

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2023DY005

Name of Service: Safari Childcare

Address of Service: Block B, Hamilton Gardens, Cabra, Dublin 7.

Eircode: D07 RT2H

Name of Registered Provider: Cian Powell, Kevin McGuinness

Service type: Full Day, Part Time, Sessional

Date of Inspection: 24/07/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	57	PM	58
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 2 nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K
Inspection undertaken by:	C. Harte and L. Jameson
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(J) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Conditions if applicable	Not applicable
---------------------------------	----------------

Description of service

Safari Childcare based in Cabra, North Dublin is one of nine services operated by the registered providers. The service offers a sessional service to children availing of the Early Education and Childhood Care (ECCE) scheme from 9:00am to 12:00am Monday to Friday, and full day care service for children aged between 1 year to 6 years from 7:30am to 6:00pm.

The service operates on the ground floor of a purpose-built building. The service has five care rooms. Wobbler room (1 year - 1 year 9 months), Toddler Junior room (1.5 years - 2 years 3 months), Toddler Senior room (2 - 3 years), Montessori One room (3-4 years) and the Montessori Two room (4 -5 years).

An enclosed outdoor area is also on site at the front of the building.

Staffing

The registered provider currently employs 17 staff to work in the service. This includes the person in charge, deputy manager, supervisor, chef and 13 staff who work directly with the children. The person in charge works in a supernumerary capacity and manages the oversight of the service. There were 17 persons present during the day of inspection including the person in charge, supervisor, chef, part-time staff, two staff who attended the service from another premises and two students.

Methodology

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of early years services in Ireland. The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 define the duty of a registered provider to ensure the safety and well-being of children and to comply with these regulations. This Act also gives Tusla the authority to assess compliance with the regulations. The purpose of regulation in relation to early years services is to ensure that the care, safety, and well-being of children attending such services is upheld. Inspections of early years services are planned based on the following:

- Previous inspection history
- Any information received in relation to the service

The findings on inspection are based on:

- Information obtained through examination of documentation
- Direct observation
- Discussion with relevant staff

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under the following:

- Regulation 19 Health Welfare and Development of Child
- Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child

As a result, the scope of the inspection included Wobbler Room, Toddler Junior Room and Montessori 1 room.

Inspection findings are documented in the inspection report which is first issued in draft format to the service with an opportunity to respond to any findings. Where statutory requirements are identified as not being met, the registered provider must demonstrate how they have rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non-compliance from re occurring. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform decisions about compliance with regulatory requirements. Where the registered provider fails to meet the statutory requirements an escalation process may be commenced.

The inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.

The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,
- (b) at all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the named person referred to in subparagraph (a) is on the premises, and
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-

- (a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,
- (b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,
- (c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and
- (d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise if required.
 - (b) A review of the staff roster and discussion with management demonstrated that a designated person in charge was rostered to be on the premises the day of the inspection for the duration of the opening hours of the service. The person in charge was present in the service when the inspectors arrived.
 - (c) The service had a management structure in place with clear roles and responsibilities. This was evidenced by the service roster and staff display in the hallway.

(2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that 12 new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection. Eleven of these new staff members work directly with the children. On the day of inspection, two staff from other premises attended the service and two students were present on an educational work placement programme. A total of 16 full files was reviewed. The qualification of one existing staff member that was outstanding from the last inspection was also reviewed. A review of records maintained by Tusla demonstrated that Garda vetting disclosures were dated within three years for all existing staff. The registered provider had completed the following checks:

- (a) Twenty-one written and validated references were available from past employers.
- (b) Eleven written and validated references were available from a source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 16 persons. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting was available for 16 adults who had lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of six months or more as an adult.

(4) Evidence was available to show that 14 staff members who worked directly with the children held at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(3) The registered provider did not ensure that information required under section (2) was available prior to commencement of a staff member.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(3) Documentation has been updated to include full employment histories with dates clearly recorded. All required documentation, including detailed CVs showing full employment history with dates and months of work, will be obtained, verified, and available prior to commencement of any staff member. This will be monitored by the manager and area manager with monthly checklists.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Template staff file checklist.
- Staff document.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 9 has been addressed.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that there is at all times an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Part in respect of the age range of the children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.

(9) In assessing compliance with the adult: child ratios specified in Schedule 6, unpaid workers and, where applicable, the person referred to in Regulation 24(2), shall not be taken into account.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the following:

- (1) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults available to the children attending the service to meet their care needs.
 - There were 13 staff available to 57 children present on the morning of the inspection.
 - There were 12 staff available to 58 children present on the afternoon of the inspection.
- (2) The adult to child ratios were maintained correctly throughout the inspection. The person in charge was available in a supernumerary capacity and to support in the care rooms as required. Two staff members from other premises also attended the service to support in the care rooms and cover staff breaks.
- (9) Two students who were present on the day of the inspection was not included in the adult: child ratios of the room.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured the following records were maintained:

- (a) Details of the name, position, qualifications, and experience of all staff were maintained within the staff files and staff profiles displayed in the hallway.
- (b) The service Tusla certificate which was displayed in the hallway detailed the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services.
- (c) The service statement of purpose and function document outlined the adult: child ratios and was displayed in the hallway.
- (d) The service statement of purpose and function document outlined the type of care or programme provided and was displayed in the hallway.
- (e) The service policy document outlined the facilities available within the service and was displayed in the hallway.

- (f) The service policy document outlined the opening hours and fees of the service and was displayed in the hallway.
- (g) The registered provider maintained all the policies required in accordance with Regulation 10.
- (h) Attendance records detailing the daily arrival and departure of the children were maintained and available in the care rooms.
- (i) A record was maintained of the staff roster which was reflective of the staff present on the day.
- (j) Following a review of a sample of nineteen records, the registered provider ensured a full record in writing was maintained for the administration of medication.
- (k) Following a review of a sample of twenty records, the registered provider ensured a full record in writing was maintained for accident and incidents.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1)(b) The registered provider ensured the following care practices were in place to meet the needs of the children attending:

- Staff engaged with children in a kind and respectful manner at their level and joined them in play.
- The service had a display in the hallway of the three weekly menus grouped for standard meals, vegetarians and vegans. The staff advised that all food is prepared on site. Mealtimes were observed to be regular, and the main meal of the day was a spinach risotto which was reflective of the menu.
- Children were given ample time to enjoy their meal as staff were observed to join children at the table encouraging their efforts to self-feed and offered assistance as needed. Additional portions were brought to the care room for children who requested more food.
- A staff member was observed to warmly greet a child and parent who arrived supporting a successful transition into the service.
- Nappy changing was observed to be regular, and children were invited to have their nappy changed in a gentle tone. A child who was reluctant to have their nappy changed was supported by having a staff

member of their preference carry out the care practice. A record of nappy changing was maintained for sharing with parents.

- Staff promoted early language development using songs, stories and strategies such as labelling and repetition.
- Children’s needs and comfort was supported by the changing of wet clothes, the removal of shoes prior to sleep and staff attending to the children’s nasal hygiene.

Non-Compliance Information

1. A child who had woken from sleep at 12.20pm remained in a darkened cot room till 1.25pm despite demonstrating their wakefulness and a staff member being present in the adjoining care room who could have provided supervision and an activity while the child’s peers continued to sleep.

When the inspector entered the cot room at 12.50pm the child was observed fully awake sitting upright and interacting with the staff member present. At 12.55pm the child clearly indicated they were no longer sleepy and sought to be out of the cot through verbal cues and movement. It is acknowledged the staff member lifted the child and placed them on their lap.

Service policy refers to the use of rooms as a dual-purpose space accommodating both sleeping children and children who are awake and playing. It also references the availability of quiet activities in another section of the room for children who are not sleeping or resting. This practice was not observed on the day.

2. Chairs were not available on the morning of the inspection to children in the Wobbler room outside of mealtimes. The chairs were stacked away from the tables. A child who asked for a chair was not provided with one and was instead told by staff they are not eating now. Children should have access to chairs throughout the day to support their engagement in tabletop activities and encourage the practice of gross motor skills such as sitting and standing independently.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. A meeting was held with staff to discuss responding to individual child’s needs and service sleep/rest policy. The service will ensure quiet play materials are always available and easy to access in sleep spaces if a child wakes early. All educators have completed a refresher session on service sleep/rest policy. Room leaders will support staff during rest periods to make sure children who are awake are engaged in line with their needs. Management will check in monthly to monitor how rest periods are managed and make sure this doesn’t happen again.

- Chairs were unstacked and made available immediately after the inspection. Staff have been reminded of the importance of allowing children access to furniture and resources that support independent learning and development. Management will monitor the arrangement during routine observations to ensure ongoing compliance.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Photographic evidence
- Staff meeting record.
- Staff policy training record.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 19 have been addressed.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

A registered provider shall ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of a pre-school child attending the service and that the environment of the service is safe.

Compliance Information

General Safety:

- The service entrance was secure when the inspectors arrived unannounced. A video doorbell, keypad and intercom system were in place. Staff demonstrated the use of a touch screen available in all care rooms to interact with persons at the door or main gate supporting staff to identify persons before allowing access to the premises. This helps prevent unauthorised persons accessing the service.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of reach of children.
- Signage was displayed throughout the service advising of the location of the nearest first aid box in the event it was required.
- There were no trailing flexes observed, and blind cords were secured.
- Furniture and equipment were observed maintained and suitable for use.

Infection Control:

- Foot pedal operated bins were present in the service to support infection control practices.

- Liquid soap, warm water and single use hand towels were available at wash hand basins used by the children and the staff members.
- Children were supported to wash their hands before eating promoting effective hand hygiene practices.
- Cleaning records were observed completed up to date.

Safe Sleep:

- Children under two years old who were sleeping on floor beds had sleep plans related to the use of floor beds available that were signed by a parent.
- A log was maintained where the colour, breathing and position of sleeping children was checked every 10 minutes.
- An ambient room temperature of 18-22°C was maintained in rooms where children over 1 year of age were sleeping.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were observed clear of obstruction on the day of inspection.
- Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Blackboards in the outdoor play area accessible to children were damaged with sharp edges which posed a potential risk of injury.

Infection Control:

2. The bed linen of three children was observed visibly stained before nap time and was not changed prior to those children being put to sleep. This posed an infection control risk.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The damaged sections of the blackboard that posed a risk were immediately removed to eliminate the hazard. A full inspection of the outdoor area was carried out to ensure no other equipment presented safety concerns. It was discussed at the staff meeting that outdoor risk assessments will be completed more thoroughly by all staff, with increased attention to all equipment and learning materials. Staff have been reminded to report and potential hazards to management.

Infection Control:

2. The stained linen was immediately removed and replaced with clean bedding once identified. All staff have been reminded that bedding must be visually checked for cleanliness before being used, regardless of whether it has been freshly laundered. A visual check of all linen is now a required step in the daily sleep preparation checklist. New linen was purchased.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- Photographic evidence.
- Staff meeting record.
- Template maintenance log.

Infection Control:

- Staff meeting record.
- Receipt of purchase.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been addressed.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 25 - First aid

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a person trained in first aid for children is, at all times, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box for children-

(a) is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and

(b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

Compliance Information

(1) A review of available documents and conversation with management demonstrated that a person qualified in First Aid Responder training was available during the operational hours of the service to the children attending the pre-school on the week of the inspection.

(2) (a) A suitably equipped first aid box was available.

(b) The first aid box was easily accessible and readily available to staff and inaccessible to children.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,
 - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and
 - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and
 - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.
- (3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall-
- (a) include the nature of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with, and
 - (b) be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the following:

- (1) There was a complaints policy maintained which outlined the following:
- (a) The procedures to be followed when making a complaint.
 - (b) The way complaints would be dealt with.
 - (c) The procedures for keeping the complainant informed on how the complaint is being dealt with.
- (2) Was not reviewed as management reported there had been no complaints received to the service since the last inspection held on the 31 January 2024.
- (3) Was not reviewed as management reported there had been no complaints received to the service since the last inspection held on the 31 January 2024.