

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR081
Name of Service:	Giraffe Childcare Stepside
Address of Service:	Belarmine, Enniskerry Road, Stepside, Dublin 18, Co. Dublin
Eircode:	D18 R202
Name of Registered Provider:	Dearbhala Cox Giffin
Service type:	Full Day Care
Day 1 of Inspection:	08/05/2024
Day 2 of Inspection:	09/05/2024

No of pre-school children 08/05/2024	AM	98	PM	97
No of pre-school children 09/05/2024	AM	97	PM	95

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla – Child and Family Agency, Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Bray, Co Wicklow
Inspection undertaken by:	Mary Redmond / Helen Bourke
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

This private childcare facility is one of twenty-three early years services operated by the registered provider. Full day care is provided for children ranging in age from one to six years of age from 7.30am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday. The service is registered to accommodate a maximum number of 137 children.

The service operates from a purpose-built premises in a residential development complex in an urban area of south county Dublin. Care is currently delivered across nine rooms and two cot rooms are also available. The Acacia room caters for the youngest children attending who are aged from eleven to eighteen months, Cameroon and Safari rooms cater for children aged one to two years, Namibia, Botswana and Masi Mara rooms cater for children aged two to three years of age and the other three rooms accommodate the older children attending. There is an outdoor space provided with an impact absorbing covering which is divided into two areas to accommodate the different age groups. A variety of play equipment is available including fixed climbing structures.

Staffing

There were thirty adults employed to work with pre-school children including the manager, deputy manager and relief staff. The deputy manager was the person in charge for this inspection and an area director was on-site to provide support for the inspection process. Twenty-seven adults employed to work directly with pre-school children had attained major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education at a minimum of Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth (DCEDIY) to be equivalent. Three adults who did not have the required qualification had a Letter of Qualification Recognition which had been issued by the DCEDIY.

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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may focus on other areas as required.

The inspection plan was to assess compliance under the following regulations:

Regulation 9 Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 Staffing levels

Regulation 16 Record in relation to pre-school service

Regulation 19 Health welfare and development of child

Regulation 20 Facilities for rest and play

Regulation 25 First aid

The following regulation was not part of the inspection plan and for this reason only the non-compliance is reported.

Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

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 reoccurring. 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 co-operation of the designated person in charge, area director and staff members who facilitated the inspection and children who were present on both days of 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.

(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) There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
 - (b) The named person to deputise was on the premises during the inspection.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in place which identified the roles and responsibilities of each employee.

The files for thirty adults who were employed to work with the pre-school children were reviewed.

(2)

- (a) There were written validated references available from previous employers for twenty-seven adults employed in the service.
 - (b) Suitable references from other sources were available for three adults who had no previous employers.
 - (c) Garda vetting dated within the last three years was available for all adults.
 - (d) Police vetting was available for twenty-eight adults who had resided outside the State for a period longer than six consecutive months.
- (4) There was evidence that twenty-seven adults had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework for Qualifications, or a qualification deemed to meet the regulatory requirement.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with children attending the service. There were twenty-three adults working directly with ninety-eight children on the first day of inspection and twenty-three adults available to work directly with ninety-seven children on the second day of inspection.

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:

- (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)
- (h) Details of children’s attendance was accurately recorded in each care room.
 - (i) A staff roster was available which accurately demonstrated adults working in the service on the day of inspection and adults who were on leave.
 - (j) Records were available to demonstrate that signed parental consent was required prior to administering medication to a child, that administration of medication was witnessed, and parents were informed following administration of medication.
 - (k) Details of accidents and incidents were recorded and there was evidence available that parents were informed following an accident or incident involving their child.

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 that appropriate and suitable care practices were in place.

Nutritious and varied food was offered to children at regular intervals throughout the day and extra portions were readily available. Food choices were appropriate to children's individual dietary and cultural needs. Mealtimes were relaxed and observed to be a positive social experience for children as adults engaged with them helping when required. Young children were encouraged to feed themselves appropriate to their age and stage of development and were helped when needed. Children who did not eat their dinner had it offered to them again later. Drinking water was readily available to children throughout the day.

Children who wore nappies had them changed regularly throughout the day and at other times when required and adults were observed to engage attentively with children during the procedure. Older children were supported to use the toilet independently and were encouraged to wash their hands afterwards.

Young children attending the Acacia room had individual sleep needs accommodated. There was a prescribed sleep time for children attending the Cameroon and Safari rooms who all slept in cots, but children had the option to sleep outside of the prescribed time as cots were always available. Children attending Namibia, Masi Mara and Botswana rooms slept on floor mats in their care rooms.

Children's hands were washed after outdoor play and before eating. Care was given to children's appearance as bibs were put on younger children before eating and their hands and faces were cleaned afterwards.

Safe sleep practices were adhered to, and children had heavy clothing and shoes removed before being put down to sleep and rest.

Transitions between caregiving practices such as eating and sleeping were well managed, including one child who was transitioning into the service.

All children had regular access to outdoor play and wore appropriate clothing and sun protection when outside.

Appropriate interactions between adults and children were observed during the inspection.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

- (1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-
- (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider had provided adequate and suitable facilities for children to rest.
- (b) There were two cot rooms with a total of twenty-five standard cots available for children to sleep and rest when required. A further four cots were available for children to use within the Safari room for sleep at a prescribed time and floor mats were also provided for children over two years of age. The safety mattresses provided were clean, firm and all had waterproof coverings. The bed linen was suitable and cleaned and stored appropriately for individual children. The rest areas provided within the care rooms were suitably resourced with mats, cushions and other soft furnishings.

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) Four adults working in the service had valid qualifications in First Aid Responder (FAR) training and were available to children. Other adults working in the service also had relevant training in first aid for children.

(2) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available.

(a) They were stored safely in conspicuous positions in the care rooms.

(b) The first aid boxes were available to children at all times.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. The nappy changing procedures observed were not effective for infection prevention and control. Practices observed included redressing children with soiled gloves, changing mats not cleaned between changes and adults leaving the sanitary area without washing their hands. The nappy changing policy displayed did not clearly outline the correct procedure.
2. There was no effective system in operation to manage the cleaning and sterilising of mouthing toys and equipment. This posed a risk of cross infection between children.
3. Water beakers for children attending the Acacia and Cameroon rooms were stored in a manner which posed a risk of cross infection. Beakers which had not been cleaned after children used them were stored on top of each other in a basket.
4. Children attending the Acacia, Namibia and Cameroon rooms did not have their hands washed before the afternoon snack and adults did not wash their own hands before serving food to children. Poor hand hygiene is associated with an increased risk of illness and infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. The nappy changing policy was updated and staff were retrained in the updated policy. The policy and task analysis have been displayed in each room.
2. New sterilising boxes for the mouthing toys were introduced into the wobbler rooms to ensure all mouthing toys and equipment can be easily sterilised. Staff were also trained in this.
3. Beakers which were not stored correctly in Acacia and Cameroon rooms are washed after each use and stored in a larger container so as not to pose a risk of cross infection. Staff were retrained in the importance of water intake and maintaining the hygiene of the beakers.

4. All staff were retrained in our Handwashing and Infection Control policy.

Management will monitor the practice within the centre to ensure that the protocols put in place for infection control are followed daily.

Supporting documentation submitted

Agenda for a staff training session held on 21 May 2024

Sign off sheets for all staff in attendance

Summary Comment

The actions as stated should address the non-compliances and practices will be reviewed at the time of the next inspection.

The regulatory requirement is deemed to have been met.