

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR083
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Name of Service:	Giraffe Childcare Cherrywood
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Address of Service:	Cherrywood Science & Technology Park, Cherrywood, Loughlinstown, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D18 K7W4
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Name of Registered Provider:	Dearbhala Cox Giffin
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time
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Date(s) of Inspection:	24/02/2025
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Date 2 of Inspection:	25/02/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	88	PM	87
Day 2	AM	88	PM	90

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Floor 7, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham, Dublin 8 D08X01F
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Inspection undertaken by:	R Phillips and E Mulhern
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Title:	Early Years Inspectors
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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	Click or tap here to enter text.
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Description of service

This privately operated childcare facility is one of 25 services run by the registered provider. The service operates from a purposefully adapted ground floor premises in a business park in South County Dublin.

There are ten care rooms, three cot rooms and a kitchen.

The service currently operates from 07:30-18:00hrs Monday to Friday, providing full day care for children from 0-6 years of age.

- Baringo room, catered for children from six months to one year.
- Acacia room for children also one year,
- Zambezi room facilitated children who are one to two years.
- Karenga room facilitated children from one to two years old.
- Safari room provided for two-year-olds.
- Masai Mara and Kenya rooms provided care for three to four year olds,
- Madagascar room facilitated four to five year olds

Staffing

This Early Years' service employs a total of 29 adults including the centre manager, two deputy managers, one chef, two housekeeping staff and 23 childcare practitioners.

On day one of the two-day inspection, 21 adults worked directly with 87 children, and on day two 22 adults worked directly with 90 children. There was an area support manager present on both days of inspection, and a centre manager came from another service to facilitate the inspection on the second day.

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

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations

- 9 (1) (2) (3) (4) Management and recruitment
- 11 (1) (2) Staffing levels
- 15 (1) (a)-(i) Record of preschool child
- 16 (1) (h)-(k) Record in relation to preschool service
- 23 Safeguarding health, safety, and welfare of child
- 26 Fire Safety
- 27 Supervision
- 28 Insurance

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15, 16, and 23. As a result, the scope of the inspection included Baby Baringo room, Wobbler Zambezi and Toddler Safari rooms.

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 persons in charge, staff and children who were present on the days 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) There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
- (b) The person in charge or the designated deputy were present at all times during the inspection.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in the service, evidenced by discussion with the centre manager and the staff roster.
- (2) Discussion with the centre manager identified nine new staff employed by the service since the last inspection on 1st and 2nd July 2024. All new staff files were reviewed.
- (2)(a)(b)
- Seventeen references from previous employers and one from a reputable source had been validated.
- (2)(c) Garda vetting disclosures were reviewed for all staff. They were dated within the last three years in compliance with the Early Years Inspectorates regulatory notice that requires registered providers to reapply for Garda vetting for all staff within a three-year timeframe.
- (2)(d) International police vetting was available for eight staff members who had worked outside the Irish jurisdiction for 6 months or longer as an adult.
- (3) The procedures specified above were carried out prior to any person being appointed.
- (4) Each employee working directly with the children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework, or a qualification deemed equivalent by the Minister.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) There was an adequate number of adults working with the children at all times during the inspection.

(2) The adult to child ratio was correct in the service throughout the inspection. There were 21 and 22 adults working with 87 and 90 children respectively on each day of the inspection.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

- (1) A sample of 11 records for children were reviewed. The information required was documented as outlined below:
- (a) The name and date of birth of each child.
 - (b) The date when each child first attended the service.
 - (c) A section was available for recording the date when the child ceases attending.
 - (d) The name, address and telephone number of parents and information where parents can be contacted.
 - (e) Names and contact details of other adults authorised to collect the child.
 - (f) Medical information, allergies, additional needs, and other information specific to the child.
 - (g) The name and telephone number of the child's medical practitioner.
 - (h) Immunisation details.
 - (i) Signed parental consent for medical treatment in the event of an emergency.

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 the attendance of each child in the service were recorded at the time of entering and leaving the service.
 - (i) The staff roster was available.
 - (j) A sample of ten medication administration records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.
 - (k) A sample of ten accident and incident records were reviewed. These records were fully completed with the pertinent information and signed by relevant staff and parents as required.

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

The following are examples of the measures undertaken by the registered provider and staff members to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the children attending the service:

General Safety:

The entrance doors were appropriately secured which prevented children from exiting the premises unsupervised and prevented unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service.

The exit which directly led to the outdoor area made for safe transitions for the children from indoor to outdoor play.

The outdoor play area was enclosed by a high wall and secured by two gates with keycode locks to prevent unauthorised access or a child leaving unsupervised. The playground was covered with impact absorbent surfacing. A smaller play area was cordoned off for the younger children to play in. No hazards were identified in the outdoor play area.

The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order.

Cleaning agents were stored appropriately in locked cupboards out of reach of children.

Storage rooms and the kitchen were inaccessible to the children.

Thermostatically controlled warm water was available in the children's sanitary facilities, and did not exceed the maximum safe temperature of 43°C.

Infection Control:

Tables were observed to be cleaned before and following meals and snacks.

Cots were spaced >50cm apart as required.

Conversation with the staff highlighted that the linen was washed weekly or sooner if required.

Soothers were stored in a cupboard in the care rooms in individually labelled containers.

Children's individual cups were labelled, and staff washed their hands and wore gloves when serving food to the children.

There was provision for the appropriate disposal and storage of waste in pedal operated bins throughout the service.

The nappy changing areas were clean and well stocked with personal protective equipment. Staff were observed cleaning the mat and unit after nappy changing.

Administration of Medication:

Medications were stored out of reach of children. Medications were stored in the original packaging as required. Staff demonstrated an understanding of the appropriate measures to be taken to safeguard children if medication was required. A sample of medication records were reviewed. The forms were completed correctly including the name and dose of the medication given, written parental consent and a second staff member's signature. No child was observed having medication on the day of inspection.

A detailed care plan was available, and staff were familiar with the procedure to administer an adrenaline auto injector if required to a child with a severe allergy.

Safe Sleep:

The children were observed to be facilitated to sleep in cots or low-level beds as appropriate.

Staff were observed carrying out sleep checks at ten-minute intervals and documenting same. Observations included noting the child's position, colour and breathing pattern, and the sleep room temperature.

Sleep checks records were reviewed from previous dates also.

The temperature in the Zambezi room while children slept was 19 °C.

The temperature was 19.8°C in Baringo room, the staff member turned up the air conditioning to maintain a safe sleep room temperature of 16-20°C.

Fire Safety:

The emergency exits were clear and unobstructed.

Records indicated that fire drills are carried out on a monthly basis to familiarise both adults and children with the procedure to be followed in case of a fire.

Outing:

The service had a policy on outings which described measures to ensure the safety and welfare of children when on an outing. First aid measures and management of a critical incident were included in the risk assessment for the outings policy. Staff demonstrated good awareness of procedures to follow to safeguard children on an outing.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. The children's hands were not washed before eating dinner in Baby Baringo room or Wobbler Zambezi room. Children's hands were not washed following nappy changing prior to mealtime in Zambezi room either. This cross contamination poses a risk to the children's health.
2. There was an inadequate system in place to sanitise mouthed toys in Baby Baringo and Wobbler Zambezi rooms. There was a box for toys that had been taken out of circulation in Wobbler Zambezi room. The inspectors did not however witness any toys being added to the box and taken out of circulation after children mouthed them, or toys being washed or sterilised as required, while the inspection was in progress. This was in contravention to the services infection control policy as discussed with the centre manager.

This regulation was non-compliant on the previous inspection dated 2nd July 2024. The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider following that inspection had not been effective in addressing the non-compliance.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. All staff have received re-training on the importance of handwashing for both the staff and children throughout transitional times ie mealtimes nappy changing returning from the garden.
The Cherrywood management team have implemented spot checks at the key moments mentioned to ensure handwashing is taking place and is done so correctly.
2. All staff received further training on how to sanitise mouthed toys after use. Staff will continue to be reminded of the practices regarding the importance of sterilising toys and mouthed toys within the room to prevent the spread of infection.
Staff are now signing when toys enter the sterilisation box. The management team are checking rooms at intervals throughout the day to ensure toys are being sterilised.

Supporting documentation submitted

Training logs were submitted for the training described above.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken and evidence submitted address the non-compliances.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-
- (a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and
 - (b) the number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Compliance Information

On review of records the inspector observed that:

- (1) (a) The service maintained a record of monthly fire drills that had taken place in the premises. The last fire drill was recorded as having taken place on 15th January 2025.
- (b) The last maintenance check for the fire-fighting equipment was recorded as having taken place on 1st May 2024 and for the smoke alarms was recorded as having taken place on 9th October 2024.
- (4) Notices of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed in conspicuous places throughout the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The children were adequately supervised at all times during the inspection. The staff were observed to count the children and call them by name at times of transition from the classroom out to the outdoor play area.

The layout of the rooms facilitated good supervision while indoors.

The staff were observed supervising the young children closely while eating and drinking in the Wobbler Zambezi room and Baringo room.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

On review of the service's current insurance certificate, the inspector observed that the insurance certificate detailed cover for care of up to 116 children. The current insurance cover expires on 16th December 2025.