

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DR083
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Giraffe Childcare Cherrywood
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Cherrywood Science & Technology Park, Cherrywood, Loughlinstown, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D18 K7W4
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Dearbhala Cox Giffin
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day Care
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<b>Day 1 of Inspection:</b>	01/07/2024
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<b>Day 2 of Inspection:</b>	02/07/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children 01/07/2024</b>	AM	74	PM	70
<b>No of pre-school children 02/07/2024</b>	AM	77	PM	77

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla – Child and Family Agency, Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Bray, Co Wicklow
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Mary Redmond / Linda Magee / Clíondhna Kerrigan
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### 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 eight months to six years of age from 7.30am to 6pm Monday to Friday. The service is registered to accommodate a maximum number of 117 children.

The service operates from a purposefully adapted ground floor premises in a business park in south county Dublin. There are ten care rooms provided; the Baringo room was closed on the day of inspection due to staff shortages. Three cot rooms are also available. The Acacia room caters for the youngest children attending who were aged from eight to fourteen months, Zambezi and Baringo rooms cater for children aged one to two years, Kilimanjaro, Kerenga and Safari rooms cater for children aged two to three years of age and the other four 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 twenty-six adults employed to work with pre-school children in this service including the manager. The deputy manager was not assigned to a care room and was available to provide cover when required. Two adults who were employed to work in other services operated by the registered provider arrived after the inspection had commenced. An area director was present to support the inspection process. 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. Two adults who did not have the required qualification had Letters 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 governance, health welfare and development of child and safety. 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 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 manager, deputy manager, 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.

(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 designated person in charge was present for 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 by the registered provider, including ancillary staff, were reviewed.

- (2)
- (a) There were written validated references available from previous employers for twenty-nine adults employed in the service.
- (b) Suitable references from other sources were also available including for one adult 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 seventeen adults who had resided outside the State for a period longer than six consecutive months.
- (3) The procedures specified above had been carried out before adults had commenced working in the service.
- (4) There was evidence that twenty-five 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

*(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

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was satisfied except for the non-compliance details below.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider did not always ensure that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was not maintained in the service as detailed below:

On arrival of the inspection team on the 1 July 2024 the minimum adult to child ratios were not in place.

1. There was one adult caring for ten children in the Madagascar room; these children were in the 3-6 year age range and were attending on a full day care basis.

The minimum ratio of adults to children for the 3-6 year age range is 1:8.

2. There was one adult caring for ten children in the Kenya room; one of these children was in the 2-3 year age range and nine were in the 3-6 year age range.

The minimum ratio of adults to children for these age ranges is 1:6 and 1:8 respectively.

Similar non-compliance with the adult to child ratio in these rooms was noted on the 2 July 2024.

In addition to the above the inspectors noted that while staff were on their breaks the adult to child ratios were not maintained in other rooms:

3. At 1.10pm there was one adult responsible for the care of ten children in the Serengeti room.

4. At 1.25pm there was one adult caring for nine children in the Kilimanjaro room.

These children were in the 2-3 year age range; the minimum ratio of adults to children for this age range is 1:6.

At these times the relief staff and the deputy manager were not available as they were maintaining the minimum adult to child ratios in other rooms where adults had left to go on their breaks.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

The registered provider will cross check the number of children to be cared for in each room against the staff allocated to the rooms to ensure that an adequate number of staff are rostered daily.

New recruits have joined the Cherrywood team following the inspection with further staff joining in September.

The planning process for staffing annual leave has been revised and a maximum of 2 full time staff will be permitted holidays at the same time ensuring part time staff and the deputy manager can effectively cover the annual leave or any unexpected absence.

The management team have reviewed roster patterns and will ensure that an adequate number of adults are always working directly with the children.

The management team will ensure holiday requests are divided by units allowing 2 staff per unit off at one time.

The management will work closely with HR regarding staff notice periods, to support recruitment in a timely manner once notices are issued.

The management will ensure that the rostering of the staff team is inline and crossed reference by the attending children and make alternative arrangements to ensure there is the adequate number of staff present on any one day.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Documentation to show names of new recruits

### **Summary Comment**

The actions as stated will address the non-compliance and prevent a reoccurrence.

The regulatory requirement is deemed to have been met.

## 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 electronically recorded in each care room.
  - (i) A staff roster was available.
  - (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)**

Nutritious and varied food was offered to children at regular intervals and extra portions were 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. Drinking water was always available and accessible to children.

Young children attending the Acacia and Baringo rooms had their sleep needs accommodated on an individual basis. There was a prescribed sleep time for older children attending but children who did not require sleep at these times were facilitated.

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.

Older 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.

All children had regular access to outdoor play and wore suitable clothing when outside.

Appropriate interactions between adults and children were observed including adults giving children choices, allowing them time to respond and encouraging language development by imitating baby babble.

Adults used effective information sharing processes, such as a mobile tablet application, which promoted consistency and continuity of care for children attending the service. Adults were also observed giving verbal handovers to parents and grandparents who were picking children up from the service.

## 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) Two 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 hands of young children attending the Acacia and Zambezi rooms were not washed after nappy changing or before eating posing a risk of infection. It is acknowledged that in the Acacia room the children's hands were wiped with cotton wool and water, but this is not effective for infection prevention.

2. There was no system in operation to manage the cleaning and sterilising of mouthing toys and equipment. This posed a risk of cross infection between children.

## Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### **Infection Control:**

All staff have received further training on the importance of handwashing.

Staff will undergo frequent re-training on the handwashing policy and procedure. Management will monitor the handwashing procedures daily and complete skills demonstrations with the team.

The staff team have been retrained on the process of sterilisation of mouthing toys and equipment.

The management team will actively monitor the use of sterilisation boxes to ensure they are being used correctly and that toys and equipment are frequently sterilised.

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### **Infection Control:**

Photographic and documentary evidence was reviewed.

## Summary Comment

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

The regulatory requirement is deemed to have been met.