

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DS003
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Giraffe Childcare Liffey Valley
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Liffey Valley Office Campus, Liffey Valley, Clondalkin, Dublin 22, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D22 W026
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Dearbhala Cox Giffin
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	12/05/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	81	PM	82
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	The Early Years Inspectorate - Tusla Child and Family Agency, Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive, County Dublin, A96P3Y6
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	O. Quill and M. Condon
<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

Giraffe Childcare Liffey Valley is one of a multiple of 25 childcare services operated privately by the registered provider in the Dublin region. The service is registered to provide full day, part-time and sessional care and caters for children from 0 to 6 years. The service operates from 07:15 to 18:45, Monday to Friday.

The service is located in a purpose built two storey premises in an urban area of west Dublin. Eight care room were available and seven rooms were open on the day of inspection. Three rooms are located on the ground floor, Baby Acacia caters for children aged 1 year. Wobbler Namibia caters for children aged 1 to 2 years. Toddler Cameroon caters for children aged 2 years. Four rooms are located on the first floor, Toddler Baringo caters for children aged 2 to 3 years. Toddler Masai Mara caters for children aged 3 years. Junior Pre-school Botswana caters for children aged 3 to 4 years and Pre-school Madagascar caters for children aged 4 to 5 years. A separate cot room is also located on the ground floor. There are two, fully enclosed outdoor play areas, one located to the side of the premises and one located on the other side of the premises for younger children.

### Staffing

The service currently employs 24 staff including a manager. There were 16 staff working directly with the children on the day of inspection. The service also employs a chef and a cleaner. The area director arrived during the inspection and attended the feedback meeting. The registered provider does not work directly in the service and was not present during the inspection.

### 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, safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

- 9(1)(a)(b), (2), (4) Management and Recruitment,
- 11(1), (2), (8)(a) Staffing Levels,
- 16(1)(h), (i), (j) and (k) Record in Relation to Pre-school Service,
- 19(1) b Health, Welfare and Development of Child,
- 23 Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of Child,
- 25 (1), (2) (a), (b) First aid.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulations:

- 16(1)(h), (i), (j) and (k) Record in relation to pre-school service,
- 19(1)(a)(b) Health, welfare and development of child,
- 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Wobbler Acacia, Wobbler Namibia, Toddler Cameroon and Toddler Baringo.

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, area director, 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.

(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 person in charge and a named person to deputise.

- (b) The person in charge and a named deputy were always on the premises during the inspection.
- (c) The service had a clearly documented management structure with staff roles outlined. Adults demonstrated an understanding of their roles and responsibilities and the lines of authority within the service.

(2) The inspection focused on regulations (2)(a)(b) and (d), and (4) records for 12 new staff employed since the last inspection on the 11 June 2024. Records for all 24 staff members employed in the service were inspected for regulation 9(2)(c).

- (a) In total 20 written validated references were available from previous employers.
- (b) In total 4 written validated references were available from a source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all 24 staff members. Garda vetting disclosures had been renewed in accordance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, which requires services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) International police vetting had been sourced as required for 12 adults who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than 6 months as an adult.
- (4) Records were available evidencing that 12 staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or equivalent. One of these staff members held a letter of qualification recognition from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY).

### 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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,*

## Compliance Information

- (1) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.
- (2) The minimum ratio of adults to children for full day care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were eighty-one children attending the service being supervised by sixteen adults on the day of inspection.
- (8)(a) There were at least two adults on the premises at all times. The staff roster provided for the person in charge or a person who could deputise to be present at all times of opening.

## 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 Wobbler Acacia, Wobbler Namibia, Toddler Cameroon and Toddler Baringo were recorded at the time of entering and leaving the service.
- (i) The staff roster was available and reflected the adults working in the service.
- (j) Details of medication administered to children was available.
- (k) A sample of 15 accident and incident forms were reviewed and there was evidence 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 throughout the day and extra portions were readily available. A hot meal of vegetarian stew and pasta was served for lunch. 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 readily available to children throughout the day. Care was given to children's appearance bibs were put on younger children before eating and their hands and faces were cleaned afterwards.

Children who wore nappies had them changed regularly and at other times when required. Adults used this time for warm one to one interaction with the children. Older children were supported to use the toilet independently and were encouraged to wash their hands afterwards. There was a designated sleep time after lunch but adults explained the sleep needs of children are accommodated outside of the prescribed time when required. Children were made comfortable for sleep outer clothing and footwear was removed. Soothers were given to children who used them and relaxing music was played.

All children had regular access to outdoor play and adults were observed to put sunscreen and hats on children to protect them from the sun.

### 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 entrance door to the service was secured to prevent unauthorised access and other exits were secured to prevent children exiting unsupervised. Cleaning products, medicines and hazardous materials were stored securely out of reach of the children. There were no trailing flexes or cables observed. Childproof locks were in place on low level cupboards. The kitchen was in accessible.

##### Infection Control:

The environment was clean and cleaning schedules were maintained. A cleaner employed by the service and was observed cleaning the floors. Children's hands were washed before eating, and after outdoor play. Nappy changing practice was observed and staff followed the nappy changing policy and all required steps for infection control. Soothers were cleaned and stored in individual labelled boxes. Cot sheets and other linen used for children was laundered frequently and stored appropriately. Foot pedal bins were in working order and used appropriately by adults and older children.

##### Administration of Medication:

Staff demonstrated an understanding of the procedures to administer medication safely if needed including obtaining written parent/guardian consent. Detailed records were available of medicines given. These had been signed by the person who gave the medicine and a witnessing staff member. A care plan were available for children who had specific allergies. Staff were able to explain the care plan and the action to take should medication be required.

##### Safe Sleep:

All children slept in cots or low beds appropriate to their age and stage of development. The room temperatures were maintained between 16 and 20°C when children were sleeping.

##### Fire Safety:

The Fire exits were clearly marked and unobstructed.

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### Safe Sleep:

1. In the Wobbler Acacia room at 13:00 the staff member caring for the children did not go into the cot room to physically check the five children who were sleeping at this time. Instead, the staff member observed the children from the door. This posed a potential safety risk as it was not possible to check children's breathing and colour from this position.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### Safe Sleep:

We have amended the roster to ensure there is additional support allowing staff to enter the cot room to check sleeping children. Management will ensure there is always support available by amending the cover required when needed and staff have been informed to call management should any additional help be necessary.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

##### Safe Sleep:

Training sheet dated 26 May 2025 stating all staff have been retrained on the Safe Sleep Policy and Procedures signed by staff.

Copy Roster dated 19 May 2025.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions as stated by the registered provider address the non-compliance. Practice will be reviewed on next inspection.

## 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 person trained in first aid for children was at all times immediately available to the children attending the pre-school. Two staff caring for the children had First Aid Responder certificates that were valid until the 20 February 2026 and the 30 April 2026.

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(2) (a), (b) Suitable equipped first aid boxes were safely stored, available at all times and easily accessible in the care rooms.