

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS003
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Name of Service:	Giraffe Childcare Liffey Valley
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Address of Service:	Liffey Valley Office Campus, Liffey Valley, Clondalkin, Dublin 22, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D22 W026
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Name of Registered Provider:	Dearbhala Cox Giffin
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	11/06/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	81	PM	78
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	R. Brien & O. Quill
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
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Description of service

Giraffe Childcare Liffey Valley is a full day care service provided by Giraffe Childcare Limited which provides 23 childcare services. The service provides full day, part-time and sessional care and caters for children from 0 to 6 years. The service is registered to operate from 07:15 to 18:45, Monday to Friday.

The service is located in an urban area of west Dublin. It is a purpose built two storey premises with eight care rooms. 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 dedicated 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 25 staff including a manager. There were 19 staff working directly with the children on the day of inspection. The service also employs a chef and a cleaner. The area manager was present on the inspector's arrival. 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 and 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,
- 19(1)(a)(b) Health, Welfare and Development of Child,
- 23 Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of Child,
- 26 Fire Safety Measures.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulations:

- 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 Baby Acacia, Toddler Cameroon and Junior Pre-school Botswana rooms.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 9(2),(4) Management and Recruitment.

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.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report Pre School

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

(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)(b) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required who were both on the premises throughout the inspection.

(2) Following a discussion with the manager it was confirmed that five adults commenced working in the service since the last inspection on 14 September 2023. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a)(b) Of the ten references that were required, nine were available from a past employer and one was available from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for the five staff members. 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 required for five staff members and was available for these staff members who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding six months as an adult.

(4) Records were available evidencing that four 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 nineteen adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a) There were at least two adults on the premises at all times.

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-

(a) each child's learning, development and well-being is facilitated within the daily life of the pre-school service through the provision of the appropriate activities, interaction, materials and equipment, having regard to the age and stage of development of the child, and

(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)(a)(b)

The service had a healthy eating policy in place and staff reported that all meals are provided by the service. Children are offered breakfast on arrival and a fruit snack is provided during the morning. Dinner was served at 11:45. Drinking water was accessible to children throughout the day and all children were given water with their dinner. Children in the Junior Pre-school Botswana room were offered a choice of milk or water with their meal. Younger children were provided with bibs for dinnertime. Children were encouraged to feed themselves and staff supported younger children who needed assistance with their dinner.

Children's care needs were observed to be met promptly. Staff were observed cleaning children's noses as required and children's hands and faces were cleaned after dinner as required. In the Baby Acacia room, children's wet clothes were changed following dinner. Children were encouraged and supported to be independent including cleaning up after their play and meals. Children's nappies were changed regularly and staff were observed engaging warmly with children when providing this care.

Children in the Baby Acacia room were placed to sleep when they displayed signs of tiredness. There was a designated nap time in the Toddler Cameroon room. There was a designated nap time in the Junior Pre-school Botswana room and children who did not want to have a nap were observed engaging in play.

Staff demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care and responded to children's cues promptly. Staff interacted warmly with the children throughout the inspection and were observed supporting children in their play. Staff were observed to use encouragement, gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour in line with the service's behaviour management policy. Staff provided an appropriate level of supervision whilst supporting the children's independence during play and mealtimes.

Staff described how they record information about each child's day using an online application detailing information on food, sleep, nappy changes and activities. Parents were observed in the service during drop off and collection times and staff shared information about the children with their parents at these times.

Care rooms were arranged to provide a range of play materials providing children with the freedom to play and explore. Play materials included small world toys, construction toys, jigsaws, rest areas with books and home corners. The care rooms provided a range of developmentally appropriate play experiences for the children and were adequately resourced with a variety of materials. Family photos, birthday displays and children's artwork were displayed in the care rooms.

The environment was laid out to support the children's independence. Play materials were observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving. Low level tables and chairs were available in the care rooms.

Two fully enclosed outdoor plays areas were available on the premises. One to the side of the building for older children and one to the other side of the building for younger children. The outdoor area for older children had shock absorbent surfacing and was divided into two sections. The outdoor area available for the younger children had an artificial grass surface. The outdoor areas were equipped with a range of developmentally appropriate play equipment. Children from Toddler Cameroon and Junior Pre-school Botswana accessed the outdoor area during the course of the inspection.

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 inspectors found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with staff and inspection of the premises that the registered provider had taken the following steps to safeguard children attending:

General Safety:

- The entrance door to the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised.
- Medicines, hand sanitisers and cleaning agents were stored safely out of reach of children.
- All storage facilities were inaccessible to children.
- The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection appeared in good working order.
- All blind cords were secured.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing.
- A system was in place for effective sterilisation of soothers.
- A system was in place for the effective sterilisation of mouthed toys.
- Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal bins.
- Individual bed linen was provided for children. Staff stated that bed linen is laundered weekly.

Safe Sleep:

- Children were physically monitored while sleeping and sleep checks were documented every ten minutes. Discussion with staff demonstrated that staff were familiar with safe sleep guidelines.
- An adult remained in the room at all times where children were sleeping on low beds.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

Inspectors observed a number of practices which posed a risk of transmission of infection within the service:

1. Some nappy changing practices observed during the inspection were inadequate for infection control purposes and at variance with the service's nappy changing procedure as follows;

A staff member was observed to carry out a number of nappy changes without washing their hands between changes. The staff member was observed lifting the lid of the bin to dispose of waste. The nappy changing mat was not cleaned between nappy changes. Children's hands were not washed following nappy changing.

2. The handwashing practices observed were inconsistent and at variance with the policy in place in the service as follows;
 - a. While it is acknowledged that children's noses were cleaned promptly, a staff member was observed to clean a child's nose and did not wash their hands following this. Another staff member was observed to clean a child's nose and then to clean a second child's nose without washing their hands in between.
 - b. Children's hands were not washed following outdoor play in the Toddler Cameroon room.
 - c. Children's hands were not washed before dinner in the Toddler Cameroon room.
3. The covering on a play tunnel in the Baby Acacia room was torn exposing the foam within which could not be effectively cleaned.
4. Sticky tape which had been placed around the sink in the children's play kitchen in the Baby Acacia room was coming away and contained accumulations of dirt and debris which could not be effectively cleaned.
5. The ball pools in the Baby Acacia and Toddler Cameroon rooms were observed to have a build-up of dust and debris on the base of the pools. Staff stated that the ball pools are cleaned as part of the routine cleaning of the play equipment, however there was no record on the cleaning checklist in the rooms for the cleaning of the ball pools.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. Staff have been retrained in the correct procedure for nappy changing, including picture of task analysis showing a step by step of the correct procedure for infection control. This includes handwashing, disposing of nappies and the cleaning of the changing mat. Continuous monthly training and monitoring by management team.

2. a.b.c.

Training was given and documented with a training card to ensure our infection control policy on handwashing and when necessary to wash both staff/children's hands during transitions. Continuous monthly training and monitoring by management team.

3. The play tunnel was removed from Baby Acacia and the room layout was changed to reflect this. Weekly checks of equipment to be checked by management and anything broken/ripped to be removed immediately.

4. The sticky tape was removed from the sink of the children's kitchen area and cleaned. Staff are aware that sticky tape is not to be used going forward and to maintain the hygiene of this area.

5. Ball pool from Toddler Cameroon has been removed and a larger kitchen/creative area was made. The ball pool in Baby Acacia has a new cleaning schedule where it is cleaned thoroughly during sleep time and documented on the sheet. Daily cleaning for the ball pool in Baby Acacia. Ball pool removed from Toddler Cameroon indefinitely.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Written and photographic evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider have been deemed to address these 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

(1)

(a) A written record was available detailing monthly fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last fire drill had been recorded as undertaken on the 09 May 2024.

(b) The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises was available. The maintenance records for the fire equipment were dated April 2024 and that quarterly maintenance of the smoke alarm system had taken place on 15 April 2024.

(4) The procedures to be followed during a fire drill and in the event of a fire were displayed in a conspicuous location within the service.