

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| 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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| Dates of Inspection: | 13/09/2023 |
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| Date 2 of Inspection: | 14/09/2023 |
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| No of pre-school children: | AM | 63 | PM | 60 |
| | Day 2 | AM | 64 | PM |

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| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Dublin 8 |
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| Inspection undertaken by: | R. Brien & M. Redmond |
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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).

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| 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 days of inspection. Three rooms are located on the ground floor, Wobbler Acacia caters for children from 11 months to 1 year. Wobbler Namibia caters for children aged 1 year. Wobbler Serengeti caters for children aged 1 to 2 years. Four rooms are located on the first floor, Toddler Baringo and Toddler Masai Mara cater for children aged 2 years. Junior Pre-school Botswana caters for children aged 2 to 3 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 26 staff including a manager. There were 23 staff working directly with the children on the first day of inspection and 22 staff working directly with the children on the second day of inspection. The service also employs a chef and a cleaner. The area manager arrived during the morning of the inspection on both days. 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,
- 15(1) – Record of a Pre-school child
- 16(h)(i)(j)(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,
- 25 – First Aid

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

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulations:

- 15(1) – Record of a Pre-school child,
- 16(h)(j)(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,
- 25(2) – First Aid

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Wobbler Acacia, Wobbler Namibia, Toddler Baringo and Junior Pre-school Botswana 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 person in charge, area manager, 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) The files of twenty-six adults were reviewed as part of the inspection. This included nine staff members who had commenced working in the service since the last inspection on 14 October 2022. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:
- (a)(b) Of the fifty-two references that were required, thirty-seven were available from a past employer and fifteen were available from a reputable source.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for the twenty-six staff members.
- (d) Police vetting was required for eighteen 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 twenty-four staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or equivalent. Three of these staff members held letters of eligibility to practice or qualification recognition letters 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 sixty-three children attending the service being supervised by twenty-three adults on the first day of inspection. There were sixty-four children attending the service being supervised by twenty-two adults on the second day of inspection.

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

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 ten records were reviewed which demonstrated that a record was available in writing which contained the information required in (a) to (i) above.

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

(h) Details of the attendance of each child in the Wobbler Acacia, Wobbler Namibia, Toddler Baringo and Junior Pre-school Botswana rooms were recorded at the time of entering and leaving the service.

(i) The staff roster was available on both days of inspection and accurately reflected the adults working in the service on each day.

(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 incidents records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.

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 the manager 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 between 11:30 and 11:45. Drinking water was available to children throughout the day and all children were given water with their meal. Older children in the Junior Pre-school Botswana room were offered a choice of milk or water with their dinner. Younger children were provided with bibs for dinnertime. Children in the Wobbler Namibia, Toddler Baringo and Junior Pre-school Botswana rooms were encouraged to feed themselves and staff were observed supporting children who needed assistance with their meal. Additional portions of dinner were available in each care room and staff were observed offering more food to children who had finished their meal and to those who requested more food.

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. Children were encouraged and supported to be independent including using the toilet independently and cleaning up after their play. Older children in the Junior Pre-school Botswana room were observed cleaning up after their meal. Children's nappies were changed regularly and staff were observed engaging warmly with children when providing this care. There was a designated sleep time in the Wobbler Namibia, Toddler Baringo and Junior Pre-school Botswana rooms. The individual sleep needs of the children in the Wobbler Acacia room were met with children placed to sleep when they displayed signs of tiredness.

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 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 into areas of interest providing children with the freedom to play and explore. Areas of interest included construction toys, musical instruments, dress up areas, rest areas with books and home corners. Children in the Junior Pre-school Botswana room also had access to an area outside the main care room called Activity Street. Small groups of children were observed accessing this area on both days of inspection. The care rooms provided a range of developmentally appropriate play experiences for the children and were adequately resourced with a variety of materials. The materials were observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving. Low level tables and chairs were available in the care rooms. Family photos and birthday walls were displayed 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. Staff were observed to play different games with the children in this area. 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.

Non-Compliance Information

1. Four children in the Wobbler Acacia room, aged 11 months to 1 year, were not provided with the opportunity to feed themselves at dinner time during the inspection to promote independence and to develop hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills. The children were not provided with their own spoons and were spoon fed by staff.
2. A child in the Wobbler Namibia room was observed to have a soother in their mouth for prolonged periods of time on both days of inspection contrary to the service's policy on soother use. Prolonged use of soothers may inhibit language and oral motor development and prevent children from interacting with their peers.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Children are encouraged to help themselves to feed at mealtimes and have access to their placemats/spoons and drinks. Staff are seated with the children to supervise and encourage self-feeding and independence. Training was given at our team meeting and signed off with a training card.
2. Childrens use of soothers are as best limited to sleep times and when upset, staff have been retrained to avail of the support from other team members if the child needs time to settle in an area. Training was given at team meeting and signed off with a training card.

Supporting documentation submitted

Written 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. These actions will be assessed on the next 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.
- 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. Staff were observed to carry out hand washing as appropriate. The children were supported to wash their hands at regular intervals including after using the toilet and nappy changing, after outdoor play and before meals.
- Children's nappies were changed in line with the service's nappy changing policy to reduce the risk of the spread of infection.
- A system was in place for effective sterilisation of soothers.
- 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.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. In the Wobbler Acacia room, the cupboard beneath the sink was not safely secured on both days of inspection and three bottles of different cleaning agents were accessible posing a safety risk if accessed by a child.

Infection Control:

2. The children attending the Wobbler Namibia room were of an age where they explored toys with their mouths. On the second day of inspection, there was no attempt made to remove the toys when mouthed despite the room having a designated box for this purpose. The toys remained in use between the different children posing a risk of cross infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Staff retrained in correct storage of cleaning products and to secure presses with child safety locks. Training given at team meeting to readvise staff and management to continuously monitor press locks throughout the day.

Infection Control:

- Staff retrained on correct procedure for sterilising toys and system implemented for the wobbler areas to ensure the toys mouthed by young children are sterilised frequently. As part of the health and safety topic in our team meetings we retrained staff on our policy.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

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

Infection Control:

- Written 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. These actions will be assessed on the 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 was immediately available to the children at all times on the day of inspection.

(2)

(a) A first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous location within the Wobbler Acacia, Wobbler Namibia, Toddler Baringo and Junior Pre-school Botswana rooms.

(b) A first aid box was available to the adults and children in the service at all times.