

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS134
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Name of Service:	Giraffe Childcare Parkwest
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Address of Service:	Unit 9 Park West Retail Plaza, Park West Business Park, Nangor Road, Dublin 12, Co. Dublin
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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:	06/06/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	61	PM	58
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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 & E. Mulhern
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 Parkwest is a full day care service provided by Giraffe Childcare Limited which provides 23 childcare services. The service provides full day-care, part-time care and sessional care and caters for children from 0 to 6 years. The service is registered to operate from 07:30 to 18:30, Monday to Friday.

The service is located in a purposely adapted premises in Park West business park in Dublin 12. There are seven care rooms in the service. The Baringo and Safari rooms cater for children aged 1 year. The Botswana room caters for children aged 1 to 2 years. The Namibia and Zambia rooms cater for children aged 2 to 3 years. The Kenya room caters for children aged 3 to 4 years and the Madagascar room caters from children aged 4 to 5 years. There is one dedicated cot room and a fully enclosed outdoor play area to the rear of the building.

Staffing

The service currently employs 19 staff including a manager. There were 15 staff working directly with the children on the day of inspection including two managers. The service also employs a chef and a housekeeper. The area manager arrived during the morning of the inspection. The registered provider does not work directly in the service and was not present on the day of 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 and premises and facilities. 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(h) 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,
- 29(c)(d) Premises.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulations:

- 16(h) 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,
- 29(c)(d) Premises.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Safari, Baringo and Namibia 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, 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 seven adults commenced working in the service since the last inspection on 26 June 2023. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:

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

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for the seven 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 six 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 the seven 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) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with children in the Baringo, Safari, Botswana, Zambia, Namibia and Kenya rooms at all times.

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

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(2)

The registered provider did not ensure that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with children in the Madagascar room at all times. The minimum ratio of adults to children was not maintained in this room at all times as follows;

- On the day of inspection from 13:00 to 14:20 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.
- Two adults were required during this time as the minimum ratio of adults to children for the 3-6 year age range is 1:8.

Management and staff were unaware of the minimum ratio requirement for children in the 3-6 year age range attending on a full day care basis.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(2)

On the day of the inspection there was an adequate number of adults rostered and directly working with the children. Management were not on ratio during lunch time and available to cover, however there was a calculation error on the number of children and lunch cover required within one of the preschool rooms. The ratios were maintained throughout the day outside of this period of time. Ratios will be maintained at all times. Management are fully aware of the adult to child ratio. All planning and room cover is scheduled accurately each morning and rooms checked during breaks and lunch cover. Ratios will be met at all times during the day.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider have been deemed to address this non-compliance.

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;

Compliance Information

(h) Details of the attendance of each child in the Safari, Baringo and Namibia rooms units were recorded at the time of entering and leaving the service.

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 and cracker snack is provided during the morning. Dinner was served at 11:30. Drinking water was accessible to children throughout the day and children in the Safari and Baringo rooms were given water with their dinner. 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. Additional servings of dinner were available. Staff in the Baringo and Safari rooms were observed asking children who had finished their meal if they wanted more and additional servings were provided for all children who requested more in these rooms.

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. Children's nappies were changed regularly and staff were observed engaging warmly with children when providing this care. There was a designated nap time in the Baringo, Safari and Toddler care rooms, however staff in the Safari room were observed placing a child to sleep when they displayed signs of tiredness.

Staff demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children through the use of gentle tones and praise 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 at arrival and collection times.

Play materials included small world toys, construction toys, musical instruments, home corners, rest areas and ball pools. Family photos, birthday walls 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.

A fully enclosed outdoor play area was located to the rear of the premises and had shock absorbent surfacing. The area was divided into two separate play spaces which were well resourced with a range of developmentally appropriate play equipment. Children from the Baringo and Namibia rooms accessed the outdoor area during the course of the inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)

Inspectors observed that each child's learning, development and well-being was not facilitated within the daily life of the pre-school service and that suitable care practices were not in place having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs as follows:

1. The environments in the Safari and Namibia rooms were not appropriately resourced to promote all areas of development and to provide enriching play experiences for the number of children in attendance as follows;

- a. The environment in the Namibia room did not support the children in initiating and sustaining play activities. The room did not adequately meet the needs of the eleven children present due to a lack of clearly defined interest areas and a lack of available play materials to support the learning and development of children in the room. For example, the supporting play materials for the toy kitchen were stored on a shelving unit in the centre of the care room away from the kitchen. There was no other equipment or play materials to support imaginary and role play in the kitchen area. It was observed that the activities in the room were mainly adult led with minimal opportunity for child-initiated activity.
 - b. There were no books accessible to the children in the Safari room. When asked by the inspector if there were books in the room, a staff member took three books out of a locked cupboard. There were seven children attending the room on the day of inspection. This non-compliance was present on the last inspection on 26 June 2023. The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider did not prevent recurrence of this non-compliance.
2. Children in the Namibia room were not provided with opportunities to move about freely and explore their environment at times on the day of inspection as evidenced below;
- a. For a period of 23 minutes from 11:05 to 11:28, children, aged 2 years, were required to sit on a mat while a staff member read stories. The other staff member based in the room was changing nappies during this time. Children were repeatedly asked to remain seated to listen to a story even though it was evident to the inspector that some children had become disengaged with the activity. Children were observed getting up off the mat and rolling on top of each other during this time.
 - b. Children were required to sit for a period of 19 minutes from 14:28 to 14:47 while waiting for their afternoon meal. Children were observed sitting at tables with no play materials while staff stood beside the tables waiting for the meal to arrive.
- Children of this age require regular opportunities for full body movement.
3. The registered provider did not ensure that there was an adequate provision of food and drinks for some of the children in attendance on the day of inspection as follows;
- a. It is acknowledged that additional servings of dinner were brought into the Namibia room and a number of children were observed asking for and receiving more food. However, when the

additional servings were gone, a child was observed to ask for more food and was told by a staff member that there was no more left. The chef then entered the room and asked staff if they needed more food. The staff member responded “No”.

- b. During the afternoon meal in the Namibia room, a child was observed to ask for more bread, staff stated that there was no more bread available. The additional bread that had been brought into the room had already been given to other children who had requested more.
 - c. Children in the Namibia room were not given a drink with their dinner. It is acknowledged that children were given a drink before being given their meal, however, children were not offered an additional drink with their meal or afterwards.
4. Staff in the Safari room were not provided with seating to enable them to sit with the children during meals and were observed standing over children during dinnertime. Staff in the Namibia room did not sit with children during their meals and were observed standing over children during mealtimes. When adults sit with children during mealtimes it promotes a relaxed atmosphere and provides opportunities for social interaction between staff and children.
 5. All children were not given enough time to eat their meal without being rushed. A staff member in the Namibia room was observed cleaning a table while a child sitting at the table was still eating their afternoon meal. The staff member was observed to spray cleaning fluid on the table which appeared to go into the child’s food. The child was observed to not finish the remainder of their meal.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(a)(b)

1. (a)(b)

The environments in Safari and Namibia have been reviewed and resources have been placed in these rooms. Additional equipment and resources have been ordered and will be placed in these two rooms, providing a stimulating and rich environment.

Additional materials and books have been purchased for both rooms. Staff have also received further training on room layouts and educational opportunities that will enhance children’s choice and provide fully resourced areas for child-initiated activities. Staff have also been spoken to regarding the placement of books within the base room. A variety of books have been also purchased offering ample opportunity to promote language skills.

Management are actively replenishing base rooms and will ensure they engage external support to boost the curriculum once all layouts have been refreshed.

2. (a)(b)

Staff in the Namibia room have been refreshed on the usage of meal time chairs. Direct support from management was given to this room during meal times and through intervals i.e. nappy changing times, meal times, snack and also during play and demonstrated positive interactions at mealtimes where staff sit with the children. Additional support will be provided during nappy changes. Children will be facilitated throughout the day to engage in meaningful play and will not be in chairs until food is served.

3. (a)(b)(c)

All our meal and snack times are treated as a social occasion and staff will sit with children during meal and snack times and assist where needed giving time for children to eat and digest food.

Staff will encourage good eating habits and will be responsive when additional request for food or drinks is required. The inhouse chef will increase the additional portions of food at each meal-time, ensuring that all children have the opportunity to have additional portions of food if required and drinks throughout all meal times.

4. Teacher chairs are available and staff have been reminded to sit with children when eating meals.

5. Staff will ensure children are finished eating and away from the base tables before cleaning them down. The staff have been reminded of the safety of the children at all times.

Our mealtimes are treated as an opportunity for social interaction as well as laying the foundations about making healthy choices. Staff have received training in relation to meal times and spot checks will be completed.

Supporting documentation submitted

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. 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.
- 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.
- 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.

Administration of Medication:

- The service had an administration of medication policy in place. Practices in line with this policy were observed on the day of inspection. There were documented care plans available for two children attending the service who required emergency medication. Staff were aware of the treatment plan and demonstrated knowledge of the procedures to follow if the medication was required.

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

General Safety:

- Two bottles of cleaning agents were observed hanging within reach of children in the sanitary area used by the Namibia room posing a safety risk if accessed by a child.

Infection Control:

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

- 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 redress a child with the same used gloves.
 - A child was observed with a toy in the nappy changing area.
 - Children's hands were not cleaned effectively following nappy changes. A staff member was observed to wet their own hands with soap and water and to rub children's hands with their hands to clean them.
- The handwashing practices observed were inconsistent and at variance with the policy in place in the service as follows;
 - Children's hands were not washed before dinner in the Baringo, Safari or Namibia rooms.
 - Children's hands were not consistently washed after using the toilet in the Namibia room.
 - Staff did not consistently wash their hands after assisting children who were using the toilet in the Namibia room.
- Part of a foam bumper on the wood in the nappy changing area used by the Namibia room was observed to be torn and could not be cleaned effectively.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- The two bottles of cleaning products have been removed from the high shelves and placed inside a new press out of sight of children.

Infection Control:

2. Staff have received training in nappy changing and a demonstration of nappy changing took place to refresh their knowledge on the policy. Management will address and refresh this again at the next staff meeting/training night.

3. Hand hygiene is the single most important means of preventing the spread of infection. Appropriate facilities are available for effective hand hygiene for both staff and children and training has been provided to ensure hand washing occurs at regular intervals ie, when using the toilet, before meals, after outdoor play etc. Hand washing, all staff have been refreshed in infection control practices and will monitor the children in their care closely. We will ensure that children's hygiene within the centre is always of the highest priority.

4. The rubber foam in the Namibia changing room has since been replaced.

All staff have been refreshed in infection control practices and will monitor the children in their care closely. We will ensure that children's hygiene within the centre is always of the highest priority. All staff have received a refresh tutorial on hygiene practices at mealtimes to promote best practice at all times and to ensure the highest standards of hygiene practices are maintained.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

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

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 VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

(c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated

(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and

Compliance Information

(c)(d)

On the day of inspection, the sanitary area used by the Safari room appeared to be adequately ventilated and the service appeared clean and well maintained.