

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS136		
Name of Service:	Giraffe Childcare Lucan		
Address of Service:	Ballyowen Lane, Lucan, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	K78 EV80		
Name of Registered Provider:	Dearbhala Cox Giffin		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	20/06/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	65	PM 46
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Dublin 8		
Inspection undertaken by:	R. Brien & F. Carty		
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	N/A		

Description of service

Giraffe Childcare Lucan is a full day care service provided by Giraffe Childcare Limited which provides 22 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 07:15 to 18:45, Monday to Friday.

The service is located in an urban area and occupies the ground floor of an office building beside the Ballyowen shopping centre in Lucan, south Dublin. There are seven care rooms in the service. The Junior Wobbler room caters for children aged 1 year. The senior Wobbler room caters for children aged 1 and 2 years. The Toddler room caters for children aged 2 years. The Junior Preschool room caters for children aged 2-3 years. The Preschool room caters for children aged 3-5 years. The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) room 1 and ECCE room 2 provide sessional care for children aged 3 to 5. There is a dedicated cot room and there are outdoor play areas at the front and rear of the building.

Staffing

The service currently employs 21 staff including a manager. There were 16 staff working directly with the children on the day of inspection. The service also employs a chef. 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/ premises and facilities. The inspections 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)(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,
- 26(1)(4) – Fire safety measures

However, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed significant risk was identified under Regulation 29 - Premises. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulations:

- 16 (j)(k)– Record in relation to pre-school service,
- 19 – Health, welfare and development of child,
- 23 - Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child,
- 29 - Premises.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Junior Wobbler, Senior Wobbler, Toddler and Junior Preschool 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.

Additional Information

An Immediate Action Notice was issued on 21 June 2023 for non-compliance with regulation 23 as the room temperatures were above the required limit for sleep rooms in the Senior Wobblers and Junior Preschool rooms.

The registered provider submitted a response on 22 June 2023 which was deemed to satisfactorily address this non-compliance as an interim measure while long term measures are put in place.

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.
- (2) The files of twenty-three adults were reviewed as part of the inspection. This included five staff members and one student who had commenced working in the service since the last inspection on 07 September 2022. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:
- (a)(b) Of the forty-six references that were required, twenty-nine were available from a past employer and seventeen were available from a reputable source.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for the twenty-three staff members.
- (d) Police vetting was required and was available for fifteen staff members who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding six months as an adult.
- (4) Records were available evidencing that twelve staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or equivalent. Seven 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-five 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.

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 Junior Wobbler, Senior Wobbler, Toddler and Junior Preschool rooms were recorded at the time of entering and leaving the service.

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

(j) A sample of medication administration records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.

(k) A sample of 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

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 available to children throughout the day and all children were given water with their meal. Younger children were provided with bibs for dinnertime. Children were encouraged to feed themselves and staff were observed supporting younger children who needed assistance with their meal. Staff stated that additional servings of dinner were available. Staff in the Senior Wobbler room were observed asking some children who had finished their meal if they wanted more and an additional serving was provided for four children who requested more.

Children's care needs were observed to be met promptly. Staff were observed cleaning children's faces 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 sleep time in the Junior Wobbler, Senior Wobbler, Toddler and Junior Preschool rooms.

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. The atmosphere in the service appeared calm and relaxed.

Staff described how they record information about each child's day using a daily record sheet detailing information on food, sleep, nappy changes and activities. This information was shared with parents at collection time.

Care rooms were arranged into defined areas of interest providing children with the freedom to play and explore. Areas of interest included small world toys, construction toys, musical instruments, 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. 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 with children’s photos were displayed in the care rooms.

Two fully enclosed outdoor play areas were available on the grounds of the service. There was a grassed area at the rear of the building which was used by the Junior and Senior Wobbler rooms. There was also a large, all weather outdoor area at the front of the service which was used by the older age groups. The outdoor areas were equipped with a range of developmentally appropriate play equipment. All children accessed the outdoor area on the day of 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 providers 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.
- 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. Staff were observed to carry out hand washing as appropriate. Children in the Senior Wobbler, Toddler and Junior Preschool rooms 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.
- A system was in use for the effective sterilisation of mouthing toys.
- Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal bins.
- Individual bed linen was provided for the children in the Junior Wobbler, Senior Wobbler, Toddler and Junior Preschool rooms. Staff stated that all bed linen is laundered daily.

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. An Immediate Action Notice was issued on 21 June 2023 as the room temperatures exceeded the required temperature ranges for sleep rooms as follows;
 - a. The Senior Wobbler room temperature was recorded at 23.4°C at 12:32 where children were sleeping. It is acknowledged that the manager of the service took corrective action when this was brought to their attention by the inspector and the temperature was recorded at 20.7° at 14:21.
 - b. The Junior Preschool room temperature was recorded at 24.1°C at 12:17 when children were sleeping. It is acknowledged that the temperature was recorded at 22.7° at 12:48, however, this remained outside the upper limit.

Room temperatures where children are sleeping should be maintained between 16 and 20°C.

The registered provider submitted a response on 22 June 2023 which was deemed to satisfactorily address this non-compliance as an interim measure while long term measures are put in place.

A number of hazards were identified in the outdoor play areas in reach of the children who accessed it on the day of inspection which posed a potential risk of injury to a child as follows:

2. Litter, including a small plastic bag, a foil container and a broken garden feature was observed in the outdoor area located at the rear of the premises which were accessible to the children.
3. A number of nettles were observed in the outdoor area located at the rear of the premises which were accessible to the children.
4. A number of thistles were observed in the outdoor area located at the front of the premises which were accessible to the children.

Infection Control:

5. The hands of children in the Junior Wobbler room were washed with wet cotton wool following outdoor play, after nappy changes and before meals which was inadequate for infection control purposes.
6. A number of used tissues were observed on the ground in the outdoor area located at the front of the premises which were accessible to children, posing a risk of cross contamination.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Immediate action was taken on room temperatures within two rooms. A risk assessment was completed and a response to the IAN was submitted on the 22nd June 2023 which was deemed satisfactory. A full air conditioning system will be installed and we endeavour to have all works completed by Friday 11th August. Management and staffing will ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to ensure room temperatures are maintained at all times.

Infection Control:

2. – 4. The outdoor areas located to the front and back of the centre were cleared of any litter that blew into the garden and all weeds and thistles were removed. Both gardens will be checked daily by the Manager and staff for litter and will be removed prior to children playing.

5. The staff have been refreshed and full demonstrations of hand washing have been refreshed to ensure that the children aged between 12mths-18mths in the junior wobbler room have their hands washed with assistance under the taps in the sink. Staff are aware of hand washing and spot checks will occur to ensure the younger children wash their hands in the sinks in the base rooms during intervals. Staff will follow all appropriate measures to ensure infection control is maintained at all times.

6. The tissues in the front of the service have been removed and cleaned. Photographic evidence of this is attached. The management team will complete garden checks throughout each day to ensure the gardens are clean and free from litter at all times and will ensure the environment is safe at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

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

Infection Control:

Written and photographic evidence, including staff training cards, 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 service.

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

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 fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last fire drill had been recorded as undertaken on 26 May 2023.

(b) The number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises was available. The maintenance records for the fire fighting equipment were dated 19 April 2023 and a record was available evidencing that quarterly maintenance of the smoke alarm system had taken place on 30 March 2023.

(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.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and

Non-Compliance Information

(d) Areas of the Senior Wobbler room were observed to require maintenance and repair as follows;
The walls in the Senior Wobbler room needed repair and repainting, there were areas where paint was worn, chipped and flaking off the wall and areas where plasterboard and the mesh interior of the wall were exposed.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The wobbler room repairs have been added to the maintenance list and will be completed in due course. The Manager will monitor this progress and ensure the work is carried out to seal the mesh and refresh the painting. Maintenance is carried out monthly to ensure the environment is clean and safe for children to play. We will ensure that all rooms within the service are fresh and inviting for children to play safely.

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 these non-compliances. These actions will be assessed on the next inspection.