

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:	25/09/2024
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	75	PM	47
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

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

Description of service

Giraffe Childcare Lucan is a full day care service provided by Giraffe Childcare Limited which provides 24 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. Sessional care is provided from 09:00 to 12:00.

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 Wobbler 1 room caters for children aged 11 months to 1 year. The Wobbler 2 room caters for children aged 1 year. The Toddler room caters for children aged 2 to 3 years. The Junior Preschool room caters for children aged 2 to 3 years. The Preschool room caters for children aged 3 to 4 years. The ECCE 1 room caters for children aged 3 to 4 years and the ECCE 2 room caters for children aged 2 to 3 years.

There is a dedicated cot room and there are fully enclosed outdoor play areas at the front and rear of the building.

Staffing

The service currently employs 22 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 was present during 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, records 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),(2),(4),(7)(a) Management and Recruitment,
10 Policies Procedures etc. of Pre-school Service
11(1),(2)(3),(8)(a) Staffing Levels,
16(h),(i),(k) Record in relation to Pre-school Service,
20(1)(b) Facilities for rest and play
23 Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of Child,
27 Supervision,
28 Insurance,
31(e) Notification of Incidents.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulations:

9(2),(4),(7)(a) Management and Recruitment,
16(h),(k) Record of a Pre-school child,
20(1)(b) Facilities for rest and play,
27 Supervision.

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

This inspection was triggered by information received by the Early Years Inspectorate on the 20 September 2024.

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*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.*

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-

- (a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,*
- (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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

(a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a)(b)(c)
- 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. A clear management structure is in place in the service with additional oversight provided by an area manager.
- (2)
- Following a discussion with the manager it was confirmed that one adult commenced working in the service since the last inspection on 04 June 2024. Documentation was reviewed in respect of this adult and met regulatory requirements as follows:
- (a)
- Two references from a past employer were available for this staff member.
- (c)
- A Garda vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána was available for the staff member. 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 and was available for this staff member who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding six months as an adult.
- (4)
- A record was available evidencing that the staff member who was employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or equivalent.

(7)

(a)

The registered provider ensured that employees were appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information and training on an ongoing basis as evidenced by the following:

- Evidence was available on the day of inspection to demonstrate that the collection procedure for ECCE children had been amended following an incident which occurred on 17 September 2024. This included documentation demonstrating that staff in the ECCE rooms had received training on the new collection procedure.
- Evidence was available of regular team meetings with one scheduled for the week following this inspection.
- Staff demonstrated an understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding the health, safety and welfare of the children attending the service through discussion with inspectors.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The inspection focused on the following policies:

- Authorisation to Collect
- Accidents and Incidents
- Risk Management Policy
- Staff Training
- Supervision

The registered provider ensured that the written policies, procedures and statements relating to these policies were in place for the service.

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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore 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)(3)

The minimum ratio of adults to children for full day care and sessional services were adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were seventy-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;*
- (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 ECCE 1 and ECCE 2 rooms were recorded at the time of entering and leaving the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(i)
The staff roster available on the day of inspection did not set out the adult:child ratio on a daily basis for the ECCE 1 and ECCE 2 care rooms. These rooms were not included on the roster and four staff who were observed working in the rooms were rostered under other areas of the service for the week including Afterschool and Relief staff.

(k)
A sample of seventeen accident and incident records were reviewed. The record relating to the incident which occurred on 17 September 2024 was incomplete. While it is acknowledged that the incident record stated that the parents were notified of the incident, the record had not been signed by the parent contrary to the service policy on accidents and incidents.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(i)
The ECCE/Afterschool staff work across both sessions daily. The roster has been compliant in all previous inspections. The roster was amended on the day of inspection to include an additional row to separate the two sessions. The roster was changed to reflect the change of sessions and staffing across ecce and afterschool.

(k)
All incidents are reported to parents on the day and incident reports are signed. The child was absent, and the report was signed when the child arrived back in. On completion of recording incidents by the centre management and staff, the parent will sign the report on the same day or on the child's next arrival day to creche.

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.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

Compliance Information

(1)(b)

Appropriate rest facilities were provided for all children under 2 years of age on the day of inspection. Children under 2 years were observed sleeping in cots.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The inspectors were not assured that staff in the ECCE 2 room were adequately familiar with the parents of the children in the care room to allow them to safely handover children to the correct adult at collection time. This may pose a risk to the child's safety if a staff member is unable to identify adults authorised to collect the child.

Staff in the room stated that they did not meet the parents at the start of the ECCE year and that they do not know all the parents by sight yet. Parents drop and collect their children from the main door of the service and do not enter the building to collect children from the care room.

Practices observed on the day of inspection demonstrated that one staff member in this room did not carry out any handovers while the other staff member completed a number of handovers. Handovers were observed to be predominantly carried out by the person in charge and the deputy person in charge.

2. In the ECCE 1 room, a low level cupboard was not safely secured and a bottle of cleaning agent was accessible posing a safety risk if accessed by a child. This non-compliance was present on the last inspection. The corrective and preventive actions did not prevent recurrence of this non-compliance.
3. In the Junior Preschool room a trailing cable from an air cooling unit was observed to be accessible to children posing a risk of injury.
4. One window in the Junior Preschool room and three windows in the ECCE 1 room were observed to be open without the safety latch on. There was a low ledge directly under the windows which lead to the windows being accessible to children posing a risk of injury or a child exiting the care room unsupervised.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. A full review of the handovers with the ECCE staff has been reviewed. Parents now collect their children from the base rooms where all ECCE staff complete the handovers with all parents. Further communication by letter/individual communication was given to the parents on the 27th September and the changes effective from the 30th September 2024.

Management and staff will ensure that safety is prioritised at all times and they will continue to monitor the environment and practice in relation to general safety. The handovers at ECCE are under continuous monitoring of the management team at collection to ensure children are collected safely.

2. A safety catch was placed on the new built in unit in the ECCE 1 room. Management and staff will ensure that safety is prioritised at all times and they will continue to monitor the environment and practice in relation to general safety.
3. The Junior preschool room has built in air con and the mobile aircon unit was removed from the room on the day of the inspection. Management and staff will ensure that safety is prioritised at all times and they will continue to monitor the environment and practice in relation to general safety.
4. The safety catches on the window in Junior Preschool and windows in the ecce room has been resecured. Management and staff will ensure that safety is prioritised at all times and they will continue to monitor the environment and practice in relation to general safety.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

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 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

On the day of inspection all children were supervised appropriately and at all times, including transitions in line with the supervision of children policy.

Children were supervised primarily by sight during the course of the inspection. Room layouts allowed for effective supervision.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

The registered provider had evidence of insurance cover valid until 16 December 2024. The insurance provides cover for a full day care service accommodating 108 children.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 31 - Notification of incidents

A registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing within 3 working days of becoming aware of any of the following incidents occurring in the preschool service:

(e) an incident in respect of which a pre-school child attending the service goes missing while attending the service.

Compliance Information

(e)
The registered provider ensured the Agency was notified within three working days of an incident concerning a missing child.