

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DS138
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Giraffe Childcare Griffeen
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Griffeen Avenue, Lucan, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	K78 P5P7
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Dearbhala Cox Giffin
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	03/03/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	61	PM	62
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	1st floor Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Sarah Quigley, Fiona Carty, Helen Sutherland
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector(s)

### 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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Giraffe Childcare Griffen is a large full day care service located in an urban, residential area of Lucan, South County Dublin. Care and education are provided to children aged between 0 and 6 years and the service currently operates from Monday to Friday between 07:15 - 18:45pm.

The service is located on the ground floor of a purpose-built premises which is adjacent to a shopping centre and a local primary school. Care is provided across seven rooms, and one dedicated sleep room is available. A large outdoor play area is available to the children to the rear of the premises.

### Staffing

The service currently employs twenty-two staff members, including a centre manager, a cook, and a cleaner. On the day of inspection twenty-three adults were present including the centre manager and three adults engaged in a work placement programme. The area manager arrived at the service subsequent to the inspectors arrival to facilitate 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.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Preschool Kenya, Preschool Botswana, Preschool Madagascar, Wobbler Safari, and Baby Baringo 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, the area manager, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

### Part III – Management and Staff

#### Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

*(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.*

*(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.*

*(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

(2)  
Following a discussion with the person in charge it was confirmed that eighteen adults commenced working in the service since regulation 9 was last inspected on the 12<sup>th</sup> of March 2024. The following records were available for the eighteen adults:

(a) (b) There were 2 references each available for the eighteen adults which had been appropriately verified.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the eighteen adults. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all adults.

(d) Twelve of the new employees required International Police vetting, the required documentation was available for the twelve adults.

(4) Fourteen of the adults held at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework. Three of the adults did not require a qualification as they were engaged in a

work placement program. One adult who did not hold a recognised qualification 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.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children throughout the inspection. There were seventeen adults allocated to work directly with sixty-one children during the inspection. The centre manager and deputy manager were available to assist in the care rooms where required.
- (2) The minimum adult to child ratio requirement was maintained in accordance with the ages and type of service delivered.

### 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-*

*(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)(b)

Appropriate and suitable care practices were observed to be in place. Meals and snacks were provided by the service and offered to the children regularly throughout the day. Drinks of water were available within the rooms and were offered regularly. Self-feeding was promoted in younger care rooms and staff assisted children where required. Staff supported the children in managing their personal care, cleaning younger children's noses and faces when required, and encouraging older children to do this independently. Children's nappies were changed

routinely and as needed, staff were observed using these opportunities for warm one-to-one interactions. Staff spoke to the children in gentle, positive tones and children were comforted promptly if they became upset. Children’s learning was child led, and staff were attentive to younger children’s cues for interactions and social play. All children were observed to go outside for a period of time and were dressed appropriately for the weather.

An area with matting and cushions was provided within the rooms where the children could rest or take a break from activities. Babies were placed to sleep in line with their individual needs. Younger children were provided with the opportunity to sleep at a designated time after lunch. Staff reported that children could be accommodated to sleep outside this time if they displayed signs of tiredness.

The children were made comfortable for sleep, with staff removing their shoes and outer clothing, and providing soothers to those who used them. The environments were calm and conducive to sleep, staff sat with the children and soothed them as needed. Staff communicated with parents through an online application in each care room. Records were communicated to parents/guardians regarding individual children’s care, including information about activities, diet, sleep, and nappy changes.

### 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 toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order. Cleaning products and hazardous materials were stored securely out of reach of the children. The entrances into the service were appropriately secured to prevent unauthorised access or a child exiting the service unsupervised.

#### Infection Control:

Staff stated appropriate exclusion periods for adults and children with infectious illnesses were implemented in the service as per the policy. Pedal operated bins were in place throughout the service for the disposal of waste.

### Administration of Medication:

There was written evidence of prior parental consent for the administration of both temperature reducing and prescribed medications, and there were procedures in place to safely administer and document such medication if required, including in the case of an emergency. Staff adequately detailed the procedures for administering medication when required during discussions with the inspectors and had appropriate documentation available to record such administration if required. Care plans were in place for children who required regular or emergency medication, and staff were familiar with these plans.

### Safe Sleep:

Staff were familiar with safe sleep guidance and placed babies on their backs to sleep. Sleep logs were maintained in the dedicated sleep room and the younger care rooms, and individual children's observations recorded room temperature, breathing, colour, and position every ten minutes. Standard cots and low-level beds were available for sleep and were used in accordance with children's ages and developmental needs. The temperature of the rooms where children slept were maintained at the required temperature ranges.

### Fire Safety:

The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection. Staff members adequately outlined the evacuation procedures in place in the event of a fire and stated that fire drills are practiced regularly on a monthly basis.

## Non-Compliance Information

### General Safety:

1. A low-level socket was uncovered and accessible to the children on the morning of inspection in the Wobbler Safari room, posing a potential risk of injury to a child. It is acknowledged that the person in charge later placed a protective cover on the socket during the inspection, mitigating this risk.

### Infection Control:

2. Although cleaning schedules were documented as being completed in the service, some of the care rooms and children's bathrooms were observed to be heavily soiled and required a deep clean as follows;
  - Areas of the flooring, skirting boards, ledges, and bases of the children's cots had heavy accumulations of dust, cobwebs, dirt and debris in crevices and on surfaces of the Baby Baringo cot room.

- Five of the sheets in use on cots where children slept in the Baringo cot room were visibly soiled and stained.
- In the Baby Baringo room, some of the children's stationary toys, the cushions in the rest area, and the ball pool were heavily stained and soiled, with a build up of dirt, debris and food residue on the surfaces and in the crevices.
- In the Safari room, areas of the shelving units and the fridge had a build-up of dust, dirt and debris on the surfaces.
- In the Safari and Cameroon nappy rooms, a build up of dirt and debris was present on the surface of the nappy changing unit.
- In the Cameroon toilet area, two potties which staff reported were in use had a build up of dirt and debris on the surface. One of the potties had live insects in it on the morning of inspection.

Ineffective cleaning of children's care rooms and sanitary areas can pose a risk of cross contamination and illness to a child.

A number of practices were observed which were at variance with the infection control policy in place in the service and posed a risk of cross contamination as follows:

3. There was no system in place in the Baby Baringo room for the management of mouthed toys, despite staff reporting they are sanitised after use. Children were observed to repeatedly mouth toys in view of staff members who made no attempt to clean them prior to other children mouthing them.
4. Children were observed in the Baringo room repeatedly mouthing other children's drinking beakers in view of staff members who made no attempt to clean them. Staff were observed taking the beakers off the children who mouthed them and placing them back in the water station, where other children then drank from them.
5. Children attending the Safari room did not wash their hands after engaging in outdoor play.
6. Some children in the Botswana room did not wash their hands after toileting. Although independence is encouraged, staff members must supervise handwashing after toileting to prevent cross contamination.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### **Corrective & Preventive Action**

##### **General Safety:**

1. The Manager identified the uncovered socket and replaced the safety insert. Sockets not in use are blocked off by safety inserts. All sockets throughout the centre have safety inserts and will be replaced after each use.

### Infection Control:

2. The cot room and all reachable surfaces of the cots have been deep cleaned. The five cot sheets had been laundered but unfortunately were stained. They have since been replaced with new fresh sheets  
The Baringo room has been cleaned, replenished new soft furnishings and play equipment. Some items such as the ball pond have been removed. The cleaning schedule has been amended to ensure all items are sufficiently cleaned. The fridge and shelving units have been cleaned within the Safari room. The nappy changing unit in the Safari and Cameroon rooms have been cleaned. All changing units have the nappy changing policy, cleaning products and visual aids to support them cleaning the changing units. All staff have been refreshed on the importance of thoroughly cleaning the changing units. Potties/toileting aids that are in use for children are cleaned after each use.
3. All Toys and equipment are cleaned and disinfected regularly. The hygiene of toys and equipment is paramount to encourage a healthy environment for the children in the service's care. All staff have received training and been made aware of the importance of toy and equipment hygiene.
4. Beakers in the Baringo room are now stored higher up on the workstation. Drinks will be offered regularly to the children. Staff are fully aware of the importance of cross contamination and will ensure children beakers are labelled and also washed regularly.
5. All staff have been spoken to and full demonstrations of the hand hygiene and infection control policy on hand washing to eliminate cross contamination after outdoor play.
6. Children will be supervised while washing and drying hands after toileting. Staff have been reminded to support young children during this process while encouraging independence. Staff received training on hand washing at toileting times. The service will ensure to monitor handwashing closely and reinforce this practice into the children's daily routine.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation was submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

### Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met.

### 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)  
An adult trained in First Aid Responder (FAR) training was available to the children during the inspection.
- (2)  
(a)(b)  
Suitably equipped first aid boxes were observed to be immediately accessible to the children within the service and were stored in a conspicuous location on the day of inspection.

### 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 record showed that the last fire drill had taken place in February 2025.
  - (b) There was a record to show that the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system had been serviced within the required timeframe.
- (4) Procedures to be followed during a fire drill and in the event of a fire were displayed in conspicuous locations within each room in the service.