

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY081		
Name of Service:	Giraffe Childcare NCI		
Address of Service:	National College of Ireland, Mayor Street Lower, Dublin 1		
Eircode:	D01 K6W2		
Name of Registered Provider:	Dearbhala Cox Giffin		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	28/05/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	53	PM 60
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8		
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Finnegan Hayes		
Title:	Early Years Inspector		

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 NCI is a privately operated full day care service located in Dublin 1. The service is one of twenty-three childcare services operated by the registered provider. The service caters for up to 68 children aged 0-6 years per day in a purpose-built building with six care rooms; one of which is closed and currently in use as a cot room, a second cot room, an additional indoor play area, a kitchen, sanitary facilities, and an office. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme. The care rooms include:

Room name	Age group
Wobbler Botswana	1-2 years
Wobbler Cameroon	1-2 years
Toddler Kilimanjaro	1.5-2.5 years
Toddler Zambia	2- 3 years
Preschool Kenya	3-4 years

An enclosed outdoor space available to the side of the premises.

Staffing

The service employs a total of 22 staff including the manager, two deputy managers, 15 childcare staff, a chef, relief chef and two cleaners. The relief cook was working in the service on the day of inspection. An area manager arrived at the service at 11am and was present for the duration of the inspection. The registered provider does not work in the service.

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 9 Management and Recruitment, Regulation 19; Health, Welfare and Development of child and Regulation 23; Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included two care rooms; Wobbler Botswana and Toddler Kilimanjaro and did not include the other care 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 inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the operations manager, 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,
- (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

- (1)
- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise if required.
 - (b) A review of the roster showed that a named person in charge is present on the premises at all times during the service opening hours.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in the service including a service manager, deputy managers and supervisors. Staff were aware of their own role and responsibilities.

(2) Discussion with management and a review of the roster showed that twelve staff have commenced employed in the service since the last inspection in February 2023. The files of these staff were reviewed in full along with garda vetting disclosures for all staff currently employed and qualifications for all childcare staff.

- (a) Twenty-three written and verified references were available from a past employer in relation to 11 staff members.
- (b) One written and verified reference was available from a source other than a past employer in relation to one staff member.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 22 staff currently employed in the service. 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 available in relation to 10 staff members who had lived outside of Ireland for more than 6 months as an adult.

(4) Evidence was available to show that 17 staff members who worked directly with the children held 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.

Non-Compliance Information

(4) Evidence was not available to show that one staff member who was working directly with the children on the day of inspection held 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. This qualification was outstanding since the previous inspection. The corrective action proposed by the registered provider has not been implemented successfully to resolve the non-compliance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Verification from the DCEDIY of the staff members qualification was confirmed. The HR department will work to ensure all staff have a major award in early childhood care and education at level 5 or higher on the national framework of qualifications or deemed equivalent by the minister prior to their start date.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of an approved qualification was received to the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions provided by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 9.

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) There were 53 preschool children being cared for by 11 adults on the morning of inspection. The person in charge and a deputy manager were available to cover breaks and assist in the care rooms as required.

(2) Ratios were maintained during the inspection. The following was observed:

Room	Age range	No. of children	No. of Adults present	Adults required
Wobbler Botswana	1-2 years	9	2	2
Wobbler Cameroon	1-2 years	11	3	3
Toddler Kilimanjaro	1.5-2.5 years	7	2	2
Toddler Zambia	2- 3 years	11	2	2
Preschool Kenya	3-4 years	15	2	2

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 17 – Information for parents

A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).

Compliance Information

The service has a system in place to ensure parents intending to send their children to the service are provided with the information required. When parents register their child to attend the service, they are provided with a pack containing the statement of purpose and function, a copy of the menu plan, example of activities and an “all about me” to allow them to share pertinent details of their child’s personality and care needs. When the parents attend the service for a viewing they are provided with a copy of the policies, consent forms, medical information form and details of what they should send with their child to 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

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Basic Needs:

- A warm and welcoming atmosphere was evident in the service on arrival. Throughout the service children and staff were observed to be engaged in a range of activities in the care rooms and in the outdoor area.
- The service operated a 4-week menu in line with their healthy eating policy; providing three meals and two snacks daily. All food is prepared onsite by the service chef. On the day of inspection, the menu consisted of cereals for breakfast, fruit and crackers for morning snack, chicken and leak pie for dinner, turkey sandwiches for tea and blueberry and oat muffins for evening snack.
- Water was observed to be readily available and accessible to the children in all care rooms on a low-level shelf.

- Nappy changing was observed to be a pleasant process provided one to one interaction with the children. Staff were observed chatting and singing to the children during this time.
- Interest boards are displayed in each care room to support staff to document the emerging interests of individual children on a daily basis.
- Children were observed to move freely around the care room without restraint for example following circle time in Wobbler Botswana room the staff member advised the children that she was going to build a tower with the blocks and invited the children to join her; some children did while others stayed in the cosy area reading books.

Physical and Material environment:

- Toys and equipment were grouped thematically into defined interest areas supporting the children ability to make choices and engage in spontaneous play experiences.
- Photographs of the children engaged in activities supported the children's sense of identity and belonging, for example photographs of the children were used in the birthday chart and a family wall in each room representing the children and their families.
- Furniture was sized appropriately for the children in each care room allowing them to access materials and equipment independently and comfortably engage in mealtimes and tabletop activities.
- An enclosed outdoor area was available to the side of the premises. The toys and equipment provided to the children were developmentally appropriate and encouraged a variety of play experiences for example; two sandpits provided sensory play, a kitchen, and associated props such as dolls and buggy's supported imaginative play while ride on toys provided opportunities for gross motor play.

Supporting Relationships around Children:

- Staff were observed to engage positively with the children using warm and gentle tones when addressing them and to engage with them in a range of daily activities to support the children's learning and development for example staff were observed to sit and chat with children during dinner.
- Staff actively supported the children's language development through songs and stories, asking questions and encouraging the children to think and engage both verbally and non-verbally with language throughout the day.

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

General Safety:

- The service entrance was secure to prevent unauthorised persons entering the service. A second door which was fitted with a coded lock was present inside the door providing a containment area for visitors and preventing access to the care rooms without the knowledge of staff. Both doors were fitted with locks at adult height which prevented children leaving the service unsupervised.
- Toys and equipment were well maintained and free from hazards.
- Presses and fridges were fitted with child proof locks to prevent children accessing them.
- Colour coded placements are used as a visual reminder of children who have a dietary preferences, requirement, or allergy. This promotes the safety of children in the service.

Infection Control:

- Nappy changing was completed in line with best practice and the service policy.
- Pedal operated lidded bins were used throughout the service for disposal of contaminated items.
- Tables were cleaned with antibacterial spray before and after mealtimes.
- Handwashing was observed to be completed at regular intervals throughout the day for example following nappy changing and before mealtimes.

Administration of medication:

- An antibiotic was observed to be held in a clip lock container in a fridge which was fitted with a child proof lock to prevent children accessing them.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff were knowledgeable in relation to safe sleep guidelines; what to look out for and risks to sleeping children.
- Physical checks of sleeping children were observed to be conducted at regular 10-minute intervals and written records of these checks were maintained.

Fire Safety:

- Staff were knowledgeable of procedure to be followed in the event of a fire emergency.
- Notices detailing the steps to take in the event of a fire were displayed throughout the service; in communal areas and care rooms.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately ensured for the type of service provided and number of children attending the service. The insurance certificate reviewed showed the insurance is in place up to 16th December 2024.