

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY313
Name of Service:	Giraffe Childcare Milltown
Address of Service:	Mount St Anne's, Milltown Road, Milltown, Dublin 6, Co. Dublin
Eircode:	D06 Y7T3
Name of Registered Provider:	Dearbhala Cox Giffin
Service type:	Full Day
Date 1 of Inspection:	19/04/2023
Date 2 of Inspection:	22/11/2023

No of pre-school children day 1:	AM	83	PM	83
No of pre-school children day 2:		83		83

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, 7 th Floor, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Dublin 8.
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Mulhern and M. Flood
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 Milltown is 1 of 21 early years services operated by the registered provider. This service is located on Milltown Road, Dublin 6 and was established in 2007. The premises are purpose built and the children are allocated to one of eight rooms with designated times to use the outdoor area. All 8 rooms were in use on the first date of inspection. Seven of the rooms were in use on the second day of inspection. There are 3 designated sleep rooms with cots available to the children attending the youngest rooms. The service is registered to accommodate children aged 0-6 years and offers full-day care from 7:30am until 6pm, Monday to Friday.

Staffing

On 19 April 2023 the person in charge told the inspectors there were 29 staff employed to work in the service. This included a chef and two housekeepers. There were 24 staff members working directly with the children including the person in charge.

On 22 November 2023 the person in charge told the inspectors there were 24 staff employed to work in the service including the chef and two housekeepers. There were 19 staff members working directly with the children including the person in charge.

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 was a two-day inspection. On 19 April 2023 the inspection focused on the areas of governance and safety under regulations 9(4), 11(2) and 23. On 22 November 2023 the inspection focused on the areas of governance and health, welfare and development of child under regulations 9(4), 11(2) and 19(1)(b). A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19(1)(b). The scope of the inspection under this regulation included the Wobbler Kilimanjaro and the Wobbler Zambia rooms. Children from the Acacia room were accommodated in the Wobbler Kilimanjaro room on the day of inspection.

Handwashing practices were assessed under regulation 23 - infection control due to previous non-compliance. This was assessed on both days of inspection. However, on inspection on 22 November 2023 additional non-compliance which posed a risk to infection control was identified. These findings are outlined within the report. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

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 person in charge, staff and children who were present on the days of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(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

19 April 2023

(4) Records were available evidencing 23 staff who were employed to work directly with children held the required qualifications. Records evidenced that these staff held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at a minimum Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

22 November 2023

(4) Records were available evidencing all staff employed to work directly with children held the required qualification.

Non-Compliance Information

19 April 2023

(4) The records that were available for three staff who were employed to work directly with children did not evidence that they had achieved 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.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action submitted following inspection on 19 April 2023

The service can confirm that one staff member has received a letter from her university to say that her certificate is ready for collection. The staff member is required to travel to her home country to collect her award title in person. A copy of her certification will be sent to the inspectorate once received.

The other two staff members have completed their qualification, but they are still waiting to receive their award certification from their university. Once the service has an update of correspondence from the university this will be forwarded to the inspectorate.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documents referring to qualifications were submitted.

Summary Comment

The qualification requirements remained outstanding for three staff following the CAPA process after the initial date of inspection (19 April 2023). On the second date of inspection (22 November 2023), only one of these staff members was still employed in the service and they held the required qualification. It was evident that all other staff employed to work directly with children held the required qualification. The regulatory requirement has been met.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(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

19 April 2023

(2) There were 24 adults working directly with 83 children. The minimum ratio of adults to children was always maintained.

22 November 2023

(2) There were 19 adults working directly with 84 children. The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained in 5 of the 7 rooms.

Non-Compliance Information

22 November 2023

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was not always maintained in the Serengeti and Wobbler Zambia rooms. The children who were attending these rooms were cared for together in the cot room when staff took their breaks from 12:20pm to 2:15pm. During this time there were two adults allocated to care for 19 children; 17 children were aged 1-2 years, and 2 children were aged 2-3 years. A minimum of four adults were required. There were no other adults available during this time as the person in charge and deputy person in charge were providing cover for staff breaks in other rooms.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Additional support cover has since been given and is readily available to both the Serengeti and Wobbler Zambia rooms during sleep time to support staff lunch periods. The management team will continue to support and monitor the lunch periods to ensure adequate support is available whilst maintaining ratios within these intervals.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting document submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions submitted should address the non-compliance. This will be reviewed in practice on the next inspection.

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

22 November 2023

Children moved freely, exploring the environment within their rooms and the outdoor area. Large, matted areas were provided indoors where the children could sit, crawl and play. Comfortable seating was provided for staff to hold or bottle feed children.

The children were provided with opportunities to play outdoors. They were dressed appropriate for the weather in coats and hats. Snacks and meals were prepared in the service and were offered at regular intervals throughout the day. Drinks were always available within the rooms and were offered to children when they were eating.

Staff supported the children to manage their personal care. Low level hooks were available for hanging coats and personal items. Bibs were provided to protect the children's clothes from becoming soiled or wet when eating. Staff cleaned the children's noses as needed and supported the children to clean their hands and faces after eating. Children's nappies were changed at scheduled times and in between when required. Staff used these opportunities for warm one-to-one interactions.

All children were provided with an opportunity to sleep after dinner. Children were made comfortable for sleep with staff removing their outer clothing and providing soothers to those who used them. Children were placed to sleep in cots according to their age and stage of development. An area was provided with matting and cushions where the children could rest or take a break from activities within their rooms.

Staff demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children through use of soft and gentle tones. They appeared to be familiar with the children engaging them by their names and discussing their likes, dislikes, and stages of development. They demonstrated an awareness of managing children's behaviour within the group appropriate to their age. This included using distraction techniques effectively for example when a child was trying to take a toy from another child.

The staff used an app to communicate information about each child in real time with parents. This included information on nappy changes, what the children ate and when they slept. A record of the children's individual routines was available. Staff told the inspectors this is provided when the child initially starts in the service. This included the child's usual bottle feeding, meal and sleep times. The staff told inspectors that they liaise with the parents/guardians at drop off and collection times and provide opportunities to meet with parents/guardians if they need to discuss anything specific to the children's care.

Non-Compliance Information

22 November 2023

1. Adequate care was not taken to ensure all children attending the Wobbler Kilimanjaro room had enough food to eat for dinner. The inspector observed children displaying signs that they were still hungry after finishing their meal. This included scraping their empty plates and picking food out of their bibs when they had finished. One child said "more" and waved the empty plate. One child cried when the empty plate was taken away. One child still had a mouthful of food when a staff member asked if he had finished while simultaneously removing the plate. When the inspector asked if there was any more food available, the staff member said no, that they forgot to order more that day.
2. It was not evident that staff members in the Wobbler Kilimanjaro room could identify and respond appropriately to the cues of tiredness in a child to meet their sleep needs. The staff members told the inspector that all 11 children sleep after dinner (dinner was served at 11:56am). The inspector observed a 17-month-old child displaying signs of tiredness including rubbing his eyes, disengaging, yawning, staring, and crying intermittently for approximately 30 minutes before being placed to sleep after dinner. At this stage the child was displaying signs of overtiredness and distress including a high pitch continuous cry. It is acknowledged that the staff took measures to comfort the child and bottle fed him as he refused to eat. However, the inspector observed that the staff had difficulty in soothing the child at this point. When the inspector asked a staff member why the child was not placed to sleep earlier, the staff member replied that although he was yawning, he was playing happily, and it is better to wait until he is really tired, so he sleeps better.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. All team members including the chef have received training regarding mealtimes. This included portion sizes, identifying the children's cues, and ensuring additional portions are readily available to all children at their request. The management team will continue to monitor and support the staff and chef through effective planning and preparation of all mealtimes daily.
2. Further training was conducted with the staff team on methods and techniques used to aid rest time for the child in question. The manager will keep on-going communication with the family and will document all levels of communication with any family where there may be struggles for a child to settle in any area of care practices.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. Staff attendance record of training titled 'Meal Times' dated 24 November 2023.
2. Staff attendance record of training titled 'Sleep Provision and Safe Sleep' dated 1 December 2023.

Summary Comment

The actions submitted should address the non-compliances identified on inspection. This will be reviewed in practice 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

19 April 2023

The inspection assessed whether corrective and preventive actions submitted for non-compliance findings on the inspection dated 18 August 2022 had been effective. The findings are outlined under compliance and non-compliance below.

General Safety:

The actions were deemed to have addressed the non-compliances as outlined:

- Children’s attendance records were accurate for use in the event of an emergency evacuation. The records detailed the name of each child who was present on the day of inspection and the times they arrived at the service. The time children left the service was documented on previous records.
- Detailed records of accidents and incidents involving children were available. These included essential information and a parent/guardian signature indicating the information had been shared.

Infection Control:

The actions were deemed to have addressed the non-compliances as outlined:

- Nappy changing mats were in good condition and appeared clean in accordance with infection control requirements. Cleaning schedules were available and included the cleaning of changing mats.
- The inspector observed the staff washing their hands before serving food and assisting children with their meal in accordance with infection control requirements.
- The ball pit in the Wobbler Zambia room appeared clean. A completed cleaning schedule was available which specified the cleaning of the ball pit.

Safe Sleep:

The actions were deemed to have addressed the non-compliances as outlined:

- Appropriate sleep facilities were available. Children under two years of age were placed to sleep in standard cots. Low beds were available for children over two years of age.
- The temperatures of rooms where children were placed to sleep were recorded between the required 16-20°C range to prevent overheating. Air conditioning units were available for use if required and were observed to be functioning.
- The inspector observed staff checking children who were sleeping in cots at 10-minute intervals. The staff member who performed the checks made a record of their observations.

22 November 2023

Infection Control:

The inspection assessed whether corrective and preventive actions submitted for non-compliance findings on the inspection dated 19 April 2023 had been effective. The actions had been deemed effective. Children’s hands were washed appropriately after nappy-changes, reducing the risk of infection spreading.

Non-Compliance Information

19 April 2023

Infection Control:

The actions submitted by the registered provider following the inspection on 18 August 2022 had not been effective in addressing the non-compliance regarding handwashing after nappy changing. Children's hands were not washed after having their nappies changed. The inspector observed the staff wiping the children's hands with wet cotton wool which is not effective for infection control.

22 November 2023

Infection Control:

Cots were not spaced at least 50cm apart in Cot Room 1 as stated in the service's Safe Sleep policy posing an increased risk of infection spreading between the children. Inspectors observed that the room was not large enough to accommodate the 22 cots that were in place. Nineteen children were accommodated in the room at the designated service sleep time. Inspectors observed that none of the cots had 50cm space between them and that many of them were spaced less than 20cm apart.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action following inspection on 19 April 2023

The staff have undergone further training on the practice of handwashing and the stages required to complete this practice. The provider is actively developing methods of training tools to ensure this practice is adequately carried out with each staff. The management team will continue to monitor and support the staff team and provide ongoing training in infection and hygiene standards to perfect this practice.

Supporting documentation submitted following inspection on 19 April 2023

Internal training record - dated 20 April 2023 with 20 staff signatures.

Corrective & Preventive Action following inspection on 22 November 2023

Following a review of the sleep provisions and age profile of the children using the cot room, management can confirm that 10 cots have since been removed and all cots remaining are spaced with 50cm between each of them. The management team will monitor this area of practice ensuring that practices relating to safe sleep and rest are maintained in line with guidance under infection control.

Supporting documentation submitted following inspection on 22 November 2023

Photograph of cot room.

Summary Comment

The actions have been deemed to appropriately address the non-compliance.