

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DY314				
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Giraffe Childcare Harcourt				
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Iveagh Court, Harcourt Road, Charlemont Street, Dublin 2.				
<b>Eircode:</b>	D02 PN59				
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Dearbhala Cox Giffin				
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	27/02/2025				
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>84</td> <td>PM</td> <td>76</td> </tr> </table>	AM	84	PM	76
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	<p>Early Years Inspectorate 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15   D15 CF9K</p>
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	C. Harte, L. Jameson and LA. Webster
<b>Title:</b>	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).

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

Giraffe Childcare Harcourt is a privately operated full day care service located in a purpose-built building in Dublin 2. The service is one of 24 childcare services operated by the registered provider. The service is registered to care for 110 children aged 0-6 years Monday - Friday. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme. The premises includes nine care rooms, three cot rooms, a kitchen, sanitary facilities, and an enclosed outdoor play space. Three care rooms are located at the basement level, one care room on the ground floor and four care rooms on the first floor.

The care rooms include:

Room name	Age group
Wobbler Safari	12 - 17 months
Wobbler Acacia	1 - 1.5 years
Wobbler Cameroon	1.5 - 1 year 8 months
Wobbler Namibia	1-1 year 3 months
Toddler Masi Mara	1.5- 2 years
Toddler Serengeti	2-2.5 years
Toddler Botswana	2.5 - 3 years
Preschool Kenya	3-3.5 years
Preschool Madagascar	3-5 years

### Staffing

The service currently employs 30 staff including the person in charge, two named persons to deputise, twenty-four early years practitioners, two cleaners and a chef. An area director attended the service on the day of inspection and remained for the duration of the inspection. The registered provider does not work directly 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, safety and premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation:

Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment

Regulation 19 Health, Welfare and development of child.

Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials.

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included Wobbler Safari, Acacia, Toddler Serengeti, Toddler Botswana, Preschool Kenya and Preschool Madagascar.

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 area director, 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)(b) The service had a designated person in charge and named persons to deputise as required. The person in charge was present in the service when the inspectors arrived and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection. A review of the roster showed that a designated person in charge is rostered to be on the premises at all times.

(c) There was a clear management structure in place and staff were aware of their role and responsibilities.

(2) A review of the staff roster and conversation with the person in charge confirmed there are currently 30 staff employed by the service. The files of eight staff who had commenced employment since the last inspection were reviewed. The registered provider had completed the following checks:

(a) Eleven written and validated references were available from past employers.

(b) Five written and validated references were available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for eight staff members. 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 for eight adults who had lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of six or more months as an adult.

(3) Evidence was available to demonstrate that the procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out in relation to eight adults before employment commenced.

(4) Evidence was available to show that seven adults who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

### 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 84 preschool children being cared for by 18 adults on the morning of inspection. The person in charge and area director were available to provide assistance in the care rooms as required.

(2) The adult child ratios were correct when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the 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

(1)(b) The following practices were observed to be in place to support the children attending:

- The atmosphere within the care rooms was clam and pleasant as staff actively engaged in play and conversation with children. Gentle tones and warm interactions were observed throughout the care rooms.
- Staff were observed to use age-appropriate strategies to offer guidance to children on the daily routine, transitions and assistance to resolve conflict.

- Children’s need for rest was supported with the use of lowlighting and soft music. Information regarding children’s individual sleep preferences were displayed above their cots with photos. Staff responded promptly to children as they woke from rest offering comfort, changing their nappies and redressing.
- The practice used by staff when administering medication to a child on the day of inspection was respectful and led to a calm experience for the child, the child was given reassurance and offered a drink following the medication.
- Children’s comfort was supported during mealtimes as they were assisted to roll up their sleeves and to wear bibs.
- Staff advised how parental engagement and information sharing is conducted via a software application. A review of the software application showed that information such as food intake, sleep, toileting and activities were recorded and shared with parents.

### Non-Compliance Information

1. A child who did not like the main meal served on the day of inspection was not offered a sufficient alternative food option and instead was given a yogurt. The staff advised the inspector they were aware of the child’s dislike for the meal and advised they had a preference for other dinner options. An alternative hot meal should be available and provided.
2. The toileting practices in the Toddler Botswana room did not provide for privacy during toileting. A child was observed in the sanitary area washing their hands as a child who had entered the care room from the garden was using the toilet. This is a small space and resulted in the toileting child being in full view of another child.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

1. All base room staff and the centre chef have been retrained to ensure children’s preferences are taken into account and alternative food options are provided when required. The management team are overseeing that the above practice is taking place daily.
2. Staff have been retrained in our toileting policy, emphasising the importance of privacy. Staff have been actively communicating amongst each other to support the children’s privacy where there is shared toileting and hand washing facilities. New procedures have also been put in place to support children during garden time who need to use the toilet in an adjoining room.

## Supporting documentation submitted

- Training logs.

## Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions taken and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 19 have been addressed.

## Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

### Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

*A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.*

## Compliance Information

The service ensured there was adequate and suitable furniture and equipment available, for example:

- The furniture and equipment in the rooms was observed to be adequate for the number of children in the rooms, it was appropriate for the age range and stage of development of the children in the rooms, and was well maintained, durable and easy to clean.
- Low level tables and chairs were available for use by the children which allowed them to engage in tabletop activities and meals comfortably.
- Toys and equipment were laid out on low level shelving, visible to the children, and were grouped in themed areas of interest such as a sensory, mark making and soft play. Themed areas of interest facilitate children to have a more focused engagement in their play experiences.
- Cosy areas were available in the care rooms to provide children a comfortable place to rest or engage in quiet activities.
- There was a variety of play materials and equipment available to the children according to their age and stage of development, which facilitated a range of play experiences including creative, imaginative and language play and promoted exploration and curiosity.
- The outdoor environment used by the Toddler Botswana group included a range of resources to promote fundamental gross motor movements including balance toys, seesaws, tricycles and scooters.

## 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 and outdoor area were secured which prevented children leaving the service unsupervised and prevented unauthorised persons accessing the service.
- Finger pinch protectors were observed in the Acacia room.
- There were no trailing flexes observed.
- An ambient temperature of 18-22°C was maintained in rooms where children were playing.

##### Infection Control:

- Children's bed linen was observed to be clean and suitable for use.
- Windows were observed open throughout the premises for ventilation which allowed fresh air to circulate.
- Adequate space of 50cm was provided between cots in the wobbler Safari cot room to limit the spread of infection.
- Children's nappy creams were observed to be individually labelled.
- Staff were observed to clean and disinfect tables following mealtimes.
- Children's soothers were observed stored in individual boxes.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Medication was observed stored in its original container and was inaccessible to children.

##### Safe Sleep:

- Sleeping children were physically monitored at 10-minute intervals throughout the service and written records of these checks were maintained.

##### Fire Safety:

- The fire evacuation procedure was clearly displayed.
- Staff were aware of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire emergency.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. The hot water in a low level handwash basin in the sanitary areas of the Botswana room and Acacia room exceeded the allowable maximum temperature of 43°C. This posed a risk of injury and did not support effective hand washing.
  - The water temperature in the Botswana room was recorded at 45.4°C.
  - The water temperature in the Acacia room was recorded at 44°C.
2. Cleaning products were accessible to children in the Acacia room sanitary area. A press was observed with a broken safety lock and contained cleaning agents. The door to the sanitary area was open leaving the area accessible to children. This posed a risk of accidental poisoning.

#### Infection Control:

3. Poor hand hygiene practices were observed which posed an infection control risk. Two staff members did not wash their hands after assisting children with nasal care.
4. A changing mat in the Toddler Serengeti sanitary area was observed to be torn with foam exposed which prevented effective cleaning and posed an infection control risk.

#### Safe Sleep:

5. Two children were observed sleeping with teddies in their cots. This is not in line with service policy and posed a potential risk of injury.

#### Fire Safety:

6. Attendance records were not accurately maintained to reflect the children present on the premises on the day of inspection. This posed a risk of hindering safe evacuation in the event of an emergency. The following was observed:
  - In the Wobbler Safari room at 10.50am 9 children were present however only 8 were signed in.
  - In the Wobbler Acacia room at 12.05pm 7 children were present however only 6 were signed in.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### General Safety:

1. The high-water temperatures were reported to our Maintenance Manager. An external maintenance company reviewed the temperatures/ equipment and found a faulty valve which was replaced on the 14th of April 25. Each room is checking the water temperatures daily and these are recorded in the Health & Safety Diaries which are checked by management.
2. New door lock was placed in the sanitary area, so all cleaning products are safely locked away. Staff members must inform management immediately when door lock is broken or missing.

##### Infection Control:

3. Staff were retained on our handwashing policy. Daily observations by management.
4. The changing mat was replaced. Additional changing mats were purchased in case required. Daily checks will be recorded in the health and safety diary.

##### Safe Sleep:

5. Staff were retrained on our safe sleep policy. Daily checks by management.

##### Fire Safety:

6. Staff were retrained on the importance of signing children in and out when required. Management are monitoring this daily.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

##### General Safety:

- Company quotation.
- Photographic evidence.

##### Infection Control:

- Training log.
- Invoice.

##### Safe Sleep:

- Training log.

##### Fire Safety:

- Training log.

## Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions taken and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been addressed.

## 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) The registered provider ensured that an adequate number of staff were trained in First Aid Response (FAR) and that a staff member trained in FAR was available on the premises throughout the opening hours of the service.
- (2) (a)(b) Adequately stocked first aid boxes were observed in the service. These were stored out of reach of the children but available to staff as needed.

## Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

### Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-*
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,*
  - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and*
  - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.*
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that-*
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and*
  - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.*

## Compliance Information

(1) (a)(b)(c) The complaints policy was reviewed as part of the inspection process. The review showed that the policy clearly outlined the information required under (a), (b) and (c).

## Non-Compliance Information

(2) (a)(b) There was no written complaints log available for review and management confirmed the service does not have a mechanism in place to maintain a list of complaints received. This was not in line with service policy that advises complaints may be aired verbally or in writing and are noted in the complaints record book.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

Complaints and compliments book is now in place. Management are using this book since inspection, and this will be evident on the next inspection.

### Supporting documentation submitted

- Photographic evidence.

## Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions taken and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 32 has been addressed.