

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL100		
Name of Service:	Giraffe Childcare Northern Cross		
Address of Service:	Retail Unit 14, Burnell Square, Northern Cross, Malahide Road, Dublin 17		
Eircode:	D17 FD93		
Name of Registered Provider:	Dearbhala Cox Giffin		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	22/02/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	64	PM 65
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 & E. Griffin		
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 Northern Cross is a privately operated full day care service located in North Dublin. The service is one of twenty-one childcare services operated by the registered provider. The service caters for up to 98 children aged 0-6 years per day in a purpose-built building with eight care rooms, a cot room, two additional indoor play areas, a kitchen, sanitary facilities a staff room and an office and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme. The care rooms include:

Room name	Age group
Wobbler Acacia	1-2 years
Wobbler Baringo	1-2 years
Wobbler Safari	1-2 years
Wobbler Cameroon	1-2 years
Toddler Botswana	2-3 years
Toddler Serengeti	2-3 years
Preschool Masai Mara	2.5-4years
Preschool Kenya	3-5years

Wobbler Acacia and Wobbler Baringo share a designated cot room which is accessible from both care rooms and each care room in the service is equipped with its own sanitary facilities. An enclosed outdoor space is available to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service employs a total of 22 staff including person in charge, 19 childcare staff, a chef and a housekeeper. An area manager arrived during the inspection and remained in the service 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 & Recruitment, Regulation 16 Records in relation to the Preschool service, Regulation 19 Health, Welfare and Development of Child, and Regulation 23 Safeguarding the Health, Safety and Welfare of child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included rooms Wobbler Acacia, Wobbler Baringo, Wobbler Safari and Wobbler Cameroon.

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 manager, person in charge, deputy 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.

(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 person to deputise as required. The deputy person in charge was present in the service when the inspector 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.

(2) A review of paperwork and conversation with the person in charge showed that there are currently 22 staff currently employed in the service including the person in charge, deputy person in charge, 18 childcare staff, a chef and a housekeeper.

A student was also present on the day of inspection. The files of 5 staff who had commenced employment since the last inspection and the student who was present on the day of inspection were reviewed. Garda vetting disclosures were reviewed for all staff currently employed in the service.

(a)(b) Twelve written and validated references were available in relation to six adults.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 23 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 four adults who had lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of six months or more as an adult.

(4) Evidence was available to show that five 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) The registered provider ensured that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children on the day of inspection. Fourteen staff were caring for 64 children in the morning and 65 children in the afternoon. The person in charge and deputy person in charge were available in a supernumerary position.

(2) Ratios were maintained on the day of inspection. The following was observed;

Room name	Age group	Number of children	Staff available	Staff required
Wobbler Acacia	1-2 years	5	1	1
Wobbler Baringo	1-2 years	6	2	2
Wobbler Safari	1-2 years	6	2	2
Wobbler Cameroon	1-2 years	8	2	2
Toddler Botswana	2-3 years	5	1	1
Toddler Serengeti	2-3 years	12	2	2
Preschool Masai Mara	2.5-4years	11	2	2
Preschool Kenya	3-5years	11	2	2

The person in charge and deputy person in charge were available in a supernumerary position and covered in rooms as needed.

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;
- (e) the facilities available;
- (f) the opening hours and fees;

- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

- (1) A registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the following information in relation to the service:
- (a) The name, position, qualifications, and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee and unpaid worker were available in the staff files and displayed in the hallway.
 - (b)(c)(d)(e)(f) The statement of purpose and function held details of the class of service, the age profile of children for which the service is registered, details of the adult:child ratios, the type of care or programme provided along with the facilities available and the opening hours and fees.
 - (g) The policies, procedures, and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10 were available in digital form for review.
 - (h) Attendance records were available in each care room.
 - (i) A staff roster which was updated to reflect the staff present was available for review.
 - (j) A sample of six medication administration records were available for review all of which were completed in full.
 - (k) A sample of 20 accident and incident records were reviewed all of which were completed in full.

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:

- The service had a welcoming atmosphere and children were observed to be engaged in a range of activities when the inspectors arrived in the care rooms.
- The service operates a four-week menu in line with their healthy eating policy. On the day of inspection, the children were observed to eat a variety of food all of which is provided by the service. The menu included three meals and two snacks daily. On the day of inspection children were observed to eat fruit for morning snack, and spaghetti bolognese for dinner. Different textures of dinner were available based on the children's needs and additional food was available if required.
- Mealtimes were adjusted to suit the individual needs of the children for example morning snack was kept in the fridge for a child who was asleep when the food was initially served. This was provided to the child upon waking.
- Dietary requirements and parental preferences were displayed within the care rooms and staff were aware of the requirements of each child. Colour coded placemats provided a visual reminder to staff of the dietary needs of the children.
- Mealtimes were a relaxed and pleasurable experience for the children in Wobbler Acacia and Wobbler Baringo care rooms. Staff sat at the table with the children and were observed to talk about their meals and children were provided with opportunities to self-feed and explore their food with their hands without restriction. This provided a valuable learning and sensory experience for the children.
- Children were assisted with self-care tasks such as nose wiping as required.
- Nappy changing was done on a set schedule and as required to ensure the children's comfort.

Physical and Material environment:

- The care rooms were stocked with a variety of materials and equipment suited to the age and developmental stage of the children.
- Toys and materials were displayed on low-level shelving which allowed the children to access the toys and promoted independent play.
- Children moved freely around the rooms and from activity to activity without constraint which supported the child's need for choice and autonomy in their play.
- Children in Wobbler Acacia were provided with push along toys to encourage and support the children learning to walk.
- The outdoor area which was divided in two separate areas both of which were fitted with a synthetic grass surface. Both areas provided an opportunity for gross motor play and imaginative play. One side of the garden housed larger equipment for the older children while the other side housed smaller equipment to cater to the younger children. The equipment available included; a climbing frame in each, a wooden ramp, wooden unit with steering wheels, car and trailer units and ride on toys.

Supporting Relationships around Children:

- Staff were respectful and caring in their interactions with the children for example staff were observed to provide comfort to a child in Wobbler Safari following a small fall.
- Staff were observed to engage in meaningful play with the children throughout the day sitting on the floor at the children's level.
- A key worker system is in place in the service which promotes familiarity and consistency while supporting children's development.
- An electronic software application is used to share details of the children's day with the parents including food, nappy changes, sleep and activities.

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 securely locked on arrival to the service. Staff attended the door to allow access which prevented unauthorised persons entering the service. The external door has a coded lock which prevented children leaving the service unsupervised.
- Care rooms and sanitary areas were well maintained and free from hazards.
- Blind cords were secured safely out of reach of the children.
- Cleaning products were stored out of reach of the children

Infection Control:

- Cleaning records were available in each room and completed to date.
- Pedal operated bins were available throughout the service for disposal of contaminated items.
- Children were supported to wash their hands before mealtimes and after nappy changing.
- Individual storage was available for children's items. Nappy creams and soothers were stored in individual cubbies to prevent cross contamination.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff were aware of safe sleep practices. Children were observed to be monitored while sleeping at intervals of 10 minutes or less and staff recorded the breathing, position, and colour of each child at each check.
- Cots and mattresses were maintained in a good state of repair.
- Airconditioning units in the rooms where children over 1 year old were sleeping ensured an ambient temperature of 18-22°C was maintained.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were unobstructed throughout the inspection.
- Fire evacuation procedure notices were displayed in the hall and all care rooms of the service.
- Staff were aware of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire emergency.

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 the service was adequately insured for the number of children in attendance.