

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015FL103

Name of Service: Giraffe Childcare Rathborne

Address of Service: The River Centre, Rathborne Place, Dublin 15.

Eircode: D15 VCV6

Name of Registered Provider: Dearbhala Cox Giffin

Service type: Full Day, Part Time

Date(s) of Inspection: 07/01/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	71	PM	72

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 2 nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K
Inspection undertaken by:	C. Harte and E. Finnegan Hayes
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 Rathborne is a full day care service in Dublin 15. The service is one of twenty-four services operated by the registered provider. This service cares for children between the ages of 0-6 years, Monday to Friday between 7:15am- 6:45pm.

This is a purposely built premises with ten care rooms over two floors. The premises also includes two dedicated cot rooms, and each care room has its own sanitary area. An enclosed outdoor space is located on the ground floor to the rear of the premises and a second large outdoor play space is located on the first floor.

Eight care rooms were operating on the day of the inspection.

- Baby Baringo (1 -1.5 years),
- Wobbler Kilimanjaro (1 year 6 months -2 years 11 months),
- Toddler Safari (2 years - 2 years 11 months),
- Toddler Kenya (2.5-3 years 4 months),
- Toddler Botswana (3 years - 3 years 8 months),
- Toddler Cameroon (3.5 years - 3 years 7 months)
- Preschool Zambia (3 years 3 months - 4 years)
- Preschool Serengeti (4 - 5 years)

Staffing

The service employs a total of twenty-nine staff including a chef and a cleaner. On the day of inspection, the service manager, two deputy managers and the operations manager were present. The registered provider does not work directly with the children attending 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under:

- Regulation 9(1),(2)(a)(b)(c)(d),(3), (4) Management and Recruitment
- Regulation 11(1),(2) Staffing Levels
- Regulation 15(1)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(h)(i), (3)(c) Record of a Pre-school Child
- Regulation 19(1)(b) Health, Welfare and Development of child
- Regulation 23 Safeguarding the Health, Safety and Welfare of the Child
- Regulation 26 Fire Safety

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under 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 Toddler Botswana room, Wobbler Kilimanjaro room, Toddler Kenya room and Toddler Cameroon room.

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 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)(b) The service had a designated person in charge and two named persons to deputise. A designated person in charge was rostered to be on the premises during the opening hours of the service on the day of inspection. The person in charge was present in the service when the inspectors arrived and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection.

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

(2) A review of paperwork and conversation with the person in charge showed there are currently 29 staff employed by the service. The files of nine staff who had commenced employment since the last inspection were reviewed. A review of records maintained by Tusla demonstrated that Garda vetting disclosures were dated within three years for all existing staff.

The registered provider had completed the following checks:

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

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

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 9 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 months or more as an adult.

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

(4) Evidence was available to show that nine 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 in the service.
- (2) The adult child ratios were correct when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection. The following was observed:

Room	Age range	No. of children	No. of adults present	No. of adults required
Baby Baringo	1-1.5 years	5	2	1
Wobbler Kilimanjaro	1 year 6 months-2 years 3 months	9	2	2
Toddler Safari	2 years – 2 years 11 months	10	2	2
Toddler Kenya	2.5 years- 3 years 4 months	6	2	1
Toddler Botswana	3 years- 3 years 8 months	7	2	1
Toddler Cameroon	3.5 years - 3 years 7 months	8	2	1
Preschool Zambia	3 years 3 months -4 years	11	2	1
Preschool Serengeti	4 - 5 years	15	2	2

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-
(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1) A sample of 21 record forms of children who currently attend the service were reviewed. These records contained all the information required under (a) to (i) above.

(3)(c) On the day of the inspection a record in writing was available for review by the inspector.

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:

1. The staff interacted with the children in a respectful, warm and sensitive manner. Appropriate nonverbal communication such as eye level contact, touch and other strategies were observed. Verbal strategies used included clear instruction on what was going to happen next, repeating words and phrases, and verbal signalling of transitions. These strategies can facilitate emotional and social development in young children.
2. Mealtime was observed to be a pleasant sociable experience for the children. Meals and drinks were served in a timely manner, and staff were observed to support the children by providing appropriate cutlery and engaged with the children throughout the experience. Staff were observed discussing dietary requirements of children attending with the chef and offering the children additional portions. Staff placed on bibs and adjusted children's seats around the table supporting the children's comfort.
3. A four-week menu was clearly displayed detailing three main meals and two snacks daily.
4. Staff encouraged self-care skills such as hand washing and regularly reminded the children about toileting giving assistance when necessary.
5. The experiences and activities provided to the children in the rooms were suitable to the age and stage of development of the children present. Children had the freedom to choose their own activities, and planned activities facilitated individual and group play.

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 on arrival this prevented unauthorised persons entering the building and prevented children leaving the building unsupervised.
- Cleaning agents were safely stored and inaccessible to children.
- Presses and equipment in the sanitary areas were observed to be well maintained and suitable for use.
- No trailing flexes or cables were observed.
- Blind cords were securely fitted.

Infection Control:

- Children were observed washing their hands prior to mealtimes.
- Windows were open for ventilation allowing air to circulate.
- Nappy creams were individually labelled supporting infection control practices.

Safe Sleep:

- An ambient room temperature of 18-22°C was maintained in rooms where children over 1 year of age were sleeping.

Fire Safety:

- Staff were aware of the fire evacuation procedure.
- Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in the care rooms and entry hall.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The water temperature in the Toddler Cameroon room exceeded 43°C and posed a risk of injury. At 11.50am the water temperature in the sanitary area sink one was 44.8°C and sink two was 44.2°C. The inspector observed that temperature indicator on sink one dispensed hot water when turned to blue posing an additional risk.

Safe Sleep:

2. Children from the Wobbler Kilimanjaro rom were observed to engage in behaviours posing a risk of injury during the transition to sleep in the cot room. Children were observed to stand in their cots, rock them

and push and pull the cots around them. Staff were present in the cot room and interjected intermittently but struggled to address all behaviours as the wheels of the cots were not locked and they were attempting to place and settle children in their cots for sleep.

This was a noncompliance on the previous inspection. The preventative actions outlined by the registered provider have not been maintained.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Corrective action: The thermostat on the water heater pump for the sinks in the Toddler Cameroon room was serviced by our maintenance team on the 10/01/2025. Water Temperature has been regulated to remain between a temperature of 38 - 42 degrees.

Preventive action: The water temperature will be checked and recorded throughout the day in our Health and Safety Diary. If water temperature exceeds over 42 degrees it will be reported to our maintenance team for corrective action.

Safe Sleep:

2. Corrective action: Staff in the Kilimanjaro room have been re- trained on sleep policy. The layout of the sleep room has been revised and all cots with wheels have been locked. We have implemented a safety cot checklist that will be carried out daily to ensure the locks are securely on prior to the children being placed inside for rest and sleep provisions.

Preventive action: The management team will monitor transitions at sleep time in the Kilimanjaro room and ensure support is available. Wheels on cots will be secured and checked daily.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- Documentary evidence.

Safe Sleep:

- Documentary evidence.
- Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

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

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 firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.

Compliance Information

- (1) (a) A record was maintained of all fire drills which occurred in the service. The record showed that fire drills are conducted on a monthly basis. The last fire drill took place on the 10 December 2024.
- (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises was available. The certificates reviewed showed that the firefighting equipment had been serviced in April 2024 while the smoke alarms had been serviced on the 17 October 2024.