

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 of Inspection:	04/02/2026
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	77	PM	78
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

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, E. Griffin and J.A. McKimm
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-five services operated by the registered provider. This service cares for children between the ages of 0-6 years, Monday to Friday between 7:30am- 6:00pm. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme.

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 (9 months -1 year 3 months)
- Wobbler Namibia (1 year -1.5 year)
- Wobbler Kilimanjaro (1 year - 1 year 11 months)
- Toddler Safari (1 year 11 months -2.5 years)
- Toddler Botswana (2-3 years)
- Toddler Cameroon (3.5 years - 4 years)
- Preschool Zambia (4 years - 5 years)
- Preschool Serengeti (4 - 5 years)

Staffing

The registered provider currently employs 25 staff to work in the service including an area director who works across multiple premises, a designated person in charge, two deputy persons in charge, a chef, a cleaner and 19 early years professionals. On the day of the inspection there was 26 adults present including the area director, person in charge, two deputy persons in charge, a chef, a cleaner, 19 early years professional and a student present on an educational work placement programme.

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, safety, premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 21. As a result, the scope of the inspection included Baby Baringo, Wobbler Kilimanjaro, Wobbler Namibia, Toddler Safari, Preschool Zambia.

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.*

(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 two named persons to deputise if required.
 - (b) A designated person in charge was available on the premises on the day of inspection for the operating hours of the service.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in place and staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- (2) A review of paperwork and discussion with management confirmed there was 8 new staff members employed since the last inspection 7 January 2025. The full files of 8 new staff members, one student and garda vetting of one existing staff member was reviewed. The registered providers 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 all adults. 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 nine 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 eight 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.

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) On the day of the inspection there were adequate number of staff available to the children attending the service to meet their care needs.
- (2) Qualified staff were available and adequate staff to child ratios were maintained correctly throughout the inspection.
- There were 20 staff members caring for 77 children present during the morning on the day of the inspection.
 - There were 21 staff members caring for 78 children present during the afternoon on the day of inspection.
- The area director and designated person in charge were available in a supernumerary capacity to assist in the care rooms as required.

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) The registered provider ensured the following records were maintained:

- (a) Details of the name, position, qualifications, and experience of all staff were maintained within the staff files.
- (b) The service Tusla certificate detailed the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services. This was displayed in the reception area of the service.
- (c) The policy document outlined the adult: child ratios displayed in the reception area.
- (d) The Tusla certificate displayed outlined the type of care or programme provided.
- (e) The policy document outlined the facilities available within the service.
- (f) The opening hours and fees of the service were displayed by the office.
- (g) The registered provider maintained all the policies required in accordance with Regulation 10.
- (h) Attendance records detailing the daily arrival and departure of the children were maintained on a software application.
- (i) A record was maintained of the staff roster which was reflective of the staff present on the day.
- (j) Following a review of a sample 20 records, the registered provider ensured a full record in writing was maintained for medication administration. This included details of the medication dosage, the full details of the child, staff who administered and was signed by parents indicating they had been informed of the medication administered.
- (k) Following a review of a sample of 24 records, the registered provider ensured a full record in writing was maintained for accident and incidents. This included details of where and when the incident occurred, the full details of the child and staff present, and was signed by parents indicating they had been informed of the incident.

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 registered provider ensured there was adequate and suitable furniture and equipment available, for example:

- The furniture and equipment in the rooms were 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, and was well maintained, durable and easy to clean.
- The toys and equipment were laid out on low level shelving, visible to the children, and were grouped in themed areas of interest such as imaginative areas, construction, sensory trays and library areas.
- 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.
- An adult sized rocking chair was present in the baby Baringo room to use when comforting and supporting the children.
- Rest areas were available in the care rooms for children to take a break from activities.
- The outdoor areas were resourced with a variety of toys to encourage gross motor movement such as ride on vehicles, balance beams, a small climbing wall and tunnel.

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 when the inspectors arrived unannounced. This prevented unauthorised persons entering the building and prevented children leaving the building unsupervised.
- The stairwell was clear of obstruction, and the stairs had non-slip flooring and a handrail at the children's level.

Infection Control:

- Windows were open for ventilation allowing fresh air to circulate.
- Waste was inaccessible to children.
- A laundry roster was in place and children had individual bed linens.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication on the premises was stored out of children's reach and was clearly labelled.

Fire Safety:

- Attendance records were accurately maintained on the day of inspection this practice supports safe evacuation in the event of an emergency.
- Emergency exits were observed clear of obstruction on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Doors along the main hallway on the ground floor were not securely closed on the day of inspection to prevent children accessing areas with potential hazards. Throughout the day of inspection, the doors leading to the laundry room and kitchen area were observed opened. It is acknowledged that no children were observed unsupervised on the hallway during the inspection.
2. A child under one year old was observed to be placed in a highchair for mealtime that did not have safety straps. This posed potential risk of injury.
3. A trailing flex was observed in the Kilimanjaro cot room within reach of a child's cot which posed a potential risk of injury.
4. Cleaning agents were accessible in the toddler Safari and preschool Zambia room in low level presses and posed a potential risk of accidental poisoning. This was brought to management's attention during the inspection and new safety locks were fitted on the day.
5. There was no visibility strips present at the children's level on the large glass doors in the baby Baringo, wobbler Namibia or wobbler Kilimanjaro rooms which posed a potential risk of injury.
6. Water temperatures within the service exceed the allowable 43°C and posed a risk of injury. The following was recorded:
 - Sink in the preschool Zambia care room was 46.1°C
 - Sink in the toilet area beside the Kilimanjaro changing bay was 44.2°C
 - Sink by the nappy changing unit in Kilimanjaro sanitary area was 47.1°C
 - Sink in the wobbler Namibia care room was 44.7°C

- Sink in the wobbler Namibia sanitary area was 44.5°C

Infection Control:

7. Staff did not consistently use disposable gloves and aprons during nappy changing. This was at variance with HSPC guidance and service policy and posed a potential risk of cross contamination.
8. Nappy creams in the toddler Safari sanitary area were stored in one container. Five creams were observed without labels which posed a potential risk of cross contamination.
9. A low-level wall mounted heater in the wobbler Namibia room had section of sticky residue which held dirt and debris and posed a potential infection control risk.

Administration of Medication:

10. Staff were not fully informed of the medical care needs of a child attending the service which posed a potential risk to the child's safety.

Safe Sleep:

11. Children in wobbler Namibia room were observed to move their cots during the transition to sleep as the cot wheels remained unlocked, this posed a potential risk of injury. This was a noncompliance on the previous inspections. The preventative actions outlined by the registered provider have not been maintained.
12. An ambient room temperature of 16-20°C was not maintained in a room where children under 1 year of age were sleeping. The temperature was recorded at 22.4°C at 12.20pm.
13. In the Kilimanjaro cot room 7 of 9 cots were observed with a toy present as children slept. This is not in line with best practice and is at variance with the service policy. This posed a potential risk to children's safety.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. A gate has been put in place in the kitchen and laundry room doorway. Management will do daily checks to ensure that gates are secure and always closed throughout the day. Children will be always supervised on the hallway.
2. The highchair was removed immediately from the room. Management will do daily checks to ensure children are using appropriate furniture for their age and that they are being supervised at all times during mealtime.
3. The trailing flex has been removed and is no longer a risk. Management will do daily checks to ensure cable, flexes are not in reach of children, and that cables that are secured have not come undone.
4. A secure lock has been put in place on the presses and cleaning products have been removed. Press locks are included in our daily hazard checklist which is completed by a member of the management team each day –

management will continue to spot check the base rooms and all presses. The staff team have received refresher training in policies regarding the storage of all cleaning solutions.

5. Stickers have been put in place on each door in Baby Baringo, Wobbler Namibia, Wobbler Kilimanjaro. Management will do daily checks to ensure stickers are visible and at a low level.
6. Water pumps for sinks were serviced on the 12 February, and the water temperature has been regulated to remain between a temperature of 38-42°C. 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.

Infection Control:

7. Staff were re-trained on nappy changing procedure & visual aids are in place to support and aid best practices. Management will continue on-site training on the importance of hygiene and infection control with a specific focus on new staff members.
8. All creams are labelled for each child. When creams are replaced, staff have spare labels in their rooms to label immediately before being placed in the nappy changing area. Management will continue on-site training on the importance of hygiene and infection control.
9. Wall mounted unit was not in use anymore; unit was removed from room on the 13 February. Equipment that is not in use will be reported to our maintenance team.

Administration of Medication:

10. Management contacted parent to have child collected on the day of inspection. Allergy action plan has been implemented for the child, and all staff have been informed.

Safe Sleep:

11. Staff have been re-trained on sleep policy. The room has been revised and all cots with wheels have been locked. Cot checklist has been implemented in Namibia. The Management team will monitor transitional times at sleep time in the Namibia room and ensure support is available.
12. Immediate actions were taken by management to reduce the temperature. Staff were retrained in Safe sleep focusing on room temperature. Management will continue to monitor the sleep room temperatures, especially on particularly warm days and ensure that the staff continue to ventilate each room throughout the day and temperature checks are being completed.
13. Children who sleep with a comforter / teddy will be closely monitored at sleep time and item will be removed from the cot when child falls asleep. Staff retrained in safe sleep Policy. Management will continue on-site

training on the importance of safe sleep. Management will closely check with staff that comforters are being removed from the cots after children have fallen asleep.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence.

Staff training card.

Health and safety check.

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence.

Staff training card.

Administration of Medication:

Confirmation of medication and care plan available.

Safe Sleep:

Staff training card.

Cot safety checklist.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions 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) A review of available documents including staff roster and certificates demonstrated that a person qualified in First Aid Responder training was available during the operational hours of the service to the children attending the pre-school on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) A suitably equipped first aid box was not available. A review of the first aid box showed only one burn dressing available. This burn dressing had expired in January 2026. A suitably equipped first aid box including two burn dressings should be available at all times to support the care and safety of children attending the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2) Burn dressings were ordered on the 11 February and arrived the following day. Management will do weekly checks on First Aid boxes and ensure the creche has spare in date first aid equipment.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 25 has been addressed.