

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KE129
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Name of Service:	Giraffe Childcare Celbridge
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Address of Service:	Block B, M4 Business Park Maynooth Road, Celbridge, Co. Kildare
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Eircode:	W23 KW6F
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Name of Registered Provider:	Dearbhala Cox Giffin
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time
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Date of Inspection:	19/05/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	92	PM	92
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Suite 7, Vista Primary Care, Ballymore Eustace Rd, Naas, Co Kildare.		
Inspection undertaken by:	R. Brien & F. Carty	S. Faherty	
Title:	Early Years Inspectors	Inspection and Registration Manager	

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	N/A
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Description of service

Giraffe Childcare Celbridge is a full day care service provided by Giraffe Childcare Limited which operates 25 childcare services. The service provides full day and part-time care and caters for children from 0 to 6 years. The service is registered to operate from 07:30 to 18:00, Monday to Friday.

The service is located in a purpose-built premises at ground level within a business park in the outskirts of Celbridge, Co Kildare. There are 11 care rooms in the service. On the day of inspection, nine care rooms were open. The Wobbler Acacia and Wobbler Baringo rooms cater for children aged 1 year. The Wobbler Namibia and Toddler Kilimanjaro rooms cater for children aged 1 to 2 years. The Toddler Botswana room caters for children aged 2 years. The Toddler Serengeti room caters for children aged 2 to 3 years. The Preschool Madagascar room caters for children aged 3 years. The Preschool Zambeze room caters for children aged 3 to 4 years and the Preschool Kenya room caters for children aged 4 to 5 years.

There are three designated cot rooms in the service, and an enclosed outdoor space is available to the side and rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs 25 staff including a manager, a chef and a housekeeper. There were 23 staff working directly with the children during the inspection. This included two adults from other centres operated by the registered provider who arrived following the inspector's arrival. The area director arrived during the morning of the inspection.

The registered provider does not work directly in the service but was present for the closing meeting.

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/ records / health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

9 (1)(a)(b),(2)(a)(b)(c)(d),(4) – Management and recruitment,
11 (1),(2),(8)(a) – Staffing levels,
16 (1)(h)(i)(j)(k) – Record in relation to pre-school service,
19 (1)(a)(b) – Health, welfare and development of child,
23 – Safeguarding, health, safety and welfare of child,
26 (1),(4) – Fire safety measures.

However, on inspection additional non-compliance was identified under regulation 20 (1)(b) – Facilities for rest and play.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under the following regulations;

16 (1)(h) – Record in relation to pre-school service.
19 (1)(a)(b) – Health, welfare and development of child,
23 – Safeguarding, health, safety and welfare of child.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Wobbler Acacia, Wobbler Baringo, Wobbler Namibia and Toddler Kilimanjaro rooms and the outdoor area.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 16 (1)(j),(k) – Record in relation to pre-school service.

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 and inspection and registration manager wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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*

(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 a named person to deputise as required who were both on the premises throughout the inspection.

(2)

The inspection focused on the recruitment records for four staff employed since the last inspection on 31st October 2024 and two staff from other centres operated by the registered provider who were present during the inspection. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows;

(a)(b)

Of the 12 validated, written references that were required, 11 were available from a past employer and 1 was available from a reputable source.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for the six 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 required for the six adults and was available for these adults who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding six months as an adult.

(4)

Records were available evidencing that the six staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or 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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times

Compliance Information

(1)

An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

(2)

The minimum ratio of adults to children for full day care services were adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were 92 children attending the service being supervised by 23 adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a)

There were at least two adults on the premises at all times.

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:

(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

- (h)
Details of the attendance of each child in the Wobbler Acacia, Wobbler Baringo, Wobbler Namibia and Toddler Kilimanjaro rooms were recorded at the time of entering and leaving the service.
- (i)
The staff roster was available on the day of inspection and reflected the adults working in the service.
- (j)
A sample of 22 medication administration records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.
- (k)
A sample of 14 accident and incidents records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.

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*
- (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)(a)(b)
The service had a healthy eating policy in place and all meals are prepared and cooked onsite. Meals were provided at regular intervals. Dinner was served between 11:45 and 12:00. Younger children were given bibs for

dinnertime. Drinking water was accessible to children throughout the inspection and children were given a drink with their meal. Staff supported younger children who needed assistance with their meal and staff sat with children while they were eating their meal.

Children's care needs were observed to be met promptly. Staff were observed cleaning children's noses as required and children's hands and faces were cleaned after dinner. Children's independence was supported, staff were observed encouraging children to take off their coats following outdoor play, to feed themselves, to put their water beakers away after dinner and to take off their shoes before bed. Children's nappies were changed regularly, and staff were observed engaging warmly with children when providing this care.

There was a designated nap time in the care rooms, however inspectors observed staff placing children down for a nap when they displayed signs of tiredness in the Wobbler Acacia room. All children were made comfortable for sleep, staff provided the children with blankets, and they offered soothers to those who used them. The environments were calm and conducive to sleep, with staff soothing the children as needed during this time.

The service had a key person system in place. Staff demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care and responded to children's cues promptly. Staff demonstrated warmth and sensitivity during their interactions with the children throughout the inspection. Children were comforted promptly when they became upset. Staff provided an appropriate level of supervision whilst supporting the children's independence during play and mealtimes. Staff were observed to use distraction, gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour in line with the service's behaviour policy. Transitions were managed well within the care rooms and children appeared to be familiar with the daily routine.

Staff described how they record information about each child's day using an online application detailing information on food, sleep, nappy changes and activities. Parents were observed in the service during collection times.

The care rooms provided a range of developmentally appropriate play experiences for the children and were adequately resourced with a variety of materials providing children with the freedom to play and explore. Areas of interest included small world toys, construction toys, jigsaws, rest areas with books and home corners. Family photos, birthday displays and children's artwork were displayed in the care rooms.

The environments were laid out to support the children's independence. Play materials were observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving. Low level tables and chairs were available in the care rooms.

A fully enclosed outdoor play area was located to the side of the premises and had shock absorbent surfacing. A range of developmentally appropriate play equipment was provided in the outdoor play area. All children were provided with the opportunity to play outdoors and were dressed appropriately to the weather.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b)

Appropriate rest facilities were not provided for all children under 2 years in the Toddler Kilimanjaro room. On the day of inspection, one child aged 1 year 9 months was observed on a foldable floor mat.

This mat was not fitted with a firm, flat, waterproof and breathable mattress. This may impact the safety and quality of sleep for children under 2 years.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

All children under 2 years have access to a cot at sleep time. An additional cot has since been placed in the Kilimanjaro room. The Management team will work in partnership with each individual family to ensure the child's sleep need are met. Children under the age of 2 years will be provided with a cot. Children over the age of 2 years will be provided with a floor bed. We will ensure that the floor beds are firm, flat, waterproof and breathable.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider have been deemed to address this non-compliance.

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 entrance door to the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised.
- The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection appeared in good working order.
- Cleaning agents and medicines were stored safely out of reach of children.
- All storage facilities were inaccessible to children.
- All blind cords were secured.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing. The children were supported to wash their hands at regular intervals including after nappy changing, after outdoor play and before meals.
- Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal bins.
- A system was in place for effective sterilisation of soothers.
- Individual bed linen was provided for children and was stored separately when not in use. Staff stated that bed linen is laundered weekly or as required.
- All cot mattresses in use had waterproof covers.

Administration of Medication:

- The service had an administration of medication policy in place. There were documented care plans available for children attending the service who required emergency medication. Staff working in the rooms with the children were aware of the treatment plans and demonstrated knowledge of the procedures to follow if the medication was required.
- Staff demonstrated, through discussion, that they were familiar with the procedures and practices in place for the administration of medication in line with the services policy on medication administration.

Safe Sleep:

- Children were physically monitored while sleeping and sleep checks were documented every ten minutes. Discussion with staff demonstrated that staff were familiar with safe sleep guidelines.
- An adult remained in the room at all times where children were sleeping on low beds.

Fire Safety:

- All fire exits were clear of obstruction.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. A large wooden reel in the outdoor area was observed to be water damaged with loose parts and splinters exposed posing a risk of injury to children.

Infection Control:

2. Some handwashing practices observed were inconsistent and at variance with the policy in place in the service. While it is acknowledged that children's noses were cleaned promptly, a staff member was observed to clean a child's nose on two occasions and did not wash their hands following this, posing a risk of the transmission of infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The large wooden reel has been removed from the garden area. The garden is checked daily to ensure the environment is safe at all times for children to play in.
Garden checks are completed daily to ensure the play area and equipment is safe for use. Any equipment that is damaged will be removed.

Infection Control:

2. Staff have been refreshed and full demonstrations of the Hygiene and infection Control policy has been completed to eliminate cross contamination.
Management will complete daily checks to ensure staff are following best practice in relation to infection control in particular around nasal hygiene.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.

Infection Control:

Written evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider have been deemed to address these non-compliances.

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 fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.**

- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
 - (a)

A written record was available detailing monthly fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last fire drill was carried out on the 29th April 2025.
 - (b)

The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises was available. There was a record to show that the fire fighting equipment had been serviced in April 2025 and that quarterly maintenance of the smoke alarm system had taken place on the 8th April 2025.

- (4)

The procedures to be followed during a fire drill and in the event of a fire were displayed in conspicuous locations within the service.