

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MH064
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Name of Service:	Giraffe Childcare Limited
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Address of Service:	Athlumney Wood, Navan, Co. Meath
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Eircode:	C15 DP27
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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:	18/05/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	62	PM	54
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Family Resource Centre, Common's Road, Navan, Co. Meath
Inspection undertaken by:	AM Cunningham & D Murray
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
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Description of service

Giraffe Childcare Limited is an established childcare facility located within the local community in Navan, Co. Meath. The childcare centre is one of 21 childcare services managed by registered provider. The childcare service provides full day care, part time and a sessional service to children aged 0 to 6 years and school aged. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The service operates from 7.15am to 18.45pm. There are seven care rooms for the preschool children namely, the Wobbler Acacia room, Wobbler Cameroon room, Toddler Serengeti room, Toddler Safari room, Preschool Kenya room, Preschool Kilimanjaro room, and ECCE Madagascar room.

Staffing

The service employs 23 staff members, (which includes the manager and two deputy managers), of whom twenty provide direct care to children, three staff members who provide domestic duties. A student on work experience was also present. The Registered Provider does not work directly with the children; however, area managers are employed who are in contact with staff and available to them when required.

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/ premises and facilities. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,19,20,21,22,23,24,25 and 26. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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 manager, area manager, deputy managers, 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) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(2) From a review of the service file and discussion with the manager it was confirmed that 3 new childcare staff had been employed in the service since the last inspection. These files were reviewed, and the following was noted.

- (a) Three validated written references were available from a past employer.
- (b) Three validated written reference were available from a source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for the three new staff.

(d) Police vetting was available for the three staff members who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) The three new childcare staff members had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications 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.

(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) During the inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.

(3) The adult to child ratios were correct and observed as follows:

- **Wobbler Acacia Room:** Two staff members cared for 4 pre-school children (aged between 1 and 2 years). All children were attending on full day care.
- **Wobbler Cameroon Room:** One staff member cared for 5 pre-school children (aged between 1 year 4 months and 1 year 6 months) all children were attending on full day care.
- **Toddler Serengeti Room** Two staff members cared for 11 pre-school children (aged between 2 years 11 months and 3 years 3 months) all children were attending on full day care.
- **Toddler Safari Room:** Two staff members cared for 8 preschool children (aged between 1 year 10 months and 2 years 3 months).

- **Pre School Kenya Room:** Two staff members cared for 12 preschool children (aged between 2 years 8 months and 3 years 5 months).
- **Pre School Kilimanjaro Room:** Two staff cared for 11 preschool children (aged between 3 years and 5 years).
- **ECCE Madagascar Room:** One staff member cared for 11 preschool children (aged between 2 years 8 months and 5 years).

A relief staff member was present to assist where required for nappy changing at mealtimes. The manager was also available to provide support to the car rooms. The area manager arrived at the service during the inspection and remained until the inspection was complete.

(8) Two staff members are present, at all times in the service as required by Regulation 11 (8), confirmed by the staff roster and staff attendance records

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

The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated in the service;

Basic Needs:

- Children's lunches were observed to be nutritious and healthy. Children could access their drinks as they wished. The staff members sat with the children during snack time and was attentive to their needs; conversations and interactions between the children and the adults were observed to be informative and playful.

- The children's personal care was attended to. Hand hygiene was carried out at recommended times, prior to mealtimes and following personal care and outdoor play.
- Nappy changing was carried out at a timely manner.
- Children availed of outdoor play during the inspection.

Supporting Relationships Around the Children:

- Positive engagement between the staff members and children were noted. The staff members used age-appropriate soft tones, used the child's individual name, and were actively involved in the children's play where appropriate. Transitions were clearly announced and signaled by staff. Children were given time to complete activities at their own pace before starting the next activity.
- In the younger care rooms staff complete communication sheets for parents of their child's day including sleep times, meals, nappy changing and activities., which is shared with parents or guardians each day.
- Children who became upset were nurtured and cuddled until they settled.
- Family trees and birthday walls gave a sense of identity and belonging.
- The children availed of outdoor play which provided a change in their environment and promoted their gross motor development.

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-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child 19 to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(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.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises, or

(b) Where no such space is provided, the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis to a suitable outdoor space.

Compliance Information

(1)(b) Two cot rooms were available one adjoining the Wobbler Acacia room which had 6 cots and one adjoining Wobbler Cameroon room with 7 cots available, an additional 2 foldup cots were available if needed for the children under 2 years who required sleep. Sleep mats were available for the children in Toddler Serengeti, Pre-school Kenya and Toddler Safari rooms for the children requiring sleep over 2 years of age. Within the care rooms there were soft furnishings, mats, and cushions for children to take a break from activities and rest if needed.

(3)(a) There was a suitable, safe, and secure outdoor space to the rear of the premises. This area was enclosed with walls and fencing, had 2 secure gates with an all-weather surface.

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

- All the care rooms were well resourced with play materials and equipment which were laid out in interest areas which were spacious and uncluttered. The play materials and equipment incorporated natural/sensorial materials, art and crafts, a range of suitable toys and books which were easily accessible on open shelving at their height which supported children to select and become involved in meaningful, sustained play experiences.
- Equipment in the outdoor space included a climbing ramp, toy cars, ride on tricycles, open wooden hut, mud kitchen and a blackboard.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The service had a menu plan with a variety of dishes ranging from vegetarian, meat and poultry prepared in the service.

On the day of inspection, the children had a variety of snacks ranging from fruit, yogurts, sandwiches and crackers. Lunch was served at approximately 12 am and 12.30pm for children attending ECCE service in the morning which consisted of pork and apple casserole with cous cous and vegetables. Water and milk were the drink of choice.

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 premises were appropriately secured to prevent pre-school children from exiting unsupervised and restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the children.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of children.
- Children's attendance was recorded correctly, a staff roster was available, and staff recorded their attendance daily.

Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were observed:

- The hand washing policy and nappy changing policy were implemented in practice with appropriate hand washing for staff and children at all times.
- Perishable items in the children's lunch boxes were stored in refrigerators.
- Individual creams were labelled to ensure creams were not shared.
- Mouthed toys were placed in a container washed and sterilized appropriately.

Safe Sleep:

Safe sleep practices were observed in the service as demonstrated by the following examples:

- A thermometer was available in the cot rooms to ensure the temperature of the rooms was maintained between 16 to 20°C while children were sleeping.
- A sleep log on each child was recorded at 10 minutes intervals. A staff member remained with the children over 2 years.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

At all times staff did not wear aprons while changing soiled nappies to prevent the contamination of clothing and cross infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Infection Control:

All Staff have been refreshed on the nappy changing policy and the management team will spot check practice to ensure aprons are worn when required. Photographic evidence of training attached.

The management team will ensure that all practice is followed and in line with best practice during nappy changing.

The management and staffing will ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of all children attending the service and that the environment is safe at all times.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has been accepted and addresses the noncompliance in Regulation 23.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) A record was kept of each child's time of arrival and departure on a daily basis by the staff members.

(3)(a) A system was in place to ensure that no person other than the children's parents / guardians, employees or authorised visitors can enter the pre-school.

(b) A visitor's book was maintained, there was evidence that visitors were requested to record their attendance, the inspectors were requested to record their arrival and departure times.

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 service provided evidence that a person had up to date First Aid Responders course and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in the premises.

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.*
- (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 of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 25/04/2023.
- (b) A record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment and mains powered smoke alarms on the premises. The firefighting equipment was last serviced in April 2023. The mains powered smoke alarms were last serviced on the 30/03/2023.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed on the premises.