

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2023DS001		
Name of Service:	Giraffe Childcare - Shackleton		
Address of Service:	Unit 1, Shackleton Mill, Shackleton Vale, Lucan, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	K78 R7PO		
Name of Registered Provider:	Dearbhala Cox Giffin		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	19/06/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	65	PM 65
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Dublin 8		
Inspection undertaken by:	R. Brien & F. Carty		
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 Shackleton is a full day care service provided by Giraffe Childcare Limited which provides 23 childcare services. The service provides full day, part-time and sessional care and caters for children from 0 to 6 years. The service is registered to operate from 07:30 to 18:30, Monday to Friday.

The service is located in an urban residential area of southwest Dublin. It is a purpose built two storey premises with ten care rooms. Nine care rooms were open on the day of inspection. Four rooms are located on the ground floor, Wobbler Baringo, Wobbler Acacia, Wobbler Safari and Wobbler Namibia all cater for children aged 1 year. Five rooms are located on the first floor, Wobbler Masai Mara caters for children aged 1 year. Toddler Serengeti caters for children aged 1 to 2 years. Toddler Botswana caters for children aged 2 years. Preschool Kilimanjaro caters for children aged 2 to 3 years and Preschool Kenya caters for children aged 3 to 4 years.

There are three dedicated cot rooms in the service. There is a large fully enclosed outdoor play area located to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs 30 staff including a manager and deputy manager. There were 25 staff working directly with the children on the day of inspection. The service also employs a chef and a cleaner.

The registered provider and area manager arrived during the morning of the inspection.

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 records. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

9(1)(a)(b)(c),(2),(4),(7)(a) Management and Recruitment,
10 Policies Procedures etc. of Pre-school Service,
11(1),(2),(8)(a) Staffing Levels,
19(1)(a)(b),(2),(3) Health, Welfare and Development of Child,
32(1) Complaints.

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 regulations:

9(7)(a) Management and Recruitment,
19(1)(a)(b),(2),(3) Health, welfare and development of child,

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Wobbler Masai Mara and Preschool Kenya rooms.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulations:

Regulation 20(1)(b) Facilities for rest and play,

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Wobbler Masai Mara and Toddler Serengeti rooms.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 9(2)(4).

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.

Additional Information

This inspection was triggered by the receipt of information which was furnished to the Early Years Inspectorate on 07 June 2024.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, area 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.*

(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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

(a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)(c)

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. There was a clear management structure in the service that identified the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(2)

Following a discussion with the manager it was confirmed that ten adults commenced working in the service since the last inspection on 06 December 2023. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a) Of the twenty references that were required, seventeen were available from a past employer and three were available from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for the ten 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 outside the State for a period exceeding six months as an adult.

(4)
Records were available evidencing that nine staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or equivalent. Three of these staff members held a letter of qualification recognition from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY).

(7)
(a) The registered provider ensured that all employees were appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information and training, prior to commencing employment in the service and on an ongoing basis once employment commenced as evidenced by the following:

- Staff detailed the induction training process in place for new employees where staff receive training on the services' policies and procedures prior to commencement. The person in charge reported that training was provided on each of the policies and procedures in place. Staff reported that policies are regularly discussed during team meetings and that updates are implemented and discussed in line with regulatory requirements. A staff training card was available for staff which outlined training provided on all areas of practice.
- Staff members reported that both team staff meetings and one on one supervision occur with staff members and the person in charge at regular intervals throughout the year. A written record was available of these meetings.
- The person in charge stated that staff may be requested to complete relevant training and continuous professional development throughout the year if a need is identified.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the following written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 were in place for the service;

1. Policy on managing behaviour.
2. Policy on healthy eating.

3. Staff training policy.
4. Supervision of staff policy.

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 was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were sixty-five children attending the service being supervised by twenty-five adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a) There were at least two adults on the premises at all times.

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.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that no corporal punishment is inflicted on a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)

The service had a healthy eating policy in place and staff reported that all meals are provided by the service. Children are offered breakfast on arrival and a snack of fruit and crackers was provided during the morning. Dinner was served at 11:50. An afternoon meal was served at 15:00. Drinking water was accessible to children throughout the day and all children were given water with their meals. Younger children were provided with bibs for dinnertime. Children were encouraged to feed themselves and staff supported younger children who needed assistance with their dinner. Additional servings were available for each meal. In the Preschool Kenya room, staff were observed offering more food to children.

Children's care needs were observed to be met promptly. Children's hands and faces were cleaned after dinner as required and older children in the Preschool Kenya room were encouraged to clean their own faces after their meals. Children were encouraged and supported to be independent including cleaning up after their play and meals. Younger children's nappies were changed regularly and staff were observed engaging warmly with children when providing this care. Older children were encouraged to use the toilet independently. There was a designated nap time in the Wobbler Masai Mara room.

Staff demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care and responded to children's cues promptly. Staff were observed to comfort children promptly when they became upset. Children were supported by staff to communicate their needs and wants, verbally and non-verbally. Staff were observed to use encouragement, gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour in line with the service's behaviour management policy. Staff provided an appropriate level of supervision whilst supporting the children's independence during play and mealtimes.

Staff described how they record information about each child's day using an online application detailing information on food, sleep, nappy changes and activities which is shared with parents. Parents were observed in the service during drop off and collection times and staff shared information about the children with their parents at these times.

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

The environment was 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 available to the rear of the premises with shock absorbent surfacing. The outdoor area was divided into two sections and both sections had a sheltered area available to children. The outdoor area was equipped with a range of developmentally appropriate play equipment. Children from the Wobbler Masai Mara and Preschool Kenya rooms accessed the outdoor area on the day of inspection.

(2)(3)

During the inspection, staff were observed to engage and interact with the children in a calm and relaxed manner. Staff were available to the children when required and supported children in developing independence and self-sufficiency when completing activities and tasks such as using the toilet, washing their hands and cleaning up after their play. Staff used the child's name when speaking to them and any minor issues were dealt with calmly. Staff were observed to be warm and kind in their interactions with children on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b)

1. The registered provider did not ensure that appropriate and suitable care practices were in place at all times. In the Masai Mara room, at the designated nap time, a staff member was observed to place their hand on a child's head and push the child's head onto the sleep mat.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Children are supported and gently placed on sleep mats at sleep time. Staff sit with children who require soothing in preparation for sleep. No matter what age and stage of development children are at, we follow their lead for cues of tiredness and allow them to nap when they need it. Staff will role model positive behaviours and will support children with their social, emotional and behaviour skills, ensuring they are kept comfortable, relaxed, happy during sleep time, the staff member highlighted at inspection has been refreshed in safe sleep and will ensure that they are respectful of the children settling to sleep at all times and care practices are positive at all times.

Appropriate and suitable care practices are in place and staff interactions during sleep will be monitored. Management will observe and support staff ensuring they engage and interact with the children in a calm and relaxed manner. We will ensure that appropriate and suitable care practices will be in place at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

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 this non-compliance.

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 of age in the Wobbler Masai Mara and Toddler Serengeti rooms. Seven children aged 1 year were observed on floor beds during the designated nap time. These beds were not fitted with firm, flat, waterproof and breathable mattresses.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Sleep is important for young children as it directly impacts on their wellbeing and development. We will always ensure that children are placed in a safe and well supervised environment. Additional cots have been purchased and have been put into practice for the seven children within the Serengeti and Masi-Mara rooms.

Children under the age of 2 years will be provided with a cot. Children over 2 years will be provided with a floor bed. We will ensure that the floor beds are firm, flat, waterproof and breathable for children.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic 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 this non-compliance.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,
 - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and
 - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.

Compliance Information

- (1) A complaints policy was available in the service which specified the following:
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service.
 - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with.
 - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.