

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2025DR002
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Name of Service:	Giraffe Childcare
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Address of Service:	Moonstone The Grange, Brewery Road, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	A94 P5H2
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Name of Registered Provider:	Dearbhala Cox Giffin
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	25/06/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	53	PM	54
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla – Child & Family Agency, Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Bray, Co Wicklow.
Inspection undertaken by:	Sarah Quigley and Olivia Quill
Title:	Early Years Inspector(s)

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 Stillorgan is a privately operated service and is one of twenty-five Giraffe Childcare facilities operated by the registered provider. The service currently provides full day, part time, and sessional care and education to children aged 0 - 6 years old. The hours of opening are from 8am to 6pm, 51 weeks of the year. The premises is a purpose built two storey facility located within a mixed housing development in an urban area of Stillorgan, south county Dublin. There are eight care rooms available, and two separate cot rooms are provided on the ground floor. Two separate enclosed outdoor spaces are available on the premises. One on the ground floor and one on a roof terrace on the first floor.

Staffing

The service currently employs twenty-four staff members, not including the registered provider who does not work directly in the service. On the day of inspection, twenty-five staff members were present including the registered provider, a cook, and an area manager.

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 announced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child

Regulation 28 - Insurance

Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Acacia Room, the Zambezi Room, the Safari Room, and the Kenya 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.

Additional Information

On the 26th March 2025, the registered provider made an application to increase the maximum number of children in attendance in the service from 86 to 120, with the proposed increase being facilitated within the existing eight care rooms available.

A previous condition on the fire certificate for the service has been lifted and a new fire certificate has been issued, enabling the increase to occur as children requiring sleep can now be accommodated on the first floor following the completion of some building works within the existing first floor care rooms. The proposed increase was assessed as part of the inspection process.

Based on the space available and the proposed age groups of the children in attendance within the eight care rooms, the requirement has been met to accommodate a maximum of 117 children at any one time.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, area manager, 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 an appointed person to deputise as required. Documentation reviewed evidenced that the person in charge or the person named to deputise were on the premises at all times during the opening hours of the service.

(2) Documentation was reviewed in respect of all twenty-four adults employed to work in the service. The following records were available for the twenty-four adults:

(a) (b)

The registered provider demonstrated that they had verified the references obtained from two sources for each of the adults.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from The National Vetting Bureau for the twenty-four adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting for the adults who required it.

(4) There was evidence that nineteen of the adults had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework for Qualifications, or a qualification deemed to be equivalent. Two of the adults who did not hold a recognised qualification held a letter of qualification recognition from the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE). Three adults did not require a qualification as they did not work directly with the children.

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) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the pre-school children attending the service during the inspection.

(2) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained in the service on the day of inspection. There were fifty-four children present in the service being supervised by eighteen adults during the inspection. The two centre managers provided assistance in the care rooms where required.

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 inspectors observed appropriate care practices in place during the inspection. The children moved freely – exploring their environments, playing and engaging with staff and each other. The service had a healthy eating policy in place. Regular meals and snacks were provided to the children throughout the inspection which were prepared onsite by a cook, including a hot lunch. Staff and children sat together during mealtimes and staff assisted children with feeding where needed. Bibs were worn during meals by younger children to protect the children's clothes from becoming soiled or wet. Drinks of water were always available within the care rooms and were offered to the children regularly and with meals.

Babies were observed to be placed to sleep in line with their individual care needs and rest areas were available in each room to enable the children to take time away from the group as desired. Older children were given the opportunity to sleep after lunch. The rooms where they slept were calm and conducive to sleep. The children who had soothers were offered them when they were being placed to sleep. Staff provided the children with reassurance and comfort when settling them to sleep, sitting with them and speaking to them gently.

Staff supported children to be independent in their environment including cleaning up following mealtimes and play, preparing for meals, and washing hands before meals. Adults used respectful language during interactions observed with the children and were responsive to children's individual care needs, including responding promptly to younger children's cues for care. Staff Infants brought bottles of milk from home and were given these according to their individual routines.

Older children used the toilet independently with assistance provided from staff where needed, and children wearing nappies were changed regularly and when required. Staff used opportunities when assisting with personal care for warm individual engagement with the children.

Two enclosed outdoor play areas were available, one on the ground floor and one on a roof top terrace on the first floor. The areas were well resourced with a variety of play equipment and materials. The children were provided with the opportunity to play outside and were appropriately dressed to the weather in light clothing and

sun hats. The care rooms were well resourced with a variety of equipment and materials which were arranged on low level shelving units, facilitating the children's choices in play. Staff reported that information on children's routines, including nappies, sleep and food, were recorded on an interactive online application to be shared with the parents each day.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

Documentation reviewed evidenced that the service was adequately insured for the type of service provided and the number of children currently in attendance, including the proposed increase in children.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.

(2) A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.

Compliance Information

- (1) Adequate clear floor space has been provided for the work, play and movement of children currently attending the service. The inspection incorporated a review of the space available in the current eight care rooms to facilitate an application submitted by the provider to increase from 86 to 120 children. Based on the space available and the proposed age groups of the children in attendance within the eight care rooms, the requirement has been met to accommodate an increase to a maximum of 117 children at any one time, as detailed below under (2);

(2)

Room name	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3	Room 4	Room 5	Room 6	Room 7	Room 8
	Acacia	Zambezi	Baringo	Safari	Serengeti	Madagascar	Botswana	Kenya
Clear floor space	45.8sqm	42sqm	30sqm	31sqm	31.1sqm	48.8sqm	35.3sqm	40sqm
Proposed age range	0 – 1yrs	1yr	1 – 2yrs	1 – 2yrs	1 – 2yrs	3+yrs	2 – 3yrs	3+yrs

The overall maximum capacity the centre can accommodate is 117 children on a full day care basis. The number of children attending each room must be in accordance with those specified in column (3) of schedule 7 under Regulation 30.