

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR101
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Name of Service:	Coco's Creche & Montessori
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Address of Service:	Lanford, Sydney Terrace, Blackrock, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	A94 WR02
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Name of Registered Provider:	Lorraine Foy
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	15/05/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	38	PM	37
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	H Sutherland
Title:	Early Years Inspector

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).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

Coco's Creche & Montessori is located in an urban, residential area of Blackrock, South County Dublin. The service provides full day care and education to children aged 0 to 6 years and opens from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. The premises consists of a single storey, purposely adapted building with three child-care rooms, a sleep room and two outdoor areas.

Staffing

There are currently ten adults employed to work in the service including the person in charge. The registered provider does not work in the service.

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

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulations 9 (2), (3), (4), 11 (1), (2), (8), 16 (h), (i), (j), (k), 19(1a) and 23; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 8. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 19 Health, welfare and development of child and Regulation 16 Record in relation to pre-school service. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Baby and Toddler rooms.

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

A referral was made to Services Operating Outside of Registration (SOORS). Please refer to the information outlined under Regulation 8 in this report.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Part II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Non-Compliance Information

The registered provider failed to notify the inspectorate of a change in the number of children attending the service. There were 38 children present in the service when the inspector arrived. An additional child arrived at 10.03am, increasing the number to 39. Staff informed the inspector that the max number on any given day was 9 in the Baby room, 19 in the Montessori room, and 12 in the Toddler room. The service is currently registered to cater for 37 children and as such was found to be operating outside of the terms of their registration.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider stated the following corrective and preventive actions:

The service immediately reviewed children's attendance numbers and checked their register. They contacted parents to confirm children's holiday and attendance. The attendance records have been reviewed to ensure numbers remain within the required capacity. The service responded to the email from SOORS to ensure they are now back within their required capacity.

All bookings, holidays and changes to attendance will be double checked and confirmed in advance. The service will continue to monitor daily attendance numbers closely to ensure the setting remains within the required limits.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of email correspondence submitted

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions stated by the registered provider have been deemed appropriate in addressing the non-compliance.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(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,

(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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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

(2) Following a discussion with the person in charge, it was confirmed that two adults commenced employment in the service since Regulation 9 was last inspected on 2 September 2025. Documentation required under Regulation 9 (2), (3), (4) was reviewed in respect of the two adults as detailed below.

(a) Four written and verified references were available from past employers.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the two adults.

(d) Police vetting was available in respect of the two adults who had lived outside of the State for a period longer than six months as adults.

(3) Documentation reviewed evidenced that the procedures specified above under Regulation 9(2) had been carried out before the two adults commenced employment in the service.

(4) Documentation was available to show that the two adults who worked directly with children attending the service held a qualification deemed appropriate by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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) The number of adults present and working directly with the children on the day of the inspection was appropriate to support their needs.
- (2) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained on the day of inspection. There were 39 children present in the service, supervised by 9 adults. The person in charge provided relief cover to the care rooms when required.
- (8) The roster provided to the inspector by the person in charge showed that a minimum of two staff members were on the premises at all times during the operation of the service.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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) A record was available in each care room detailing the attendance of each preschool child on the day of inspection.
- (i) An accurate staffing roster was available in the service, detailing the hours of work for each staff member on the day of inspection. Previous records of staff members rostered to work in the service were available for review also.
- (j) The service maintained records of medication administration. A review of a sample of 10 records confirmed that the required information was appropriately documented.
- (k) The service had written records of accidents and incidents available for inspection. A sample of 10 records were reviewed and demonstrated that the necessary information was recorded.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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

Compliance Information

Each child's learning, development and well-being is facilitated within the daily life of the service as outlined below:

Staff reported that the service provides breakfast and a hot lunch and children bring a morning and afternoon snack from home, which consisted of rice cakes, crackers, fruit and yogurt. On the day of the inspection children were served beef ragu and diced potatoes for their lunch. Children were encouraged to eat their meals independently and staff provided support to younger children when required. Drinking water was available and offered to children with their meals. Children's nappies were changed on a schedule and as needed and staff provided advanced notice and used the time for warm one to one interaction. Children were encouraged to be independent when using the toilet and staff remained close by to provide support if needed.

Younger children slept in accordance with their individual routine, while older children slept at a designated time after lunch. Staff reported that the sleep schedule was flexible and children could sleep outside of the designated time should they display signs of tiredness. This practice was observed during the inspection. Areas with child size seating and rugs were available in each of the care rooms for children to rest if required. Children were made comfortable for sleep and staff supported the transition, remaining next to some of the children providing comfort and reassurance.

Play was child led and children had autonomy to choose their preferred play materials. Staff sat with children during play, sang songs and actively listened and observed to identify moments to extend children's learning. When children were finished playing with materials staff encouraged them to tidy up and acknowledged them doing so independently. Staff were observed to be warm and friendly in their interactions with children throughout the inspection. The service had a settling in procedure and staff described how they were supporting a new child who had just joined the Baby room. The inspector found through discussion with staff that children spent time outdoors daily and outdoor play was promoted. Children were observed to spend time outside during the inspection. The outdoor space had a variety of equipment to support sustained engagement such as a climbing frame, playhouse, push along toys, a sand table and bikes.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

The care rooms were laid out with open low-level shelving. The materials were arranged in a manner that supported independence, enabled choice and encouraged spontaneous play. Materials available included home areas, small world materials, musical instruments, puzzles, construction, books and mark making materials. Children's sense of identity and belonging was supported through displays such as family walls and photographs of the children.

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 prevent unauthorised persons from entering and to ensure children could not exit unsupervised.
- Cleaning agents and medication were stored safely out of children's reach.
- The storage facilities were inaccessible to children.
- Daily inspections of the indoor and outdoor areas took place in the service, as evidenced by documented risk assessments.

Infection Control:

- Pedal-operated bins were available throughout the service to support the safe disposal of waste.
- Liquid soap, warm water and single use paper towels were available at wash hand basins.
- Staff and children were observed engaging in appropriate and consistent hand-washing routines.
- The perishable items contained in the snacks provided by parents/guardians were stored in the fridge, preventing them from spoiling.
- Bed linen was stored individually and staff reported that it was washed on a weekly basis and as needed.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated an awareness of the procedures to take to ensure medication is given safely if needed, including obtaining written parental/guardian consent and having a witness present.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff were observed to carry out physical checks on sleeping children every ten minutes.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- A sleep log was available for review, detailing the room temperature, breathing pattern, colour and position of the child.
- The temperature of the rooms where children slept were maintained at the required temperature range.
- Standard cots, mats and low-level beds were available for sleep and were used in accordance with children's age.

Fire Safety:

- Staff adequately detailed the procedure to safely evacuate children from the service in the event of a fire.
- The designated fire escape routes were clearly marked and free from obstruction on the day of inspection.