

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DR142
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Coco's Childcare
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Rathenge, 114 Mount Merrion Avenue, Blackrock, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	A94 R9K2
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Lorraine Foy, Lynn Ruddle
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	26/02/2026
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	52	PM	51
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	H Sutherland and R Duff
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Cocos Childcare is a privately owned early years service located in a residential area of South County Dublin. The service operates from the ground floor of a purpose-adapted two-storey residential property. Full day care and education are provided for children 0 to 6 years of age. Opening hours are 8.00am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday. The internal layout consists of four care rooms: Baby, Wobbler, Toddler and Montessori. Two separate sleep rooms are available to accommodate the rest needs of younger children. Outdoor play space is available at both the front and rear of the property.

### Staffing

The service currently employs 13 adults, including the person in charge. The registered providers do not work directly in the service. On the day of the inspection, there were 14 adults present, including the person in charge, 12 adults working directly with the children, and one person participating in an educational work placement programme.

### 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 safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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 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

*(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

(1)

- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
- (b) The designated person in charge was present when the inspectors arrived unannounced at the service. A review of the staff roster showed that a designated person was on the premises at all times during the opening hours of the service.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in place within the service, which was confirmed with staff members and the person in charge during discussions with the inspectors. In addition to a person in charge and an adult to deputise, each care room had a room leader in place.

(2) Following a discussion with the person in charge, it was confirmed that two adults had commenced employment in the service since Regulation 9 was last inspected on 16 June 2025. Documentation required under Regulation 9 (2), (3), (4) was reviewed in respect of these adults as detailed below.

The requirements of Regulation 9(2)(c) relating to Garda vetting were reviewed for three adults whose disclosures were due for renewal. The file of a person present on an educational work placement programme, along with the qualification record of a staff member previously identified as unqualified during the last inspection, was requested for review.

- (a) Four written and verified references were available from past employers.
- (b) Two written and verified references were available from sources other than past employers.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for six adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(3) Documentation reviewed showed that the procedures specified above under Regulation 9(2) had been carried out prior to the adults commencing employment in the service.

(4) Documentation was available to show that the three adults requiring an early years qualification held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### 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) 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 minimum adult-to-child ratio was maintained for the duration of the inspection. There were 12 adults working directly with 52 children in the morning, and 12 adults working directly with 51 children in the afternoon. The person in charge was also available to provide support when required.

### 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) Documented records demonstrated that children’s attendance was accurately maintained within the preschool rooms.
- (i) An accurate staffing roster was available in the service, detailing the hours of work for each staff member on the day of inspection.

- (j) Documentation of medication administered within the service was available for inspection. A sample of 51 records reviewed showed that the records included all essential details.
- (k) The service had written records of accidents and incidents available for inspection. A sample of 46 records were reviewed and demonstrated that necessary information was recorded.

### 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-

*(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 and suitable care practices in place in the service as follows:

The children were offered meals and snacks regularly during the inspection. The service provides breakfast and a hot lunch, and the parents/guardians provide a morning and afternoon snack. Mealtimes were observed to be relaxed and a sociable experience for children. Staff sat with children and engaged in conversation. Younger children were observed to feed themselves, with staff providing support when required. Bibs were provided to protect younger children's clothing while eating their meals. Drinking water was available and offered to children regularly. A jug of water and cups were available on a low-level table in the Montessori room, and children were observed helping themselves to water as required. Opportunities were provided for children to develop self-care skills and learn about routine for example, washing their hands after using the toilet or having their nappy changed, tidying up after activities, and managing their own belongings.

Nappy changes for younger children were carried out on a schedule, and staff were observed to promptly respond to children requiring a nappy change outside of the scheduled times. During this time, staff talked to children in playful tones, supporting them to feel safe and secure. Children who were toilet training were encouraged to be independent, and staff were observed to give them gentle reminders to use the toilet. Older children were observed to use the toilet independently, and staff were available to provide support if required. Children were observed to be familiar with the routine and transitions throughout the day. This supported a calm, well organised environment where children appeared confident in knowing what to expect.

Play was child-led, with children moving freely around the care rooms and independently choosing activities that interested them. Babies slept in accordance with their own individual routines, while younger children slept at a designated time after lunch. Rest areas were available for older children, providing opportunities for relaxation and quiet time when needed. Children engaged in outdoor play were observed to be appropriately dressed for the weather. Staff described how they share information daily with parents/guardians through a software application in relation to the children's diet, nappy changes, sleep, and activities.

### 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.
- The outdoor space was observed to be safe, with no hazards identified on the day of inspection.
- Cleaning agents and medication were stored in a safe and secure manner and were inaccessible to children.
- Risk assessments of the play environments were carried out, and documented records were available for review.

##### Infection Control:

- The perishable items contained in the snacks provided by parents/guardians were stored in the fridge upon arrival and kept refrigerated until snack time, preventing them from spoiling.
- The care rooms were visibly clean and well maintained. Cleaning schedules were available for review, outlining daily cleaning tasks.
- Children's soothers were stored in individual containers and sterilised daily.
- Staff and children were observed engaging in appropriate and consistent handwashing routines.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated an awareness of the procedures required to ensure medication is given safely if needed, including obtaining written parental/guardian consent.

##### Safe Sleep:

- Staff were observed to carry out physical checks on sleeping children every ten minutes, and documented sleep checks were available for review.
- Standard cots and low-level beds were available for sleep and were used in accordance with children’s developmental needs.

**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 free from obstruction on the day of inspection.

**Part VI - Safety**

**Regulation 27 – Supervision**

*A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.*

**Compliance Information**

Throughout the inspection, the inspectors observed that staff maintained appropriate supervision of children. This included during mealtimes, sleep, activities, outdoor play, and transitions between activities.

**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 is adequately insured for the type of service provided and the number of children in attendance.