

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR142
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Name of Service:	Coco's Childcare
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Address of Service:	Rathenge, 114 Mount Merrion Avenue, Blackrock, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	A94 R9K2
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Name of Registered Provider:	Lorraine Foy, Lynn Ruddle
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date(s) of Inspection:	23/04/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	47	PM	48
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, 7 th Floor, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Dublin 8.
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Mulhern & O. Quill
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

Coco's Childcare offers full day care to children aged 0 to 6 years between 7:30am and 6:30pm. The service operates from the ground floor of a purposely adapted two storey residential property. It is in an urban area of Blackrock, South County Dublin. There are two sleep rooms and four care rooms; Baby, Wobbler, Toddler and Montessori. There is a large outdoor area at the rear of the building and a small outdoor area at the front.

Staffing

There are twelve staff employed to work in the service including the person in charge.

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 and health, welfare and development of child. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19(1)(b). As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Wobbler 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

Regulatory Compliance Meeting

A regulatory compliance meeting was held with the registered providers on 10 June 2024 due to outstanding non-compliance following CAPA process. The registered providers submitted documentation following the meeting in relation to regulation 11. This information was considered in the decision regarding compliance status.

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*
- (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 person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
 - (b) The person in charge was on the premises throughout the inspection. The staff roster provided for the person in charge or named deputy to be present at all times of opening.
- (2)
- (a) Appropriate consideration was given to the past employer references of all staff.
 - (b) References from a reputable source were considered for staff who only had one or no previous employers.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all adults and were dated within the last three years.
 - (d) International police vetting was available for all adults whom this was required.

(4) Ten adults working directly with children held 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.

Non-Compliance Information

(4) Two adults employed to work directly with the children did not hold the minimum required qualification. This regulatory requirement was non-compliant on the previous inspection dated 10 January 2022. One of the staff members had been employed following that inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Qualified staff will be employed. Check qualification with Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) before employing.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documents submitted.

Summary Comment

(4) The regulatory requirement has not been met.

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 children in the Baby and Wobbler rooms. There were 5 staff allocated to work with 17 children. The person in charge was allocated to provide break cover.

(2) The minimum ratio requirement of adults to children was always maintained in the Baby and Wobbler rooms.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) An adequate number of adults were not allocated to work directly with the children in the Toddler and Montessori rooms at all times as outlined under regulation 11(2) below.

(2) The minimum ratio requirement of adults to children was not maintained in the Toddler and Montessori rooms when staff took their breaks. Details are outlined in the charts below. The minimum ratio requirement of adults to children attending on a full-day-care basis age 2-3 years is 1:6 and age 3-6 years is 1:8.

Service allocation of adults to children - Toddler room 23 April 2024

Time	Number and age of children	Number of adults available
09:30 - 10:00	9 (8 age 2-3 years; 1 age 3-6 years)	1
12:15 - 13:10	9 (8 age 2-3 years; 1 age 3-6 years)	1
13:10 - 13:45	11 (8 age 2-3 years; 3 age 3-6 years)	1
13:45 - 14:00	10 (8 age 2-3 years; 2 age 3-6 years)	1
14:00 - 14:15	9 (8 age 2-3 years; 1 age 3-6 years)	1

Service allocation of adults to children - Montessori room 23 April 2024

Time	Number and age of children	Number of adults available
09:30 - 10:15	23 age 3 - 6 years	2
12:00 - 13:10	23 age 3 - 6 years	2
13:10 - 14:00	21 age 3-6 years	2
14:00 - 14:30	22 age 3-6 years	2
14:30 - 15:00	23 age 3-6 years	2

The inspectors reviewed the staff roster and children's attendance records for these rooms from 15 April 2024 to the day of inspection. It was evident that the minimum ratio requirement was not maintained in the Toddler room on the day prior to the inspection (22 April 2024). One adult was allocated to work with 11 children for

approximately 2.5 hours while staff took their breaks. Ten of the children were aged 2-3 years and one child was aged 3-6 years.

The minimum ratio requirement was not met in the Montessori room on any of the days dated from 15 April 2024. Only two adults were allocated to work with between 20 and 25 children for approximately three hours and 45 minutes daily, while staff took their breaks. The staff members and person in charge confirmed the information was accurate.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The service is actively recruiting qualified staff. Management will look at re organising the format for breaks and lunches to make sure ratios are maintained at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

11 (1) & (2) The registered providers did not evidence that the stated actions had been taken during the CAPA process. The registered providers submitted a staff rota following the Regulatory Compliance Meeting which included a breakdown of the rooms and staff allocations.

The rota provided for the minimum adult to child ratio requirement to be met in all rooms except the Montessori room, where only two staff had been allocated all day, every day. There were 23 children aged 3-6 years attending this room on a full day care basis on the day of inspection. Staff reported the room accommodates up to 25 children.

The regulatory requirement has not been met.

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 within the service. Meals and snacks were offered to the children regularly throughout the day. Drinks of water were available within the rooms and were offered when children were eating. The staff supported the children to manage their personal care. They provided the children with bibs to protect their clothes from becoming soiled or wet when eating. The children's nappies were changed routinely and in between when required. Staff used these opportunities for warm one-to-one interactions. Staff supported the children with handwashing at appropriate times and helped the children to clean their faces after eating.

An area was provided with matting and cushions within the rooms where the children could rest or take a break from activities. The children were provided with an opportunity to sleep after dinner. Staff told the inspector that they provide for the children to sleep outside of these times if they show signs of tiredness. The children were made comfortable for sleep with staff removing their shoes and outer clothing and providing soothers to those who used them. The environments were calm and conducive to sleep, with staff sitting with the children and soothing them as needed during this time. The staff used an app to communicate with parents/guardians in relation to the individual children's care. This included information relating to diet, sleep, and nappy-changes. Staff demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children throughout the inspection with the use of soft and gentle tones.