

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR142
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Coco's Childcare
-------------------------	------------------

Address of Service:	Rathenge, 114 Mount Merrion Avenue, Blackrock, Co. Dublin
----------------------------	---

Eircode:	A94 R9K2
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Lorraine Foy, Lynn Ruddle
-------------------------------------	---------------------------

Service type:	Full Day
----------------------	----------

Date of Inspection:	16/06/2025
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	49	PM	48
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

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:	H Sutherland, 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
---------------------------------	----------------

Description of service

Cocos childcare is a privately owned service located in a residential area in South County Dublin. The service operates from the ground floor of a purposely adapted two storey residential property and offers full day care to children aged 0 to 6 years between 7:30am and 6:30pm. The premises comprises of four care rooms, Baby, Wobbler, Toddler and Montessori and two sleep rooms. Additionally, the service has a large fully enclosed outdoor area to the rear of the premises and a fenced area to the front.

Staffing

There are currently thirteen adults employed to work in the service. On the day of inspection thirteen adults were present. This included the person in charge and eleven adults working directly with the children. In addition, one staff member who was not rostered to work in the service arrived after the inspection commenced. The staff member was assigned from another service operated by the registered providers to provide additional support in the Toddler room.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

9 (1),(a)-(c) (2),(a)-(d),(3),(4) Management and recruitment

11 (1) ,(2) Staffing levels

19(1)(a) Health, welfare and development of child

23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

25(1), (2)(a) and (b) First Aid

26(1)(a)(b) and (4) Fire safety measures.

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

16 June 2025

An immediate action notice (IAN) was issued to the registered providers on the day of inspection in relation to a risk identified under Regulation 23. The temperature of the toddler room where children under the age of three were sleeping was recorded as 24°C, which posed a potential risk to children. Further details are available in the body of the report. A response which adequately addressed the concern was received on 17 June 2025.

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
- (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

- (1)
- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as needed.
 - (b) The person in charge was on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
 - (c) There was clear management structure and staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities and the roles and responsibilities of their colleagues.
- (2) Following discussion with the deputy person in charge it was confirmed that six adults had commenced employment in the service since Regulation 9 was last inspected on 23 April 2024. Documentation required under

regulation 9(2)(3)(4) was reviewed in respect of the six adults along with the file of an additional adult who arrived to provide cover in the service. The requirements of Regulation 9(2)(c) relating to Garda Vetting was reviewed for all adults employed to work in the service.

- (a) (b) There were two references available for each of the seven adults which had been appropriately verified.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for fourteen adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda Vetting every three years for all adults employed in the service.
- (d) International Police Vetting was available for four adults who previously lived outside of the State for a period of six months or more as an adult.

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

(4) Documentation was available to show that six adults who work directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed appropriate by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE).

Non-Compliance Information

(4) One adult employed to work directly with the children did not hold the minimum required qualification. This regulatory requirement was non-compliant on previous inspections dated 23 April 2024 and 10 January 2022. The preventive actions submitted following these inspections have not prevented the non-compliance from recurring.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered providers stated the staff member has completed Early Learning and Care Level 5 and is awaiting certification. The registered providers will ensure they only employ staff with the correct qualifications.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence submitted

Summary Comment

9 (4) It is acknowledged that the staff members work has gone forward for certification. However, the non-compliance remains outstanding as the staff member does not yet hold the required qualification to work with 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) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children. There were twelve adults working directly with the forty-nine children in attendance. The person in charge was available to support when required.
- (2) The minimum adult to child ratio was maintained for the duration of the inspection.

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

Mealtimes were observed to be a calm social experience and the pace was unhurried. Staff reported that parents provide the children's daily snacks and the service provides breakfast and dinner which on the day of inspection was tomato and basil pasta. Additional portions of food were available for children requesting extra. Drinking water was available to children throughout the inspection. Older children were observed helping out with small jobs in the service, this practice promoted autonomy and gave the children a sense of responsibility. Nappy changing was carried out on a schedule and as required, staff were observed to use this time to engage in

conversation with the children ensuring a calm, positive experience. Older children were supported to use the toilet independently. Babies and young children were provided with the opportunity to sleep during the day and areas with rugs and cushions were available for older children to rest if required. All children were observed to have the opportunity to engage in outdoor play during the inspection.

The inspectors observed warm and respectful interactions during the inspection. Staff were observed positioning themselves at children's level using eye contact when communicating and provided time for children to respond with verbal and non-verbal cues. Play was observed to be child led with staff responding sensitively to children's interests and choices. Staff advised that the service uses a digital platform to provide information to parents in relation to updates on eating, nappy changes, sleep and activities. In addition, parents have the opportunity to engage in informal discussion with staff on a daily basis. Children's interests and experiences from home were acknowledged and extended by being implemented in the daily planner strengthening the link between the home and the service. Staff were observed reading stories to children and provided opportunities to discuss the images in the books supporting the development of language and communication skills.

The indoor environment offered a variety of resources to support children's learning and development. For example, home corners promoted imaginative play and social interaction and books and mark making materials fostered early literacy and communication. Construction materials were available to support early maths and fine motor skills. Children were observed using these materials to build towers during the inspection. Mirrors were placed at child level encouraging interaction and curiosity and babies were observed to show interest in their reflection during play. Children were observed to move freely around their environment without obstruction and child size furniture was used to support independence and easy access to learning materials. Materials such as, bikes, slides, playhouses, cars and balls were available in the outdoor area to support children's play and exploration.

Non-Compliance Information

- Room temperatures in the Montessori room were found to be outside of the required range of 18-22°C posing a potential risk to children's comfort and wellbeing. On the day of inspection, the temperature in the Montessori room was recorded at 26.3°C. It is acknowledged that children spent most of the morning in the garden and staff had taken measures to try to reduce the temperature such as, closing the blinds, opening windows and putting a fan on in the room. Measures taken reduced the temperature to 24°C which was still outside the required range.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The service has installed an air conditioning unit in the Montessori room. This unit allows educators to control the room temperature, ensuring it remains within the recommended guidelines at all times. The air conditioning unit will be turned on in the morning and used consistently throughout the day to ensure the room is at an appropriate temperature at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence received

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 19 (1)(a) has been adequately addressed and will be subject to review on the next inspection.

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:

- External doors were appropriately secured to prevent unauthorised entry and the children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- Staff demonstrated appropriate safety practices by applying sun cream to children prior to taking them to the garden.
- Toys and play equipment used by the children were observed to be safe for the age of children using them and in good condition.
- Cleaning agents and hazardous items were stored safely out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

- Pedal operated bins were in use in the sanitary areas and the care rooms to support effective hygiene practices.
- Liquid soap warm water and single use paper towels were available at wash hand basins.

- Effective hand washing practices were observed to control the spread of infection. For example, children were observed to wash their hands after using the toilet, following nappy changing and before lunch.
- The service was observed to be clean and well maintained and cleaning schedules detailing daily and weekly tasks were available for review.
- Staff advised that children’s bed linen is laundered weekly and as required. Each child’s bed linen was observed to be stored individually and clearly labelled with the child’s name.
- All perishable food brought by the children from home for snack time was observed to be stored in a fridge reducing the risk of bacteria multiplying.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated knowledge of the procedure to safely administer medication to a child and documentation was available for use should it be required.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff were observed to carry out physical checks on sleeping children every ten minutes.
- A sleep log was available for review, detailing the room temperature, breathing pattern, colour and position of the child.
- Appropriate bedding was used to prevent overheating.
- Standard cots and low-level beds were available for sleep and were used in accordance with children’s developmental needs.

Fire Safety:

- The designated fire exits were observed to be unobstructed throughout the inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. An immediate action notice (IAN) was issued to the registered providers on the day of inspection in relation to a risk identified under Regulation 23. The temperature of the toddler room where children under the age of three were sleeping was recorded as 24°C, which posed a potential risk to children. A response which adequately addressed the concern was received on 17 June 2025.
2. A care plan was not available for a child requiring medication posing a risk to the safe administration and management of the child’s medical needs.
3. Artificial grass in one part of the outdoor area was observed to be lifting from the surface, posing a potential trip hazard for children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. An air conditioning unit was purchased and the noncompliance was addressed on 17 June 2025. The registered providers have stated that educators will check and record the room temperature every ten minutes during sleep checks. The air conditioning unit will be turned on in the morning and used consistently throughout the day to ensure the room is at an appropriate temperature ahead of sleep times.
2. The service has consulted with the parents and have made a care plan with them and all staff have been advised that a care plan is required for medication.
3. The service has levelled and secured the artificial grass and updated their risk assessment to include condition of astro turf.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence submitted
2. Record submitted
3. Photographic evidence and record submitted

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 23 has been addressed and will be subject to review on the next inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 25 - First aid

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a person trained in first aid for children is, at all times, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box for children-

(a) is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and

(b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

Compliance Information

(1) There was evidence to show that four adults hold certification in First Aid Responder training and all four were available for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

- (a) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and stored safely in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in the hallway of the service.
- (b) The first aid box was observed to be easily available to the adults caring for the children attending the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-

- (a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and*
- (b) the number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.*

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Compliance Information

(1)

- (a) A written record was available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service. The record showed that the last fire drill took place on 15 May 2025.
- (b) The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises was up to date. Fire extinguishers were serviced in October 2024 and the smoke alarms were serviced on 16 April 2025.

(4) The procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed in prominent positions around the service. For example, in the care rooms and the hallway.