

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DS143
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Cocoon Childcare - Lucan
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	1 Rosse Court Terrace Block 5, Balgaddy, Lucan, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	K78 K260
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Nicola Battams
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	19/02/2024
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<b>Date 2 of Inspection:</b>	20/02/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	67	PM	55
<b>Day 2</b>	AM	67	PM	N/A

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Floor 7, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	F Carty and S Quigley
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<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspectors
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### 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

Cocoon Childcare Lucan is one of 14 full-day-care services operated by the registered provider. The service is located in an urban, residential area of Lucan, Co Dublin. It opens Monday to Friday from 7:30am to 6:30pm. A sessional service is offered from 9:15am to 12:15pm and a second session from 1:30pm to 4:30pm for 38 weeks of the year.

The service operates from a single storey purposely built premises on the ground floor of an apartment complex. Children are allocated to one of 6 rooms according to their age. Separate sleeping facilities are provided in the Junior and Senior Wobbler rooms. An outdoor area is located to the rear of the building.

### Staffing

The registered provider employs twenty three adults including a manager, assistant manager and a cook to work in the service. The service manager reports to the operations executive who oversees the management of a number of services.

On the first day of inspection there were seventeen adults working directly with the children including both the manager and assistant manager. A staff member from another centre and the operations executive arrived to the service following the inspectors arrival. There were also two students present.

On the second day of inspection there were twenty adults present including the operations manager and two staff from other centres.

The registered provider was present for the feedback meeting on Day two of the inspection.

### 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, information and records, 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:

Regulation 9 – Recruitment

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

Regulation 16 - Record in relation to pre-school service

Regulation 19 - Health welfare and development of child

Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of pre-school child

Regulation 25 – First Aid

Regulation 26 – Fire Safety Measures

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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 children, registered provider, person in charge and staff who were present on the days of the inspection.

### 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,*

*(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

The files for twenty-three adults including the operations manager, two staff from another branch, a cook and two students who were present on the day of inspection were reviewed.

- (2)
- (a) There were forty-one written validated references available from previous employers for adults employed in the service.
  - (b) Five references from other sources were available for adults who did not have a previous employer.
  - (c) Garda vetting was available for all adults.
  - (d) Police vetting was available for sixteen adults for whom it was required.

(4) All adults who required a qualification had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth (DCEDIY) to meet the regulatory requirement.

### 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)

There were an adequate number of adults working directly with children attending the service. There were seventeen adults working directly with sixty seven children on the first day of inspection and twenty adults available to work directly with sixty seven children on the second day of inspection; this included the service manager. The operations manager and two staff from other branches were also working directly with children on both days of inspection.

(2)

The minimum adult to child ratios were maintained at all times throughout both days of inspection.

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:*

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*

*(f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*

*(g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*

*(h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*

*(i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

### Compliance Information

(1)  
A sample of twenty six records of preschool children maintained in the service were reviewed by the inspectors to assess compliance. The documentation reviewed evidenced that eighteen of the records detailed all of the required information outlined under Regulation 15(1), and that 11 of the records detailed the required information under 15(1)(a) to (i)

### Non-Compliance Information

(1)  
Eight records did not contain all the information required as follows:  
(b) Three records did not have the date on which the child first attended the service.  
(g) Three records did not contain details of the child's medical practitioner.  
(h) Two records did not contain the immunisation records of the child.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)  
(b,g,h) Prior to the Inspection, all parents were emailed to provide updated immunisation records for their children. All updated booking forms have since been collected and are now on file.  
A periodic schedule is in place for the centre management team to review children's records are completed in full and all relevant information is up to date.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

An email to parents requesting immunisation records was submitted to the inspector.

## Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions together with the evidence submitted are deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 15.

## 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 written record was available in the care room detailing the attendance of each preschool child on the day of inspection.
- (j) Records of the administration of medication were available in the service and a sample reviewed on the day of inspections detailed signed parental consent
- (k)  
Written records of accidents and incidents which occurred in the service were available on the day of inspection. A sample reviewed documented necessary details.

### Non-Compliance Information

(i)

A roster was available and given to the inspectors upon arrival to the service, however it did not document the names of staff that were working on the day of inspection. A staff member from another branch arrived at 11.30am to assist in the service. When asked, the manager was not informed prior to the inspection that this member of staff was due to arrive and was therefore not noted on the roster.

It is acknowledged that a roster detailing all of the staffing in the service on day two was given to the inspectors upon their arrival.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

On the morning of the inspection, a staff member had contacted the centre to say that they were unable to attend work. A relief member from another centre was organised by a member of Operations team to cover this absence, and as the manager was facilitating the Inspection. The staff roster was updated that afternoon. Where required, staff rosters will be updated daily to include staff absences due to illness.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

No supporting documentation submitted.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted are deemed to address the requirements of Regulation 16.

## 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 care practices in place in the service during the inspection.

Staff reported that all meals with the exception of children attending on a sessional basis are provided daily by the service with all food prepared freshly on site by a chef. Children's drinks were available to them in the care rooms at all times. Mealtimes were observed to be sociable occasions with extra food being offered if children requested it. Children's faces were washed following mealtimes, clothes were changed if wet or soiled and all nappies were changed at set times and when required.

The play experiences in the service were observed to be child-led. Staff were observed supporting the children's learning, sitting and engaging with the children and using prompts to extend play experiences. Children all accessed the toilet independently during the inspection and staff supported younger children where required. Staff demonstrated kindness and warmth during interactions observed by the inspectors. Comfort was offered to children promptly when required and the children appeared happy and content throughout the inspection.

Children attending the Junior Wobbler room were placed to sleep when they displayed signs of tiredness or when their routine dictated.

Soothers were offered to children who used them when they were being placed to sleep. Staff provided the children with reassurance and comfort where required when they were settling them to sleep, speaking gently to them. Areas were provided within the care rooms where children could rest or take a break from activities as desired.

Children who accessed the outdoor area on both days of inspection were appropriately dressed conducive to the weather in hats and coats.

## 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

An example of measures taken to safeguard the children from harm is outlined below.

#### General Safety:

- Entrances were secured to prevent unauthorised access and children leaving unsupervised.
- Exits were kept clear for the safe evacuation of children in the event of an emergency.
- Heavy furniture was secured to prevent tipping and injury.
- Cleaning products and medicines were stored out of reach of children.

#### Infection Control:

- Children's hands were washed before eating, after using the toilet and after nappy changing.
- Adults were observed washing their hands after wiping children's noses, after changing children's nappies and before serving food.
- Procedures were in place for the removal and cleaning of toys which had been mouthed by children.

#### Administration of Medication:

There was written evidence of prior parental consent for the administration of both temperature reducing and prescribed medications, and there were procedures in place to safely administer and document such medication if required, including in the case of an emergency. Staff adequately detailed the procedures for administering medication when required during discussions with the inspectors. Documentation was available to record such administration if required, a sample of this documentation was reviewed by the inspectors and was appropriate.

#### Safe Sleep:

Children under two years were placed to sleep in cots whilst those over two years slept on beds. Ten minute sleep checks took place and staff were aware of the requirements under safe sleep guidance.

#### Fire Safety:

Regular fire drills took place, and all fire exits were kept clear.

#### Non-Compliance Information

### General Safety:

1. A broken chair was observed in the ECCE room on the first day of inspection which could cause injury to a child if used.

It is acknowledged that the chair had been removed on the second day of inspection.

### Infection Control:

2. There was a soiled nappy observed on the counter in the pre-school sanitary accommodation. The inspectors observed the soiled nappy left for over an hour which caused a malodour in the area. Children were also observed accessing the sanitary accommodation independently during this time.

3. The refrigerator in the ECCE room which was used to store the children's lunches which contained perishable items was not working, the temperature was recorded at 18.4° Celsius and the inside of the fridge was observed to be unclean. There were long strands of hair, and a build up of dirt and food particles observed in the refrigerator. The high temperature could cause tummy upset as the perishable food is not kept at the required temperature prior to consumption.

4. In the ECCE and Junior Preschool rooms there were gaps in the wooden flooring which had a build-up of dirt and debris.

5. In the ECCE, Preschool and Junior Preschool rooms the lacquered surfaces on some tables was chipped in parts which can't be effectively cleaned.

6. The tables in the ECCE room and parts of the flooring in the Junior Preschool rooms had a sticky residue on them which had not been cleaned effectively.

7. The sanitary accommodation in between the Junior Preschool and ECCE rooms was not clean on the first day of inspection. There was a build up of dirt and dust on the sinks and around the toilet bowls. There were no cleaning schedules available to demonstrate when the toilets and sinks had last been cleaned.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### **Corrective & Preventive Action**

#### **General Safety:**

1. A member of staff removed the chair immediately after the afternoon session was completed. The centre management team will actively monitor that all damaged equipment is removed from care rooms immediately.

#### **Infection Control:**

2. All staff were retrained in our Nappy changing procedure, with emphasis on the correct disposal of nappies. The centre management team are actively monitoring all sanitary areas throughout the day, to ensure high levels of cleanliness and infection control.
3. The maintenance team arrived shortly after the inspection took place and replaced the socket fuse. A deep clean of the fridge took place, and the centre management team are actively monitoring the daily temperature records and fridge cleaning records.
4. The maintenance team addressed the gaps in flooring. Going forward, staff will notify a member of the management team of any maintenance issues identified, and arrangements will be made for required work to be completed.
5. Preschool furniture is scheduled for replacement this quarter. The centre management team will continue to monitor that all care room equipment is in good condition and plan for its replacement, where needed.
6. Residue was removed immediately after the inspection had taken place. All staff are aware of the requirement to remove tape residue, after activities have taken place.
7. The sanitary area was cleaned that evening, and the cleaning schedule was removed from staff clip board and displayed on the sanitary area door.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

#### **General Safety:**

No evidence submitted.

#### **Infection Control:**

2. A copy of the Nappy Changing Policy training was submitted.
3. A photograph of the fridge was submitted.
4. A photograph of the repaired flooring was submitted.
7. Updated cleaning schedules were submitted.

### **Summary Comment**

The corrective and preventive actions together with the evidence submitted are deemed to have addressed the non-compliance under Regulation 23.

### 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) A person with current first aid training was available to the children throughout the inspection.

(2)

(a) The first aid box was suitably equipped and stored in a conspicuous position.

(b) The first aid box was available for use at all times.

### 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.

### Compliance Information

(a) A written record was available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service. The record showed that the last fire drill had taken place on the 31st January 2024.

(b) There was a record to show that the firefighting equipment had been serviced in August 2023, and that maintenance of the fire detection and alarm system had also taken place on the 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023.