

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DS143		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Cocoon Childcare - Lucan		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	1 Rosse Court Terrace Block 5, Balgaddy, Lucan, Co. Dublin		
<b>Eircode:</b>	K78 K260		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Nicola Battams		
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	06/08/2025		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	48	PM 51
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	The Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive, County Dublin.		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	O Quill and S Quigley		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspectors		
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>			
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		

### Description of service

Cocoon Childcare Lucan is a private childcare facility and is one of fifteen Services operated by the registered provider in the Dublin, Kildare and Wicklow regions. Full day care, part-time care and sessional care and education is provided for children aged 1-6 years of age. The hours of operation are between 7:30am and 6:30pm Monday to Friday.

The service operates from a single storey purpose-built premises on the ground floor of an apartment complex in an urban, residential area of Lucan, County Dublin. Care of the children is facilitated across six care rooms. Junior and Senior Wobbler rooms cater for children aged 1 year. Toddler 1 and 2 rooms cater for children aged 2 years. Junior Pre-School and Pre-School rooms cater for children aged 3 years and older. A dedicated cot room is located within the Junior and Senior Wobblers rooms. An enclosed outdoor area is located to the rear of the building.

### Staffing

The service currently employs nineteen staff including a cook and domestic staff. There were thirteen staff working directly with the children on the day of inspection. Two area managers arrived after the inspection commenced and one of the managers attended the closing meeting with the person in charge. The registered provider does not work directly in the service and was not present during 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, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

Compliance was assessed under the following regulations:

9(1)(a)(b), (2) (a)-(d) and (4) Management and Recruitment,

11(1), (2), (8)(a) Staffing Levels,

19(1)(a)(b) Health, Welfare and Development of Child,

23 Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of Child,

28 Insurance.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulations:

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

23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Junior and Senior Wobblers and Toddler 1 and 2 care rooms.

The inspection did not include the Junior Pre-School and Pre-School 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.

## Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, operations managers, 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)(b) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required who were both on the premises throughout the inspection.

(2) Following a review of files and a discussion with the manager it was confirmed five adults commenced working in the service since the last inspection on 20 February 2024. Additionally, an adult from a childcare agency was present on inspection. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these six adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a) Eleven written validated references were provided from past employers.

(b) One written validated reference provided was from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all adults employed in the service. Garda vetting disclosures had been renewed in accordance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, which requires services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting had been sourced as required for four adults who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than 6 months as an adult.

(4) Records were available evidencing that five adults who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or equivalent. One adult held a letter of qualification recognition from the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE).

### 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) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children for full day care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were fifty one children attending the service being supervised by thirteen adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a) There were at least two adults on the premises at all times. The staff roster provided for a minimum of two adults to be on the premises at all times of opening.

### 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:

(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;

#### Compliance Information

(1)(i) The staff roster was available.

### 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

(1)(a)

##### Basic Needs:

Each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the pre-school. There was a calm atmosphere in the service. Staff displayed warmth and sensitivity during their interactions with the children. Meals and snacks were provided at regular intervals throughout the day. The children sat in groups when eating. Staff sat with the children at mealtime and younger children were encouraged to feed themselves and additional support was provided as required. Milk and water were offered with the morning snack and drinking water was freely available in all care rooms.

Older children were observed to use the toilet independently while younger children's nappies were changed as needed and staff were observed engaging warmly with the children when providing this care. The children slept in cots and low beds appropriate to their age and stage of development after dinner. They were made comfortable

for sleep with staff removing their outer clothing and providing soothers for those who used them. Staff reported there is a daily timetable for outdoor play. Children were observed to enjoy the time outdoors both playing on the equipment provided and playing various games with staff.

### Supporting Relationships:

Staff demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care and responded to children's cues promptly. Staff interacted kindly with the children throughout the inspection and were observed supporting children in their play. Family photos, a birthday wall and children's artwork were displayed in the care rooms fostering a sense of belonging and creating a welcoming environment.

Staff described how they record information about each child's day using a written template detailing information on food, sleep, nappy changes and activities. Parents were observed in the service during drop off and collection times and staff shared information about the children with their parents at these times.

### Physical and Material Environment:

The environment was laid out to support children's independence. Each care room provided a variety of developmentally appropriate play materials and areas of interest allowing children the freedom to play and explore. These materials were observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving provided. Designated areas of interest included home corners, book areas, and construction toys. Suitable rest areas were available to allow children to take a break from activities. A fully enclosed outdoor play space was located to the rear of the premises and had an artificial grass surface. The outdoor area was divided into two separate play spaces which were well resourced with a range of developmentally appropriate play equipment.

## 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:

- Access to the service was secure to prevent unauthorised access or children leaving unsupervised. An intercom system was in place to monitor visitors before granting access. The outdoor area to the rear of the premises was secured by a high wall.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to children.

- Cleaning agents and medications were stored safely out of reach of children.
- Blind cords were secured safely on all windows and doors.

### Infection Control:

- The environment was clean and staff maintained a cleaning schedule. Mouthed toys were removed and placed in a designated container to be sterilised before being reintroduced for children to play with.
- Staff were familiar with the system in place to sterilise children's soothers. After use all soothers were stored in individual labelled containers.
- Staff stated bed linen is laundered weekly and staff confirmed it's completed more frequently if required.
- Sanitary facilities were equipped to support handwashing. Staff guided children to wash their hands after using the toilet, after outdoor play and before meals.
- Children's nappies were changed in accordance with infection control procedures.
- Waste was properly managed using pedal-operated bins, ensuring hands-free disposal.

### Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated an understanding of the procedures to administer medication safely if needed including obtaining written parent/guardian consent. Detailed records were available of medicines given. These had been signed by the person who gave the medicine and a witnessing staff member.
- Care plans were available for children with specific medical conditions and staff were familiar with them.

### Safe Sleep:

- Staff were familiar with the safe sleep policy and remained in the rooms at all times when children were sleeping. A written record of physical checks of the children was recorded at 10-minute intervals by staff.

### Fire Safety:

- Staff demonstrated an awareness of the procedures to take in the event of a fire. The fire exits were clear from obstruction and the fire assembly point was signposted.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

*A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.*

#### Compliance Information

There was evidence that insurance was in place for a maximum number of 104 children valid until 31 January 2026.