

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DS145
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Cocoon Childcare - Tallaght
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	11 Marfield Mall, Tallaght, Dublin 24, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D24 K8AF
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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 of Inspection:</b>	11/09/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	47	PM	47
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Level 7, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham D08X01F
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	R Phillips, E Mulhern
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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>	N/A
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### Description of service

Cocoon Childcare Tallaght is one of 16 childcare services operated by Cocoon Educare Ltd.

Children aged 1 to 6 years are accommodated on a sessional, part-time, and full-day care basis between 07:30 and 18:30 Monday to Friday.

The service operates from a purposely built facility located on the ground floor of a mixed commercial and residential development. The service has six care rooms and two designated sleep rooms. An outdoor area is available to the side and rear of the premises.

### Staffing

The service employed eighteen staff including a manager, deputy person in charge, two cooks, a cleaner and thirteen childcare practitioners. The person in charge and deputy person in charge were present when the inspectors arrived unannounced for the inspection. An operations manager arrived to support 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

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

- 11 (1)(2) Staffing levels
- 16(1) (h)(i)(j)(k) Records of a preschool service.
- 19(1)(b) Health, welfare and development of child and
- 23 Safeguarding health, safety, and welfare of child.

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

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16 Records of a preschool service and regulation 19(1)(b) Health welfare and development of child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included Wobbler 1 Wobbler 2 and Junior Toddler rooms. A sample of 10 medication administration records and a sample of ten accident and incident forms were reviewed.

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
- (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 person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
  - (b) The service manager and deputy person in charge were on the premises during the inspection. The staff roster provided for the person in charge or a person who could deputise to be present at all times of opening.
  - (c) The service had a clearly documented management structure with staff roles outlined. Adults demonstrated an understanding of their roles and responsibilities and the lines of authority within the service.

(2) Documentation was reviewed in respect of all staff employed to care for the preschool children since the last inspection on 17 April 2024 and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a)(b)

References had been sourced from past employers and reputable sources for the nine staff whose files were reviewed as required.

(c) Garda Vetting had been sourced for all adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for nineteen adults employed.

(d) Records of police vetting were available for eight staff who had lived outside the Irish jurisdiction for six months or more as an adult.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph 2 were carried out prior to the adult's commencing employment in the service for all new staff files inspected.

(4) A record was available evidencing that seven of the adults working directly with the children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or equivalent.

### 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 adequate numbers of adults caring for the children throughout the inspection.

(2) There were 13 childcare practitioners, a manager, deputy manager and operations manager all working directly with 47 children on the day of inspection.

### 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.*

*(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(h)

Details of the attendance of each child in the service were recorded at the time of entering and leaving the service.

(i)

The staff roster was available on the day of inspection and reflected the adults working in the service on that day.

(j)

A sample of ten medication administration records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.

(k)

A sample of ten accident and incidents records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.

(3) The records were made available as required for 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-
- (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

There was drinking water available at all times during the inspection.

The children were offered meals and snacks at regular intervals.

The staff promoted the older children's independence with personal care; toilet use and managing their belongings.

Nappy changing was carried out in a responsive manner, and the opportunity was used by the staff to engage with the children on a one-to-one level.

The staff were gentle in their approach to caring for the children.

The children were supported in transitions from one activity to another and soothed when they became upset.

The staff assisted the children to get comfortable for sleep, removing outer clothing and shoes and giving soothers to those who use them.

## 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

The following are examples of the measures undertaken by the registered provider, manager and staff members to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the children attending the service:

#### General Safety:

The entrance doors and outdoor area were appropriately secured preventing children from exiting the premises unsupervised and unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service.

There was artificial grass in the outdoor area, providing a safe all-weather surface for outdoor play.

The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order.

Thermostatically controlled warm water was available in the children's sanitary facilities, and did not exceed the maximum safe temperature of 43°C.

Cleaning agents were stored appropriately in locked cupboards, and up on high shelving out of reach of children.

### **Infection Control:**

Inspectors observed staff cleaning tables before and following meals and snacks.

The cots and floor beds appeared clean, with fresh linen, which staff stated was washed for cots and floor beds weekly or more frequently as required. Cot mattresses were covered in waterproof wipeable material.

Soothers for some of the younger children were stored in individual boxes labelled until sleep time.

There was a system in place in the wobbler rooms for mouthed toys, taking them out of circulation and staff were aware of the process of cleaning and sterilising them.

Staff were observed washing their hands before serving food to the children.

Staff were observed washing younger children's hands before and after meals and after wiping their noses and after returning from outdoor play.

### **Administration of Medication:**

Medicines were stored out of reach of children.

Medicine was stored in the original packaging as required.

Staff demonstrated an understanding of the appropriate measures to be taken to safeguard children if medicine administration was required.

A sample of medication records were reviewed. The forms were completed correctly including the name and dose of medicine given, rational for administration of medicine, written parental consent and the signatures of a staff member who gave the medicine, a staff member who witnessed same, and of parents.

No child was observed having medication on the day of inspection.

### **Safe Sleep:**

The children were observed to be facilitated to sleep in cots or low-level beds as appropriate.

The sleep room temperature was 17.4°C.

Staff remained in the room with the sleeping children on low level beds. Staff were observed to carry out sleep checks at ten-minute intervals and document same. Observations included the children's breathing pattern, sleep position, colour, room temperature, staff comments and signatures.

### Fire Safety:

The fire exits were unobstructed throughout the service.

Signage clearly marked fire exits throughout the service. Each room had fire safety information signs with the fire evacuation procedure clearly outlined on each.

### Outing:

The operations manager stated that the service does not bring the children on outings.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### Infection Control:

1. Handwashing practices observed at nappy changing were at variance with the hand washing and nappy changing policy in place in the service. One member of staff changed two children's nappies in a row and didn't wash their own or the children's hands.
2. The mat was not wiped down following nappy changes. This puts the children at risk of cross contamination and spread of infection.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### Infection Control:

The staff team were being retrained and reissued the policy for nappy changing, infection control and handwashing after the inspection took place. We also held a full day induction for all new team members which took place on Saturday 13th September which focused on quality care practices and included Nappy Changing in detail along with demonstration and staff participation. The centre management team also held a centre team meeting on Monday 6th October which included our nappy changing policy in both detail, practical demonstration and staff participation.

The centre management team will continue to actively monitor nappy changing and handwashing procedures within the centre and ensure retraining is held if required. The centre management team will also ensure to continue providing training on nappy changing and handwashing for any new starters that may commence employment through the centre induction and physical demonstration of nappy changing.

## Supporting documentation submitted

### Infection Control:

Signed sheets indicating staff have read the handwashing, infection control and nappy changing policy and procedure documents.

Signed induction training records, completed on dates in September and October 2025 since the recent inspection, detailing training in handwashing, infection control and nappy changing policies and procedures.

The training presentation including the above procedures.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions taken to address the non-compliances and evidence submitted have been reviewed by the early years inspector and deemed to address the non-compliances.

## 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

On the day of inspection all children were supervised appropriately, at all times, including transitions, nappy changes, using the toilet and at mealtimes. Children were adequately supervised in the outdoor area. Children were supervised primarily by sight during the course of the inspection. Room layouts allowed for effective supervision.