

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS200
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Name of Service:	Cocoon Childcare - Kimmage
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Address of Service:	28a Shelton Park, Lower Kimmage Road, Kimmage, Dublin 12, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D12 PN40
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Name of Registered Provider:	Nicola Battams
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	24/02/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	74	PM	79
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	1st floor Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.
Inspection undertaken by:	S Quigley & E Mulhern
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

Cocoon Educare Kimmage is a full day care service located in an urban, residential area of Kimmage, Dublin 12 and is 1 of 17 services operated by the registered provider. Care and education are provided to children aged between 6 months and 6 years. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 07:30 and 18:30 hours. The service operates from a purpose-built single storey premises. Children are allocated to one of six care rooms dependant on their age and stage of development. A large outdoor play space is located to the side of the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs 22 staff members including a centre manager, and a cook. The registered provider does not work directly in the service. On the day of inspection, 22 staff members were present. An area manager arrived to the service to support the centre manager and facilitate the inspection. The registered provider was not present during the inspection but arrived to the centre for feedback at the close of 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/ safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19 health, welfare and development of child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Junior Wobbler, Junior Preschool, the Wobbler, and the Junior Toddler 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, staff and children who were present on the day 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.*

(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

(2)

Following a discussion with the person in charge it was confirmed that 10 adults had commenced working in the service since regulation 9 was last inspected on the 12 June 2025. Documentation required under regulation 9(2)(3)(4) was reviewed in respect of these 10 adults as detailed below.

- (a) (b) There were 2 references each available for the 10 adults which had been appropriately verified.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the ten 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 to work in the service.
- (d) Of the 10 adults, 9 required International Police vetting which was available for the 9 adults.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) had been carried out prior to the adult's commencing employment in the service.

(4) Nine of the adults held at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework. One of the adults who did not hold a recognised qualification 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.

Compliance Information

- (1) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the pre-school children attending the service during the inspection.
- (2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were 74 pre-school children in the morning and 79 in the afternoon attending the service being supervised by 17 adults during 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-*
- (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

(1)(b)

The children appeared content during the inspection, engaging in free play and activities. Most children spent time outdoors and were dressed in coats appropriate to the weather. Meals and snacks were prepared on site by a cook and offered at regular intervals throughout the day. The children sat in small groups with adults when eating. The adults encouraged self-feeding in younger rooms providing assistance when required and engaged the children in conversation promoting social skills. Drinks were accessible to the children indoors and were offered with meals.

The adults supported the children to manage their personal care. They reminded and assisted them to wash their hands and faces and clean their noses when needed. Staff provided regular opportunities for children who were toilet training to use the toilet and gently encouraged and guided independence. Children wearing nappies had these changed at designated times and staff stated they are changed in between if needed. Staff used opportunities when providing personal care for warm one-to-one interactions. Older children used the toilet independently.

Areas with soft seating, cushions and mats were available in the rooms for children to rest or take a break from activities. The adults demonstrated warmth in their interactions with the children, responding to their cues and speaking kindly to them in gentle tones. Transitions from activities to care routines ensued smoothly and were well managed. Staff recorded information on the children's day including nappy changing, sleep, activities and

meals eaten which they reported is shared with parents. Children's identity and belonging was promoted through displays of artwork, photographs, and pictures from home. A keyworker system was in place and displayed in each care room to support secure relationships between staff and children.

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 inspectors found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with staff, and inspection of the premises that the registered providers had taken the following steps to safeguard children attending:

General Safety:

The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order. Cleaning products and hazardous materials were stored securely out of reach of the children. The entrance into the service was appropriately secured to prevent unauthorised access or a child exiting the service unsupervised. There were no hazards identified in the indoor or outdoor play environments.

Infection Control:

Staff stated appropriate exclusion periods for adults and children with infectious illnesses were implemented in the service as per the policy. Pedal operated bins were in place throughout the service for the disposal of waste. Staff were observed to have good hand hygiene and supported children to wash hands at appropriate times. Cleaning schedules were in place and the care rooms were observed to be clean. Staff followed infection control procedures to prevent cross contamination during nappy changing, in line with the service policy.

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 and had appropriate documentation available to record such administration if required. Care plans were in place for children who required regular or emergency medication, and staff were familiar with these plans. A sample of the administration of medication documents reviewed contained the necessary details.

Safe Sleep:

Staff were familiar with safe sleep guidance and placed babies on their backs to sleep. Sleep logs were maintained in the dedicated sleep room and the younger care rooms, and individual children's observations recorded room temperature, breathing, colour, and position every ten minutes. Standard cots and low-level beds were available for sleep and were used in accordance with children's ages and developmental needs. The temperature of the rooms where children slept were maintained at the required temperature ranges.

Fire Safety:

The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection. Staff members adequately outlined the evacuation procedures in place in the event of a fire and stated that fire drills are practiced regularly on a monthly basis.

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

During the inspection, children were observed to be appropriately supervised at all times by the staff members present.