

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY317
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Name of Service:	Cocoon Childcare Longmile Road
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Address of Service:	Slieve Bloom Park, Longmile Road, Drimnagh, Dublin 12, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D12 P110
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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(s) of Inspection:	12/08/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	65	PM	62
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	H Sutherland, R Duff
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 Childcare Longmile is a private full-day-care service located in an urban, residential area of Drimnagh, Dublin 12. The service operates from a single storey purpose built premises and opens Monday to Friday from 7:30am to 6:30pm. Children are allocated to one of six rooms according to their age. Separate sleeping facilities are provided in the Baby and Wobbler rooms. An outdoor area is located to the rear of the building.

Staffing

The service currently employs 17 staff members including the service manager, a domestic assistant and a cook. On the day of inspection there were 17 adults present including, the service manager, the operations manager, the domestic assistant, an agency chef and three staff from services owned by the registered provider. The registered provider arrived after the inspection commenced to facilitate 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, safety and records. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

This inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

Regulation 9(1) (a-c), (2) (a-d) (3), (4) –Management and Recruitment

Regulation 11(1), (2) – Staffing Levels

Regulation 15 Record of a preschool child

Regulation 19(1)(b) Health, welfare and development of child

Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25 First Aid

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 Record of a preschool child, 19 Health, welfare and development of child and 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Baby room, Senior Wobbler room, Toddler room, Junior Wobbler room and Junior Preschool.

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 registered provider, operations manager, 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 required.
 - (b) The designated person in charge was on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure that identified the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee.
- (2) Following a review of information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that 17 adults were employed to work in the service. The files of the 17 adults were reviewed along

with the files of the 5 other adults present during the inspection. The requirements of 9 (2)(3)(4) were met as follows:

- (2)
- (a) Thirty-four written and verified references were available from past employers.
 - (b) Ten written and verified references were available from a source other than a past employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for 22 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) Police vetting was available for nine adults who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding six months as an adult.
- (3) Documentation reviewed evidence that the procedures specified above under 9(2) had been carried out prior to the 22 adults commencing employment in the service.
- (4) Documentation was available to show that 18 adults held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications, a letter of eligibility to practice or a qualification deemed equivalent by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE). Three of the adults did not require a qualification.

Non-Compliance Information

(4) Evidence available for review for one adult employed in the service did not specify that a major award had been achieved.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The employees transcripts were sent to the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) for review and a letter of eligibility to practice was received. Going forward the service manager will ensure that all college transcripts are sent to the DCDE and letters of eligibility to practice will be kept on file.

Supporting documentation submitted

Letter of eligibility to practice submitted.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under regulation 9 (4) has been adequately addressed

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

(8)

There were at least two adults on the premises throughout the inspection. The staff roster provided for a minimum of two adults to be on the premises at all times during the opening hours of the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) An adequate number of adults were not working with the children attending the baby room during the inspection as outlined below:

At 1.35pm the inspectors entered the baby room and found a staff member alone caring for three babies under the age of 1 and a 1 year old. One of the babies had fallen asleep on their tummy on a rug in the care room, one was asleep on the staff members knee, another was sitting in a chair and the 1 year old child was asleep in a cot. On noticing the baby asleep on the floor, the staff member got up and placed the sleeping baby on her knee into a cot. The staff member then picked up the baby sleeping on the rug and placed the baby into a cot. Following this the three sleeping children woke up and required attention. The inspector asked the staff member if she needed some assistance to which the staff member responded yes. The inspector called another staff member to assist and the staff member alerted the person in charge who then arrived to the care room to provide support.

- (2) The registered provider did not ensure that the minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained in the service for a period during the inspection as detailed above. The required ratio for this age group is 1:3 for babies 0-1 year and 1:5 for children aged 1-2 years.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(2)

The service manager will ensure that there is adequate staff available during lunch hours and staff know to call for assistance if required.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1)(2)

No evidence submitted

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions submitted. The non-compliance identified under regulation 11 has been adequately addressed.

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 nine records were reviewed by the inspector. The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the details relating to (a) to (i) of the above regulation for all records reviewed.

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 inspectors observed appropriate care practices in place in the service during the inspection. Staff reported that the service provides all of the children's daily meals. On the day of the inspection children were served breadsticks, fruit and milk for their morning snack and shepherds pie with sweet potatoes for their dinner. Mealtimes in the service were observed to be a sociable experience and staff were observed to sit with children and encourage conversation supporting the development of children's social skills. Self-feeding was encouraged in younger care rooms with staff assisting as required and additional portions were available for children requesting more. Bibs were provided to protect the children's clothes from becoming soiled or wet when eating. Babies were held during bottle feeding and the inspectors observed nurturing engagement during this time. Drinking water was available to children throughout the day and children were offered water with their meals. Nappy changing and toileting were observed to be a regular, timely and pleasant experience for children. Staff were observed to warmly engage with children during these times, offering praise and encouragement for their self-care skills. Younger children were provided with the opportunity to sleep in accordance with their individual needs or at a designated time after lunch. Staff stated that children could sleep outside of the designated time if required. Children's outer clothing was removed and soothers were provided for comfort were needed. Staff were observed to comfort and reassure children during sleep time and remained present until each child was settled.

The inspectors observed staff interacting with children in a warm, patient and playful manner using soft tones, and friendly body language. Staff appeared to be familiar with all children attending the service and were observed taking time to engage with children in other care rooms during outdoor play. Children’s learning was guided by their own interests and staff were attentive to younger children’s cues for social interaction. During the inspection inspectors observed staff singing songs with children, reading stories and inviting comments from children throughout the story supporting the development of their listening skills and vocabulary. Conflicts between children were managed in a calm constructive manner. Staff advised that parents were provided with the opportunity to discuss key aspects of their child’s day at drop off and collection times. Additionally, records were provided for parents of younger children to take home at the end of each day supporting continuity of care. Staff reported that each room has a schedule for outdoor play and it was flexible allowing for children to have more time outdoors if needed.

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:

- The entrance doors into the service were adequately secured to prevent unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised.
- Toys and play equipment used by the children were observed to be safe for the age group, maintained and in good condition.
- Cleaning agents and medication were stored out of reach of children.
- Staff were aware of children’s food allergies and adequately described how allergies are managed in the service.
- Care plans were available for children that may require medication in the event of an emergency.

Infection Control:

- Pedal operated bins were in use in the sanitary areas and care rooms to support effective hygiene practices.
- Liquid soap, warm water and single use paper towels were available at wash hand basins.
- Children were supported to wash their hands after nappy changing, toileting and before mealtimes.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff clearly demonstrated knowledge of the services procedure to safely administer medication to a child and documented medicine consent forms were available for review.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff were observed to carry out physical checks on sleeping children every ten minutes.
- Sleep logs were maintained detailing the room temperature, breathing pattern, colour and position of the child.

Fire Safety:

- The designated fire escape routes were free from obstruction on the day of inspection.
- Staff members adequately outlined the evacuation procedures in place in the event of a fire.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. Inspectors observed that a staff member did not remove their used gloves before re-dressing children during a series of nappy changes. This procedure was at variance with the services nappy changing policy and posed a risk of cross infection. This practice was found to be non-compliant on the previous inspection on 4 October 2022. The corrective actions submitted following this inspection failed to prevent recurrence of the non-compliance.

Safe Sleep:

2. During the inspection it was observed that the temperature in two of the rooms where children between the ages of 12 to 24 months were sleeping were found to be outside the recommended safe sleep range as follows:

- The inspectors recorded the temperature in the Junior Wobbler sleep room as 23°C at 11.30am, 24.4°C at 11.56am and 26°C at 1.40 pm.
- The temperature in the Senior Wobbler room was recorded as 24°C at 12.00pm, 24.8°C at 12.32pm and 24.2°C at 1.40pm.

The inspectors acknowledge that efforts were made to reduce the temperature in both rooms. In the Junior Wobbler sleep room, there were two air conditioning units in operation. The blinds were closed and the person in charge explained that the service had a heat deflecting material placed on the sleep

room window. Children were placed to sleep in light clothing and staff increased sleep checks to every five minutes when the inspector highlighted the rise in temperature.

In the Senior Wobbler room three fans were in operation and the blinds were closed. Children were placed to sleep in light clothing and staff carried out sleep checks every five minutes.

Although efforts were made to reduce the temperature the actions taken were ineffective posing a potential safety risk to sleeping children.

3. The inspectors observed eight children under the age of two in the Senior Wobbler room sleeping on low level stackable beds. This practice did not align with current safe sleep guidelines.
4. Sleep plans were not available for the eight children who had transitioned from a cot onto a bed.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. The service manager has retrained all staff members on the nappy changing policy and staff have signed to say they have read and understood the procedure. The manager will monitor nappy changing practices to ensure procedures are followed correctly.

Safe Sleep:

2. A wall mounted air conditioning unit has been purchased and installed in the Junior Wobbler room. Children attending the Senior Wobbler room will now use the Junior Wobbler room for sleep. The service manager will continue to monitor the room temperatures and ensure adequate measures are put in place when required.
3. New beds have been purchased and are currently in use in the Senior Wobbler room along with folding cots.
4. Sleep plans have been completed for all children transitioning from a cot to a bed. Sleep plans will be completed going forward for any child under the age of two that is transitioning onto a bed.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

1. Documentation submitted.

Safe Sleep:

2. Photograph submitted.
3. Photograph submitted.

4. Records submitted.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under regulation 23 have been adequately addressed.

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 three adults hold certification in First Aid Responder training and two 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 prominent position in the service.

(b) The first aid box was observed to be easily available to the adults caring for the children attending the service.