

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL072				
Name of Service:	Cocoon Childcare Clonsilla				
Address of Service:	1 Phibblestown Wood, Clonsilla, Dublin 15.				
Eircode:	D15 X886				
Name of Registered Provider:	Nicola Battams				
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
Date of Inspection:	26/11/2025				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>53</td> <td>PM</td> <td>52</td> </tr> </table>	AM	53	PM	52
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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 D08 X01F
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Griffin and L. Jameson
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.

Description of service

Cocoon Childcare Clonsilla is one of seventeen services operated by the registered provider. The service is located in a purpose-built building on a ground floor in a residential development in Dublin North. The service is registered to provide full day, part time and sessional care for up to 92 children aged between 0 to 6 years old from 7.30 am to 6.30 pm Monday to Friday. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE) and operates a morning session between 9.30 am to 12.30 pm.

The service consists of six care rooms: the Baby Room with a connecting cot room, Wobbler Room, Toddler 1 Room, Toddler 2 Room, Junior Preschool Room and Preschool Room. There is also an office, a staff room, a kitchen and an enclosed outdoor play area to the rear of the building. There is access to staff and children's sanitary accommodation.

Staffing

The registered provider does not work in the service and employs twenty-five adults to work in the service. This includes two operation support managers, one person in charge, a deputy person in charge, nineteen childcare staff two of whom are employed under the access and inclusion model (AIM) and two auxiliary staff a cook and a cleaner. On the morning of the inspection, the deputy person in charge, twelve childcare staff, one auxiliary staff for cooking and one student were present. The student was present in one of the care rooms and was supporting the staff and children in supernumerary capacity. The registered provider was not present on the day of the inspection. One of the two operation support managers arrived shortly after the inspection begun and remained on site to facilitate the inspection process alongside the deputy person in charge.

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.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 16 Record in Relation to Pre-School Service (j) and (k), Regulation 19 Health, Welfare and Development of Child (1) (a) and Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Baby Room, the Toddler 1 room and Junior Preschool Room.

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 operations support manager, the deputy person in charge, staff, student 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 named person to deputise as required.
- (b) A review of the roster showed that a named person in charge or the deputy is rostered to be on the premises at all times during the service opening hours.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in place, and staff reported being aware of this.

(2) A review of paperwork and conversation with the deputy person in charged confirmed there are currently twenty-five adults employed by the registered provider to work in the service. The staff files of the two

operation support managers, person in charge, deputy person in charge, nineteen childcare staff, two auxiliary staff and one student were reviewed as part of the inspection process. The registered provider had completed the following checks:

- (a) There were 37 written and validated references available from past employers in relation to the staff member employed
 - (b) There were 15 written references available from a source other than a past employer in relation to the registered provider.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the 26 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 in relation to 17 staff members who had lived outside of Ireland for a period of more than 6 months as an adult.
- (3) Evidence was available to demonstrate that the procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out in before staff employment and student placement commenced.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that the 23 staff members who worked 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 a qualification deemed by the Minister to be 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) The registered provider ensured that there was an adequate number of adults working with the children throughout the inspection. In the morning there were twelve adults working with fifty-three children and during the afternoon there were eleven adults working with fifty-two children. In addition, the deputy person in charge and operation support manager were available to provide support and staff were observed to ask management for support when required.
- (2) The adult child ratios were correct when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection. Staff were aware of the required ratios for the age range of children.

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (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) The registered provider ensured the following information was maintained in relation to the early years' service:

- (a) The name, position, qualifications, and experience of all staff members was available on file.
- (b) (c)(d)(e) The statement of purpose and function contained the information required including details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services, details of the adult: child ratios in the service, the type of care or programme provided in the service and the facilities available.
- (f) The opening hours and fees were displayed on the parent's noticeboard.

- (g) The service provided copies of all the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10.
- (h) Daily attendance records were kept in each care room in relation to every preschool child.
- (i) A staff roster was available for review.
- (j) A record was maintained of administration of medication which occurred in the service. A sample of ten records were reviewed. These records were completed in full and contained all the necessary information.

(3) All records and documentation requested by the inspector were available for review.

Non-Compliance Information

(k) A sample of ten accident and incident records were reviewed of these seven were found to be incomplete and did not contain all the necessary information. The following was observed:

- On one record there was no parent signature or date of signing to show that the parent had been informed on the day of the accident/incident.
- Two records did not include the date of the accident/incident which had occurred.
- Two records did not include the name of the person who had informed the parent of the accident/incident.
- Four records did not include the date of when parents were informed by staff of the accident/incident.
- Five records did not include the date beside the parent signature.

It is important that the parent has been informed on the day of the accident/incident relating to their child on the so they can monitor their child appropriately.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

The management team retrained all staff on the service's accident/incident policy and on completion of the service accident and incident forms. An example of a fully completed accident/incident form has been issued to all team members to ensure all necessary information is documented. All accident/incident forms have been reviewed, and the centre management team have obtained any missing information from the relevant parents. All parents are informed verbally by handover or phone call on the day on any accident and all team members are aware to obtain the parents signature also on the day of the accident.

Preventive Action

The centre manage will actively monitor the completion of accident/incident forms for all children and ensure all relevant information is obtained on the day of the accident.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Documentary evidence of a sample accident and incident report completed in full.
- Documentary evidence of staff training cards.
- Documentary evidence of staff signed off on accident and incident policy.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions proposed by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance identified under 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-

(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:

- The service provided meals and snacks at regular intervals two of which were a hot meal for the children. All food was prepared in the kitchen of the service. Different dietary requirements were catered for if required and additional food was observed to be available, for example, at dinnertime the chef was observed to check with staff in each care room if children required additional food and if any child required an alternative dish. Water and milk were available in each care room for the children to drink.
- There were cosy areas with a soft mat, cushions and books for rest and relaxation present in each care room. In addition, there was a child sized armchair in the Toddler 1 room which was observed in used by the children and an adult armchair in the baby room observed to be used by adults for comforting children.

- A sense of identity was promoted throughout the care rooms. For example, there was a birthday wall display and a family wall display in each care room. The children's artwork was displayed on the wall of the care rooms and children had their own storage space for personal items. In addition, there was a baby activity wall of the children engaging in fun activities in the baby room.
- An outdoor play area was available for the children with a soft artificial ground surface. The area was sectioned into two main areas with a low wooden fence. The children were observed to play outdoors during the inspection. This supported their social, cognitive, gross and fine motor development. In addition, children were provided with suitable outdoor clothing to support a comfortable outdoor play experience.

Supporting Relationships:

- Children were observed to have the freedom to move freely in their care room and independently choose their activities and play experiences.
- Staff were observed to interact continuously with the children. For example, snack time was observed to be a sociable event and staff chatted amicably with the children.
- Language used by staff was observed to be kind, considerate and supportive. For example, during nappy changing procedures children were observed to be spoken to in a reassuring and friendly manner throughout the nappy changing procedure.
- The service operated a key worker system and staff discussed individual children they were working with and were knowledgeable of children's interest and developments.
- Children's sleep needs were observed to be met in the Baby and Wobbler Rooms. Children who showed signs of tiredness were given the opportunity to sleep when they required.
- The service used daily report sheets and informal chats at collection time to communicate with parents daily and update them on their child's food, sleep, toileting and fun activities.

Equipment and Materials:

- The furniture provided in the care rooms were low level and suitable to the needs of the children. There were appropriate chairs and tables in the care rooms to facilitate the children to eat comfortably and independently.
- The care rooms in the service were designed with the age and stage of development having been taken into consideration and equipment and materials were visible and accessible enabling the children to independently access their choice of activity. For example, in the baby room there was adequate space

for the babies and toddlers to explore their environment which included soft low climbing equipment, building blocks, kitchen with supporting props, push and pull along toys which were appropriate for the baby room.

- In the Toddler 1 room there were cause and effect sensory mats. Cause and effect toys help promote joint attention, play skills and exploration. The layout of the both the Toddler 1 room and the Junior Preschool room there was art equipment and materials accessible to the children, sensory play materials such as water and sand, a construction area with supporting equipment, a home area with a play kitchen with supporting props were available in both rooms. This variety of materials and equipment facilitated a range of play experiences including creative, imaginative and language play and promoted exploration and curiosity. In addition, toys and materials in all care rooms were stored on low and accessible shelves and were themed and labelled which promoted spontaneous play opportunities.

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 main entrance door which leads into the centre and the service was appropriately secured with a second entrance door with a keypad system to prevent a child from exiting unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised access to the service.
- The outdoor play area was securely walled and gated reducing the risk of children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children throughout the inspection.
- There were no flexes or cables observed that were accessible to the children.
- Blind cords were secured safely out of reach of the children.
- Cleaning agents were observed to be stored safely out of the reach to the children.
- Toys and equipment used by the children were observed to be well maintained and in a good state of repair.

Infection Control:

- The sanitary accommodation was equipped with warm running water, liquid soap, and hand drying facilities. Children were observed to be familiar with washing their hands before snack time, after outdoor play and after toileting.
- Foot operated pedal bins were observed to be used by children and staff for the appropriate disposal of waste in the care rooms and sanitary facilities.
- Soothers were stored safely, and staff were knowledgeable on how to wash and sterilise soothers between use.
- Perishable goods such as formula bottles were observed to be stored in a fridge in the baby room reducing the risk of bacteria multiplying.
- An ambient temperature of 18-22°C was maintained throughout the care rooms, and the windows were open in the care rooms and sanitary accommodation to allow fresh circulation of air.
- Cot mattresses were waterproof and in good condition. Individual bed linen was used for sleeping children.
- Cots and low beds were placed 50 cm apart to reduce the possibility of cross contamination and ensured suitable access to children in the event of an emergency.
- The premises was observed to be clean and hygienic. There were cleaning schedules on the wall of the care rooms and sanitary accommodation.

Administration of Medication:

- The staff were knowledgeable regarding the needs of children in their care and were aware of allergies. Children who required medication had consent available and there was a written procedure in place for administration of medication. In addition, medication was clearly labelled and was stored safely in its original box in a place that was inaccessible to the children.
- There were individual medical care plans in place for two children with a diagnosed medical condition. The medical care plans outlined information about the medical condition and the procedures to follow in the event of a medical emergency.

Safe Sleep:

- Outer clothing was removed from the children before sleep time.
- Children under two years of age were provided with a cot for sleeping.
- Children over two years of age were provided with low beds for sleeping.
- An ambient temperature of 16-20°C was maintained for sleeping children under one years of age.

- An ambient temperature of 18-22°C was maintained for sleeping children over two years of age.
- Children were monitored while sleeping at intervals of ten minutes or less and staff recorded the breathing, position, and colour of each child at each check.

Fire Safety:

- The emergency exits were observed to be unobstructed throughout the inspection. The children's attendance book was monitored to ensure staff knew how many children were present. This ensured a safe evacuation of the children and staff in the event of an emergency evacuation.

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 four adults hold certification in First Aid Response training. The four adults were present on the day of the inspection and rostered to be present during the operational hours of the service.

- (2)
- (a) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and stored safely in an easily accessible and conspicuous position.
 - (b) (b) The first aid box was observed to be easily available to the adults caring for the children attending the service.

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 firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The registered provider ensured that a record of fire drills which were evidenced to occur monthly in the service was maintained. The record showed that the last fire drill took place on the 28 October 2025.
 - (b) (b)The registered provider-maintained records relating to the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting was last serviced in July 2025.The smoke alarms were last serviced in October 2025.
- (2) Records were open to inspection by an unauthorised person. All fire safety records requested by the inspection team were available for review.
- (4) Notices detailing the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire emergency were displayed on the wall in the care rooms and on the wall of the corridors outside the care rooms.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service had adequate insurance for a maximum of 92 children attending the service on a full day care basis with an expiry date of 31 January 2026.