

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2025DS001
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Cocoon Childcare
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	33-35 Dodderbrook Rise, Ballycullen, Dublin 24, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D24 E4AP
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Nikki Battams
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	02/12/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	26	PM	26
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Level 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham Dublin 8
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	R Phillips E Mulhern
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A
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### Description of service

This privately run service is one of 17 services run by the registered provider. It is located in a residential area in Ballycullen, Dublin 24. The service provides full day care and sessional childcare to children aged between 0-6 years. Opening times are 07:30-18:00 Monday to Friday, 51 weeks of the year.

The service operates from a purpose-built setting with seven care rooms and two designated sleep rooms. There are three care rooms on the ground floor, and four on the first floor. There were five of the care rooms open on the day of inspection. An enclosed outdoor area is available at the rear of the premises.

### Staffing

There are 14 staff employed in the service, comprising of a manager, assistant manager and 11 childcare practitioners, all of whom work directly with the children. There is also a full-time chef employed. The registered provider and operations manager were present for 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 announced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

9 (1)(2)(4) Management and recruitment,

11(1)(2) Staffing levels,  
19 (1)(a) (b) Health Welfare and Development of child.

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

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.*

*(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 employees in the service demonstrated an awareness of the lines of authority and accountability within the service.

(2) Documentation was reviewed in respect of 16 staff files, and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a)(b) There were 32 validated references, 28 from previous employers and 4 from reputable sources available in respect of the 16 staff files.

(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 4 adults employed by the company, prior to the opening of this service.

(d) Records of police vetting were available for 11 staff who lived outside the Irish jurisdiction for six months or more as an adult.

(4) A record was available evidencing that in respect of the sixteen staff files inspected, all 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.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d) There was evidence that the registered provider did not ensure that all staff were suitable and competent prior to employment:

Police vetting was not available for one adult who had lived outside of the Irish state for more than six consecutive months as an adult.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

The staff member applied for police vetting on the day of inspection. Recruitment procedures ensure police vetting is completed prior to commencement of employment, and this will be rechecked by the centre management team prior to staff commencement.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of an application for police vetting was submitted.

### Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted were reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and deemed to address the non-compliance.

## 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

- 11(1) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.
- 11(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children for full day care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were 26 children being cared for by 12 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-
- (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
  - (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)(a)(b)

#### Basic Needs:

There was water available for drinking in each care room, and meals were served regularly. The inspectors observed children getting additional helpings of dinner and alternatives were available. The staff sat with the children while they ate.

The children's nappies were changed on a schedule but in a responsive manner as required.

The youngest children were facilitated to sleep as required, older children slept at a scheduled time.

All the children had at least one opportunity to play outside and were supported in wearing warm outdoor clothing suitable to the cold weather.

#### Supporting Relationships:

The staff members demonstrated warmth and sensitivity by speaking in soft tones and responding promptly when the children became upset. They offered reassurance by sitting close to the children on the floor and displaying affection.

Additional staff were allocated to the Junior Wobbler room, to support the staff settling in children who are new to the service.

Staff were heard in conversation with the children about their siblings attending the service, promoting their sense of belonging, and connection between their family and the service.

## **Materials and Equipment:**

There were ample play materials available in the care rooms, appropriate to the age and stage of children attending, for example there were cause and effect toys, balls, shape sorters, and large mirrors in the junior wobbler room. The layout in the junior wobbler room facilitated pulling to stand and freely moving around the floor.

Children were observed enjoying sensorial activities in the senior wobbler room with sand, and in the Junior preschool were playing with modelling dough.

Each room was noted to have an adequate rest area, which children chose to opt out of activities and rest in for a while at intervals. There were books available in each room's rest area. In Junior preschool a small group were discussing their chosen books with the adult present promoting their language development.

## **Programme of Activities:**

There was a garden timetable in each room outlining the times each room had access to the outdoor play area. There were individual learning plans and observations in the senior toddler room, where there were also photos of the children participating in a variety of activities on the wall at the children's eye level.