

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,
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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 of Inspection:	18/08/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	68	PM	67
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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, O Quill and K Doyle
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).

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Description of service

Cocoon Childcare Longmile is a private preschool 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. Full day, part time and sessional care and education are offered to children age 0 to 6 years. Children are allocated to one of six care rooms according to their age. Separate sleep facilities are provided in the Baby and Wobbler rooms. An outdoor area is located to the rear of the building.

Staffing

There are currently 21 adults employed to work in the service including the person in charge, 18 early years educators, a cook and a domestic assistant. On the day of the inspection there were 22 adults present including the registered provider, person in charge, area manager, 15 early years educators, a cook, a domestic assistant, a maintenance operative and an early years educator employed by an external agency. The registered provider and the area manager arrived subsequent to the inspector's arrival 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.

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A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 16 (k) Record in relation to pre-school service. Regulation 19 (1)(a)(b) Health, welfare and development of child and Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the following rooms Baby, Wobbler, Senior Wobbler, and 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, area manager, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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 present when the inspectors arrived unannounced at the service. A review of the staff roster showed that a designated person was on the premises at all times during the opening hours of the service.
 - (c) The service had a clear management structure and staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- (2)** Following a review of previous inspection information, information available during inspection, and discussions with the person in charge, it was determined that 12 adults commenced employment in the service since

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Regulation 9 was last inspected on 12 August 2025. Documentation required under Regulation 9 (2), (3), and (4) was reviewed in respect of the 12 new employees, along with the files of 4 additional adults who were on the premises on the day of the inspection. Garda vetting for 2 staff members whose disclosures were identified as due for renewal were requested for review.

- (a) Thirty written and verified references were available from past employers.
- (b) Two written and verified references were available from sources other than past employers.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for 18 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Thirteen of the employees required international police clearance. The required documentation was available for 12 of the adults.

(4) Documentation was available to show that the 13 adults who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification deemed equivalent by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE).

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (d) International Police Vetting was not available for one adult who had lived outside of the State for a period of more than six months as an adult and whose contact with children was incidental to their role. International Police Vetting was required from two countries however; the required documentation was only available for one.
- (3) The registered provider did not ensure the following checks were carried out prior to one adult working in the service.
- Documentary evidence indicated that one adult had commenced employment within the organisation prior to receipt of police clearance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(d), (3)

International Police Vetting was obtained for the adult. A full review of all individual files within the relevant team has been completed to ensure all required vetting documentation is in place and up to date.

Supporting documentation submitted

Record submitted

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Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 9 (2)(d) and (3) 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

- (1) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.
- (2) The minimum adult to child ratio for a full day care service was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were 68 children attending the service being supervised by 15 adults in the morning and 67 children supervised by 15 adults in the afternoon. The person in charge and deputy person in charge were available to provide support when needed.
- (8) (a) The roster provided to the inspectors by the person in charge showed that a minimum of two staff members were on the premises at all times during the operational hours of the service.

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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:

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (k) Written records of accidents and incidents that occurred in the service were available for review on the day of inspection. A sample of 19 accidents and incidents that had occurred in the service between March and August 2026 reviewed demonstrated that all of the required information was recorded.

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

(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)(a)(b)

Staff reported that the service provides all of the meals for the children including breakfast, a morning snack, a hot lunch, an afternoon and evening snack. Babies bottles were provided by the parents/guardians and brought to the service each day. On the day of the inspection children were served crackers and cream cheese for their morning snack, shepherd's pie for lunch, and banana, melon and milk for their afternoon snack. Children were offered drinks of water with their meals. Mealtime was a calm and relaxed experience and children were provided with time to eat their meal at their own pace. Younger children were provided with bibs to protect their clothing.

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Self-feeding was encouraged and staff sat at child level and were available to provide support to younger children requiring assistance with their meal.

Children's nappies were changed on a schedule and as needed. Staff were observed engaging warmly with children while carrying out this care practice. Older children were observed to use the toilet independently. Children were encouraged to be independent in managing their own self-care, including washing their hands before meals, after nappy changing and after using the toilet. Babies and some of the children attending the Wobblers room were placed to sleep in accordance with their individual needs. A designated sleep time after lunch was provided for children attending the Wobbler and Senior Wobbler rooms and staff reported that the routine was flexible to allow children to sleep outside of this time if they displayed signs of tiredness. Children who did not require a sleep or had already slept were provided with an alternative space to engage in free play. Rest areas were available in each of the care rooms for children to take a break from activities throughout the day.

Staff described how they record information in relation to key aspects of the children's day including mealtime, sleep and nappy changing. Parents/guardians are provided with this information each day when collecting their child from the service. Daily routines were displayed along with short term plans outlining the activities and experiences planned for the children. The care rooms were laid out with low level shelving allowing children to access materials of interest with ease. Resources available to the children included small world materials, sensory materials, musical instruments, construction materials, home corners and books. Child size tables and chairs were available to allow children to sit comfortably during mealtimes and activities. Family walls were on display supporting children's sense of identity and belonging. A fully enclosed outdoor area was located to the rear of the premises. The space was separated into two areas with a low-level fence and had artificial grass surfacing. An adequate amount of play equipment was provided to support outdoor play.

Non-Compliance Information

19 (1)(b)

During the inspection it was observed that a staff member did not use an appropriate and safe method to lift a child. A staff member was observed holding a child by their hands and lifting them into the air after the child had climbed over a sand table. This practice posed a risk of injury to the child.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

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Safe lifting practices have been reviewed with all staff, including the requirement to always lift children safely from under the arms.

Supporting documentation submitted

Staff meeting sign in sheet

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 19 (1) (a) (b) has been adequately addressed.

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 door to the service was adequately secured to prevent unauthorised persons from entering and to ensure children could not exit unsupervised. Visitors were required to be admitted by a staff member.
- The internal doors were appropriately secured and prevented children accessing unsafe areas.
- Cleaning agents and medication were stored safely out of children's reach.
- The windows were secured and positioned out of children's reach.
- Highchairs were in good condition and fitted with safety harnesses.

Infection Control:

- Pedal operated bins were in use throughout the service to support the safe disposal of waste.
- Liquid soap, warm water and single use paper towels were available at wash hand basins.
- Children's soothers were labelled, stored in individual containers and staff reported that they were sterilised daily and as required.
- Bed linen was stored individually and staff reported that it is washed on a weekly basis and as needed.

Administration of Medication:

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- Care plans were available for children with medical conditions who may require emergency medication, and staff demonstrated awareness of the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency.
- Staff demonstrated an understanding of the procedure for administering medication. The practice included obtaining written consent from parents/guardians, ensuring a second staff member was present to witness the administration, and completing records.

Safe Sleep:

- Standard cots, low-level beds and floor beds were available for sleep and were used in accordance with children's age and developmental needs.
- Staff were observed to carry out and physical checks on sleeping children every ten minutes.
- A sleep log was available for review.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. A lock on a low-level press in the sanitary area used by the children attending the Preschool room was broken. The press contained large containers of antibacterial soap and cleaning agents posing a risk to children's safety.
2. A cable was not safely secured out of children's reach in the Senior Wobbler room. An air conditioning unit was observed to be stored in an area that was accessible to children. The electrical cable was not appropriately secured and was within children's reach posing a risk to their safety.

Infection Control:

3. Children in the Senior Wobbler room were not supported to wash and dry their hands appropriately after sand play. Although there was liquid soap stored next to the wash hand basin it was not made available to children when washing their hands following sand play. Additionally, the inspectors observed a staff member using the same face cloth to dry the hands of three children. This practice poses a risk of cross-contamination and the spread of infection and is at variance with the services infection control policy.

Safe Sleep:

4. The temperature in the cot room was above the recommended safe sleep range of 16°C to 20°C while two children under the age of one were sleeping. The inspectors observed the following:
 - At 11.04am the inspector recorded the temperature as 21.6 °C while one baby under the age of one was sleeping.
 - At 11.54am the temperature was recorded at 21.9°C while one child under the age of one was in the cot room. The thermometer used by the service showed a reading of 21.9°C. Staff stated

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when the temperature goes above 21°C they carry out sleep checks every 5 minutes as opposed to 10 minutes. However, 10-minute checks were documented and no remedial action was taken to reduce the temperature until the inspector highlighted the concern. It is acknowledged that a maintenance operative carried out repairs on an air conditioning unit in the care room which subsequently reduced the temperature in the cot room.

The above practice poses a risk to children's safety and is at variance with the services safe sleep policy.

Fire Safety:

- During discussions with the inspectors staff provided inconsistent information regarding the frequency of fire evacuation drills. Additionally, a review of records available to the inspectors found that there was no evidence of documented fire evacuation drills since the 8 April 2026. The absence of regular fire evacuation drills may result in children and staff not being familiar with the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency, posing a risk to the children's safety.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- The broken lock was replaced immediately and all cleaning products were removed from children's access until the press was secured. All staff have been reminded to check all safety locks as part of the morning risk assessment, or as needed throughout the day and to report any faults to management immediately.
- The cable was secured immediately and the air conditioning unit has since been removed from the room. Staff will ensure that all cables are safely secured and out of children's reach. This will be checked as part of the morning risk assessment and throughout the day as required, with any issues identified reported to management and addressed immediately.

Infection Control:

- All staff have been retrained on correct handwashing procedures, including the use of soap and individual paper hand towels. The centre management team will monitor handwashing practices throughout the centre.

Safe Sleep:

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4. Safe sleep procedures have been reviewed with all staff, with particular attention given to monitoring room temperatures and reporting any concerns to the centre manager. The maintenance team have a quarterly schedule in place to check the air conditioning unit and ensure it is functioning correctly.

Fire Safety:

5. All staff have since been retrained in fire safety procedures, and a fire evacuation drill was completed the following day. The centre management team will ensure fire drills are completed monthly and records are kept up to date and available at all times. Confirmation of completed fire drills will be sent to operations support each month.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photo of safety lock on press submitted

Infection Control:

Evidence of staff review of the handwashing policy

Evidence of staff review of the Infection control policy

Safe Sleep:

Evidence of staff review of the safe sleep policy

Fire Safety:

Fire drill records submitted

Summary Comment

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