

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL072
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Name of Service:	Cocoon Childcare Clonsilla
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Address of Service:	1 Phibblestown Wood, Clonsilla, Dublin 15.
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Eircode:	D15 X886
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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:	01/07/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	55	PM	50
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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 X01
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Griffin and JA. McKimm
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 Clonsilla is one of eighteen services operated by the registered provider. The service is located in a purpose-built building on a ground floor in a residential development in North Dublin. 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 9.30am to 12.30pm during term time.

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-six adults to work in the service. This includes three operation support managers, one of which is allocated to this service, a person in charge, a deputy person in charge, nineteen childcare staff and two auxiliary staff a cook and a cleaner.

On the morning of the inspection, the person in charge, the deputy person in charge, sixteen childcare staff and one auxiliary staff for cooking were present in the service. The registered provider was not present on the day of the inspection. One of the three operation support managers arrived shortly after the inspection began and remained on site to facilitate the inspection process alongside the person in charge and 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

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- 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 the following:

- Regulation 9 (1), (2), (3) and (4)- Management and Recruitment
- Regulation 15 (1) and (3) - Record of a Pre-School Child
- Regulation 16 (1) (k) - Record in Relation to Pre-School Service
- Regulation 19 (1)(b) - Health, Welfare and Development of Child
- Regulation 23 - Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child
- Regulation 25 (1) and (2) – First Aid

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Toddler Room and the Junior Preschool Room. Regulation 11 was inspected across all 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 management team, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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Statutory Notices

Notice	Date Served	Detail
Immediate Action Notice IAN 0263	01/07/2026	Police vetting was not available for one staff member who was working with and had direct access to children on the day of the inspection. This was a potential safeguarding risk.
Status	The registered provider submitted a detailed response with corrective and preventive actions which were accepted by the Inspectorate. This statutory notice is closed.	

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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) The registered provider ensured that;

- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and named person to deputise as required.
- (b) A review of the roster showed either the person in charge or the deputy person in charge were rostered to be present during the operational hours of the service.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in place, and staff reported being aware of this.

(2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the registered provider it was determined that six new staff members had been employed since the previous

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inspection and all six of these new staff members work directly with the children. The files of the six new staff were reviewed. In addition, Garda vetting for five adults whose disclosures were identified as due for renewal were requested for review. The registered provider had completed the following checks:

- (a) Eleven validated written references were available from recent past employers.
 - (b) One validated written reference was available from a source other than a past employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the eleven adults. This showed that the service had adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) Documentary evidence was available which showed that five of the six adults who had lived in a state other than Ireland for more than six months as an adult had the required translated international police vetting available.
- (4) There was evidence to show that the six 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 eligible by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality.

Non-Compliance Information

- (3) The registered provider did not ensure the checks required under (2) were conducted prior to the start date of two staff members. This posed a safeguarding risk.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (3) The centre manager reviewed all staff files after inspection took place to ensure all staff files are fully complete with all required documents. Required documentation was obtained immediately after inspection and sent for review. The centre manager will conduct a thorough check ahead of each staff members commencement of employment using a staff file checklist form to ensure all required documentation is in place ahead of the staff members first day of employment.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Documentary evidence of staff file checklist.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider through the corrective and preventive action plan have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 9.

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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) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults available to the children attending the service to meet their care needs.

- There were 16 qualified staff available to 55 children present on the morning of the inspection.
- There were 16 qualified staff available to 50 children present on the afternoon of the inspection.

(2) The adult child ratios were correct when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection. For example:

- The person in charge and deputy person in charge were also available to provide cover where required.
- Cover staff were available to provide support when needed in the rooms.
- Staff were aware of the required ratios for the age range of children.

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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.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

(3) (c) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were available for review.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) A sample of twelve children's registration records were reviewed as part of the inspection. The registered provider did not ensure that all the required information was maintained for each child. Evidenced by the following.
- Part (1) (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy, special need, if any, or any relevant information to support the provision of special care and attention of the child had been left blank on six of the twelve children's records reviewed. This posed a potential risk of safety.
 - Part (1) (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child had been left blank on four of the twelve children's records reviewed. This posed a potential risk of safety.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) (f) All children's booking forms were reviewed by the centre manager, and any missing information has been updated by parents and centre manager.
- (h) All children's booking forms were reviewed and updated immunisation records were obtained for all children attending the centre. The centre management team will actively monitor all booking forms and review once received in the centre. The centre management team will also ensure to update any missing information with the parents ahead of the child's commencement date and will review all children's booking forms on a quarterly basis to ensure no discrepancies. The centre management team will also review children's immunisations during this time and obtain any updated vaccinations the child has received whilst in the centre. The centre management team has set up a calendar reminder to review children's booking forms and immunisation records.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Documentary evidence of calendar reminder for management to review children's booking forms.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider through the corrective and preventive action plan have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 15.

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.

(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) (k) A record was maintained of accidents and incidents which had 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.

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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)

Appropriate and suitable care practices were observed, as evidenced by the following:

- A review of documentation, discussion with staff and observation on the day showed children were provided with varied food on a regular basis. Breakfast is served on arrival; this is followed by a fruit snack and a hot meal served before midday. During the afternoon the children were served afternoon snack, and this was followed by a teatime snack. There was a four-week menu plan available.
- There was sufficient food provided, with additional portions available on request. Alternative meals were available for those children with alternative dietary requirements. For example, one child was observed not to want to eat the dinner served. A staff member brought the child an alternative meal after gently trying to encourage the child to eat the first dinner served. This was done in a respectful and sensitive manner.
- Drinks of water and water stations were available to the children in the care rooms.
- The staff interacted with the children in a respectful, warm and sensitive manner. There was a key worker system in place and staff were observed to be familiar with the children in their care room which enabled staff to provide for the children's individual care needs, such as food and play preferences.
- The experiences and activities provided to the children in the rooms were suitable to the age and stage of development of the children. For example, children in the junior preschool room were provided with open ended materials such as modelling dough and supporting props. This type of hands-on learning builds confidence and supports fine motor skills and language development.
- Children were encouraged to tidy away toys after use and to put on their own jackets this promoted independence, self-confidence, and physical development.

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- Daily routines were available and were reflected in practice. Staff and children appeared to be familiar with the transitions between experiences such as that from play to mealtime to sleep. As a result, these transitions were prompt and smooth.
- The service ensured children's need for rest and relaxation were met through the provision of comfortable rest areas available.
- Children had access to outdoor play on the day of inspection. Suitable clothing and suncreams were available, allowing for safe outdoor play.

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 service was appropriately secured to prevent a child from exiting unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised access to the service. The inspectors were asked to show identification and sign in the visitor book.
- The external gates to the outdoor play area were secure with surrounding walls and securely gated reducing the risk of unauthorised access. Children who were brought out to the outdoor areas from indoors were observed to be supervised.
- Blind cords were secured and there were window restrictors in place.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children throughout the inspection.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely and were not accessible to the children.

Infection Control:

- Individual cots/beds and bed linen were used for the sleeping children. Staff were familiar with the washing schedule of the bed linen.
- The nappy changing mats were observed to be in good condition.
- The sanitary accommodation was equipped with hygienically dispensed soap, hand paper towels and toilet rolls.

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- An ambient temperature of 16-22°C was maintained in the care rooms, and the windows were open to allow fresh circulation of air.

Administration of Medication:

- Emergency medication was stored safely out of the reach of children and was kept in its original box. Staff were aware of where it was stored and how to administer it. There was a documented care plan outlining the procedures for the safe administration of a prescribed medication for a child with a diagnosed medical condition.

Safe Sleep:

- Heavy outer clothing was removed from the children before sleep time.
- Children under two years of age were provided with individually labelled cots for sleeping and children over two years of age were provided with their own individually labelled bed.
- An ambient temperature of 18-22°C was maintained while children over the age of one slept.
- A sleep log was maintained while children slept. Staff were observed to physically check and record the colour, breathing and position of sleeping child every 10 minutes.

Fire Safety:

- Staff ensured the details of each child's attendance was recorded accurately, and all fire emergency exit doors were clear from obstruction.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The threshold between the service doors and the soft artificial surface in the outdoor play area were of a height that posed a potential trip risk. In addition, the underlay of the soft artificial surface had split and lifted slightly off the ground in the outdoor play area just outside the door of the toddler care room. This posed an additional potential trip hazard.
2. A drain cover in the outdoor play area was broken. It is acknowledged this drain was not in use., however, the broken cover still posed a risk of safety.
3. There was a loose screw on the wooden gate in the outdoor area. This posed a potential risk to safety.
4. The sink in the toddler care room had become loose off the wall leaving a slight gap between the wall and the sink. This posed a potential pinch risk.

Infection Control:

The following practices observed did not promote effective infection control measures to help reduce the spread of infection. Evidenced by the following:

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5. Children were not observed to have their hands washed hygienically after outdoor play time and before dinner time in the Toddler room. Instead, staff members were observed to give children wet cotton wool and disposable wipes. The Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) recommend using thermostatically controlled warm water, hygienically dispensed soap and hand paper towels to prevent the spread of infection.
6. During nappy changing procedures a staff member was observed to open the bin using their hands. This posed a risk of cross infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Centre maintenance team have heightened the flooring under the astro-turf at each garden door in order to raise the ground up to avoid any potential trip hazard. The split area of astro -turf was replaced to ensure no potential trip hazard. Centre management team and staff will ensure to carry out daily checks and risk assessments of the outdoor area to ensure no hazards identified. The centre management team will continuously monitor the outdoor area and ensure any risks identified will be reported to the centre maintenance team and corrected.
2. The drain cover was removed and replaced with a new one on the day of inspection. Centre management team and staff will ensure to carry out daily checks and risk assessments of the outdoor area to ensure no hazards identified. The centre management team will continuously monitor the outdoor area and ensure any risks identified will be reported to the centre maintenance team and corrected.
3. The loose screw on the garden gate was corrected, and the gate was checked and painted to ensure no further hazards. Centre management team and staff will ensure to carry out daily checks and risk assessments of the outdoor area to ensure no hazards identified. The centre management team will continuously monitor the outdoor area and ensure any risks identified will be reported to the centre maintenance team and corrected.
4. The sink in the toddler room was secured to the wall by a member of the maintenance team on the day of inspection. It was also sealed around the edges for extra safety. Staff will continue to complete daily risk assessment forms, and our maintenance team will be contacted immediately by management if a risk is noted. Staff teams aware to notify centre management team of any risks identified and centre management team will actively review care room risk assessment forms.

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Infection Control:

- All staff have been retrained in our hand-washing policy and procedure. Face cloths were provided to all care rooms for children to clean their faces and hands will be washed in the sink with warm water and antibacterial soap. The centre management team will actively monitor handwashing practices throughout the service. All hand-washing areas are fully stocked with all appropriate material (hand soap, hand towels, face cloths) and water temperatures are checked daily to ensure warm water is available. These areas are checked by management each day.
- All staff were retrained in the centre nappy changing policy, handwashing policy and infection control policy. Policies were also re-issued and signed off by all team members once fully re-trained. Management have also demonstrated nappy changing procedure to each team member and staff are aware that touching the lid of the bin poses a risk of cross contamination. The centre management team will actively monitor all handwashing, nappy changing and infection control measures within the centre and ensure the team have them in practice daily.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- Photographic evidence of door area and new astro turf and documentary evidence of outdoor daily risk assessment.
- Photographic evidence of new drain cover and documentary evidence of outdoor daily risk assessment.
- Photographic evidence of outdoor gate fixed and documentary evidence of outdoor daily risk assessment.
- Photographic evidence of sink secured and documentary evidence of care room daily risk assessment.

Infection Control:

- Documentary evidence of hand-washing policy and infection control policies. Documentary evidence of staff signed off on policies and a sample of staff training card. Photographic evidence of water temperature checks.
- Documentary evidence of nappy changing policy, hand washing policy and infection control policies. Documentary evidence of staff signed off on policies and a sample of staff training card.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider through the corrective and preventive action plan have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23.

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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) Three adults held up to date first aid responder certification and there was evidence to show that one of the three adults were rostered to be available to the children at all times during the operational hours of the service.
- (2) The registered provider ensured that:
- (a) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were easily identifiable and stored throughout the premises.
 - (b) The first aid boxes were easily accessible and readily available.