

# TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

## Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances



**Tusla I.D:** TU2019TY003

**Name of Service** Muddy Puddles Country Childcare

**Address of Service:** Fantane, Borrisoleigh, Co. Tipperary

**Email Address:** trevorgroome@hotmail.com

**Name of Registered Provider:** Trevor Groome

<b>Type of Proposed Service:</b>	<b>Full Day Care</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Part-Time</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Sessional</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Drop-In</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Childminding</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Temporary</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Proposed change:** Change in Number of Children: From 36 to 67.  
Change in Service Type: From Sessional to Full Day Care.  
Change in Age Profile to 6 months – 6 years.  
Change in Hours of Operation to 07:00 - 17:45

**Proposed Number of Children:** 67

**Recommended Change Following Inspection:** Approve all changes

**Registered change:** Change in Number of Children: From 36 to 67.  
Change in Service Type: From Sessional to Full Day Care.  
Change in Age Profile: From 2 – 6 years to 6 months – 6 years.  
Change in Hours of Operation: From 09:00 – 12:00 to 07:00 - 17:45  
Change in Service Name: From Muddy Puddles Country Pre-School to Muddy Puddles Country Childcare

The above changes are subject to the receipt of retention planning permission from the Local Authority on or before the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023. Failure to secure the aforementioned document, will require the service to revert to their previous registration status.

**Date of Inspection:** 2 0 0 7 2 0 2 3

**Inspection undertaken by:** L McGeeney

**Title:** Early Years Inspector

**Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address:** Civic Offices, Limerick Road, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary



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## Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

### Rationale for Inspection:

Proposed Change of Circumstance

**Note: For Office use only, to be completed by Registration Office**

<b>Registration Status:</b>	Registered Full Day Care Service for 67 Children
<b>Date of Registration</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> September 2023

### Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(D) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

<b>Description of Service</b>	This service was established in 2019 to provide care and education to children aged 2 – 6 years on a sessional basis for up to 33 children at any one time. It is proposed that the service will increase its provision to cater for children aged 0 – 6 years as well as providing a registered school aged care service for children aged 5 – 12 years. It is proposed that the maximum capacity of the service will increase to 67 children at any one time. The hours of operation will extend from 7am to 5.45pm and the service will provide full day care.
<b>Premises</b>	<p>The service is operated from a premises that was formerly a primary school, located in a rural area called Fantane, near the town of Borrisoleigh in North Tipperary. On the grounds of the service there are six buildings that make up the service including: the main building which contains three activity rooms, sleep rooms, kitchenette and sanitary accommodation areas; three prefabricated buildings with two activity rooms, dining room and sanitary accommodation area; two converted outbuildings with one providing the kitchen and the other an activity room and sanitary accommodation areas. There is also a modular building that is used as the staff room.</p> <p>The service is sited on large grounds which have been developed into several outdoor play areas.</p>
<b>Staffing</b>	The registered provider works in the service on a daily basis and is responsible for catering, driving the bus and providing relief in the rooms when required. There are six staff

# TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

## Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

	employed to work directly with the children. There were also two students on work experience present in the service on the day of inspection.
<b>Methodology</b>	<p>The inspection was an announced inspection to assess compliance with the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016. The Inspection focused on regulations under the following themes; Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of the child, Safety and Premises.</p> <p>The findings on inspection based on information obtained through examination of documentation, direct observation, and discussion with relevant staff are documented in the inspection report and taken into consideration when making a decision in relation to registering the change in circumstance. 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.</p>
<b>Additional Information</b>	Muddy Puddles Country Childcare is currently operating a full day care service for 67 children aged 6 months – 6 years without prior approval from the Tusla Registration Office.
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	The Inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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.*

#### Requirement met:

This requirement has been met.

(1)(a) There was a designated person in charge and a named person who could deputise in their absence.

# TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

## Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

### 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.
- (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.

#### Requirement met:

This requirement has been met.

(1) On the day of the inspection there were 23 children aged between 1 and 5 years being supervised by 5 staff. The registered provider was also available to prepare and cook meals and to provide relief in the rooms if required. There were two students on work experience and another member of staff working with 11 school aged children who were not included in the adult/child ratio.

(8)(a) There were at least 2 staff present in the service at all times while it was in operation.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 20 - Facilities for Rest and Play

- (1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that—
- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and
- (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.
- (2) A registered provider—
- (a) of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that is registered for the first time on or after 30 June 2016, shall ensure that a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the preschool children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

#### Requirement met:

This requirement has been met.

(1)(a) The service comprised of four buildings which were used by the children as indoor activity spaces. In the main building there were two rooms for children aged under three years and a sand room for use by children aged over three years. There were also two sleep rooms. Adjacent to the main building was a recently constructed building which provided an activity room for children aged over three years. Two of the prefabricated

buildings at the back of the premises were used by the early years children in the mornings as activity rooms for children aged over three years. Each of the activity rooms was set up with toys, equipment, materials and furniture suitable to the age and stage of development of the children who used the rooms.

Other spaces available to the children included the dining room for the school aged children that was sometimes used as an art room by the early years children and a double decker bus in the outdoor play area.

(b) There were soft seating areas or relaxation areas in each room. In the rooms used by the younger children there were playpens with padded floors and soft sides where the children chose to play when they wanted a rest away from the general play area. There were two sleep rooms near Puddles room, the room used by children aged 0 – 2 years. One of the sleep rooms was furnished with three standard cots and the other had four cots in the main area and another in an annex. There were blinds on the windows of the sleep rooms to help reduce the amount of light in the room during sleep times. There were partitions between each cot to create separate zones for each child while they slept. There were also two standard cots in Puddles room where children who were settling-in to the service could have their daytime sleep.

(2)(a) The service was sited on extensive grounds. The grounds were divided into several outdoor play spaces by the use of fencing and gates. Some areas were exclusively for use by specific age groups while other areas were for use by all of the children.

The area at the front of the premises was divided into three spaces: one half of the space was used as a vegetable garden where the service was growing potatoes for their own use. The other half of the garden was divided into two outdoor play areas: one area was for the younger children and included a sheltered space with comfortable seating and access to the sand area at the side of the premises. The other space was for the older children and included balance logs, swings, climbing frames, a constructed hill with slides down the slope and a tunnel through it. The registered provider was in the process of making a zipline for this space.

# TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

## Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

	<p>The area between the main building and the adjacent building had a concrete surface and was used by the children for ride-on toys and push toys.</p> <p>An area at the back of the main building had been developed into an outdoor play space for the children from Puddles room and a new door in the back wall gave direct access to the space from the room. The door could be left open to allow children to move freely between the indoor and outdoor space.</p> <p>There was an area with a playhouse and seating on a soft fall surface enclosed by a picket fence near the kitchen.</p> <p>The main area at the back of the premises was used by the older children. This consisted of a ball court with tarmac surface and beyond that a playing field with goal nets. There were two retired double decker buses in the outdoor area. One of them was used as a play space and the other was not in use at present while it was being developed for use.</p>
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### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 22 – Food and Drink

*A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.*

<b>Requirement met:</b>	<p>This requirement has been met.</p> <p>There was a healthy eating plan for the service. Children brought snacks and drinks to be consumed in the premises, in line with the healthy eating policy. Snack times were at 10am and 3pm. Perishable foods and drinks were stored in fridges in each building.</p> <p>Meals such as breakfast and dinner were supplied by the service. Dinner was a hot meal that was prepared on the premises and served to all the children from 11.45am.</p> <p>Drinking water was available to the children throughout the day.</p>
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### 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.*

<b>Requirement met:</b>	<p>This requirement has been met.</p>
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**General Safety:**

The service was located on a rural road with minimal traffic. Children were always supervised when at the front of the premises to prevent them gaining access to the roadway.

Hot water was thermostatically controlled not to exceed 43°C.

The older children didn't use the ball court when the younger children were playing outside in case their ball went over the fence and landed in the play area of the younger children.

Children did not enter the kitchen.

**Infection Control:**

There were hand washing sinks in each building where staff and children could wash their hands at appropriate times during the day such as before eating, after outdoor play and after using the toilet or a tissue.

The service was kept clean and staff practiced 'clean as you go' in their rooms.

There was an infection prevention and control policy for the service.

**Administration of Medication**

The service had a policy of the administration of medication. Parents written consent was sought before medication was administered to a child in the service including both prescription and non-prescription medications.

**Safe Sleep**

The service had a safe sleep policy. Children were monitored while they slept and a record was maintained of sleep checks.

**Fire Safety**

Fire escape routes were kept clear of obstruction.

# TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

## Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

### 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.

#### Requirement met:

- (1) There were staff with first aid response (FAR) training present in the service.
- (2)(a) There were first aid boxes available in each building of the service.
- (b) First aid boxes were available if required by a child 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 fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

#### Requirement met:

- (1)(a) There was a record of the monthly fire drills that took place in the service.
- (b) There was a record of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the service.
- (4) A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of an emergency was displayed on the walls in each building.

### Part VI – Safety

#### Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

#### Requirement met:

This requirement has been met.

There was current insurance for the service, covering up to 67 children, valid until 27 March 2024.

# TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

## Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

### Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 – Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are—

- (a) of sound and stable structure,
- (b) safe and secure,
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated,
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

#### Requirement met:

This requirement has been met.

(a) The buildings used by the service included buildings made of concrete blocks, plaster and slate roofs and other buildings that were prefabricated. All buildings appeared to be of sound and stable structure. The registered provider stated that the buildings had been assessed by an engineer and that the prefabricated buildings had been re-roofed.

The area at the front and side of the premises had recently been tarmacaded to provide appropriate parking space for staff and parents.

(b) The premises was safe and secure. The entry and exit points were kept secured to prevent unauthorised access to the premises and to prevent a child leaving the service unsupervised or gaining access to the road in front of the service. Gates into and between the outdoor play areas prevented children gaining unsupervised access to unsafe areas or areas designed for older children.

(c) All of the rooms in the service including activity rooms, sleep rooms and most of the sanitary accommodation areas were naturally lit and ventilated through openable windows. All rooms had electric lighting to supplement natural light when required. The main building was heated by radiators as part of an oil-fired central heating system. The other buildings in the service were heated by wall mounted electric heaters. Room heating was not required on the day of inspection which took place during the summer.

# TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

## Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

(d) The service was well maintained and clean. There was a cleaning schedule for the service with tasks signed off when completed.

(e) There was sufficient sanitary accommodation throughout the service for the number of children and staff proposed to attend the service.

There were three children's toilets and a wash hand basin in the sanitary accommodation area in the main building. There was also a staff toilet and wash hand basin and two nappy changing areas, one each in Muddy and Puddles, with a wash hand basin and changing unit in each nappy changing room.

There were two toilets and wash hand basins in the building adjacent to the main building which provided sanitary accommodation for children and staff. There were also two toilets and wash hand basins in the prefabricated buildings. In all there was sufficient provision for up to 16 staff, 44 toilet trained children and 22 children who were not yet toilet trained.

There were sufficient toilets for another 22 toilet trained children which could be included in the ratios if additional wash hand basins were installed.

### Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 30 – Minimum Space Requirements

(1) *Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.*

(2) *A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.*

Requirement met:	Room name	Size	Age range	Space requirements	Maximum capacity	Number of children present
	Puddles	31.8m <sup>2</sup>	0-1 years 1-2 years	3.5m <sup>2</sup> 2.8m <sup>2</sup>	9 or 11 (average of 10 children in mixed)	0 6

# TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

## Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

					0 – 2 year age range)	
Muddy	31.8m <sup>2</sup>	1-2 years 2-3 years	2.8m <sup>2</sup> 2.35m <sup>2</sup>		11 or 14 (average of 12 children in mixed 1-3 year age range)	0 6
Sand room	14.12m <sup>2</sup>	2.5-6 years 2-3 years 3-6 years	1.818m <sup>2</sup> (AM) 2.35m <sup>2</sup> 2.3m <sup>2</sup>		7 (AM) or 6 (PM)	0
Pre-school room 1	35.17m <sup>2</sup>	2.5-6 years 2-3 years 3-6 years	1.818m <sup>2</sup> (AM) 2.35m <sup>2</sup> 2.3m <sup>2</sup>		19 (AM) or 15 (PM)	11
Pre-school room 2	24.84m <sup>2</sup>	2.5-6 years	1.818m <sup>2</sup> (AM)		13	0
Pre-school room 3	25.14m <sup>2</sup>	2.5-6 years	1.818m <sup>2</sup> (AM)		13	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>162.87m<sup>2</sup></b>				67 - 77	23

This requirement has been met.

(1) There was sufficient clear floor space in the premises as outlined in the table above for the proposed number of children that will attend the service.

(2) There was sufficient space in the service for the proposed number of children to attend on a full day or part-time basis.