

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

SLA Identifier:	TU2021CE001
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Name of Service:	Caterpillar Kids Pre-School and Afterschool Service
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Address of Service:	Ballykeelaun, Parteen, Co. Clare
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Eircode:	V94 YP89
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Name of Registered Provider:	Natasha Berty
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	30/07/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	15	PM	15
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Quality and Regulation Directorate Tusla Child and Family Agency Ennis Primary Care Centre Station Road Ennis County Clare
Inspection undertaken by:	A.McCarthy
Title:	Early Years Inspector

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
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Description of service

Caterpillar Kids Pre-School and Afterschool Service is located in a converted commercial building, in the village of Parteen, County Clare. The full day care service operates Monday to Friday from 07:30 to 18:30. Care and education is facilitated for preschool children ranging in age from two to five years. A school aged childcare service is also facilitated within the service. The childcare facility comprises of two care rooms, children's and adult sanitary facilities, a nappy changing room, a sluice room, an office/staff room and a storage room. An enclosed play area is located at the side of the building for use by the children.

Staffing

Ten adults are employed by the service. On the 30 July 2024 the registered provider and six adults were present. Four adults cared for the children in attendance, two auxiliary staff prepared and cooked the meals and cleaned the service. The registered provider had an administrative role and provided relief cover in the care rooms.

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 focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 23, 25, 26 and 28. 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. 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 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,*
- (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*

(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 registered provider was assigned as the person in charge and the assistant manager was available to deputise.

(b)

The registered provider and the assistant manager were available throughout the inspection.

(2)

Ten files were available, the findings included the following:

(a)

Nineteen written references were available from past employers in respect of the adults working in the service.

(b)

One written reference was available in respect an adult working in the service. The reference was obtained from a source other than a past employer.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the ten adults working in the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

International police vetting was available for one adult, who had lived in another state for a period longer than six months.

(4)

Eight adults working directly with the children held Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications ranging from Level 5 to 7 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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)

During the inspection an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children in attendance.

(2)

On the 30 July 2024 an adequate number of adults cared for the fifteen children in attendance. The ratio of adults caring for children was maintained during the inspection in the care rooms.

(8)(a)

The staff roster demonstrated that more than two adults were available in the service at all times.

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)

The children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the service through the provision of appropriate activities, interactions, materials, and equipment, having regard to the age and stage of development of the children. Two care rooms were in operation during the inspection. The care practices were reviewed by the inspector in these rooms.

Basic Needs of Children:

The adults treated the children in a kind and caring manner and positive behavioural strategies were used during interactions. The inspector observed the staff conversing with the children in a sensitive and respectful manner, the staff used soft tones of voice, the children's individual names and responded promptly to their cues for assistance. The staff were observed to make good eye contact with the children and engage with them at their level.

The children were encouraged to be independent, whilst caring for their belongings and using the toilet. The adults supervised and treated the children in a sensitive manner during toileting. The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care and nasal care appropriate to their age and level of development. Appropriate crockery and feeding utensils were provided for mealtime. The children were offered cereal and toast for breakfast, various fruit, yoghurts and crackers were offered for snack time. An external company supplies the dinner each day. The children were provided with chicken, corn and pasta. Water stations were available in each room.

The adults offered praise and encouragement and children were respected and supported in their choice of individual and group engagement in activities. The children in each room were offered a range of developmentally

challenging play and learning activities and the children were observed to be fully engaged and included in all activities in the indoor and outdoor environments.

Supporting Relationships Around Children:

A key person approach was observed in the care rooms, the adults demonstrated an appropriate level of knowledge of the children's preferences, interests, and individual capabilities. The adults followed the children's lead in the care rooms and the children were supported in individual and group play. The rooms accommodated visual routine displays demonstrating photographic illustrations to support and include all children in the programme of care. The children were notified in advance of any transitions. The adults in each room worked effectively to facilitate the programme of care and learning.

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:

- A key coded, bell operated system was in place at the entrance door to monitor the safe entry and exit of the children to and from the childcare facility.
- The outdoor areas were secured with high concrete walls to protect the children within.
- Medication and cleaning agents were stored in a secured area out of reach of the children.
- Storage facilities were secured and inaccessible to the children.
- Completed risk assessments were available demonstrating measures taken to reduce risk within the service.

Infection Control:

- The service was maintained in a clean condition. Completed cleaning schedules were available.
- The sanitary facilities were adequately resourced with wash hand basins, warm running water, liquid soap hand paper towels and pedal operated bins.
- The children washed their hands at appropriate intervals after activities, toileting and before mealtime.
- The children's perishable food items were stored correctly in refrigerators.

Administration of Medication:

- The manager and the adults working in the service demonstrated an awareness of the administration of medication procedure outlined in the policy. Documentation and a service policy was available to guide staff on the safe administration of prescriptive and non-prescriptive medication.

Safe Sleep:

- The two care rooms had areas for the children to rest and relax. These areas included couches and soft furnishings

Fire Safety:

- The fire exits and passageways were clear from obstruction throughout the service.
- Written records of completed monthly fire drills were available.
- A fire assembly point was readily identifiable with signage.
- Records of up-to-date fire safety training were available.

Outing:

- The registered provider confirmed that outings are not routinely undertaken by the service.

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)

Five adults working in the service had a record of First Aid Response training (FAR).

(2)(a)

Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available and accessible to the adults in the care rooms and office.

(b)

The first aid boxes were available for use in emergency situations for the children in the pre-school 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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Written records of completed monthly fire drills were available in the service. The last fire drill was recorded as taking place on the 28 June 2024.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system was serviced on the 22 March 2024.

(4)

A fire action notice demonstrating the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Up to date insurance cover was available for forty-four pre-school children. The policy is valid until the 27 March 2025.