

# TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

## Initial Inspection of Proposed New Service

**Tusla I.D.:** TU2025CC006

**Name of Service:** Zenith Childcare Midleton

**Address of Service:** Tír Cluain, Midleton, Co Cork P25 KP66

**Email Address:** charlene@zenithcaregroup.com

**Name of Proposed Registered Provider:** Charlene Roche

<b>Type of Proposed Service:</b>	<b>Full Day Care</b>	✓	<b>Part-Time</b>	✓	<b>Drop-In</b>	
	<b>Sessional</b>	✓	<b>Childminding</b>		<b>Temporary</b>	

**Proposed service type:** Full Day Care, Part-Time, Sessional

**Proposed Number of Children:** 122

**Outcome of the F06 Inspection**  
(e.g., type of service, numbers, age ranges, times,)  
Full Day Care/Part-Time/Sessional service for 109 children, aged 0 to 6 years operating from 7.30am to 6.00pm.

**Registered service:** Registered Full Day Care/Part-Time/Sessional Service for 109 Children.

**Date of Inspection:** 1 9 0 8 2 0 2 5

**Inspection Undertaken by:** D Prendergast & N O' Donoghue

**Title:** Early Years Inspectors

**Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address:** Early Years Inspectorate, Administration Building, St Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher, Cork T23 X440.

<b>Rationale for Inspection</b>
<b>Proposed New Service</b>

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

**Registration Status:** Registered Full Day Care/Part-Time/Sessional Service for 109 Children

**Date of Registration:** 26<sup>th</sup> August 2025

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### 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>	Zenith Childcare Midleton proposes to provide a full day care service, including options of part time and sessional care, for children aged 0 to 6 years. This includes children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme, which is proposed to be facilitated over 38 weeks annually. Proposed daily opening hours are from 7.30am to 6.00pm, each Monday to Friday, for 49 weeks of the year.
<b>Premises</b>	The proposed childcare facility is situated in a residential area of Midleton in Co Cork. A purpose-built, two storey premises is proposed for use. There are seven care rooms, each with adjoining sanitary facilities. A designated sleep room is available adjoining the Wobbler 1 room. The service also includes a sensory room, an office, a kitchen, a staff room and staff toilet facilities. Two enclosed outdoor play environments are available on site.
<b>Staffing</b>	It is proposed that 28 adults will be employed at the service. The proposed registered provider and the operations manager will not be based at the service.
<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 four 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 the registering application. 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>	It was initially proposed that the service would cater for 122 children, aged 0 to 6 years. However, during the inspection, it was confirmed that a decreased number of children would be attending the ECCE scheme and that instead, an increased number of younger children were proposed to be accommodated. This subsequently affects the overall number of children that the service can cater for. On inspection, it was determined that the service can be registered for 109 children.

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<b>Acknowledgement</b>	The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the proposed registered provider, operations manager and the deputy person in charge, 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>Requirement met:</b>	<p>The requirement has been met.</p> <p>(1)(a)</p> <p>A named person in charge has been assigned to the service, along with a deputy person in charge, who can deputise, as required. Information to this effect was on display in the main entrance area.</p>
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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.

<b>Requirement met:</b>	<p>The requirement has been met.</p> <p>(1) The service proposes that the required adult to child ratios will be adhered to as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Wobbler 1 and Wobbler 2 rooms will each cater for 10 children, aged 1 to 2 years and both rooms will be staffed by 2 adults.</li> <li>• Toddler 1 will accommodate 12 children, with an age range of 2 to 3 years and there will be 2 adults available to these children.</li> <li>• Up to 15 children, aged 1 to 2 years will attend Wobbler 3, with 3 adults responsible for their direct care.</li> <li>• Eighteen children aged 2 to 3 years will be accommodated in Toddler 2 and there will be 3 adults working directly with these children.</li> <li>• Preschool 1 and 2 will each facilitate up to 22 children, between the age of 2 ½ to 6 years, during the sessional service and both rooms will have 2 staff. Up to 16 children per room will remain for full day care and 2 staff will be available in each room.</li> </ul>
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### 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:

The requirement has been met.

(1)

(a) The rooms have been furnished and laid out in consideration of the developmental needs and proposed age range of the children. There is a sufficient quantity of child sized tables and chairs available and play resources are visible and accessible at child height. For example, interest items such as jigsaws, construction materials, musical instruments and handheld vehicles are arranged on low-level, open shelving. Suitably equipped home corners are also provided, along with materials such as books, dress up clothes and dolls.

The two outdoor play areas include newly fitted, colourful, artificial grass surfaces. There are ride on toys, seesaws, climbing frames and wall mounted blackboards accessible, along with a balance beam, a wooden bridge and sand play.

(b)

- The rest needs of children aged under 2 years will be accommodated in a designated sleep room and in the Wobbler 3 and Toddler 1 care rooms.
- The sleep room is equipped with nine standard cots and safety mattresses and two additional cots and safety mattresses have been ordered.
- There will be 19 floor beds accessible; 13 of these are currently available and delivery of a further 6 is awaited. The proposed registered provider is aware of the requirement to complete an individual sleep plan and risk assessment, in respect of each child aged 15 months to 2 years, who will be using a floor bed.
- There are 24 stackable beds and a supply of linen provided for any child aged over 2 years, who may require sleep. Linen for the cots and floor beds will be supplied by the children's parents.

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- A suitably furnished rest area is provided in each care room. These spaces include brightly coloured floor mats, cushions, soft toys and books.
- (2)
- (a) The designated outdoor play area of the proposed service is available on the premises and is observed to be suitable, safe and adequately secure.

### Part V – Care of Children in Pre-School Services

#### 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.*

##### Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

A healthy eating policy has been devised and is suitable for a full day care service. Up to four daily meals will be offered; breakfast, a mid-morning snack, a hot lunch and an afternoon snack. It is proposed that the service will supply all of the meals and snacks for the children who will attend full day care, including a hot meal from an outside catering company. Corresponding menus have been developed. Parents or guardians have the option of providing snacks for the children, in particular children who will attend the ECCE sessional service.

If powdered infant formula feeds are required, these will be prepared at home and refrigerated in the service, upon the children's arrival. There are several refrigerators available throughout the premises, for the safe storage of perishable foods and sufficient reheating facilities are also provided. Drinking water will be freely accessible to children throughout the day. Appropriate crockery and cutlery will be used for mealtimes.

### 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.*

##### Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

##### General safety:

- There are no trailing cables or flexes within the children's reach.
- High-level door handles are fitted to care room doors. This will reduce the risk of children gaining unsupervised access to other areas within the service.
- Suitable storage is available for cleaning agents and equipment.
- Visibility markings have been placed on glass panel doors.
- The first aid boxes within the care rooms are maintained at adult height.
- Fire exits routes are free from obstruction and fire exit signage is illuminated.
- Fire extinguishers are wall mounted.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As the fire assembly point is located in the car park, adjacent to unsecured entrance/exit points, a written risk assessment in relation to conducting fire drills, was made available and was deemed satisfactory.</li> <li>Heavy furniture, such as storage units, have been securely anchored.</li> </ul> <p><b>Infection control:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adequate handwashing facilities are provided to support hygienic handwashing and drying. This includes warm running water, liquid soap, single use paper towels and foot pedal operated bins.</li> <li>The nappy changing areas are equipped with single use aprons and gloves.</li> <li>Most of the cot mattresses are waterproof and are easily cleaned. Waterproof mattress protectors have been ordered for the cot mattresses that are not waterproof.</li> <li>Cubby shelf storage is provided for the children’s coats and personal belongings.</li> </ul>
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### Part VI - Safety

Regulation 25 – First Aid	
<p>(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.</p> <p>(2) A registered provider shall ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box for children—</p> <p>(a) is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and</p> <p>(b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times</p>	
<b>Requirement met:</b>	<p>The requirement has been met.</p> <p>(1) The available documentation demonstrates that two of the adults have undertaken First Aid Responder (FAR) training. The proposed registered provider advised that FAR training has been organised for eight additional adults and that this is scheduled to be facilitated during the week of 25 August 2025.</p> <p>(2)</p> <p>(a) There are nine first aid boxes on the premises, which are appropriately stored and adequately stocked.</p> <p>(b) The first aid boxes will be available at all times, while the service is in operation.</p>

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### 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:

The requirement has been met.

(1)

(a) Written provision is in place to record the monthly fire drills that will be undertaken.

(b) The available firefighting equipment within the proposed childcare facility is documented in writing. The servicing record for the firefighting equipment is dated 21 July 2025 and a maintenance report in respect of the smoke alarm is dated 6 August 2025.

(4) The service's fire evacuation procedure, which contains details in relation to the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire, is clearly displayed in all of the care rooms.

Signage highlighting the fire assembly point is clearly visible.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

#### Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

Insurance is in place for a maximum of 122 children to attend the service. The certificate is valid from 21 May 2025 to 27 March 2026.

This service's registration is contingent upon the registered provider maintaining up-to-date insurance coverage that accurately reflects the number of children attending the service.

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### 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:

The requirement has been met.

- (a) From a visual examination, the exterior of the building appears to be of sound and stable structure. Although a crack is visible on one of the walls in the outdoor play area, an engineer’s report has been obtained, which outlines that said wall is stable. The engineer has instructed that the condition of the wall be monitored.
- (b) The main entrance door is fitted with a key pad and there is a buzzer in place for visitors. Exit from the interior is controlled by a door release button, at adult height. The outdoor play spaces are fully enclosed by walls and secured gates.
- (c)
  - The care rooms are provided with a supply of natural light, through glass windows and doors. This is supplemented by LED ceiling lights, with protective covers, which are also available in the sanitary facilities.
  - The premises is heated by underfloor heating, powered by a gas boiler. A recent record of servicing for the gas boiler, dated 15 August 2025, is available.
  - Adequate ventilation is provided in the care rooms through openable windows. Mechanical ventilation is in place in the sanitary facilities.
- (d) A programme of cleaning has been developed and there are cleaning records displayed across the service, which staff will sign, in line with regular cleaning.
- (e) A total of 11 toilets and 13 wash hand basins are available across the children’s sanitary facilities. Two additional wash hand basins within these areas are for adult’s use. There are also 4 nappy changing units in place, which allow for up to 44 children in nappies to be accommodated. Three toilets and three wash hand basins are accessible for staff. The premises is serviced by a public water and sewage system.

### 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.
- (4) Where a registered provider contemporaneously provides—
- (a) a sessional pre-school service, and
  - (b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both,
- the minimum clear floor space applicable for the duration of the sessional preschool service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the floor space specified in paragraph (3).

#### Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) Within the care rooms, adequate space is available to accommodate the children’s play and exploration.

(2) Sufficient clear floor space is provided, as per the following recorded room measurements and the proposed numbers and age ranges of children:

- Wobbler 1: 28.69m<sup>2</sup>, 10 children (full day care) aged 1 to 2 years.
- Wobbler 2: 29.44m<sup>2</sup>, 10 children (full day care) aged 1 to 2 years.
- Wobbler 3: 42.97m<sup>2</sup>, 15 children (full day care) aged 1 to 2 years.
- Toddler 1: 36.97m<sup>2</sup>, 12 children (full day care) aged 2 to 3 years.
- Toddler 2: 56.34m<sup>2</sup>, 18 children (full day care) aged 2 to 3 years.
- Preschool 1: 55.11m<sup>2</sup>, 22 children (sessional) or 16 children (full day care) aged 2 ½ to 6 years.
- Preschool 2: 54.27m<sup>2</sup>, 22 children (sessional) or 16 children (full day care) aged 2 ½ to 6 years.

(4)(a)&(b)

The registered provider proposes to contemporaneously cater for children attending the sessional service and the part time/full day care service. The Preschool 1 and Preschool 2 rooms each allow for the children attending the sessional service, to have a minimum of 1.818 square metres of clear floor space during this time.