

# TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

## Initial Inspection of Proposed New Service

**Tusla I.D.:** TU2025TY003

**Name of Service:** Caterpillars Childcare (Kilcommon)

**Address of Service:** Kilcommon National School, Castlequarter, Kilcommon, Co Tipperary, E41 DK00.

**Email Address:** caterpillarschildcare@gmail.com

**Name of Proposed Registered Provider:** Gráinne Harte

<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 and Sessional

**Proposed Number of Children:** 35

**Outcome of the F06 Inspection**  
(e.g., type of service, numbers, age ranges, times,)

Full Day Care, Part-Time & Sessional Service for 35 children (Max. 26 Full Day Care/Part Time) aged 0-6 years old, from 07:30 – 18:00 for 49 weeks of the year

**Registered service:** Full Day Care, Part-Time & Sessional Service for 35 children (Max. 26 Full Day Care/Part Time)

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

**Inspection Undertaken by:** L McGeeney and B Fraher

**Title:** Early Years Inspectors

**Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address:** North Tipperary Civic Offices, Limerick Road, Nenagh Co Tipperary E45A099

**Rationale for Inspection**

**Proposed New Service**

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

**Registration Status:** Registered Full Day Care, Part-Time & Sessional Service for 35 children (Max. 26 Full Day Care/Part Time)

**Date of Registration:** 10<sup>th</sup> September 2025

# TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

## Initial Inspection of Proposed New Service

### 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>	<p>This proposed full day care service will provide care and education to children aged between 0 and 6 years old. It is proposed that a registered school age care service will also be provided. The service will operate Monday – Friday, 7.30am – 6pm for 49 weeks of the year. This will include a daily three-hour session from 9am – 12pm, funded under the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE) for eligible children, which will run for 38 weeks of the year, in line with the school calendar.</p> <p>This will be one of several services operated by the registered provider in North Tipperary and Laois under the name ‘Caterpillars Childcare’, including Caterpillars Childcare Newport, Caterpillars Childcare Rearcross and Caterpillars Childcare Killeen.</p>
<b>Premises</b>	<p>The service will be operated from part of Kilcommon National School, North Tipperary. The service has been developed in the former hall of the school which has been renovated and divided to provide three activity rooms, a sleep room, kitchen and sanitary accommodation area. An enclosed outdoor play area for the exclusive use of children attending the service has been developed in part of the school grounds at the front of the premises.</p>
<b>Staffing</b>	<p>The registered provider will not work in the service on a daily basis but proposes to be present one day each week. The service manager and two other members of staff will work directly with the children on a daily basis. Cleaning staff will work in the service out of operational hours.</p>
<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</p>

# TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

## Initial Inspection of Proposed New Service

	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.
<b>Acknowledgement</b>	The Inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the proposed registered provider and person in charge 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) The service manager will be the person in charge on a daily basis. There was a named person who could deputise as required.

### 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) It is proposed that there will be 3 staff working with up to 22 children aged between 0 and 6 years old over 3 activity rooms initially. The number of staff will increase in line with the required ratios as the number of children increase.

(8)(a) There will be at least two staff present in the service when it is 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 children will have access to one of the three newly developed activity rooms: Pre-school room, Toddler room and Baby room. Each room was bright, comfortable and furnished with a range of toys, furniture, equipment and materials suitable to the age and stage of the development of the children who would use the room. There was a range of tables and chairs of different heights and styles to suit the needs of both children and staff.

The outdoor play area was located beside the service to allow easy access on a daily basis.

(b) There was a large sleep room beside the Baby room furnished with four cots with fitted mattresses, suitable for infants aged 0 – 12 months. The registered provider said that they also have cots suitable for up to 18 months old and standard cots, which will be moved into the sleep room when needed. There were two floor beds in the Toddler room, with more available if needed. There were camp beds available for use by children aged over 2 years old who required a sleep during the day.

Cosy rest areas had been created in each activity room where the children could rest and relax during the day. In the Pre-school room there was a tall ‘black-out’ tent for rest and sensory play, in the Toddler room there were floor mats, padded wall cover and floor beds and in the Baby room there were floor mats and a padded wall cover.

# TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

## Initial Inspection of Proposed New Service

(2)(a) An area at the front of the premises had been sectioned off from the school play grounds by the use of green mesh fencing and gates to create an outdoor area for the service. The ground surface was covered with artificial grass. Fixed equipment included a large wooden bus and a wooden tractor climbing frame and slide. There was also a tuff tray table and seating areas.

### 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:

This requirement has been met.

It is proposed that the service will provide all of the food and drinks consumed by the children while attending the service, with the exception of infant formula which will be supplied by parents.

The service had a healthy eating policy.

Drinking water was available from the tap in the kitchen.

A fridge was available in the kitchen for the storage of perishable foods.

### 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:

This requirement has been met.

The following was observed which will support the health, safety and welfare of the children:

#### General safety

There were separate entrances for the service and the school, both of which were kept secured and opened from the inside by a member of staff or from the outside by

a fob or keypad code. This will prevent unauthorised access to the premises and prevent a child from leaving the service unsupervised.

There were gates between the school grounds and the roadway to prevent children running onto the road from the grounds.

The outdoor area for the service was fully enclosed and gated to prevent unauthorised access and to prevent a child from gaining unsupervised access to the roadway or any other area of the grounds.

Hot water was thermostatically controlled not to exceed 43°C. On the day of inspection water temperatures ranged between 32°C and 36°C.

#### **Infection control**

There was a policy on infection prevention and control for the service, a hand washing policy and a nappy changing policy to support best practice.

There were sinks in each room and in the sanitary accommodation areas with hot and cold running water to support hand washing at appropriate times during the day.

Cots were placed at least 50cm apart in line with infection control guidance.

#### **Safe sleep**

The service had a safe sleep policy which stated that children would be checked every ten minutes while they slept. A record of sleep checks will be maintained using an electronic application designed for this purpose.

There was a room thermometer to ensure that the sleep room was maintained at the required temperatures.

# TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

## Initial Inspection of Proposed New 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

#### Requirement met:

This requirement has been met.

(1) There will be at least one member of staff with current first aid responder (FAR) training present in the service while it is in operation.

(2)(a) There were two large, well equipped first aid boxes available on the windowsill in the corridors of the service where they could be easily accessed when required.

(b) The 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 firefighting 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:

This requirement has been met.

(1)(a) There was a fire drill recording page on the electronic application used in the service for maintaining records.

(b) There was a record of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the service. Firefighting equipment was serviced on an annual basis, most recently on 27 August 2025. Smoke alarms in the premises were serviced in June 2025. New smoke alarms were added to the system as part of the development of the service.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed on the wall, above the firefighting equipment.

# TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

## Initial Inspection of Proposed New Service

### 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.

The service held current insurance cover for a full day care service valid until 27 March 2026.

Registration is contingent upon the Registered Provider maintaining up-to-date insurance coverage that accurately reflects the number of children attending the service.

### 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 premises was of concrete and paster construction, built c. 1950 and renovated in 2025 by the installation of dividing partition walls to create four rooms from the former school hall.

(b) The service appeared to be safe and secure.

A concrete ramp had been built at the entrance door to the service for accessibility. Doors to the service were controlled by an electro-magnetic locking system. There was a high fence and gate enclosing the outdoor area.

The kitchen was inaccessible to the children.

(c) The premises was bright with each room lit by natural light, supplemented by artificial lighting. Vertical blinds were fitted to the windows to enable staff to manage

the natural light entering the rooms. Each room was naturally ventilated through openable windows.

The service was heated by wall mounted radiators as part of an oil-fired central heating system. An immersion heater was used to heat water at times during the year when central heating was not required.

(d) The premises was recently renovated and painted, clean and in good condition throughout. All furniture and equipment were newly purchased and in perfect condition.

There was cleaning schedule to ensure the service will be well maintained after opening.

(e) The sanitary accommodation area had two separate cubicles equipped with a toilet and sink each. One of the sanitary accommodation areas contained a wall mounted, fold-down nappy changing unit. Staff sanitary accommodation was located off the central corridor, in the school section, and would be shared with school staff. There was sufficient sanitary accommodation for up to 8 staff, 22 toilet trained children and 11 children who require nappy changing. It is proposed that a second nappy changing unit would be installed if the number of children requiring nappy changing exceeded 11 at any one time.

### 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.*
- (3) *A registered provider of a sessional pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre shall ensure that a minimum of 1.818 square metres of clear floor space is available for each child 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:

This requirement has been met.

(1) There was 82.83m<sup>2</sup> available between the four rooms. The proposed usage for the rooms on the day of inspection was as follows:

Pre-school room: 27.72m<sup>2</sup>

Toddler room: 17.86m<sup>2</sup>

Baby room: 21.36m<sup>2</sup>

Sleep room: 15.89m<sup>2</sup>

The amount of clear floor space available to the children for work and play was 66.94m<sup>2</sup> as the sleep room cannot be included in the calculation of clear floor space.

The four rooms were measured as part of the inspection in case the service changes the current proposed usage of each room in the future.

The service could accommodate the proposed 35 children if all children were aged 2.5-6 years old and attended on a sessional basis.

(2) The maximum number of children that can occupy each room at any one time will be dependent on the age of each child and the length of time they spend in the service each day. Based on a full day care attendance the maximum capacity of each room would be as follows:

# TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

## Initial Inspection of Proposed New Service

Baby room (21.36m<sup>2</sup>): 6 infants aged 0–1-year-old or 7 children aged 1-2 years old.

Toddler room (17.86m<sup>2</sup>): 6 children aged 1-2 years old or 7 children aged 2-3 years old.

Pre-School room (27.72m<sup>2</sup>): 11 children aged 2-3 years old or 12 children aged 3-6 years old.

(3) The preschool room can accommodate up to 15 children aged 2.5- 6 years old attending on a sessional basis.

(4) When the service contemporaneously provides a sessional service and a full day care service in one room, the clear floor space required for the sessional service will apply for the duration of the session for all children in the room.