

A Parent's Guide to the National Childcare Funding Programmes 2018/2019



**What can your local
City/County Childcare
Committee do for YOU?**



Dublin City

Childcare Committee Company Limited by Guarantee

Coiste Cúraim Leanaí Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath Cuideachta faoi Theorainn Ráthaíochta

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Introduction

What can your local City / County Childcare Committee (CCC) do for you?

City/County Childcare Committees (CCCs) were established nationally in 2001 to encourage the development of childcare locally. CCCs offer a wide variety of services locally; we offer information and guidance to Early Years providers, childminders, parents and the general public on a variety of issues relating to Early Years Care and Education.

CCC's administer the National Childcare Funding programmes on behalf of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA).

The aim of this guide is to provide parents with information about the National Childcare Funding programmes.

Different Types of Service Providers

Early Years services and childminders provide full-time care, part-time care, sessional and after-school services. Fees charged are generally at the discretion of the service provider.

Private Service Providers

Private service providers offer quality childcare services that are run as private businesses. These Early Years services range from small businesses that are operated by sole traders to larger childcare facilities that are operated by companies, some of which may have a number of different services in various locations. Private services may offer the Early Childhood Care and Education programme (ECCE), Community Childcare Subvention (CCS), Community Childcare Subvention Plus (CCSP), Community Childcare Subvention Universal (CCSU), Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement (CCSR), Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement (Transitional) CCSR(T) and the Training and Employment Childcare (TEC) Funding Programmes.

Community Service Providers

Community Service Providers (not-for profit) offer quality Early Years services and are managed by a voluntary Board of Management. Community based childcare services may offer the ECCE, CCS, CCSP, CCSR, CCSR(T) and TEC childcare Funding Programmes.

Childminders

A Childminder is a self-employed person who provides childcare in their own home. Childminders may offer the National Funding Programmes to parents subject to meeting certain criteria.

Types of Childcare:

Sessional:

A sessional service refers to a programme for children for up to 3.5 hours per session. Services may offer a morning and/or an afternoon session.

Part-Time Day Care:

A part-time day care service refers to a programme for children over 3.5 hours and less than 5 hours per day.

Full Day Care:

A full day care service refers to a programme of activities for children for more than 5 hours per day. A full day service may include sessional and part-time services and School Age Childcare Services for children attending primary school.

School Age Childcare:

School Age Childcare refers to centre-based services for school aged children from 4 – 12 years which operate during one or more of the following periods: before school - after school - during the school holidays.

Childminders:

Childminding services refers to care for children within a Childminders home. A Childminding service may include sessional and part-time services and School-Age Childcare services for children attending primary school.

(Tusla, 2016).

Beginning your Search for Early Years Care and Education



Step 1: Consider your early years' service requirements, the type of the service you choose will depend upon:

- your child's needs and your family needs
- the type of service you prefer
- the options available in your community

Step 2: Contact your local City/County Childcare Committee who will provide you with a directory of services within your area.



Step 3: How much childcare do you require? Knowing your childcare needs will help you to narrow down your options. You may need a full time early years service (5 hours or more each day), part time care only (3.5 hours up to 5 hours), sessional care (up to 3.5 hours) or perhaps a home-based childminding service.

Step 4: Find out if you are eligible for financial support through the available National Childcare Funding Programmes. There are various financial supports available for parents and families through the current National Childcare Funding Programmes and also through a Universal Subsidy for children between the age of 6 months to 36 months as detailed in this Parent's Guide. If you have further queries about the National Funding Programmes please contact your local Childcare Committee.

Step 5: Once you have created a shortlist of early years' services in your area that may meet your childcare needs, you can contact them directly to enquire further and arrange an appointment to visit the service. Guidance on contacting a service and arranging a visit are detailed on page 5.

Contacting an Early Years' Service

Making an informed decision

By completing background research into early years' services, it supports you to make informed decisions when choosing an early years' care and education service. The Early Years Care and Education sector is regulated under the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years' Services) Regulations 2016. Tusla Child and Family Agency has statutory responsibility to support compliance and quality standards through regular inspection.

Early Years Inspections:

Inspection is designed to ensure the health, safety and welfare of children and the promotion of their development. It is also to ensure that Early Years services comply with relevant statutory requirements including the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years' Services) Regulations 2016. Tusla Child and Family Agency is responsible for inspecting pre-schools, crèches, day-care and similar Tusla registered services which cater for children aged 0-6 years. This agency has statutory responsibility to assess levels of compliance with the Regulations and works with service providers in partnership to promote a culture of compliance. Inspection reports are valuable published resources, a list of Tusla registered service inspection reports can be viewed through Tusla's website www.tusla.ie under the Family Support Early Years Inspection section.

The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years' Services) Regulations 2016

It is the duty of every person providing an early years care and education service to take all reasonable measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the children attending the service and to comply with the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016. The Regulations document and the Amendments to the Regulations document are available through Tusla's website www.tusla.ie.

Initial contact / phone interview:

Once you have completed research regarding services, the next task is to shortlist potential early years' services. A brief email or phone interview asking your key questions will guide you to the next stage of choosing a suitable service. When you contact an early years' service, you can ask a number of questions initially. These questions may help you to shortlist providers and make informed decisions in choosing appropriate care for your child.

Such questions may include:

- Is the service registered with Tusla?
- What are the opening hours of the service?
- What age range of children does the service accommodate?
- Are there spaces currently available or is there a waiting list in operation?
- What type of childcare is provided, e.g. full day care, part-time, sessional, etc.?
- If your child has specific needs, is the service resourced to meet those needs?
- Which National Childcare Funding Programme does the service participate in, if any?
- What information is already available to you - Website, Facebook page etc.?

Arranging a visit to an Early Years' Service:

After an initial phone interview it is recommended you visit the Early Years service. Arrange an agreed date and time with management, and visit during operating hours. If possible, bring another family member and your child along.

It is essential that you meet the manager and staff, explore the setting's environment, and discuss the policies and procedures that are in place. This is your opportunity to ask about practice such as the services approach to behaviour management, the procedures in place for emergencies, is there a healthy eating policy and how the service will encourage your child's interests and promote independence? Then as a parent/guardian, you can decide if the service compliments your approach to parenting and is it the appropriate fit for you and your family.

Some points to consider:

- Narrow your choices down to a couple of services that best suit your child and your family needs.
- Consider first impressions of the service. Would you be happy to leave your child in that service?
- Consider external information available to you: Tusla's Early Years' and the Department of Education and Skills (ECCE services only) inspection reports are available online.
- Has anyone been able to recommend the service to you?
- Don't be afraid to ask questions. An Early Years provider should be happy to inform parents on their service, their approach to education and care and clarify any common misconceptions.

Choosing an Early Years' Service

QUESTIONS TO ASK & WHAT TO LOOK FOR?



The Learning Environment:

Look for:

- Is the indoor and outdoor environment spacious, bright and welcoming?
- Are the premises in good repair, clean, secure and safe?
- Are the rooms well-arranged allowing for safe movement of the children?
- Is the equipment and toys age appropriate, safe, in good repair and varied?
- Do all children have easy access to the toys and learning materials?
- Is there evidence of the children's work displayed throughout the service?
- Are children free to choose activities?
- What learning opportunities are offered through the curriculum, e.g. physical play, outdoor play, individual activity, group activity, creative activities, construction opportunities? Etc.
- Do the children seem content, comfortable and happy in their surroundings?
- Are the children engaged in conversation, with an activity or meaningful play?
- Can you observe caring and respectful interactions between adults and children?
- How is daily information about children communicated to parents/guardians, i.e. diaries, scrapbooks, etc.

Ask:

- What will a typical day for my child look like? Is independence promoted and encouraged?
- How will staff help my child during the settling in process?
- Do the children have an opportunity to mix with other age groups, i.e. siblings?
- How often do the children go outside?

- What curriculum approach is used?
- How many children (your child's age group) are being cared for in the room?
- How do staff manage difficult or challenging behaviour?
- Is there an open-door policy? Can you visit at any time?

Health and Safety:

Look for:

- Entry and exit points to building and rooms that are clear and clutter free.
- Doors to children's rooms with viewing panels.
- An area that displays information about who is the designated person in charge. Some services may also display photographs and names of their staff team.
- An area that display information about who is the First Aid Officer, the Health and Safety Officer and the Designated Liaison Person for Child Protection concerns.
- Evidence of fire safety procedures such as fire evacuation assembly points, fire extinguishers, smoke alarms, fire exits, record of fire drills and record of evacuation procedures.
- Outdoor play area, nappy changing area, sleeping and resting facilities that are safe and appropriate.
- Hygienic food preparation areas that are inaccessible to the children.

Ask:

- Who has access to the building?
- Is there a safety statement and can you view it?
- Is there a Child Safeguarding Statement in place?
- Is food prepared on the premises?
- **Transport:** Is there a school drop off/collection service in place? Does the vehicle have seatbelts and /or booster seats as appropriate? Is the vehicle appropriately insured with a qualified driver and staff member?

- **Child Protection:** Is there a Child Safeguarding Statement in place? Is there a procedure for reporting child protection concerns? Have staff attended child protection training and hold up-to-date certification? Is there a Designated Liaison Person and Deputy Designated Liaison Person? Have all staff been Garda Vetted and references checked?
- **Collection policy:** Who can collect your child? What measures are in place to ensure only those authorised to collect your child have access to your child? Are passwords or ID required? Are there late collection penalties?
- **Illness and Exclusion policy:** What is the setting's illness policy and their policy around the administration of medication? What are the exclusion periods for illnesses? What happens if my child falls ill on the premises? If my child has specific medical needs, how will they be accommodated?
- **Accident/incident/emergency care:** What procedures are in place in the event of a medical emergency? At what stage of an emergency will you be contacted? How are you informed of any incidents/accidents relating to your child?
- **Outings:** Are the children taken on outings? How frequent are the outings? What is the adult to child ratios while off the premises? Are these outings covered by insurance? Ask to see the Outings Policy.
- **Healthy eating policy:** Do parents supply food or does the service provide food? Are there sample menus available to view? Can the service cater for specific dietary requirements that your child may have? What are the meal times? What happens if your child doesn't eat their dinner? What types of drinks and snacks are permitted in the service? Is water available throughout the day?
- **Is the service registered with Tusla?** A list of registered services can be found on Tusla's website www.tusla.ie

Management & Staff:

Look for:

- Confirmation from the designated person in charge that all staff meet the qualification requirement, are Garda Vetted and Police Vetted (where necessary), and references are checked before working with the children.
- Adequate number of adults in each room to meet the adult:child ratio requirements as set out in the Early Years Regulations 2016.

- Staff that are positively interacting with the children and colleagues, e.g. at the child's level, positive verbal and body language, and communication that is respectful and encouraging.
- Signs of a professional and caring approach to working with children, colleagues and you as a potential parent of a child in their care.

Ask:

- Who will be looking after your child?
- Is there a Key Worker System in place? (one staff member who is responsible for supporting your child's transitions and communicating key information to you) How often will you be able to communicate with this person?
- Is there a high turnover of staff? If so, any reasons or explanation for this.
- Are the staff Garda Vetted and references checked as required by the Early Years Regulations 2016? Do new staff members complete an induction followed by adequate supervision?
- Is there a designated person in charge on the premises at all times during hours of operation?
- What opportunities are there for parents/guardians to get involved with the service (e.g. outings, plays, family events, etc.)?
- How are concerns about children, staff or the service dealt with? Is there a complaints policy/procedure?

Fees:

- What is the weekly/monthly charge for the childcare you require? How often are fees paid? What is the preferred method of payment? What period of notice do I need to provide when I no longer need childcare?
- Is a deposit required? Is the deposit refundable? Always ask for a receipt of deposit.
- Are there any extra/optional charges e.g. late collection, additional hours.
- What are the payment arrangements regarding holidays, e.g. Christmas and mid-terms?
- If transport is supplied to and from school, is this an extra cost?
- What National Funding Programmes does the service participate in and which programme are you eligible for? Information on the National Childcare Programmes are detailed in this guide.

What's Next once you have chosen an Early Years' Service?



When you have visited early years' services, you may feel you are in a better position to choose the right one for your child and family.

Once you have chosen a service, there are some simple steps to take next:

- Contact the service provider to begin the enrolment process. If you wish to visit the service again, make an appointment.
 - When paying a deposit, ask for a receipt and be clear of the criteria around refundable/non-refundable deposits. Note that deposits for ECCE only sessions cannot exceed 4 weeks' capitation.
 - If your child's name is placed on a waiting list, ask for written confirmation and for the services procedure in managing the waiting list.
 - Arrange a start date and settling in period in line with the procedures of the service.
 - Prepare your child for their new experience by talking about the service, what they might do there, about their new teacher and friends they will make.
- Share as much relevant information as possible with the staff caring for your child such as any illnesses, allergies or medical needs, likes and dislikes, eating and sleeping patterns, etc. Ensure you have enough time to do this. The more information you provide about your child the easier it is for staff to meet your child's needs, and the easier it is for your child to transition from home to the early years' service.
 - Ensure the service is provided with everything they require to care for your child such as nappies, food, bottles, etc.
 - Request a copy of the policies and procedures.
 - If you are availing of a funding scheme, ask for clarification on the associated notice period (e.g. if you choose to move to another service, what is the notice period and if the funding stays with the child or with the service in these instances).



Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme

The Free Pre-School Year in the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE) is a universal childcare programme designed to give children access to up to 2 years free pre-school education before they start primary school.

Is my child eligible for the ECCE Programme?

Children are eligible for the ECCE Programme once they have turned 2 years and 8 months of age before the 1st of September 2018. You may enrol your child at any stage during the 2018/2019 Programme Year once they meet the eligibility criteria of 2 years and 8 months of age before the 1st of September 2018.

How much will it cost?

If your child is eligible for the free pre-school year then your child is entitled to a pre-school session of 3 hours per day, 5 days per week, for 38 weeks, for free.

Childcare services can charge for additional services that they provide, such as additional hours and optional extra activities, such as trips, swimming, parties, etc. Childcare services receive a capitation of €64.50 per week for 38 weeks, for each child. If you avail of extra hours/optional activities, your ECCE payment will be applied as a reduction of €64.50 weekly for 38 weeks.

It is not mandatory that children attend 5 days per week but, where they do not, the capitation fee will be reduced on a pro-rata basis.

How do I know which childcare services are in the ECCE programme, and how do I get a place for my child?

A list of current ECCE services is available from your local City/County Childcare Committee. You should make contact with some local childcare services to see if they have ECCE places available. They will explain their fees to you, along with any extras that they offer. Once you have found a childcare service that you wish your child to attend, they will ask you for some information about your child, such as your child's PPS number and date of birth.

Can I transfer my child from one childcare service to another?

You may choose to transfer your child from one ECCE service to another at any stage during the pre-school year. You must give 4 weeks' notice to the childcare service, and you are required to complete a transfer form, which must be signed by the original service and the new service. If you transfer your child without any notice period, the original service will be paid 4 weeks capitation in lieu of notice and you will have to pay fees for the following 4 weeks in the new service.

Can I use a Childminder instead?

Yes, childminders who meet certain requirements can apply to provide the ECCE programme.

Please contact your local City/County Childcare Committee to find out if any childminders in your area are participating in the programme.

Are there exemptions to the upper age limit?

If your child is above the upper age limit for the ECCE programme there are some circumstances where the child can continue to participate in the ECCE programme.

In exceptional circumstances, exemptions from the upper age limit may be granted where a child has additional needs which delay their entry to school. Applications for such exemptions must be submitted in writing to the DCYA and must include a letter of recommendation from a specialist stating support for the child to avail of a further year of preschool. Exemptions will not be granted where a child will turn 6 during the pre-school year.

The Access and Inclusion Model (AIM)

The Better Start Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) is a model of supports designed to ensure that children with disabilities can access the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme. Its goal is to empower service providers to deliver an inclusive pre-school experience, ensuring that every eligible child can fully participate in the ECCE programme and reap the benefits of quality early years care and education.



The model is designed to be responsive to the needs of each individual child in the context of their pre-school setting. It will offer tailored, practical supports based on need and will not require a formal diagnosis of disability.

What supports are provided under AIM?

There are 7 levels of supports available through AIM ranging from **universal supports** to **targeted supports**. **Levels 1- 3** of the model involve a suite of universal supports which are designed to promote and support an inclusive culture within pre-school settings. However, where a service provider, in partnership with a parent/guardian, considers that some further additional support may be necessary to meet the needs of a particular child, they can apply for one or more targeted supports under **Levels 4 - 7** of the model.

Level 1: An Inclusive Culture: A new Inclusion Charter has been developed for the early years sector. The purpose of the Charter is to demonstrate the sector's commitment to inclusion. Service providers are invited to sign-up to this Charter by producing and publishing their own Inclusion Policy. To support this process, updated Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Guidelines for Early Childhood Care and Education have been produced and a national training programme on the Inclusion Charter and the Guidelines is delivered by the City and County Childcare Committees.

Level 2: Information for Parents and Providers This level recognises the requirement of parents and providers to have clear, consistent and up to date information accessible to them regarding ECCE and AIM services and supports. In depth information on AIM for providers and parents is available on the national website www.aim.gov.ie

Level 3: A Qualified and Confident Workforce This level recognises the requirement to continue to develop a qualified workforce that can confidently meet the needs of all children wishing to participate in the ECCE Programme. A higher education programme, **"Leadership for Inclusion in Early Years" or LINC**, funded by the DCYA, has been available annually since 2016. Graduates from the programme take on the role of Inclusion Co-ordinator within their pre-school setting to support and further guide inclusive practice.

Level 4: Expert Educational Advice Service Under level 4, service providers can access a national service, Better Start, where specialists in early years care and education for children with additional needs can provide expert advice, mentoring and support. The degree of support offered by Early Years Specialists will depend on the needs of the child and the service provider. Application for targeted supports are made with the permission of and through partnership with parents/guardians.

Level 5: Equipment, Appliances and Minor Alterations A national scheme is available to provide specialised equipment, appliances or capital grants towards minor building alterations, where these are necessary based on the recommendation of a designated professional, to support access to facilitate a child's participation in pre-school. Applications for Level 5 supports are made by a service provider, in partnership with a parent.

Level 6: Therapeutic Intervention Therapy services which are considered critical for a child's participation in the Early Childhood Care and Education programme will be made available. Arrangements are in place with the Health Service Executive (HSE) to deliver this service and a number of additional therapy posts have been funded under the Access and Inclusion Model to support this service provision.

Level 7: Additional Assistance in the Preschool Room This level recognises that a small number of children (approximately 1.0% – 1.5% of those availing of the ECCE Programme) will require more support than is available through Levels 1 – 6. Where the above supports are not sufficient to meet the needs of the child, service providers, in partnership with parents, can apply for additional capitation to fund extra support in the classroom or to enable the reduction of the staff to child ratio.

Further detailed information for parents/guardians, including frequently asked questions in relation to the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM), can be found online at www.aim.gov.ie



For more information on the ECCE Programme or AIM contact your local City/County Childcare Committee or the Early Childhood Service where you would like your child to attend.

YOUR CHILDS ELIGIBILITY FOR THE ECCE PROGRAMME



The programme is available to all children from the age of 2 years and 8 months. Table 1 below sets out relevant eligibility dates by year of birth:

Table 1: Eligibility for ECCE by month of birth

Birth date between	Eligible Enrolment date(s)	ECCE end date
1st January 2014 - 31st March 2014	1st April 2017, 1st September 2017 + 1st September 2018*	June 2019
1st April 2014 - 31st August 2014	1st September 2017 + 1st September 2018*	June 2019
1st September 2014 - 31st December 2014	1st January 2018 + 1st September 2018*	June 2019
1st January 2015 - 31st December 2015	1st September 2018 + 1st September 2019	June 2020
1st January 2016 - 31st December 2016	1st September 2019 + 1st September 2020	June 2021
1st January 2017 - 31st December 2017	1st September 2020 + 1st September 2021	June 2022
1st January 2018 - 31st December 2018	1st September 2021 + 1st September 2022	June 2023
1st January 2019 - 31st December 2019	1st September 2022 + 1st September 2023	June 2024

*Children born between 1st January and 31st December 2014 will continue to be eligible for free pre-school under the terms of the ECCE expansion as announced in Budget 2016. ECCE eligibility criteria as announced under Budget 2018 will come into effect with effect from 1st September 2018.



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**The following section of this guide is derived
from the Affordable Childcare Website**

www.affordablechildcare.ie

**and the Rules for DCYA Childcare Funding
Programmes document, 9th August 2018**

Need support with your childcare costs?

Up to €1,040 per year for children under three*

Up to €145 per week for children up to 15 years of age in families returning to work or study

Click below to find out what supports may be available to you and your family.



**I have a child under
3 years old**



**The ECCE (free pre-
school) Scheme**



**Can I get help with
my childcare costs?**



**The Affordable
Childcare Scheme –
next steps**

**With Special Thanks to the Department of Children
and Youth Affairs (DCYA) for providing
and sharing this information.**

Community Childcare Subvention Universal (CCSU)



If your child is aged between 6 months and 36 months* and is enrolled in Tusla-registered childcare, you are eligible for a non means-tested universal childcare subsidy of up to €20 per week. That amounts to up to €1,040 per year.

**Your child may continue to receive the universal subsidy until they commence their ECCE (free preschool year). In some cases, this will be slightly older than 36 months.*

CCS Session Type	Universal Band (CCS Band U) (Weekly Subsidy)
Full-time (i.e. 5.01 or more hours)	€20
Part-time (i.e. 3.31 to 5 hours)	€10
Sessional (i.e. 2.16 to 3.30 hours)	€7
Half-sessional (i.e. 1 to 2.15 hours)	€3.50

If your child is under 6 months old, you may qualify for a means-tested childcare subsidy of up to €145 per week. To see if you qualify for this childcare support see Table 1 on page 15.

Children must be enrolled in TUSLA registered childcare services in order to avail of the universal subsidy. To see a list of TUSLA registered childcare providers please see the Affordable Childcare website www.affordablechildcare.ie

How do I apply for the Universal Subsidy

- Speak to your childcare provider to check if they are offering the subsidy.
- For the universal payment of up to €20 per week provide the PPSN and date of birth of the child and the PPSN of the parent(s) to your childcare provider to register.
- The subsidy will be paid directly to your childcare provider and will be deducted from the cost of your childcare.

If you have any questions about this scheme, please contact your local City/County Childcare Committee (CCC).



Community Childcare Subvention CCS / CCSP



Community Childcare Subvention CCS

Overview of CCS

The Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) Programme is a childcare programme targeted to support parents on a low income to avail of reduced childcare costs at participating community childcare services. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs pays for a portion of the childcare costs for eligible children, with the parent paying the remainder.

The CCS is only available through participating community not-for-profit childcare services; a list of these services are available through your local CCC. The service provider submits an application for CCS on behalf of the parent. CCS subvention is available for 52 weeks of the year.

CCS services may cater for infant, pre-school and afterschool places. They may also incorporate a breakfast club. Some CCS services may be stand-alone services and cater for just one type of service e.g. afterschool.

Am I eligible for the CCS Programme?

A child must be under 15 years of age to be eligible for the 2018/19 CCS programme. A child will not be eligible if they are enrolled on any other DCYA childcare programme.

If you are a parent/guardian who:

- holds a medical card or GP visit card;
- is on low income;
- is in school;
- in further education;
- job training;
- or in receipt of a social welfare payment,

then you may be eligible for assistance with your childcare costs.

To view the eligibility criteria see Table 1 on page 15 of this guide.

Community Childcare Subvention Plus (CCSP)

Overview of CCSP

The Community Childcare Subvention Plus (CCSP) Programme provides support for parents on a low income to avail of reduced childcare costs at participating privately owned childcare services and at community not-for-profit childcare services; a list of these services is available through the local CCC. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs pays a portion of the childcare costs for eligible children, with the parent paying the remainder. The eligibility of the parent is determined by their status with the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and is set out on Table 1 on page 15 of this guide. Interested parents should contact their local participating childcare service in the first instance.

Am I eligible for the CCSP Programme?

A child must be under 15 years of age to be eligible for CCSP, that is, the child must be born on or after 1 September 2003 to be eligible. CCSP subvention is available for up to 52 weeks of the programme year.

If you are a parent/guardian who:

- holds a medical card or GP visit card;
- is on low income;
- is in school;
- in further education;
- job training;
- or in receipt of a social welfare payment,

then you may be eligible for assistance with your childcare costs.

To view CCS/CCSP Eligibility and rates see Table 1 on the next page.

Table 1 CCS/CCSP Eligibility

Your eligibility is determined by your status with the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP). The level of the subvention is determined by your DEASP status and also by the level of childcare you require. The eligibility criteria and subsequent childcare and subvention options are set out in **Table 1** below.

	Band A (with medical card unless otherwise stated)	Band AJ (with medical card)	Band B	Band D
Eligibility criteria	- One Parent Family Payment - Widows/Widowers Pension - Farm Assist - Fish Assist - State Pension Con/Non-Con - Blind Pension - Guardian's Payment Con/Non-Con - Illness/Injury Benefit - Disability Allowance - Carer's Benefit/Allowance - Back to Work Enterprise/ Education Allowance - Community Employment/ Rural Social Scheme - Domiciliary Care Allowance - Working Family Payment (WFP) - Secondary Students - Invalidity Pension - Disablement Pension - Partial Capacity Benefit - Official Tusla Referrals (no medical card required) - HSE Public Health Nurse referrals (no medical card required) - TÚS - Part-time Job Incentive Scheme - Gateway	- Job Seeker's Benefit/ Allowance* - Supplementary Welfare Allowance**	- Medical Card - Parents who are in receipt of Social Welfare payments listed under Band A/AJ but have no medical card	- GP Visit Card (over 6yrs+only)*** - Parents who no longer qualify for Band A/AJ this year but who were verified as being on Band A/AJ at the end of the previous school year

*parents who qualify for Band AJ under Jobseeker's allowance/benefit receive maximum subvented childcare of €80 for full day care per week.

**parents who qualify for Band AJ under Supplementary Welfare Allowance payments receive maximum subvented childcare of €80 for full day care per week.

***Please note GP visit card for children 0-6 years of age does not qualify for CCS/CCSP subvention funding. A Family GP visit card does qualify for CCS/CCSP. The maximum subvention is €145 per week; however, the amount will depend on how much childcare you use and what funding you are eligible for.

Weekly rate	Band A (with medical card unless otherwise stated)	Band AJ (with medical card)	Band B	Band D
(Full-Day payment (5.01 hrs +))	€145	€80	€70	€50
(Part-time payment (3:31-5:00))	€80	€80	€35	€25
(Sessional payment (2:16-3:30))	€45	€45	€25	€17
(Half-session payment (1:00-2:15))	€22.50	€22.50	€12.50	€8.50

For information on CCSR and CCSR(T) see page 16 of this guide.

To qualify for enhanced targeted subsidies you will need to provide proof of eligibility, for more information contact your local CCC to find out more.



Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement (CCSR)

Overview of CCSR

CCSR is intended to support the Programme Refugees (PRs) in their resettlement and integration into Irish society. It enables parents to attend a language and orientation course within their reception centre for eight weeks and then a full year following their move into the community.

Am I eligible for CCSR?

Age of eligible child

Participating pre-school going children must be between 0 and 5 years old on their start date.

School-aged children (between 6 and 12 years) can access childcare for the primary school holiday periods only.

How do I apply for CCSR?

Parent/s must supply a completed eligibility letter submitted and signed by the Department of Justice and Equality. Please contact your local CC for more info.

Types of Places under the CCSR Programme

Part-time places (between 3hrs 31mins and 5hrs) are provided under the CCSR programme.

Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement (Transitional)(CCSR(T))

Overview of CCSR(T)

CCSR(T) provides access to free childcare for children of families experiencing homelessness. The provision provides subvention for all pre-school children. The scheme is also designed to help those transitioning from homelessness to permanent accommodation.

Eligibility for CCSR(T)

Age of eligible child

Participating pre-school going children must be between 0 – 5yrs on their start date.

School-aged children (between 6 and 12 years) can access childcare for the primary school holiday periods only.

How do I apply for CCSR(T)?

- i. A verification letter from Focus Ireland (if in the Dublin area) or from their local authority (for all counties outside Dublin) is required.
- ii. In order to confirm eligibility, both the Parent's and Child's Personal Public Service Number (PPSN) are required, as well as the child's date of birth.



The CCSRT (Transition) Parents Information leaflet has been updated to reflect the new contact details for Focus Ireland representatives



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Centralised Email Address

A centralised email address has been established for Childcare Services to contact Focus Ireland representatives directly if there is availability within your service for children to avail of CCSRT childcare funding.

This email address is: childcareinformation@focusireland.ie

The childcare service may email Focus Ireland directly if a place becomes available for a child to attend within the CCSRT programme, this will assist the Focus Ireland team to locate early years places for children who are eligible to avail of CCSRT.

Within this email please include the following details:

Name of Service:

Address of Service:

Contact Details:

Number of Places available:

Age group of place/s:

Day/s available:

Sessional or Part time place/s:

The contact details have changed in relation to the Focus Ireland representatives:

Niamh Lambe - (086) 8386832
childcareinformation@focusireland.ie

Laura Young - (087) 3666380
childcareinformation@focusireland.ie

James Donnelly - (086) 3813563
childcareinformation@focusireland.ie

Grainne Finnegan - (087) 1744592
childcareinformation@focusireland.ie

You can also call the landline
(01) 7036100 to speak to a Focus
Ireland member.

FREE CHILDCARE FOR HOMELESS FAMILIES



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ARE YOU AND YOUR FAMILY EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS AND WOULD LIKE HELP WITH YOUR CHILDCARE COSTS?

If you are a parent/guardian who has been deemed homeless by your Local Authority then you may be eligible for assistance with your childcare costs incurred with a registered childcare service.

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) currently provides Financial help towards childcare costs for homeless families under the Community Childcare Subvention Programme (CCS). Under the CCS Transitional Programme, families experiencing homelessness have access to free childcare for children aged 0-5 years, school aged children (6-12yrs inclusive) can now access free childcare during the holiday periods only.

AM I ELIGIBLE?

You may be eligible if you have registered as homeless with your Local Authority and have children between the ages of 0-12 years.

I THINK I'M ELIGIBLE HOW DO I APPLY?

Parents/guardians should contact Focus Ireland/their Local Authority for a verification form.

Once the verification form is completed by you and has been signed by a Focus Ireland/Local Authority Housing Official, the parent/guardian must approach a childcare service/creche to seek a place for their child and bring the verification form to the manager of the childcare service/creche as proof of entitlement.

WHAT DOES FREE CHILDCARE MEAN?

Free childcare means that families that are accepted on the programme will have access to free childcare up to 5 hours a day. A daily meal will also be provided to the child. The parent/guardian **will not pay any fee** to the childcare service/creche.

CCSR(T) SERVICES WILL ONLY OFFER CHILDCARE PLACES FOR THE FOLLOWING SESSION TYPES:

Part-time places (between 3 hours 31 minutes and 5 hours per day).

Sessional places (between 2 hours 16 minutes and 3 hours 30 minutes per day).

Contact Details for Focus Ireland (Dublin only)

Laura Young: 0873666380
James Donnelly: 0863813563
Grainne Finnegan: 0871744592

*If we are unavailable you can call
017036100*

Training and Employment Childcare (TEC)

The objective of the TEC Programmes is to support parents on eligible training courses and eligible categories of parents returning to work, by providing subsidised childcare places. TEC is only available through participating early years services; a list of these services is available through the local CCC.

There are 3 strands of the TEC programme:

- **Childcare Education and Training Support programme (CETS)**

The CETS Programme provides childcare to certain training course participants on courses provided by the Education and Training Boards (ETB, formerly FÁS and VEC) and Secondary Schools.

- **Community Employment Childcare programme (CEC)**

The CEC is administered on behalf of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP) and provides childcare for children of parents who are participating on Community Employment schemes.

- **After-School Child Care programme (ASCC)**

The ASCC is administered on behalf of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP) and provides afterschool care for primary school children for certain categories of working parents and parents on DEASP employment programmes (not including Community Employment).



Childcare Education and Training Support programme (CETS)

Childcare places can be full-time, part-time, afterschool only or after-school with transport places. ETBs and Solas have sole responsibility for deciding who is eligible to avail of this strand of the TEC Programme.

Am I eligible for a CETS place?

Participants on the following Further Education Programmes are eligible to apply for CETS funding:

- CETS approved Education and Training Board (ETB) courses (Formerly FÁS Training Centres)
- CETS approved Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)
- CETS approved Youthreach
- Back to Education Initiative (BTEI)
- Secondary school students completing Junior or Leaving Certificate cycle

How do I apply for CETS?

Parent must provide a letter from their training provider to include hours of course and start and finish dates. Once you have found a childcare service, the service will ask you for a copy of your letter of eligibility as evidence that you are eligible for the CETS programme. They will ask you to complete a TEC Child Registration Form, with details of you and your child's PPS numbers, dates of birth, etc., along

with information about the type of childcare place required. They may also ask you for proof of you and your child's PPS numbers and dates of birth.

How much will the CETS place cost?

The maximum amount that you can be charged per week for a CETS place is:

- Full-time Childcare Place - €25 per week
- Part-time Childcare Place - €15 per week
- After-school Childcare Place - €5 per week
- After-school (with transport) Childcare Place - €15 per week

Community Employment Childcare programme (CEC)

The CEC programme provides part-time or afterschool care for children up to 13 years of age.

Am I eligible for CEC?

If you are a parent taking part in a CE scheme, you are eligible for a CEC place for your child. Your CE sponsor should give you a letter of eligibility for CEC.

This letter must contain the following information:

- Name of parent
- Start date of entitlement to childcare support
- Confirmation that the parent is eligible for the CEC programme

How do I apply for CEC?

A list of current CEC services is available from your local City/County Childcare Committee.

Once you have found a childcare service, they will ask you for a copy of your letter of eligibility as evidence that you are eligible for the CEC programme.

They will ask you to complete a TEC Child Registration Form, with details of you and your child's PPS numbers, dates of birth, etc., along with information about the childcare place required. They may also ask you for proof of you and your child's PPS numbers and dates of birth.

How much will the CEC place cost?

The maximum amount that you can be charged per week for a CEC place is:

- Part-time Childcare Place - €15 per week
- After-school Childcare Place - €15 per week



After-School Child Care programme (ASCC)

The After-School Child Care programme provides after-school care for primary school children for certain categories of working parents. It is administered on behalf of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP). DEASP have sole responsibility for deciding who is eligible to avail of this strand of the TEC Programme.

Places can be after-school only or after-school with transport places. Places can also be approved for full day care up to a maximum of 10 weeks (when your child is on school holidays and you require full day care).

- Pro rata payments are applied for 3, 4 or 5 day places.
- Parents are entitled to a maximum of 52 weeks on the scheme, regardless of how many days a week they may avail of.
- Services will be paid for 52 weeks in total.
- Where eligible parents require childcare for morning periods before the child starts school, rather than after-school hours, this can be accommodated under the scheme. The same rates apply.

Am I eligible for ASCC?

In order to be eligible for ASCC a client must be in receipt of Working Family Payment (WFP) and increase hours of work or **satisfy the below**:

- Be in receipt of Jobseekers' Benefit (JB) or Jobseekers' Allowance (JA), Jobseekers' Transitional payment (JST) or One-parent Family Payment (OFP) or be on a DEASP employment programme (or any combination of the above) for at least three months (78 days) **AND** have one or more children aged between 4 and 13 years who are in primary school

AND

- Commence any one of the following: employment (either full-time or part-time) OR increase their employment OR a specified DEASP employment programme as follows (except Community Employment): WPP, BTWEA, TUS, Gateway or RSS

How do I apply for ASCC?

Your local DEASP office will be able to tell you if you are eligible for an ASCC place. If you are, your DEASP office should give you a letter of eligibility for ASCC. This letter must contain the following information:

- Name of parent.
- Start date of entitlement to childcare support.
- Confirmation that the parent is eligible for the ASCC programme.

Once you have found a childcare service, they will ask you for a copy of your letter of eligibility as evidence that you are eligible for the ASCC programme. They will ask you to complete a TEC Child Registration Form, with details of you and your child's PPS numbers, dates of birth, etc, along with information about the childcare place required. They may also ask you for proof of you and your child's PPS numbers and dates of birth.

How much will the ASCC place cost me?

The maximum amount that you can be charged per week for an ASCC place is:

- After-school Childcare Place - €15 per week
- After-school (with transport) Childcare Place - €15 per week



Frequently Asked Questions for Parents



When do the subsidies start?

Registrations for the subsidies start from August 2018.

Where do I apply?

Parents should apply through their chosen childcare provider.

Is the subsidy paid to the parent or the childcare provider?

The subsidy is paid to the childcare provider. It should be offset against the cost of childcare for that provider. If, for example, a childcare provider charges €170 per week for a full day care place, the amount charged to parents when the universal subsidy is applied should be €150 per week.

What does 'registered' childcare mean?

All childcare services in the Republic of Ireland are compelled to register with Tusla; the Child and Family Agency and are subject to regulation and inspection. Some childminders are also registered with Tusla and therefore may also participate in the Funding Programmes.

Are the subsidies available per child or per family?

The subsidies are available for each eligible child in your family. For instance if you have two children who are not yet old enough to avail of the ECCE (free pre-school programme) then both will qualify to receive the universal subsidy of up to €20 per week. This adds up to €1,040 per year per child in full time childcare.

What are the Universal Subsidy Rates?

CCS Session Type (Universal)	Weekly Subsidy	Daily Subsidy
Full-time (i.e. 5.01 or more hours)	€20	€4
Part-time (i.e. 3.31 to 5 hours)	€10	€2
Sessional (i.e. 2.16 to 3.30 hours)	€7	€1.40
Half-sessional (i.e. 1 to 2.15 hours)	€3.50	€0.70

What if my child is only availing of childcare for a couple of days per week?

All subsidies are available on a pro-rata basis. For example, if a child is availing of childcare for two days per week, the amount of universal subsidy available would be €8 per week ($€20/5 = €4 \times 2 \text{ days} = €8$).

If my child is eligible for the ECCE Programme, but can't find a place within a service, will my child be eligible to receive the universal subsidy until an ECCE place is available?

No. The universal subsidy is only available until the child becomes eligible for the ECCE Programme. However, children eligible for the ECCE Programme may still be eligible for the targeted subsidies provided under the CCS and TEC Programmes.

Who is eligible for CCS/CCSP personalised support subsidies?

Take a look at the table on page 15 of this guide. If you are in receipt of the supports listed you may qualify for childcare subsidies of as much as €145 per week per child.

Do I need to pay a deposit for my childcare place?

Childcare providers may charge new parents/guardians a refundable booking deposit to hold a place for a child in ECCE, CCS, CCSP and TEC schemes. For CCSR / CCSR(T) Childcare providers may not request booking deposits from parents/guardians to hold a place. For the ECCE scheme the maximum deposit a provider may charge is equivalent to four weeks' ECCE payment. For CCS, CCSP and TEC schemes the maximum deposit a provider may charge is equivalent to two weeks' payment.

The full amount of the **DCYA subvention** held on deposit must be refunded to the parent/guardian once the child's registration is approved. When and how the balance of the deposit is returned to the parent/guardian is a matter for the provider. For example under CCSP where a service's weekly fee is €200 and the subvention due is under band A is €145, the service may charge a two week deposit of €400. Once the registration has been approved the service will refund the amount of €290 to the parent.

Can I be asked to pay for optional extras?

Yes. Childcare providers may charge for optional extras, but where a parent/guardian does not choose any of the optional extras, their child must be provided with the full service provision. Each optional extra must be identified individually on the fees list. Childcare providers cannot charge for any activities/items which form part of the ECCE service. DCYA determine what can and cannot be charged as optional extras to ensure every child's effective participation in the programme. Parents may choose to opt out of any optional extras by giving one month's notice to the childcare provider.

What documentation is required?

To enter in to the programmes you may be asked to sign some of the following documents:

- **Child Registration** form should be completed for all funding schemes. Information is used to register the child on online Programmes Implementation Platform (PIP). The Service Provider will then destroy this document, for data protection purposes.
- **PIP parental declaration forms:** When information has been registered on PIP, the service provider will print off the PIP Parent Declaration Form which must be signed by parents.
- **Fees list and service calendar:** Service Providers must complete a fees list and service calendar at the beginning of each programme year. They must show details of all the fees charged to parents, as well as details of any additional charges, optional extras, discounts or donations applied by the service
- **Programme Service Fees Information Letter:** Parents will be asked to sign to show that they have read and understood the contents. This letter will be kept on file by the childcare provider.
- **Parents sign in sheets or permission letters:** For TEC Schemes only.



If you have additional questions related to the various funding schemes, please contact your local Childcare Committee for advice and information. Contact details for each Childcare Committee are available on the back of this guide.

Useful Contacts

Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA)

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) was established on 2nd June 2011. The DCYA focuses on harmonising policy issues that affect children in areas such as early childhood care and education, youth justice, child welfare and protection, children and young people's participation, research on children and young people, youth work and cross-cutting initiatives for children.

Contact Details:

Department of Children and Youth Affairs
Block 1,
Miesian Plaza,
50-58 Baggot Street Lower,
Dublin 2, D02 XW14

Tel: +353 1 6473000

Fax: +353 1 6473101

E-mail: contact@dcya.gov.ie

Web: www.dcy.gov.ie



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Pobal

Pobal is a not-for-profit company that manages programmes on behalf of the Irish Government and the EU. Pobal provides a range of services to and on behalf of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs in the area of early education and childcare.

Contact Details:

Pobal
Holbrook House
Holles Street
Dublin 2
D02 EY84

Telephone: 01 511 7000

Fax: 01 511 7981

Email: enquiries@pobal.ie

Web: www.pobal.ie



National Childcare Organisations

Seven national childcare organisations currently receive funding under the Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme to promote quality. These organisations are:

- Barnardos
- Childminding Ireland
- Early Childhood Ireland
- Irish Steiner Kindergarten Association
- St. Nicholas Montessori Society of Ireland
- National Childhood Network
- National Parents Council



City / County Childcare Committee Contact Details

Carlow	059 9140244	Limerick	061 600918
Cavan	049 4365856	Longford	043 3342505
Clare	065 6864862	Louth	042 9336364
Cork City	021 4310500	Mayo	094 9047010
Cork County	022 23880	Meath	046 9073010
Donegal	074 9123442	Monaghan	047 72896
Dublin City	01 8733696	Offaly	057 9135878
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown	01 2896600	Roscommon	094 9622540
Fingal	01 4851727	Sligo	071 9148860
Galway	091 752039	South Dublin	01 4570122
Kerry	066 7181582	Tipperary	062 64200
Kildare	045 861307	Waterford	051 295045
Kilkenny	056 7752865	Westmeath	044 9335454
Laois	057 8661029	Wexford	053 9237156
Leitrim	071 9640870	Wicklow	0404 64455

This document was revised by Dublin City Childcare Committee in August 2018.



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