



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth

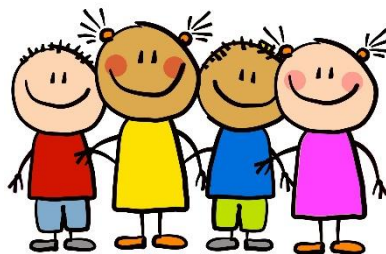


Playing Outside Grant 2021

For Early Learning and Care and School Age Childcare
Services

Application Guidelines

JUNE 2021



Closing date for applications is the 31st of August 2021.

Introduction

On the 1st of June 2021, the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth announced a major funding package for Early Learning and Care (ELC) and School-Aged Childcare (SAC) services. The **Playing Outside Grant 2021** will provide €5.5 million in funding for ELC and SAC services as part of the Summer of Play initiative.

The objective of the Playing Outside Grant 2021 is to support services to facilitate greater outdoor activities and/or create a new or develop an existing outdoor learning and play space that will support an increase in provision of early learning and childcare outdoors and improve natural ventilation indoors in line with the current National Public Health Strategy.

The **amount of grant** which is paid to each Early Learning and Care and School Age Childcare Service is **based on the number of individual children registered** in a service on one or more **DCEDIY programmes** on the **3rd of May 2021**. The number of individual children registered will be taken from Early Years Portal and PIP systems hosted by Pobal.

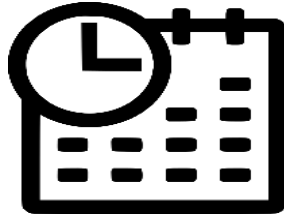
DCEDIY Programmes for this grant are:

- National Childcare Scheme (NCS)
- Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)
- Community Childcare Subvention Programme Plus (CCSP)
- Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement (CSSR)
- Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement Transition (CSSR-T)
- Training and Employment Childcare (TEC)

The Playing Outside Grant 2021 is **allocated** as follows:

Number of children registered on DECDIY Programmes	Grant Allocation €
1-49	€1,000
50-99	€2,000
100+	€2,500

Key Dates



ACTIVITY	IMPORTANT DATES
Open for online applications	Friday, 18th June, 2021 @ 10am*
Closing date for online applications	Tuesday, 31st August, 2021 @ 5pm*
Eligible Expenditure Dates	Between 1 st June 2021 and 31st December 2021
Payment Schedule	Payments to approved applicants will commence from Friday 25th June and will occur weekly thereafter.
Expenditure Report	No later than 31st December 2021, if requested to submit by Pobal
*Times are subject to change	
PLEASE NOTE: If you contact Pobal with an ICT issue within 48 hours of the closing date and time Pobal cannot guarantee that your ICT issue will be resolved in time for you to submit your application.	

Who is eligible to apply?

- Community and privately owned Early Learning and Care (ELC) and School Age Childcare (SAC) services in the Republic of Ireland.
- Services which offer both Early Learning and Care and School Age Childcare within their facility.



Applicants wishing to set-up a new childcare or school-age facility **are not eligible** to apply.

All applicants must:

- **Have a Service reference number** for the premises which is the subject of the application.
Please note: The service reference number was formally called the DCYA reference number.
- **Be registered with Tusla**
- Be **contracted with DCEDIY** and have a minimum of one child registered in respect of one or more of the DCEDIY registration schemes to provide Early Learning and Care Service and or School Age Childcare services on the **3rd May, 2021**.

Note: The above declarations are included in the terms and conditions on the application form. If you are unable to confirm these statements your application is ineligible and you will not be able to submit your application form.

- **Complete and submit an online application form** on Early Years Portal - HIVE by the 31st August, 2021 at 5pm.

NOTE: The application form is only available on the Early Years Portal (HIVE). **The application form is not available via the PIP system.** Here is a **guideline for registering on the Hive.** [Link](#)

Multiple service owners

I own more than one Early Learning and Care and or School Age Childcare facility. How many services am I eligible to apply for?

Multiple owners of childcare services may submit an application form for each facility i.e. complete and submit a separate application for each facility they own, provided that they have a valid service reference number for each facility and each facility meets the eligibility requirements of the programme outlined in pg.4 above.



What must I do in advance of making my application?



Read the applicant guidelines carefully. Undertake an assessment of your facilities/service outdoor area and make a plan, including a list of the additional equipment or works required to facilitate greater outdoor activities and/or create a new or develop an existing outdoor learning and play space that will support an increase in provision of early learning and childcare outdoors and improve natural ventilation indoors in line with the current National Public Health Strategy.

Applicants are expected to:

- Comply with public procurement guidelines.
- Purchase items or services in accordance with the eligible costs.
- Complete the online application form on the EYP system by the closing date and confirm agreement to the terms and conditions of the grant;
- Retain all quotations, invoices and receipts for a minimum of **3 years** from date of payment of the grant and for inspection by Pobal/DCEDIY or as requested as part of a financial return, should they be selected to make a financial return in respect of this grant.
- Return any unspent monies to Pobal and or return any grant associated with ineligible expenditure as a result of verification, audit or compliance visit.

Please refer to the **list of indicative eligible items and services** outlined in this guidance document **before making your application.**

Eligible Costs



The Playing Outside Grant 2021 is available to assist services to purchase items and services that facilitate greater outdoor activities and/or enhance outdoor spaces and/or improve natural ventilation indoors.

Applicants may be required at a later date to demonstrate how the items or equipment or modifications paid for with the grant comply with these guidelines.

Successful applicants of the Playing Outside Grant 2021 may be **subject to an inspection** by DCEDIY or one of its agents, a Pobal Compliance Visit and or Pobal Audit Visit and or submission of financial return to Pobal.

Eligible cost dates

All eligible items i.e. equipment and or alterations **must be purchased and paid for between the 1st of June 2021 and the 31st of December 2021**. Any items or services purchased outside of these dates are not eligible under this grant.

Types of eligible costs

Below is a **list of examples** of the types of costs that are eligible under this grant. This is not an exhaustive list of eligible costs however the onus is on the applicant to demonstrate that the **capital or equipment purchased meets the primary objective of this grant** i.e. to facilitate greater outdoor activities and/or enhance outdoor spaces and/or improve natural ventilation indoors in line with the current National Public Health Strategy.

All items purchased **must have a potential lifespan of at least 12 months**.

Examples of Eligible Costs

Category	Items
Transitional spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canopies • Screens • Roofing
Outdoor Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing shelter, warmth and respite from the elements (natural, temporary or permanent coverings). • Provision of shade (sails, tents, pergolas, dens, planting (i.e. willow). • Garden Area including planting (raised beds, poly tunnel, trees, willow tunnels/tepees, shrubs, hedging, grass, flowers, bird houses). • Gardening tools for children and adults (shovels, spades, rakes, buckets, cans). Ground works (patio surfacing, fire pit, hills/hollows, water channels). • Provision of outside plumbing - external handwashing/drinking water/toileting provision and nappy changing areas. • Outdoor play equipment (sandpit/covers, mud kitchen, large scale blocks/music, water troughs, water butts, guttering, wheelbarrows, tuff trays, binoculars, magnify glasses). • Outdoor furniture for rest and breaks (table, chairs, benches, hammocks, outdoor cushions, matting, bedding). • Small storage for outdoor clothing, children's records, medicine, food. • Outdoor wear/clothing. Large storage • Recycling and composting equipment. • Specialised equipment for children with additional needs to support participation and inclusion (not covered under AIM). • A variety of hard and soft surfaces e.g. to facilitate playing ball, cycling; slopes and puddles; short and long grass, bare earth and mud; gravel, rocks and stones; leaf litter; undulating ground. • Natural planting / growbags/ window boxes/ hanging baskets. • Flower beds/ compost. • Tree rope swings & traversing walls. • Ride, balance and steer wheeled toys, stilts and buggies. • Tree stumps for balance and coordination. • Hollowed out logs. • Sensory gardens. • Reflective pools. • Enclosed areas – e.g., dens, tunnels, boxes.

Examples of Eligible Costs

Category	Items
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural or manmade (hedging, fencing, gates). • Security system- key pad etc. • Child safe gates. • Entry/Exit security features
Ventilation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjustments to existing doors and windows. • Additional windows and doors to increase ventilation.

Are any costs ineligible?

Examples of Ineligible Costs

Items

The following costs are not eligible for funding.

This is not an exhaustive list

- Cleaning supplies and consumables e.g. sanitiser, disinfectant etc.
- Soft toys (indoor and outdoor).
- Personal Protection Equipment.
- Televisions.
- ICT equipment including tablets, PCs, Software, printers.
- General maintenance and repairs where there are no modifications.
- General painting and decorating where there are no modifications.

Can the grant be used as a part payment or contribution towards an eligible cost?

Part-funding is acceptable under this grant programme. If a service chooses to spend some of the grant on a more expensive piece of equipment or refurbishment and fund the balance through their own resources, this is allowed.

Can I change my mind on an item after I have submitted my application form?

There is some flexibility in relation to the items that can be purchased. If an applicant purchases something not indicated on their application form this is acceptable provided that the applicant can demonstrate that the items and or works are necessary to facilitate greater outdoor activities and/or create a new or develop an existing outdoor learning and play space that will support an increase in provision of early learning and childcare outdoors and improve natural ventilation indoors in line with the current National Public Health Strategy.

What happens if I do not spend all of the grant?

Any unspent grant after the 31st of December, 2021 must be returned to Pobal by the applicant. Please contact Pobal to make arrangements for any refunds. Applicants may also be requested to refund any grant deemed ineligible as result of a compliance, audit or verification visit or as a result of a review of a financial return to Pobal.

What is the approval process for my grant application?

You will be approved for a payment once you have submitted your application form online and our checks indicate that you are tax compliant and that there are no significant issues with your current contracts with DCEDIY and or Pobal. The application form is also the grant agreement (contract) for this grant. You are not required to complete any further documentation.

When will I receive my payment and how much will I receive?

You will receive 100% of the grant allocated to your service. You will receive your payment within 10 working days of submitting your application form as long as our checks indicate that you are tax compliant and that there are no significant issues with your current contracts with DCEDIY and or Pobal. The grant will be automatically paid into the bank account that you have setup on HIVE/Early Years Platform.

How do I apply?

This is an online application process. Application submitted by e-mail, post or hand-delivered to any of Pobal's offices or DECDIY offices will not be accepted. Late applications will not be accepted.

To **access the online application form** follow these 5 easy steps:



Step 1: Go to Early Years Portal. Here is the [\(LINK\)](#)

Step 2: Login using your verified user e-mail and password for HIVE

Step 3: Select Service Facility/Provider

Step 4: Go to Programmes tab and "select" Playing Outside Grant

Step 5: Complete application

Completing the online form

- Check the pre-filled information is correct for your service. If any of the information displayed here is incorrect, please **CLICK ON** the My Account drop down menu on the top left hand side of the page and select Service Provider. From here, you will be able to change any details that are incorrect and proceed with the application.
- Please note that if you are increasing your level of service as approved in your Tusla registration, for example from part time to fulltime provision you should contact Tusla to communicate this change.
- Select the capital and or equipment areas of expenditure you intend to purchase or have purchased from the options on the form. You can select all that are applicable.
- Accept the terms and conditions of funding
- The amount of your grant under the Playing Outside Grant 2021 programme will be pre-filled for you. You will see this before you submit your application form.
- Submit your application

I do not have a verified username and password for Early Years Portal (HIVE). Can I still apply?

Yes you can apply for the Playing Outside Grant. However you must commence or complete the on-boarding (registration) of your service on the Early Years Portal-HIVE. Select "Start On-Boarding Process" on the top left hand side of the Welcome page in order to make an application.

Please use this link: [HIVE](#). When you have completed the on-boarding process, you will have a user name and password which will allow you to access your application form for this grant.

If you are having technical issues with HIVE please check the Resources section on the HIVE Portal. Alternatively you can raise a Service Request in HIVE using the following categories as appropriate:

Program

POG (Playing Outside Grant)

Category

- Payment
- Application Form
- Program Clarification
- Technical Issue
- Review Eligibility

Subcategory

- General

Requirements for the Playing Outside Grant 2021

All applicants must:

- Have a Service Reference Number and have completed -boarding on the Early Years Platform (HIVE)
- Be Registered with Tusla
- Be Tax Compliant
- Must follow public procurement guidelines
- Retain all documents for inspection or submission
- Comply with GDPR
- Accept and adhere to the terms and condition of the grant

On-boarding (registering) on the Early Years Platform (HIVE)

A service must register on the Early Years Platform and have successfully completed all the “on-boarding processes” **in order to access the application form** for the Playing Outside Grant 2021.

To complete the on-boarding process a service must provide information about their service, including bank account details and contact details. The process also involves identifying a primary authorised user (PAU) who is authorised to access the EYP system, apply for funding and submit information on behalf of the service.

To complete the on-boarding process your service must also be registered with Tusla and evidence of this is required as part of this process.

Registering with Tusla

All Early Learning and Care (ELC) and School Age Childcare (SAC) services must register with Tusla.

It is a legal requirement for all ELC services proposing to operate from **the 30th June 2016** to make application under section 58 D (2) of The Child and Family Agency Act 2013, at least 3 months before it is intended to commence operation. (Except in the case of a Temporary early years' service in which case at least 21 days' notice must be given).

Registration of SAC services is a mandatory legal requirement for providers of school age provision from the **18th February 2019**.



- Existing Early Learning and Care Services (ELCs) and School Age Childcare Services (SACs) are required to be registered with Tusla in order to receive a grant agreement or grant payment on behalf of DCEDIY from Pobal.
- ELC and SAC services should seek advice and support from their City/County Childcare Committee in relation to the registration with Tusla and on the Pobal Early Years Platform.
- **ELC and SAC services must be registered with Tusla before they receive their Playing Outside Grant 2021 payment.**

Public Procurement

- All applicants must comply with public procurement guidelines.
- Information on public procurement is available from the Office of Government Procurement www.etenders.gov.ie
- Evidence of compliance with public procurement guidelines may be requested or inspected at a later date. This documentation must be retained for a minimum of 3 years, as per the terms and conditions of this grant.

Do I need to submit quotations with my application?



No. Applicants are not required to attach quotations with their application.

Applicants must **retain quotations from an independent supplier for each item** that they intend to purchase with their grant

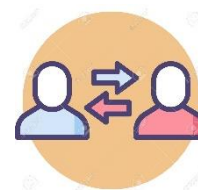
Small items of equipment which can be purchased from the one supplier, for example, small pieces of equipment, can be included on the one quotation.

Please ensure that you obtain and retain separate quotations for each cost.

Conflicts of Interest

You must ensure that there are no “conflicts of interest” in relation to the procurement of goods and services paid for by this grant.

A conflict of interest is any form of personal interest, which may impact (or be perceived by others as impacting) upon your impartiality when selecting a supplier/contractor for goods and services. **Personal interest includes cases where a relative or another person connected to your organisation tenders or quotes to provide goods or services to your organisation.**



In addition the Irish Charities Regulator has useful information in relation to [Managing Conflicts of Interest.](#)

Retention of Documents

Applicants must keep the following documents for a **minimum of 3 years**. These must be made available to for inspections and or to support an expenditure return for the grant.

- **Written evidence of your procurement process** e.g. e-mails to suppliers and quotations received in return. Make sure you have the requisite number of quotations as per public procurement guidelines and written evidence of contacting suppliers.
- All **invoices** and **receipts** from your suppliers for both goods and services must be kept.
- **Bank Statements** providing evidence of receipt of the grant and payment for goods and services
- **Accounting records** showing your income and expenditure in relation to the Playing Outside Grant 2021.



General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)



Early Learning and Care Services and School Age Childcare Services must ensure that they are fully aware and comply with their obligations and responsibilities in relation to processing personal data within their service(s).

Please refer to the Data Protection Commission for additional information in relation obligations in relation to GDPR. Here is a link to their website: [Data](#)

[Protection Commission Guidance](#)

DECDIY is the Data Controller for personal data processed for the Playing Outside Grant 2021 for ELC and SAC Services. The DECDIY privacy notice can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/help/privacy-policy/>

Pobal, as a **Data Processor**, will process applications under the instructions of the DECDIY.

We will process your information in the following ways:

- Contact details, primary authorised user and bank account information from the Pobal Early Years' Platform will be used to create the application forms and for the payment process for this grant.
- The information contained in your application form may be used for research purposes by the DECDIY or Pobal in relation to the impact of Covid-19 on the early years' sector.
- As part of the administration and management of this grant DECDIY or Pobal may share the information in this application form with other Departments, Statutory Bodies or their agents.

Terms and Conditions of the Playing Outside Grant 2021

Below are the terms and conditions of the grant. **Please read these in advance of commencing the application process to ensure you fully understand them and you or your board are in a position to accept these terms and conditions.**

Note: Once an application form is submitted and approved for funding, the application form **represents the contract** between DECDIY and the applicant for this grant. When filling in the application form you will be asked to agree to the following Terms and conditions.

Terms and Conditions

- I/We confirm that I/We wish to apply for the Playing Outside Grant 2021 for Early Learning and Care and School Age Childcare Services.

- I/we confirm that we were in contract with DCEDIY on the 3rd May 2021 and have a minimum of one child registered in respect of one or more of the following schemes:
 - National Childcare Scheme (NCS),
 - Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE),
 - Community Childcare Subvention Programme Plus (CCSP),
 - Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement (CSSR),
 - Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement Transition (CSSR-T),
 - Training and Employment Childcare (TEC).
- Professional fees are not eligible for funding.
- The Childcare Service is Tusla-registered, open and operating as an early learning and care and or school age service on the 3rd May 2021.
- Public procurement guidelines will be adhered to when purchasing the goods and services in respect of this grant.
- All items purchased in respect of this grant will have a projected lifespan of 12 months or more. Consumables are not eligible for funding.
- The invoices and receipts used to support this grant will be for eligible costs only, in line with the grant application guidelines.
- The invoices and receipts in relation to this grant have not and will not be used in support of another claim for reimbursement from another funder or grant from DCEDIY.
- All receipts, invoices and evidence of compliance with procurement will be retained for up to 3 years following payment of the grant.
- The Childcare Service will continue to provide Early Learning and Care and or School Age Services for 12 months post receipt of this grant.
- If approved, the grant payment will be made to the bank account setup for the Early Learning and Care service on the Early Years Platform (EYP) system.
- If, for any reason, the grant, or part of the grant, is unspent it will be refunded to Pobal.
- The Childcare Service shall permit representatives and agents of the DCEDIY to attend the premises of the Childcare Service and shall permit access to the Childcare Service premises and personnel for the purposes of verification of compliance with the terms and conditions of this Agreement.
- Should expenditure be deemed ineligible, as part of a financial return, verification visit, audit or compliance check by Pobal, DCEDIY or other agent of DCEDIY, all or part of the grant will be refunded.
- Any failure of technology or disruption to internet services affecting submission of the application will be at the applicant's risk and Pobal or DCEDIY accepts no liability whatsoever if the application fails to be submitted or is rejected as a late submission.
- Where applicable, planning permission has been approved for any capital works completed with the Playing Outside Grant 2021.
- Where applicable a lease or licence agreement for the use of the building as a Childcare Service is in place for 3 years from the date of submission of the application.

- Where applicable, the owners of the building have provided the necessary permission to carry out the capital works outlined in the application for the Playing Outside Grant 2021
- Applying and/or approval of the Playing Outside Grant 2021 does not mitigate the need for the Childcare Service to be compliant with existing statutory building regulations.

Useful Definitions

Early Learning and Care Services.

Note: Early Learning and Care services, Early Years Services and Pre-Schools are used interchangeably in various regulations, guidelines and policies. The definitions for services are taken from the Child and Family Act 2013. Under this Act, **an Early Years' Service** is a service providing a pre-school service, or a school age service. A pre-school service is any pre-school, play group, day nursery, crèche, day-care or other similar service which caters for pre-schoolchildren. The Act defines a pre-school child as a child who is under six years, and who is not yet going to a recognised school.

“Full day care service” means an early learning and care service or pre-school offering a structured day care service for pre-school children for **more than 5 hours per day** and which may include a sessional pre-school service for pre-school children not attending the full day care service;

“Sessional Pre-School Service” is an Early Learning and Care Service/Pre-School offering a planned programme to children for **not more than 3.5 hours per session**. A Sessional Service can cater for children aged 0-6 years.

“Premises”, in relation to a pre-school service, includes a building or part of a building, and any out-offices, yard, garden or land appurtenant thereto or usually enjoyed therewith in which the service is being or is proposed to be carried on;

“Pre-school service in a drop-in centre” means a pre-school service offering day care to pre-school children which is used exclusively on an intermittent basis;

A **‘school age service’** means any early years’ service, play group, day nursery, crèche, day-care or other similar service which ;

- Caters for children **under the age of 15 years** enrolled in a school providing primary or post primary education.
- Provides a range of activities that are developmental, educational and recreational in manner, which take place outside of school hours, the primary purpose of which is to care for children where their parents are unavailable.
- The basis for access to which is made publicly known to the parents and guardians of the children.

Contact Details

If you require any further clarifications or information please raise a Service Request in HIVE using the following categories as appropriate:

Program

POG (Playing Outside Grant)

Category

- Payment
- Application Form
- Program Clarification
- Technical Issue
- Review Eligibility

Subcategory

- General

Please note the Early Years Provider Centres Opening Hours are **8am to 6pm Monday to Friday**

You can also call on Telephone number **01 511 7222**.