



Newsletter

Fingal County Childcare Committee

February 2021

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Version 3 of Provider FAQs covering the period up to 7 March

Dear Service Provider,

[Service Provider FAQ - 1 February-7 March Version 3.pdf/ \(pobal.ie\)](#) on the current arrangements for provision of ELC and SAC for the period 1 February – 7 March.

This version replaces the FAQs that issued on 27 January and new information is highlighted in grey in the text to distinguish it from previous versions.

The FAQs that issued of Wednesday on the gradual reopening of ELC and SAC services covers the period of 8 March – 28 March and should not be confused.

Thank you,
Early Years Team

FCCC Jobs Board

DCEDIY are very aware that retention and recruitment issues have been raised by the sector for over a sustained period. However, the need for a relief panel of staff has again been identified by the ELC/SAC sector, due to staffing challenges brought about by Covid-19.

The Department is currently looking at a suite of proposals related to retention and recruitment. A local and national jobs board of the ELC/SAC sector is one such proposal. This issue has been discussed with the Communications Working Group. In the interim providers are reminded that FCCC offer a jobs board on our website whereby providers can post vacancies for staff free of charge.

PIP Announcements

2021 Compliance Checks Programme – Update 15/02/2021

Dear Service Provider,

The Department has worked to support Early Learning and Care (ELC) and School Age Childcare (SAC) services throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to providing funding to ensure the continuity of care and sustainability of services, the Department has modified the compliance process to take account of public health advice and to reduce the administrative burden on providers at this time.

As services have a duty to claim funding in line with scheme rules and funding agreements, the Department also has a duty to ensure funding is being dispersed responsibly and for purposes intended to protect Exchequer Funding. For this reason, compliance checks will continue on a staggered basis during this restrictive period, beginning with checks on TWSCS funding from 2020.

The checks will be carried out remotely and in full compliance with public health advice. Services will be required to submit relevant documents upon request to Pobal who will then assess them. This may involve additional correspondence where clarifications are sought. Services that have been directed to close by the HSE or that have previously participated in a TWSCS verification will

not be expected to participate in the new round of TWSCS checks. These checks will commence on 22nd February 2021.

Advance notice will be given as compliance checks on other funded schemes commence in coming weeks. In accordance with public health advice, the compliance checks will be carried out remotely under level 3, 4 and 5 restrictions and will be desk based unless it is absolutely necessary to make onsite visits.

We want to take this opportunity to thank services in advance for their cooperation and participation in the verification checks in these exceptional times.

CCSP/TEC Saver Programmes

The Savers Management Window will remain open until the end of the 2020-21 Programme year to allow providers to make any necessary amendments to registrations on CCSP/TEC 2020-2.

Please see the Savers Management Windows for the 2020/2021 programme year below:

From	To
12 February 2021	8 March 2021
26 March 2021	19 April 2021
25 June 2021	13 August 2021

You are required to make any amendments to registrations in advance of 11th January 2021 to ensure compliance with scheme rules

Extended 2 Hour Attendance Rule for NCS

Under the stimulus package announced in July, the Department introduced added flexibility on attendance rules under NCS. This change allows for 2 hours variation in attendance against registration per week without triggering a report. For non NCS, a 30 minute variance tolerance per day per child is allowed. These temporary measures were introduced in response to the exceptional environment caused by COVID-19.

This measure has been extended and will now last until 31st March 2021.

You can find links to Attendance Trackers to support your attendance keeping for NCS on the Attendance Rules page of the Early Years Hive.

This page also contains the rules around child absence and under attendance under the scheme for your benefit.

COVID-19 Impact Support - Opened Monday 1st March

Dear Provider,

We are writing to you this afternoon to provide you with the <https://pip.pobal.ie/Shared%20Documents/COVID->

[19%20Impact%20Support%20Announcement.pdf/](#) announcing the launch of the COVID-19 Impact support, a strand of sustainability funding for which applications will be open on Monday 1st March.

Information about eligibility criteria and how to apply are contained within the link above.

Kind regards
Early Years Comms Team

Fingal County Childcare Committee Child-Minding Information & Updates



The team at Fingal County Childcare Committee recognise that childminders play a central role in the provision of both early learning and care and school-age childcare in Fingal and are committed to supporting childminders. The Development team in Fingal CCC deliver professional development training, mentoring and information on quality practice.

If you are a childminder, thinking of becoming a childminder or require any support or advice in relation to your childminding service you can contact the development team at Fingal CCC by calling our main office on (01) 4851727 or the development officer in your area:

- Mairéad Tucker, Lead Development Officer Swords and Surrounding Areas Ph: 087 7477553
Email: mairead@fingalcountychildcare.ie
- Jacinta Cooke, Development Officer, Balbriggan and Surrounding Areas Ph: 087-7722228
Email jacinta@fingalcountychildcare.ie
- Nicola McKernan, Development Officer, Dublin 15, and Surrounding Areas Ph: 087 6025263
Email: nicola@fingalcountychildcare.ie

First 5 pre-school Hub

The Department of Children Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth have added some new resources to their First 5 Pre-school at Home Hub.



Check out these and other fun ideas at <https://first5.gov.ie/parent/pre-school-at-home/>

HSE Information

Covid-19 Testing & Face Coverings

The HSE has written to all providers with an update on close contact testing, the use of face-coverings and face-masks and non-HSE Covid-19 testing.

Anyone who is experiencing symptoms of Covid-19 should self-isolate and contact their GP who will arrange testing through the HSE, free of charge. Nobody with symptoms of Covid-19 should be working.

Undertaking a private antigen test and obtaining a negative result is not sufficient to allow a symptomatic staff member to work.

Close contact testing recommendations have changed from day 5 testing to both a day 0 as well as a day 10 test. If close contacts remain with no symptoms and have a 'not detected' test result from the day 10 test, they can finish their restricted movements. If testing is not undertaken, the 14 day restricted movements continue to apply.

Face coverings must be worn by staff in ELC/SAC services at all times when not caring directly for children.

HPSC Health Advice on Symptoms of Covid-19 for ELC & SAC Settings

The HPSC has published a new Decision Pathways document that provides some new information on when children from 3 months to 13 years can attend their ELC/SAC setting.

The document includes the following change to previous advice:

A child with nasal cold symptoms (runny nose or sneezing) can continue to attend their ELC/SAC setting, provided:

- The child is otherwise well and active
- The child has no new cough or temperature
- There is no other person in the child's household with a suspected or confirmed case of Covid-19

Other advice remains unchanged. Please see scenario E in the HPSCs Decision Pathways document for further information:

<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/algorithms/COVID-19%20Assessment%20and%20decision%20making%20pathway%20for%20all%20children.pdf/>

Webinar: Covid-19 Infection Prevention & Control Guidance for Childcare Settings

Presented by Professor Martin Cormican and Mary McKenna, Dr Abigail Collins and Dr Kevin Kelleher, a webinar on Covid-19 infection prevention and control guidance for childcare settings was held on 27 January.

On the link below, you will find links to both the webinar recording - use the password: **vHSsfW3**

<https://hse-webinar.webex.com/ec3300/eventcenter/recording/recordAction.do?theAction=poprecord&siteurl=hse-webinar&entapname=url3300&internalRecordTicket=4832534b00000004e77726569989e947e934962461e82ada4b69e376d851bdc798e2feeea143269a&renewticket=0&isurlact=true&format=short&rnd=3522279770&RCID=a2ee32dabe14b7dd6f8846867ceb9c4a&rID=207497397&needFilter=false&recordID=207497397&apiname=lsr.php&AT=pb&actapname=ec3300&&SP=EC&entactname=%2FnbrRecordingURL.do&actname=%2Feventcenter%2Fframe%2Fg.do>



This is a challenging time to be a parent.

The HSE have put together some information and resources to support the wellbeing of families. <https://spark.adobe.com/page/AKbH02yz6HeWh/> **Wellbeing for Parents.**

Supporting Children Campaign



Launched recently by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, the Supporting Children campaign provides easy-to-access information on services available to children and families throughout the period of Covid-19 restrictions.

It encourages everyone to be mindful of vulnerable children and young people in these challenging times. The Supporting Children web portal on Gov.ie provides access to the many supports and services for children and their families.

For more information visit the website below:

https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/42dcb-supporting-children/?referrer=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.ie%2Fsupportingchildren%2F&fbclid=IwAR1r-VAaKNsqA8x4HjqI-vHcc_d8VJhn7SfkVImBUUpDnWFyUAakC04yCTIM/



COSAINT LEANAÍ - NATIONAL CHILD SAFEGUARDING PROGRAMME – EARLY LEARNING AND CARE

www.childsafeguardelc.ie

As you are all aware there is an embargo on training for the foundation level Children's First. If services are concerned that their certificate is out of date or will be over the coming weeks, a memo has been sent to all Early Years Inspectors informing them that in this present moment the certificates from the E-Learning module will suffice. If it has been 3 years or more since an employee has completed the E-Learning, then they are advised to complete it again.

The new website <http://childsafeguardingelc.ie/early-learning-care-services/> is a fantastic resource that we should be directing providers to for information and links to documents etc.

The National Child Safeguarding Programme; Early Learning and Care launched their website in October, please see below.

The National Child Safeguarding Programme; Early Learning and Care provides the only Tusla approved sector specific Child Safeguarding Programme in Ireland. Full of Early Learning and Care sector specific child safeguarding training and resources, which were developed in conjunction

with Tusla, www.childsafeguardingelc.ie is a 'one stop shop' for all Child Safeguarding resources for Early Learning and Care Services in Ireland.

The website can be found at www.childsafeguardingelc.ie and on Twitter at @safeguardingelc

Children First Child Protection revision webinar

This webinar was developed to highlight the key elements of the face-to-face Always Children First Foundation training. Its purpose is to serve as an interim revision resource for Early Years practitioners.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aH_7yLe1ZPI&feature=youtu.be

CHILDREN FIRST REFRESHER RESOURCES

In the absence of a full training strategy from the National Child Safeguarding Programme due to current public health guidelines, there are a full range of Refresher online resources available on www.childsafeguardingelc.ie

- Staff in all services who haven't completed the Tusla eLearning Programme in the last 3 years to do so <https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-first-e-learning-programme/>
- Staff in all services can access the Children First Revision Webinar <http://childsafeguardingelc.ie/early-learning-care-services/>
- Staff in all services can access the Garda Vetting webinar <http://childsafeguardingelc.ie/early-learning-care-services/>
- Staff in all services can review and refresh their knowledge by accessing Info Blasts on various topics <http://childsafeguardingelc.ie/category/english/>
- Staff within ELC and SAC services can refresh their knowledge of their own organisation's Child Safeguarding Policy using the resources available at <http://childsafeguardingelc.ie/resources-publications/> and on Tusla's website <https://www.tusla.ie/services/child-protection-welfare/> ; https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Tusla_-_Child_Safeguarding_-_A_Guide_for_Policy,_Procedure_and_Practice.pdf

Early Learning and Care services are providers of Relevant Services under the Children First Act 2015.

Providers of Relevant Services under the Children First Act are required to have a Child Safeguarding Statement. *A key element of the Child Safeguarding Statement is the risk assessment.*

When completing a risk assessment, an Early Learning and Care service is required to examine all aspects of its service from a safeguarding perspective while children are availing of your service. The risk assessment should establish if there are any practices or features of your service that may potentially put a child at risk of harm.

Remember the risks identified should be in relation to the specific activities of the service with children. It is not in relation to general health and safety risks.

The Children First Act 2015 defines harm as:

Assault, ill-treatment, or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child's health, development, or welfare or

Sexual abuse of the child, whether caused by a single act, omission or circumstance or a series or combination of acts, omissions, or circumstances or otherwise.

The risk assessment process is intended to enable your organisation to:

- Identify potential risks.
- Develop policies and procedures to minimize risk by responding in a timely manner to potential risks.
- Review whether adequate precautions have been taken to eliminate or reduce these risks.

All risks that are identified and stated in the risk assessment MUST be accompanied by a list of policies and procedures that are in place to manage that risk. It is imperative that the risks outlined in your risk assessment are unique and individual to your service.

After the Child Safeguarding risk assessment has been completed, the areas of risk identified should be included in the body of Child Safeguarding Statement. The Child Safeguarding Statement should also outline the policies and procedures which are in place to manage the risks that have been identified.

The National Child Safeguarding Programme; Early Learning and Care have developed, in conjunction with Tusla, a Child Safeguarding Statement Template and Information Sheet which provides a detailed template and further information for completing a risk assessment within your Child Safeguarding Statement.

Further information can also be found at the following links:

<http://childsafeguardingelc.ie/resources-publications>

<https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/organisations/what-is-a-risk-assessment/>

Barnardos Resources and Online Training Webinars



ESSENTIAL LEARNING SUPPORTS

This third lockdown is proving challenging for so many of us. For some families, **the school closures** are a very real and problematic setback.

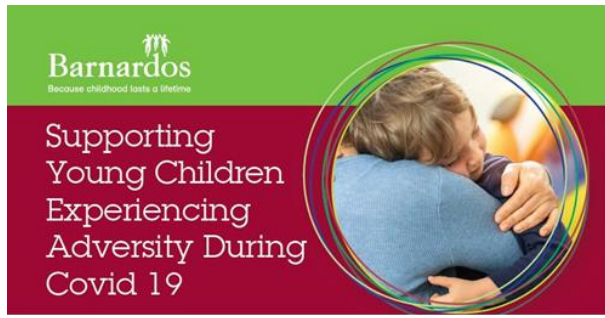
Our frontline staff are currently delivering books and **essential learning support** materials to help vulnerable children and parents who are finding home schooling particularly challenging, and who may not have access to digital devices or WiFi.

We are also **supporting children** who are struggling during school closures with activity packs specifically targeted to their age and educational needs.

These packs can include;

- Worksheets specific to why the child has been attending Barnardos
- Arts and crafts materials
- Plant pots, compost and seeds
- The makings of a birdfeeder and bird seed
- Skipping ropes, footballs, yoga DVDs
- Jigsaws, decks of cards, playdough
- Chalk and chalkboards

The packs cost €18 euro - https://shop.barnardos.ie/products/gifts-for-good-activity-pack?mc_cid=db64f6c06a&mc_eid=d8ebf3db74/



This aim of this guide is to give early years educators an understanding of the kinds of stresses and challenges children and their families may be experiencing in their everyday lives and the impacts these have on children's wellbeing, learning and development so you can fully support the child while they are in the setting. **Click on the link below.**

<https://www.barnardos.ie/learning-development/training/elearning/supporting-young-children-experiencing-adversity-during-covid-19>

FREE webinar as part of the Aontas Adult Learner Festival.



Supporting Children Through Professional Practice in Early Learning and Care (Mindfulness)

Thursday 4th March 2.30 – 4.00pm

An Introduction to Creative Mindfulness for Early Years Educators

Louise Shanagher, Children's Therapist, Mindfulness Teacher and Psychology Lecturer

Explore mindfulness and self-compassion practices to support your own wellbeing and fun creative mindfulness practices to share with children.

Finding Mindfulness and other Resources for Early Years Educators

Colin O'Keeffe, Barnardos Library and Information Service Coordinator

Learn how to find and evaluate high quality resources that focus on mindfulness both for yourself, as a professional and for the children you work with.

Attendance at this event is free but spaces are limited.

Training Webinars

Barnardos have a number of new webinar dates for the coming months.

Supporting Practice Through Supervision in Early Years - 24th March

You can find all the details of these and book on their website. Don't forget, our expert training is available as tailored training, provided in-house, to a group of staff or volunteers in your organisation or network. If you would like to chat to one of our team about your training needs just get in touch.

Making the Most of Supervision Webinar (2 ½ day event) 15th April

The aim of this course is to generate a positive relationship between supervisor and supervisee focusing on quality practice and, through this, to inspire and motivate staff in their work.

Book now https://www.barnardos.ie/learning-development/training/training-events-courses/2021/february/webinar-making-the-most-of-supervision-25-days-23rd-february-2021?mc_cid=3865ea4123&mc_eid=d8ebf3db74/

Designated Liaison Person Training Webinar (2 mornings 10am to 1pm)

6th & 7th July 2021 Fee: €90

As numbers are limited early booking is advisable. The aim of this 2 part webinar is to equip participants with the knowledge and skills that are necessary to carry out the role of Designated Liaison Person (DLP) effectively and with competence. Book https://www.barnardos.ie/learning-development/training/training-events-courses/2021/july/designated-liaison-person-training-webinar-6th-july-2021?mc_cid=f167a335d5&mc_eid=d8ebf3db74/

Barnardos are delighted to get behind Libraries Ireland today for a new national day of reading [Ireland Reads](#).

To celebrate the joy of stories and storytelling we have produced two new free resources we think you might be interested in.



A new online resource for early childhood educators offering guidance on how best to engage children in storytelling and story reading to support their learning and development.



A video where you can watch Susan and Susie Puppet from Barnardos reading a favourite story for young children.

BARNARDOS ONLINE SAFETY TRAINING PROGRAMME



FREE Webinar on Online Safety for Parents

Delivered Live By a Barnardos
Online Safety Trainer

Registered charity number: 20010027

Webinar Dates & Times

Tues 9th March @ 7.30pm

Wed 24th March @ 1pm

Tues 13th April @ 7pm

Wed 28th April @ 7pm

Wed 12th May @ 1pm

Tues 25th May @ 7.30pm

Register your place:
www.bit.ly/osp-parents



FINGAL COUNTY CHILDCARE COMMITTEE – WEBSITE

FCCC website is updated daily with a broad range of information that is relevant to the early years and school age sectors in Fingal. Under LATEST NEWS you will find DCYA Updates, PIP Announcements, On-line Training, Information for parents and other topics that FCCC believes would be of interest to you, your staff, and your parents.

It is of particular importance is that providers regularly read and understand the most up to date FAQ's and PIP Announcements and if clarifications are required please contact FCCC at (01) 4851727 or contact a staff member from the list on Page 1 above.

