



# Newsletter

## Fingal County Childcare Committee

April 2017

Volume 4, Number 4

### *In This Issue*

- Force Majeure
- ECCE Child Absent due to illness
- Affordable Childcare Scheme
- Congratulations ECI Awards
- CCST

We have had some queries from Early Years services regarding the following:

#### **Force Majeure**

**12. Force Majeure.** (Is defined in the ECCE contract as: )

12.1. If and to the extent that either party (the "Affected Party") is hindered or prevented by circumstances not within its reasonable ability to control, including but not limited to, acts of God, inclement weather, flood, lightning, fire, trade disputes, strikes, lockouts, acts of terrorism, war, military operations, acts or omissions of third parties for whom the Affected Party is not responsible ("Force Majeure") from performing any of its obligations under this Agreement, the Affected Party shall be relieved of liability for failure to perform such obligations.

12.2. The Affected Party shall promptly notify the other party of the estimated extent and duration of such inability to perform its obligations and upon the cessation of the event of Force Majeure the Affected Party shall notify the other party of such cessation.

12.3. In the event Force Majeure continues for more than 45 days then either party shall have the right to terminate this Agreement on written notice to the other party.

If a service has to close, the days need to be made up. The service must complete a new calendar, the new calendar should be displayed and a copy given to each parent. You don't need to get the parents to sign the new calendar but you must have it displayed for Pobal Compliance visits.

#### **ECCE Child Absent due to illness**

A service provider should enquire into absence within the first week. A PIP Leaver form must be submitted after four weeks absence from the programme. If there is good reason for absence beyond four weeks service provider must contact the CCC in writing (email will suffice) to seek authorisation not to submit a PIP Leaver Form. The CCC will log a note on the PIP System for compliance purposes.

#### **Affordable Childcare Scheme**

On Wednesday 12th April, 2017 Government announced plans for the delivery of more affordable childcare this September. The Government has agreed its plan to make childcare more affordable from September using the additional €19m of childcare funding agreed in Budget 2017.

The childcare supports available from this September will include:

- A new universal childcare subsidy for children aged from 6 months up to 36 months old (or commencement of the free pre-school programme). This new universal childcare subsidy will benefit up to 33,000 children. For children in full-time, registered childcare, it will amount to €1,000 per annum.

- Significant increases of up to 50 per cent in childcare subvention rates provided under the Community Childcare Subvention Scheme for children aged from 6 months up to 15 years old:

Up to 23,000 children and their families currently availing of childcare supports under this Scheme will benefit from these increases. For example, parents availing of full-time childcare who currently have had their childcare costs subsidised by €95 per week under this Scheme will see their subvention rate rise to €145 per week.

Up to 7,000 additional children and their families are expected to benefit from this Scheme for the first time from September due to improved access to this Scheme through a greater number of community/not-for-profit and private childcare providers throughout the country. These children and their families too will benefit from these generous increases in childcare subvention rates.

Children and families can avail of these new levels of childcare subsidies under a number of circumstances, including if they are in receipt of the Family Income Supplement or if they have a medical card or a GP only card.

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs is working with the Department of Social Protection, Pobal and a number of Government Departments to build a fully automated online system which will ultimately be used to access and administer childcare supports.

When that online system is available, existing levels of investment will allow a further 9,000 families to benefit from more affordable childcare, through childcare subsidies of up to €12 per week.

The online system will provide a user-friendly means for parents to access childcare supports and will also help improve the administrative efficiency.

***Congratulations*** to two of our childcare providers, **Little Gumboots Preschool in Balbriggan, Co. Dublin** were the overall winner's country wide of the Innovation of the year award for Sustainability and **Beverton Preschool in Donabate** was awarded the best overall Learning Story of the Year 2016 at the Early Childhood Ireland Awards for innovation and learning stories in Dublin's Talbot Hotel.

### **Community Childcare Subvention Transitional (CCST)**

As part of the "Rebuilding Ireland – an Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness" the Department of Children and Youth Affairs has committed to introducing a new scheme under the current CCS Programme, which will provide access to free childcare for homeless children. The new scheme is to be known as Community Childcare Subvention Transitional (CCST).

All children living in homeless conditions, aged 0-5 inclusive will be eligible for the scheme.

- The Department of Children and Youth Affairs are working with Focus Ireland to ensure that all eligible children will be aware of the scheme and supported in accessing the scheme
- Children will be eligible for 25 hours per weeks, which will include 15 hours of free pre-school (ECCE) where they are eligible for this, or school hours. School children will avail of this free childcare outside of term time. This free childcare will be available for 50 weeks of the year.
- Providers can receive backdated payments to January for services they provide to children so registration does not reflect real-time numbers.
- Contracted childcare services will be provided with a flat rate of €110 per week, per child.
- Parents will not be asked to pay any top-up or co-payment for these part-time hours. Participating service providers must accept the terms of the scheme when signing up to the programme.
- A daily meal must be provided for each child (which will be included in the subvention rate).

***If your service would like to participate in this scheme please contact the FCCC offices***