



Newsletter

Fingal County Childcare Committee

April 2018

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Better Start

Better Start is a Quality Development initiative of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA), collaborating with the Early Years Education Policy Unit of the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and works to establish a cohesive approach to quality across the Early Childhood Education and Care sector in Ireland. Better Start is hosted by Pobal on behalf of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

There are three strands of Better Start:

- The Quality Development (Mentoring) Service to enhance quality of practice in early year's settings
- Supporting Access and Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in ECCE (AIM)
- Coordination, cohesion and consistency of quality supports

Better Start Quality Development Service is an additional resource to support and drive quality improvement. It provides a highly skilled and experienced Early Years Specialist team to work directly in a mentoring capacity with early year's services, complementing and adding to other quality resources such as training, continuing professional development programmes, networking, cluster-type support groups and individual or team-based development work provided by the City and County Childcare Committees and the Voluntary Childcare Organisations.

Early Years Specialists are qualified (Level 8/9) early childhood professionals with a wealth of practice experience. They have a thorough grounding in evidence-based best practice, mentoring and facilitation. Early Years Specialists are Garda Vetted and receive on going professional support and supervision. They have experience of implementing quality frameworks (SÍolta and Aistear) in a range of settings and across age groups – birth to 6 years and can offer information, guidance and "tried and tested" solutions which can build on the knowledge and experience of practitioners to enhance the quality of your service to children.

The Quality Development Service operates on a national, rather than regional or county basis. Requests for the service come directly to Better Start from the City and County Childcare Committees. All requests for the service are processed centrally. Early Years Specialists will be allocated to the ECEC services on the basis of availability, skills and experience as far as possible matching the service profile.

Current criteria to access the Quality Development Service:

Services catering for 20 full and/or part-time children with at least 40 children overall

- (1) Group or chain providers with services under the same ownership
- (2) Sessional services for children (birth to 6 years) with at least 40 children in total

They also retain flexibility to respond to requests from services for support in exceptional circumstances. Sample reasons for why a service might be eligible for special consideration for support could include one or a combination of the following:

- Inspection issues or recommendation
- Access to quality support has been very limited
- A combination of factors such as location of service, high levels of disadvantage, rural isolation or the needs/profile of children
- Significant staff turnover

There may be additional reasons that you or your local City or County Childcare Committee (CCC) would like to put forward to make a case for your service to be given special consideration for the allocation of support of an Early Years Specialist. These will be considered on a case by case basis.

If you meet the criteria and would be interested in engaging with this service contact us here at the office on: 01 4851727

AIM CPD Training Funding

A CPD fund for Early Years settings to contribute to costs of staff attending AIM L3 Hanen and Lámh training has been announced as a pilot project by Minister Katherine Zappone.

Payment of €13 per hour, for up to 18 hours training will be payable on completion of one or both of these two courses, currently being offered by Better Start. In order to be eligible for payment the courses must be fully completed (all modules) and attendance certified. Hanen Teacher Talk Modules A, B & C (18 hours) and Lámh one day course (6 hours).

Details on how to apply for payment and the payment process will be provided over the coming weeks. Participants who attended the first round of training in March and who go on to complete the training in April and May will be eligible, as will those starting in April and finishing in June.

Aim Resource Packs

The distribution of AIM Inclusive Play Packs will commence on 9th April 2018. ECCE settings will be prioritised for distribution where:

The setting has availed of targeted AIM supports OR

An employee in the setting has graduated from the Leadership for Inclusion (LINC) in the Early Years higher education programme 2016/17 and has agreed to take on the role and responsibilities of an Inclusion Coordinator OR

An employee in the setting has enrolled in the Leadership for Inclusion (LINC) in the Early Years higher education programme 2017/18 OR

At least one employee in the setting has completed the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) training being rolled out by City and County Childcare Committees (CCCs).

For ECCE settings with multiple ECCE rooms, a maximum of three AIM Inclusive Play Packs will be distributed initially with remaining AIM Inclusive Play Packs distributed once all settings have received at least one AIM Inclusive Play Pack

It may take up to 8 weeks to complete distribution to all ECCE settings.

Distribution is being managed by Learning SPACE (email info@learningspace.ie / phone 048 9031 9360).

The AIM Inclusive Play website is now live and can be accessed via www.aim.gov.ie

EDI Training

There are still places left on this training (15 hours). The dates below are the **final** dates that we will be offering. Attendance at each session is required.

Please note: "Participation in the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion training programme is not mandatory for pre-school practitioners. However, participation is strongly encouraged by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs as completion of this training will assist pre-school providers to deliver an inclusive pre-school experience, which is the cornerstone of AIM."

Venue	Dates	Time	√
EDI-53 Castlelands Community Centre Balbriggan Co Dublin	Saturday 12 th May 2018 Wednesday 16 th May 2018 Monday 23 rd May 2018 Monday 30 th May 2018	9.30am to 4.00pm 6.00pm to 9.00pm 6.00pm to 9.00pm 6.00pm to 9.00pm	
EDI- 54 The RIASC Centre Feltrim Rd Swords	Saturday 12 th May 2018 Tuesday 15 th May 2018 Tuesday 22 nd May 2018 Tuesday 29 th May 2018	9.30am to 4.00pm 6.00pm to 9.00pm 6.00pm to 9.00pm 6.00pm to 9.00pm	
EDI – 56 Crosscare Main Street Blanchardstown Village Dublin 15	Saturday 19 th May 2018 Monday 21 st May 2018 Monday 28 th May 2018 Monday 11 th June 2018	9.00am to 3.30pm 6.00pm to 9.00pm 6.00pm to 9.00pm 6.00pm to 9.00pm	
EDI – 57 The RIASC Centre Feltrim Road Swords	Saturday 9 th June 2018 Tuesday 12 th June 2018 Tuesday 19 th June 2018 Tuesday 26 th June 2018	9.30am to 4.00pm 6.00pm to 9.00pm 6.00pm to 9.00pm 6.00pm to 9.00pm	
EDI – 58 Castlelands Community Centre Balbriggan Co Dublin	Saturday 16 th June 2018 Wednesday 20 th June 2018 Wednesday 27 th June 2018 Wednesday 4 th July 2018	9.30am to 4.00pm 6.00pm to 9.00pm 6.00pm to 9.00pm 6.00pm to 9.00pm	
EDI-41 Crosscare Main Street Blanchardstown Village Dublin 15	Monday 18 th June 2018 Monday 25 th June 2018 Monday 2 nd July 2018 Monday 9 th July 2018	2.00pm to 8.00pm 6.00pm to 9.00pm 6.00pm to 9.00pm 6.00pm to 9.00pm	

To secure a place you must forward completed booking form Fingal County Childcare Committee to sile@fingalcountychildcare.ie

The Early Years Service Profile 2017/2018 – Deadline: 5pm, Friday 27th April

The deadline for submitting this year's Early Years Service Profile is 5pm, Friday 27th April.

The data provided by early years service providers is critical to understanding and mapping trends in the sector and will be used by Government to inform future policy and planning at both local and national levels.

The information provided in this year's survey will be particularly important for planning capacity at a local level, capital funding and promoting accessibility for people with disabilities.