

A Parents Guide to the National Childcare Funding Programmes 2015/2016



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

Contents

•	Introduction/ Types of Childcare	3
•	Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme	4
•	Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) Programme	6
•	Training and Employment Childcare (TEC) Programmes	8
o	Childcare Education and Training Support (CETS) programme	8
o	After School Childcare (ASCC) programme	9
o	Community Employment Childcare (CEC) programme	10
•	Information about Síolta / Aistear Quality Frameworks	11
•	Useful Contact Details	12
•	City and County Childcare Committee Contact Details	16

Introduction

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

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

CCC's administer three 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 Childcare

Childcare services may provide full time, part-time, sessional and school-age services. Fees charged are generally at the discretion of the childcare service.

Private Childcare Providers:

Private Providers offer quality childcare services that are run as private businesses. These childcare services range from small businesses that are operated by sole traders to large childcare facilities that are operated by companies, some of which may have a number of different childcare facilities in different locations. Private Childcare Services may offer the ECCE and TEC Childcare Funding Programmes.

Community Childcare Providers:

Community Childcare Providers offer community based, not-for-profit childcare services. A Community Childcare Service is run by a voluntary Board of Management. Community based childcare services may offer the CCS, ECCE and TEC childcare funding programmes.

Childminders:

A Childminder is a self-employed person who minds other people's children in their own home. Childminders may offer the ECCE programme, subject to meeting certain criteria.

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme:

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

Is my child eligible for the ECCE Programme?

If your child was born between 2nd of February 2011 and 30th of June 2012, they are eligible to avail of the ECCE programme from September 2015 to June 2016.

If your child was born between 2nd of February 2012 and 30th of June 2013 they are eligible to avail of the ECCE programme from September 2016 to June 2017.

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 €62.50 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 €62.50 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 or 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 or county childcare committee to find out if any childminders in your area are participating in the programme.

What if my child is too old to participate in the ECCE programme?

If your child is above the age range for the ECCE programme, there are some circumstances under which they may still avail of the programme:

The upper age limit of 4 years 7 months may be extended where a child is not in a position to commence primary school until they are more than 5 years 6 months of age, due either to the enrolment

policy of the local school, or because s/he has been assessed as developmentally delayed. Applications for an extension of the upper age limit will be examined on a case-by-case basis. Please note that under the Education and Welfare Act 2000 all children must be enrolled in a primary school by the time they reach their 6th birthday.

Children with special needs:

Where a child has been assessed by the Health Service Executive, or treating consultant, as having special needs which will either delay their entry to primary school or make it more suitable that they avail of the pre-school year on a pro-rata basis over two years, this will be examined on a case-by-case basis. In such cases, the child may avail of the pre-school year over two years by availing of the ECCE sessions, for example, for two days in the first year and three days in the second year, or vice versa.

A full list of conditions and frequently asked questions about the ECCE programme is available on the Department of Children and Youth Affairs website www.dcy.gov.ie.

If you have any queries or concerns in relation to the ECCE programme, please contact your local city or county childcare committee who will be able to help you with your query.



Community Childcare Subvention Programme:

The Community Childcare Subvention Programme (CCS) is a support programme for community-based childcare services to provide quality childcare at a reduced rate to parents. It enables community childcare services to reduce fees for parents in receipt of certain social welfare payments, Family Income Supplement, and holders of medical cards and GP visit cards. Participation in the CCS programme is restricted to community / not-for-profit childcare services.

Am I eligible for the CCS programme?

If you are a parent in receipt of a social welfare payment, you may be eligible. See the table () for more details.

How do I know which childcare services are currently in the CCS Programme?

A list of current CCS services is available from your local City or County Childcare Committee.

Can I use a Childminder or Private Childcare Service instead?

Childminders and Private Childcare Services cannot offer the CCS programme.

Band Table and Rates of Payment:

The table on the next page outlines the weekly subvention rates for parents considered to be 'Band A', 'Band AJ' or 'Band B' based on the type of service the child is availing of. The list of payments under Band A in the table is not exhaustive.

Where clarification is required on which Band you qualify for, please contact your local City or County Childcare Committee.

It is important to note that a Medical Card is required with Band A and Band AJ payments.

A full list of conditions and frequently asked questions about the CCS programme is available on the Department of Children and Youth Affairs website www.dcy.gov.ie

If you have any queries or concerns in relation to the CCS programme, please contact your local city or county childcare committee who will be able to help you with your query.



DCYA CHILDCARE PROGRAMMES INFORMATION AND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The table below outlines the CCS eligibility criteria for Bands A, AJ and B, based on the type of service the child is availing of. (The list of payments under Band A/AJ in the table is not exhaustive). A Medical Card is required with Band A and Band AJ payments.

CCS Band Eligibility

Band A (with medical card)	Band AJ (with medical card)*	Band B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One Parent Family Payment Widows/Widowers Pension Pre-retirement Allowance Farm Assist State Pension Blind Pension Guardian's Payment Illness/Injury Benefit*** Disability Allowance Carer's Benefit/ Allowance Back to Work Enterprise/Education Allowance Community Employment / Rural Social Scheme Domiciliary Care Allowance Family Income Supplement (FIS) Secondary School students Invalidity Pension Disablement Pension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job Seekers Benefit/ Allowance Supplementary Welfare Allowance** Tús Part-time Job Incentive Scheme Gateway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical Card GP Visit Card (over 6yr+ only) Parents who are in receipt of Social Welfare payments listed under Band A/AJ but have no medical card 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official Tusla Referrals (no medical card required) HSE Public Health Nurse referrals (no medical card required) 		

* Parents who qualify for Band AJ (with medical card) e.g. a parent in receipt of Jobseekers Benefit/Allowance (JB / JA) and with a medical card qualify for subvented childcare to a maximum of €50 subvention for full day-care per week (Band AJ). This cap applies where a child attends from 3 full days to 5 full days per week. Parents in receipt of Jobseekers Benefit/Allowance (JB / JA) and do not have a medical card qualify for subvented childcare under Band B.

** A similar cap applies to Basic Payments under the Supplementary Welfare Allowance Scheme, as many of those in receipt of such payments are awaiting a decision on a Jobseekers Benefit/Allowance claim. In the event that this payment concludes with a successful claim which attracts a full rate Band A eligibility, with a medical card (e.g. One Parent Family Payment) then the eligibility for that payment can be back dated to the September of that given academic year for which the basic payment applied. However, the successful claim, which must have been backdated to include the CCS snap-shot week, must be appealed as part of the CCS Appeals Process

*** No Band is automatically applied to those parents on **Maternity Benefit**, partaking in a **Springboard course** and/or a **National Internship Programme (NIP/JobBridge)**, or in receipt of the ETB/SOLAS Training Allowance on CCS Snap-shot week. The appropriate band will be decided on a case by case basis, based on the allowance received immediately prior to the course/programme/training/benefit.

**** GP visit card is now universal for children 0-6 and therefore will now only apply to Band B subvention eligibility for 6yrs+. Children under 6 who were approved for Band B subvention in 2014/15 due to child's GP visit card will still be eligible.

***** Parents on Disability/Illness/Occupational Injury Benefit will be reviewed during the course of the academic year ('DB Review'). If the relevant Benefit no longer applies at the review, the band will be amended accordingly. A parent may appeal the assigned Band with evidence of a different eligible Social Welfare payment being received during the DB Review period.

Training and Employment Childcare (TEC) Programmes

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.

There are 3 strands of the TEC programme:

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

The CETS Programme formerly catered for FAS and VEC training course participants and now provides subsidised childcare on behalf of the Local Education and Training Boards (ETB's).

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

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

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

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

Childcare Education and Training Support programme (CETS)

CETS is for parents completing ETB / Solas courses (formerly FAS and VEC courses). It is administered on behalf of the Department of Education.

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

How do I know if I'm eligible for a CETS place?

If you are a parent and are undertaking training through ETB's or Solas, you may be eligible. You should ask your training provider if you are eligible. If you are, your training provider should give you a letter of eligibility for CETS. This letter must contain the following information:

- Name of parent
- Name of eligible course
- Start date of the course
- End date of the course and/or the number of weeks of the course
- Confirmation that you are eligible for childcare under the CETS programme

How do I access a place?

A list of current CETS services is available from your local City or County Childcare Committee.

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 me?

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

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 Social Protection (DSP). DSP have sole responsibility for deciding who is eligible to avail of this strand of the TEC Programme.

Places can be afterschool 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 afterschool hours, this can be accommodated under the scheme. The same rates apply.

How do I know if I'm eligible for an ASCC place?

In general, to qualify for support under the ASCC programme, you must:

- Be in receipt of Family Income Supplement (FIS) (regardless of duration); **OR**
- Be currently getting a Jobseeker's Benefit (JB), Jobseekers Allowance (JA) or One Parent FamilyPayment (OFP) or on a DSP employment programme; **AND**

- Have been in receipt of a JB, JA or OFP payment or have been on a Department of Social Protection (DSP) employment programme (or any combination of the 4) for at least 3 months; **AND**
- Have one or more children aged between 4 and 13 who are in primary school; **AND**
- Either start a new job or increase the days you currently work; or
- Start a DSP employment programme (except CE)

Your local DSP office will be able to tell you if you are eligible for an ASCC place. If you are, your DSP 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

How do I access an ASCC place?

A list of current ASCC services is available from your local City or 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 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

Full time Childcare Place (maximum of 10 weeks) - €15 per week

Community Employment Childcare programme (CEC):

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

How do I know if I'm eligible for an ASCC place?

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 access a CEC place?

A list of current CEC services is available from your local City or 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 me?

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

- Part-time: €15 per week
- After-school: €15 per week
- Part-time Childcare Place (maximum of 10 weeks): €15 per week

General questions about TEC programmes:

Am I guaranteed a childcare place, if I get a letter of eligibility?

For all 3 TEC programmes, places are allocated on a first come, first served basis, up to a maximum number of places available. Therefore, eligibility for a TEC programme does not guarantee you a subsidised childcare place.

Can I transfer from one childcare service to another?

You can choose to transfer your child from one TEC service to another. You must give 2 weeks' notice to the childcare service, and you are required to complete a TEC leaver form, which must also be signed by the existing service, and the new service.

Can I use a childminder instead?

Childminders cannot offer the TEC programme.

A full list of conditions and frequently asked questions about the TEC programmes is available on the Department of Children and Youth Affairs website www.dcyh.gov.ie.

If you have any queries or concerns in relation to the TEC programmes, please contact your local city or county childcare committee who will be able to help you with your query.



Síolta Information for Parents

Síolta, the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education, was developed by the Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills. It was published in 2006, following a three-year developmental process, which involved consultation with more than 50 diverse organisations, representing childcare workers, teachers, parents, policy makers, researchers and other interested parties.

Síolta is designed to define, assess and support the improvement of quality across all aspects of practice in early childhood care and education (ECCE) settings where children aged birth to six years are present. These settings include:

- Full and Part-time Daycare
- Childminding
- Sessional services
- Infant classes in primary schools

Since December 2008, the **Early Years Education Policy Unit**, in the Department of Education and Skills, has been responsible for the implementation of Síolta. Early Childhood Care and Education services participating in the Free Pre-school Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme are required to “adhere to the principles of Síolta”.

Core Elements of Síolta

Síolta is comprised of three distinct but interrelated elements: **Principles, Standards** and **Components** of Quality. The 12 Principles provide the overall vision of the Framework, while the 16 Standards and 75 Components allow for the practical application of this vision across all aspects of ECCE practice. The Components of Quality are further explained by a set of Signposts for Reflection and ‘Think-about’s’ which are intended to support practitioners in early education settings to become aware of and critical of their practice. These core elements of Síolta are set out in detail in each of the **Síolta user manuals**.

For more information go to www.siolta.ie

Aistear Information for Parents

Parents play a key role in their children’s education. Effective early childhood settings and schools take account of the influence of the home on children’s learning and they build on the experience children bring to the setting or school. Establishing strong links with parents helps make children’s education as successful as possible.

The NCCA developed Aistear: **the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework** (2009) in partnership with the early childhood sector. Parents played a key role in this.

Aistear states that: “*Parents are the most important people in children’s lives. The care and education that children receive from their parents and family, especially during their early months and years, greatly influence their overall development. .Extended family and community also have important roles to play*”.
(Principles and themes, p.9)

For more information and lots of useful resources go to the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) Aistear Toolkit at www.ncca.ie

Useful Contacts

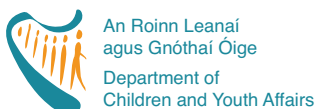
Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA)

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
43-49 Mespil Road
FREEPOST F5055
Dublin 4, D04 YP52

Tel: +353 1 6473000
Fax: +353 1 6473101
E-mail: contact@dcya.gov.ie
Web: www.dcya.gov.ie



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



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
- Forbairt Naíonraí Teo
- Irish Steiner Kindergarten Association
- St. Nicholas Montessori Society of Ireland
- National Childhood Network



Notes

Notes

[illegible]

City / County Childcare Committee Contact Details

Carlow	059 9140244	Longford	043 3342505
Cavan	049 4365856	Louth	042 9336364
Clare	065 6864862	Mayo	094 9047010
Cork City	021 4357500	Meath	046 9073010
Cork County	022 23880	Monaghan	047 72896
Donegal	074 9123442	Offaly	057 9135878
Dublin City	01 8733696	Roscommon	094 9622540
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown	01 2368030	Sligo	071 9148860
Fingal	01 8077660	South Dublin	01 4570122
Galway	091 752039	Tipperary North	067 44888
Kerry	066 7181582	Tipperary South	052 6182274
Kildare	045 861307	Waterford	051 295045
Kilkenny	056 7752865	Westmeath	044 9335454
Laois	057 8661029	Wexford	053 9237156
Leitrim	071 9640870		053 9239763
Limerick	061 600918	Wicklow	0404 64455

