



OFFALY COUNTY CHILDCARE COMMITTEE



WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN

17th April 2024



IMPORTANT DATES, DEADLINES AND DCEDIY PRESS RELEASE

Here you will find details and reminders of important upcoming deadlines along with DCEDIY current press releases.



OCCC UPCOMING EVENTS

Here you will find details of all our upcoming training events with links to bring you directly to Eventbrite.



HIVE NOTIFICATIONS

Here you will find the most recent Hive notifications and details on Compliance for ECCE and NCS.

CONTACT DETAILS



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IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES

- **27th April 2024:** OCCC annual Seminar: Nurturing Social and Emotional Growth in Children and Supporting Positive Behaviour - Bridge House, Tullamore
- **21st May 2024:** AIM Information Talk for ECCE Service Providers
- **29th April 2024:** Portal will open on or before for service providers to register nominated accountants for Core funding Income & Expenditure report
- **2nd May 2024:** Public Consultation closed at 5pm for Draft Childminding Regulations Submissions:
<https://www.gov.ie/en/consultation/2071d-public-consultation-on-the-draft-childminding-regulations/>
- **5th May 2024:** R&C for Core Funding opens
- **25th May 2024:** Always Children First Child Safeguarding Awareness Training
- **31st May 2024:** Portal will open on or before for submission of Core funding Income & Expenditure report
- **26th June 2024:** Closing date for submission of Core Funding income & Expenditure report

2025 Programme for Support Organisations to Early Learning & Care/ School Age Childcare and Childminding Sector

The purpose of the Programme for Support Organisations to Early Learning & Care/ School Age Childcare and Childminding Sector is to enable organisations that support the early years sector to submit a proposal to apply for funding for work that they will undertake to directly facilitate and support, or to compliment, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) Early Years policy objectives in 2025.

It is envisaged that the total funding available will not be less than the €2.54m currently allocated to voluntary organisations undertaking work on behalf of the Department.

The Programme is open to non-governmental organisations or not for profit organisations, is a registered charity, with special interests and expertise in the Early Learning and Care, School Aged Childcare (ELC/SAC) and/or Childminding sector.

DCEDIY is looking for innovative solutions or supports within eight designated overarching themes and proposals may be submitted by individual support organisations or by a consortium.

The application process is designed in two phases:

Phase 1 /Outline Proposal – deadline for applications Friday 19 April 2024 at 3pm.
Organisations that pass the Phase 1 review will be invited to submit an application at Phase 2 /Full Proposal – deadline for applications Friday 31 May 2024 at 3pm.
Please direct any Programme queries to the following email address querysupportorgs25@pobal.ie

Pobal/DCEDIY will aim to respond to all queries within 48 hours.

Application forms and Guidelines

2025 Programme for Support Organisations to Early Learning & Care/ School Age Childcare & Childminding Sector

- [2025 Programme for Support Organisations to ELC SAC CM Sector - Applicant Guidelines 389.85 KB](#)Last Updated 3rd April 2024
- [2025 Programme for Support Organisations to ELC SAC CM Sector - Phase 1 Outline Proposal Application Form 167.29 KB](#)Last Updated 3rd April 2024
- [2025 Programme for Support Organisations to ELC SAC CM Sector - Phase 1 Outline Proposal Application Guidelines 356.25 KB](#)

Minister O’Gorman publishes the Participation of Children and Young People in Decision-making: Action Plan 2024-2028

Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Roderic O’Gorman, today published the Participation of Children and Young People in Decision-making Action Plan 2024-2028 .

This Action Plan builds on the ambition and achievements of the first National Strategy on Children and Young People’s Participation in Decision-Making and aims to further promote the inclusion of children and young people in decision making at all levels – in the home, in school, in their communities and at national level.

The successful implementation of this Action Plan will, in the short term, result in the views of children and young people being harnessed to inform policy, services, legislation and research that is relevant to their lives. Their views will also be sought in evaluation and monitoring of relevant services and policies.

This Participation Action Plan will drive continued development of participation structures and practice, at local, national and international level, among organisations, sectors, practitioners and government departments and agencies. Through the implementation of these actions, and by using and enhancing existing resources and supports, DCEDIY will continue to innovate and lead the participation of children and young people in decision making across government and internationally.

Welcoming the announcement, Minister O’Gorman said:

“Ireland is a world leader in participation practices, being the first country in Europe to have a dedicated Participation Strategy for Children and Young People. I am pleased to be able to further progress this important focus with the publication of this Participation of Children and Young People in Decision-making: Action Plan 2024-2028.

The ambitions of this Action Plan will see the voices of children and young people embedded in decisions made across more Government Departments and Agencies than ever before. Public policy can only be improved in the recognition of children and young people as citizens of today, not just adults of the future.”

The Participation of Children and Young People in Decision-making: Action Plan 2024-2028 is available in both English and Irish, and is supported by the publication of a Report on the Public Consultation on the next Government Policy Framework for the Participation of Children and Young People in Decision-making .

<https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/d6997-minister-ogorman-publishes-the-participation-of-children-and-young-people-in-decision-making-action-plan-2024-2028/>



SEMINAR 2024

NURTURING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL GROWTH IN CHILDREN & SUPPORTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Saturday 27th April 2024

Venue: Bridge House, Tullamore **Time:** 9.30am - 4.00pm **Cost:** €10 (Includes Lunch)

This promises to be an engaging and informative day with Nicola Erasmus returning to Offaly to share her expertise and practical strategies that will support educators to enhance their professional development.

We are also delighted to have Zarah Doyle from AsIAM who will focus on Autism and Play Environments.

NURTURING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL GROWTH IN CHILDREN THROUGH

- Positive Relationships and Interactions:
- Building secure attachments:
- Emotional Literacy:
- Empathy and Understanding:
- Problem-Solving and Conflict Resolution:
- Play-Based Learning:
- Emotional Regulation:
- Consistent Routine and Boundaries:
- Emotional Expression through Art and Music:

SUPPORTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR THROUGH

- Positive Reinforcement:
- Clear and Consistent Expectations:
- Modelling Behaviour:
- Effective Communication:
- Use of Positive Language:
- Teaching Self-Regulation:
- Social Skills Development:
- Individualized Support:

AUTISM AND PLAY ENVIRONMENTS

- Explore the intersection of autism and play environments.
- Learn evidence-based strategies to create inclusive environments.
- Support play environments that foster engagement, communication and well-being of Autistic children.
- Gain practical insights, tools and techniques to enhance play experiences and promote positive outcomes for Autistic children.



AIM INFORMATION SESSION FOR ELC EDUCATORS



21ST MAY 2024



VIRTUAL MEETING @ 7PM



Offaly County Childcare along with Better Start AIM Specialists will deliver an information session for Parents on the levels of support available to ensure that all children can participate and access the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. AIM specialists will be happy to answer any questions that parents may have on the night relating to AIM.



Targeted Supports

AIM targeted supports cater to a wide range of abilities and are focused on the needs of the child and do not need a diagnosis of disability. However, some children may require one or more further supports to ensure that they can participate meaningfully in the ECCE programme.



Universal Supports

AIM universal supports benefit the whole pre-school environment through empowering pre-school providers to create a more inclusive culture in their settings.



AIM Inclusive Play

AIM Inclusive Play was introduced in 2018 as a set of sensory and educational play resources to support inclusive practice within Early Learning and Care settings.



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eventbrite.ie

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

pobal
government supporting communities



Children First



ALWAYS CHILDREN FIRST: CHILD SAFEGUARDING AWARENESS TRAINING

This accredited training course will enable participants to

- **Gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of how to recognise and respond to child protection and welfare concerns.**
- **Consider child-centred practice as a key part of child safeguarding and how you might implement child centred practice.**
- **Gain a clear understanding of your role and responsibilities in relation to keeping children safe and promoting their welfare to enable them to achieve their full potential**

Booking Conditions

- ✓ Training participants must complete the Tusla eLearning programme prior to attendance of this course.
- ✓ Open to all early years practitioners working in a childcare service in County Offaly, including those in DLP or Mandated Person roles
- ✓ Maximum booking of 2 people per service, service must be based in Offaly
- ✓ Cost per participant: €10

Date:

- **Saturday 25th May 2024**

Venue:

- **O'Connor Square, Tullamore,
Co. Offaly, R35 Y2T5**

Time:

- **9.30am - 4.00pm**

Register Now on Eventbrite



www.offalychildcare.com

AIM INFORMATION SESSION FOR PARENTS

IS YOUR CHILD IN PRESCHOOL OR DUE TO
START PRESCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER 2024?



28TH MAY 2024



VIRTUAL MEETING @ 7PM



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An Roinn Léinn, Comhaltas na hÉireann, Múinteoir, Léigheoire agus Oide
Department of Education, Equality
Disability, Inclusive and Youth

pobal
community supporting communities



Hive Notifications



Recording and Slides for AIM Level 7 Compliance Webinars

Dear Service Provider,

Many thanks to all the service providers for their attendance at the AIM Level 7 Compliance webinars held recently.

A recording is now available under 'Recorded webinars' in the [Training Videos](#) section on the Hive.

A copy of the PowerPoint slides used during the webinars is available [here](#).

A document containing answers to questions asked during these webinars is currently being developed and will also be available here in due course.

Regards,

The Early Years & Compliance Teams

Hive Notifications

ECCE compliance

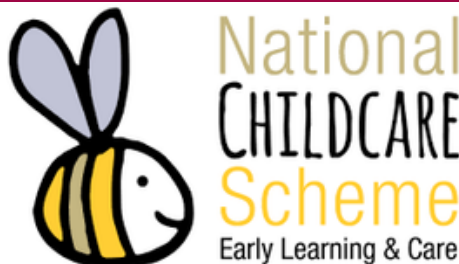
It is the responsibility of the Service Provider to ensure compliance with their contractual requirements. Service providers should ensure that they understand and adhere to the ECCE Funding Agreement. Failure to do so will result in non-compliance and will require corrective action.

In order to make compliance visits as efficient as possible for both providers and visit officers, service providers should ensure that their compliance file is kept up to date and contains:

- Attendance records
- Enrolment details (including minimum enrolment exemption where relevant);
- Parental declaration forms
- Parent letters
- Fee records
- Staff qualifications
- Higher capitation forms

The below documents offers guidance for service providers on ECCE compliance:

- [**ECCE Compliance Checklist 23-24**](#)
- [**ECCE Compliance Approved Provider Guide 23-24**](#)
- [**ECCE Post-Inspection Rectification Actions 23-24**](#)
- [**ECCE Good Practice Guide for Attendance Records**](#)



National Childcare Compliance visits

Authorised officers will make on-site visits to childcare facilities to confirm that certain key NCS rules are being complied with. Under the Childcare Support Act 2018, these officers are allowed to enter childcare premises, inspect any books, records or other documents relating to the operation of the service.

It is important that services facilitate the compliance visit and provide the requisite records/information to the authorised officer during the course of the unannounced visits.

Hive Notifications

CCSP Saver Programme compliance

It is the responsibility of the Service Provider to ensure compliance with their Funding Agreement requirements. Failure to comply with any of the terms of the Funding Agreement may result in the suspension of CCSP Saver Programme Funding and/or DCEDIY funding or part thereof may be withdrawn and/or a termination of this Funding Agreement.

In order to make compliance visits as efficient as possible for both providers and visit officers, providers should ensure that their compliance file is kept up to date and contains:

- Attendance Records
- Service Fee Information Letters
- Parental declaration forms;
- Parent/guardian letters;
- Fee records;
- Staff qualifications and letters of qualifications;
- Grandfathering declarations as applicable;
- Evidence of Tusla registration(s).

The compliance file must be kept on site and available for inspection at all times.

Services should also ensure that:

- Registrations are correct,
- Fees list and calendar, for all approved funding programmes, are clearly displayed for parents and,
- **There is a staff member on site at all times who has access to the compliance file and can facilitate the visit. Failure to do same could result in a service being found non-compliant.**

Please note that if the records are readily available for review any interruption to the service will be minimal, other than seeking clarifications when required.

To assist services to comply with the CCSP Saver Programme requirements, the Department and the Scheme Administrator provide a range of training and supports.

These include:

- [CCSP Compliance Checklist 23-24](#)
- [CCSP Compliance Approved Provider Guide 23-24](#)
- [CCSP Post-Inspection Rectification Actions 23-24](#)

Providers are strongly encouraged to engage with these supports, both before and after compliance visits, to ensure that they maintain compliance with scheme rules.

Hive Notifications



AIM Level 7 Compliance

AIM Level 7 compliance checks will be commencing on AIM Level 7 payments from the week beginning 22 April 2024. This will involve a series of standardised checks on AIM Level 7 approved capitations relating to additional assistance in the pre-school room and the maintenance of reduced ratios.

The compliance checks are aimed at confirming adherence with AIM Level 7 rules and contract conditions as set out by the Department of Children Equality Disability Integration & Youth (DCEDIY).

To ensure the compliance checks can be conducted at unannounced inspections, please ensure that the person in charge on-site has access to the following records to present to the Visit Officer for review:

- The child attendance records for each of the ECCE sessions attended by child/ren benefitting from AIM Level 7
- The Staff Qualifications for staff working in these ECCE session/s

The Pobal compliance team have uploaded additional compliance support documents to the Hive in order to assist services in preparing for a compliance inspection. The documents, which are listed below, are available under the Resources section and can also be accessed through this link

- [AIM Level 7 Compliance Guide for Approved Providers 2023 - 2024](#)
- [AIM Level 7 Compliance Checklist for Approved Providers 2023 - 2024](#)
- [AIM Level 7 Rectification Actions Guide 2023 - 2024](#)

Please note - these documents are only supports, intended to assist you. There is an onus on each provider to familiarise themselves with their responsibilities under the AIM Rules (AIM Level 7 included) and contractual conditions.