



OFFALY COUNTY CHILDCARE COMMITTEE



WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN

31st March 2025



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

NCS Compliance Inspections – 2024/2025

On-going

**NCS Weekly Returns to be completed between
Monday morning and Tuesday afternoon**

Weekly

Childminder Development Grants 2025

4th April 2025

Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Training

**5th & 12th April
2025**

Aistear National Conference registration

**Closing Date
7th April**

Nurturing Skills Learner Fund

1st May 2025

**Always Children First Safeguarding Awareness
Training**

28th June 2025

Aistear National Conference



DCEDIY will host a national Aistear Conference on May 24, 2025, from 10am to 4pm at the Dublin Royal Convention Centre. This National Early Years Conference will provide a forum for educators, policy makers, academics, students and support organisations to collaboratively explore the updates, new concepts and key messages within the updated Aistear. The conference will feature a combination of presentations and networking opportunities which aim to inform and inspire educators to consider how the updated Framework can be reflected in daily practice.

Keynote Speaker: Professor Iram Siraj, University of Oxford and NUI Maynooth

Breakout sessions will include:

Relationships and Interactions (slow relational pedagogy) - Dr. Ger French

Play (outdoor learning) - Dr Sharon Skehill

The Learning Environment (inclusive practice) – Shirley Heaney

Partnership and connections (agentic educator) - Dr Grainne Mc Kenna

Irish Language - Máire Uí Mhurchú

Transitions (key person) - Dr Mary Daly

In partnership with DCEDIY, Offaly County Childcare Committee is pleased to offer the following opportunity to Early Years Educators and Childminders in the county

1. Entrance tickets to the event, which will include lunch and a conference bag containing a copy of the updated Aistear and other resources.
2. Transportation to the event.
3. A certificate of attendance, which will support your service's QIPP 2025.

Please note, that places are limited to 10, and random selection will apply.

If you are interested in attending the conference, please email aine@offalychildcare.com, including the following information:

- Your name
- The name of your service
- Your role
- Your email address

Closing date for receipt of your expression of interest is the close of business on the 7th April.

Get Sun Smart Competition

The Get SunSmart! Art Competition is a great chance for children to get creative and learn about the importance of protecting their skin while enjoying the outdoors. This is open to preschool children also.

The competition closes at 5pm 9th May 2025.

For more information and to enter the competition, visit:
<http://gov.ie/getsunsmart>

Get SunSmart! Children's Art Competition

Prizes: Overall winners will have their artwork featured as part of the 2025 SunSmart Campaign and also win an OPW Family Heritage Card, a Family Day Pass to Dublin Zoo and a National Book Token

Runner up prizes also up for grabs



More info at www.gov.ie/getsunsmart



Closing date extended to 9th May 2025



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DIVERSITY, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION CHARTER AND GUIDELINES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION

DIVERSITY EQUALITY & INCLUSION TRAINING



Topics

- The National Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter
- Understanding Diversity, Equality and Inclusion
- Developing an anti-bias approach in early years
- The physical environment and its role in inclusive practice



Saturday 5th April 2025:
9.30am - 4.30pm



Saturday 12th April 2025:
9.30am - 4.30pm

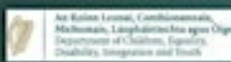


Offaly CCC Training
Room,
O'Connor Square
Tullamore



€10 for training course

[REGISTER NOW](#)



[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

NATIONAL CHILD SAFEGUARDING PROGRAMME

for Early Learning & Childcare Services



ALWAYS CHILDREN FIRST: CHILD SAFEGUARDING AWARENESS TRAINING

This accredited training course will enable participants to

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

- 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



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- **Date:**
Saturday 28th June 2025
- **Venue:**
O'Connor Square, Tullamore, Co. Offaly, R35 Y7P0
- **Time:**
9.30am - 4.30pm

[**CLICK HERE TO REGISTER**](#)

Hive Notifications

Easter Updates: NCS & ECCE Calendars, CCSP Amendments

Dear Service Provider,

As some services may close for the Easter break, dates during 14-18 and/or 21-25 April, it may be necessary to make the following changes on your Early Years Hive.

Please note Good Friday, 18 April 2025, is not a public holiday.

We advise making any necessary changes as soon as possible to ensure there are no issues when returns are submitted and payments processed.

NCS: Service calendar and returns

If your service is closed for part or all of the week, you must mark the closures on your NCS service calendar accordingly. You must also note whether it is a subsidised (paid) closure or not.

For more information, please see 'How to add a closure' on the **NCS Service Calendar** section of Help & Support.

For school-aged/ECCE children, if you are increasing their hours during mid-term, please ensure you do not forget to amend the hours for children whose hours reduce after mid-term. As you know NCS subsidy hours cannot be claimed for hours that a child is in school or ECCE, or hours that your service is closed, and any over-claims are liable to be recouped.

NCS returns must be submitted on the Early Years Hive each week. Returns become available from the last day (Sunday) of the reporting week and must be completed by the following Tuesday and are based on the previous week's attendance. If a return is not submitted within the required timeframe, all subsidy payments will be suspended until it is submitted.

Hive Notifications

Changes cannot be made to service calendar opening hours or claim hours once a return for that week has been submitted on the Early Years Hive.

If you require further assistance, please raise a **Service Request** using the following categories ensuring that you include the CHICK number in the request:

- Programme: NCS
- Request Type: NCS Calendar
- Request Type Details: General

NCS: Updated bridging payments

A 'bridging payment' is available to service providers during periods of subsidised closure, if they are unavailable to submit their weekly NCS return, for example, mid-term breaks, Easter, Christmas etc.

Important: Please keep claims active at all stages. Please do not amend calendars in regard to bridging payments unless the hours of the service have changed for that period. Example: Normal opening hours 9am to 5pm however over the mid-term opening hours 2pm to 6pm.

Update

For guidance on returns, as well as updated guidance on bridging payments, please see the **NCS Attendance Returns Guide**.

ECCE: Service calendar

Providers in contract for the ECCE programme are reminded that changes to service calendars must be first approved by County Childcare Committees (CCCs) and parents must be given 20 working days' notice in writing of any change to the service's calendar.

Copies of such notices must be kept on file for compliance purposes.

Approved providers in contract for the ECCE programme must be open for a minimum of 38 weeks (or 182 days) over the programme year.

Hive Notifications

For further information on service calendars, please contact your local CCC or refer to the **ECCE Service Calendar** section of Help & Support.

If you require further assistance, please raise a **Service Request** using the following categories:

- Programme: ECCE
- Request Type: ECCE Calendar
- Request Type Details: General

CCSP Saver Programme: Amending sessions (e.g. a child is moving from part-time to full-time)

If a registration is changing and needs to be updated from part-time to full-time, please input a CCSP Leaver with the date the child is changing service level. A new registration should then be created with the updated level of service for the appropriate period, within 6 weeks of the start date of the new registration. Please see 'How to end/add a CCSP Saver Programme child registration' on the **CCSP child registration** section of Help & Support for guidance:

If you require further assistance, please raise a **Service Request** using the following categories:

- Programme: CCSP
- Request Type: Registrations
- Request Type Details: Leaver

Regards,
The Early Years Team

Hive Notifications

ECCE compliance

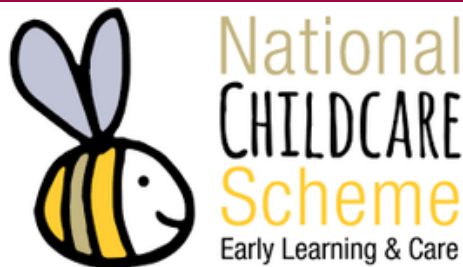
It is the responsibility of the Service Provider to ensure compliance with their contractual requirements. Service providers should ensure that they understand and adhere to the ECCE Funding Agreement. Failure to do so will result in non-compliance and will require corrective action.

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

- [Accessing the NCS Compliance Report on Hive](#)
- [NCS Compliance Checklist](#)
- [NCS Compliance Service Provider Guide](#)
- [NCS Post Inspection Rectification Actions](#)

Hive Notifications

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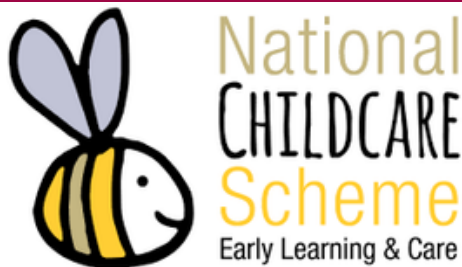
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Hive Notifications

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.