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Early Year's Service Providers Newsletter

Welcome to Issue four of the Newsletter for 2016. The information in this newsletter is an attempt to keep the sector in Offaly informed and up to date. I hope you enjoy reading it and if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact the office.

Public consultation on the Single Affordable Childcare Scheme

On Friday 28th October 2016 Minister Zappone published a policy paper on the new Single Affordable Childcare Scheme and launched an online consultation survey.

The scheme, which was announced as part of Budget 2017, aims to make childcare more affordable for families. It will include a universal element for children between 6 and 36 months, and a targeted element, based on net parental income, for children up to 15 years. The scheme will also create a flexible platform for future investment in childcare.

The policy paper provides detail on the scheme and can be accessed at <http://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/earlyyears/20161028PolicyPaper.pdf>

Minister Zappone invites everyone- parents, other family members, childcare providers, childminders and anyone interested in the issues- to share their views on the detail of the policy by Friday 25th November 2016. The online survey can be accessed at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AffordableChildcareScheme>. If you would like a paper copy posted to you, please call 01 6473000.

For more information on the Single Affordable Childcare Scheme see the enclosed leaflet.

Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Guidelines Training Programme for Early Childhood Educators

The aim of the training programme is to support educators to engage with the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Guidelines. The training aims to foster awareness about Diversity, Equality and Inclusion and to encourage and support those working in the sector to actively advocate for inclusion for all children and their families within the ECCE setting. It will explore the key issues surrounding Diversity, Equality and Inclusion and promote good practice in terms of supporting Diversity, Equality and Inclusion in an early childhood education and care setting.

Please see the enclosed leaflet for more details along with a question and answer section.

Pobal feedback Survey

Pobal would greatly appreciate your feedback in relation to the services and supports we provide across a range of different programmes. Please log onto PIP and go to announcements to find the link for the survey.

The survey will remain open until Monday 14th November and Pobal look forward to receiving your feedback. If you have any queries about this survey please don't hesitate to contact one of the team at yourfeedback@pobal.ie

Learner funds 1 & 2 for Level 6 courses

There has been a change in the deadline for those who received funding under Learner Funds 1 and 2 who are doing a level 6 course. The DCYA have decided to extend the deadline for completion to 30th June 2018 for those who have already begun their course. If this applies to you, please contact us immediately so that we can arrange the funding of your course.

There has been **no change** to the deadline for Level 5 course completion which remains December 2016.

Aistear for Adults

Aistear for Adults is a fun informal networking night where childcare providers will have an opportunity to meet, relax and have some fun.

Included on the night: Table Quiz, Christmas Crafts and Finger Food.

Venues: **Birr on Friday 2nd December, The County Arms Hotel**
Tullamore on Friday 9th December, The Tullamore Court Hotel

Cost is €10 per person, if you wish to book a place please return the enclosed booking form with the fee.

Partnership with Parents

This workshop will look at the Parent Partnership Pillar of the Aistear Síolta Practice Guide. There will be an opportunity to share ideas and experiences with other services. Participants on the evening will have access to resources which support parent partnership.

Tracey Buckley Childcare Resource Library

Membership of the Tracey Buckley Childcare Resource Library is open to all childcare providers, childminders, parent and toddler groups, students and individuals who register. The registration fee is €10 for the current two year term 2016 - 2017. Members can borrow books and topic boxes for a period of one month while the story sacks can be borrowed for a period of two weeks.

During the summer of 2016 three new topic boxes were introduced:

- **Babies:** Contains: Books, Baby bath, car seat, bouncer and changing mat, Doll and doll's clothes, Nappies and food sachets, Accessories, Family finger puppets
- **Sea Life:** Contains: Books, Counters, Plasticine, Selection of shells, Sea creatures, Jigsaws, Sea life finger puppets, Banner, Playdough cards
- **Gardening:** Contains: Books, Seeds, Gardening gloves, Pot plants, Artificial flowers, Garden sticks, Felt flowers, Gardening tools

To view what Story Sacks and Topic Boxes are available on the website go to the home page and choose the Resource Library, if there is a Story Sack or Topic Box you would like to borrow but its Out on Loan send an email to frances@offalychildcare.com to reserve it upon its return.

The Tracey Buckley Childcare Resource Library is open Monday to Thursday, contact Frances on 057 9135878 if you wish to find out more information on the library and to become a member if you are not already registered.

Booking Forms

If you require additional booking forms you can do so by visiting www.offalychildcare.com. Please complete both sides and send it to the office with the appropriate payment.

Child Protection

Any services who have yet to complete child Protection Training need to contact the office as a matter of urgency as it is imperative that at least one person from each service has attended the training.

Please contact Sheena on 057 9135878.

Duty Social Worker

Please contact the Duty Social Worker on 057 8692567/057 8692568 regarding any child protection concerns as per the Child Protection Training delivered through OCCC.

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