



Christmas Newsletter 2015



Forbairt Cáilíocht
Luathbhlianta Náisiúnta
National Early Years
Quality Development



SLIGO COUNTY CHILDCARE COMMITTEE



A word from Sharon Boles

Hello everyone,

we have come to the end of 2015, another busy year for all Early Years Educators as well as County Childcare Committee, this time of the year also allows us all to reflect on our achievements. From our perspective you all have been incredibly busy over 2015 and as usual have answered the call in relation to your own professional development. Over the past twelve months we have been amazed with the amount of training and development that you all have been involved with, to mention a few we saw Early Years Educators in Sligo completing the following:

- Aistear in Practice
- Child Protection
- Management and Governance Training
- FETAC level 5 & 6
- Critical Incident Training
- Your service is a Business Programme
- Smart Start

We are aware that this is a huge commitment by you as Early Years Educators and we would like to acknowledge this.

Settings in Sligo availed of Capital funding of in excess of €156,000 this year, many of the settings received funding to update their IT equipment while some settings also received funding for major



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Learning with Nature*

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Manager-Sharon Boles

Development Workers

*Viola Craig, Joan McGrath,
Nicola McCormack*

*Administrator-Suzanne
Cole*

*Reception—Laura Norman
& Barry Sullivan*





improvements and updates to buildings.

We have seen many policy developments throughout the sector this year with greater commitments including the extension of the ECCE/CCS programme as well as the publication of the IDG report on Investment in the Early Years sector and the Access to ECCE for Children with Disabilities. It remains to be seen how these policy changes will be implemented and details will be provided throughout 2016, however it is a positive move by Government in addressing quality and accessibility to Early Childhood Education and Care.

The County Childcare Committee remains your local agent on behalf of DCYA/POBAL as a training, development and support mechanism. We look forward to working with you all in 2016.

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the staff and Board of Sligo County Childcare Committee to wish you the children and families you work with a very happy, peaceful and safe Christmas. See you all in 2016.

Sharon



PIP



Make sure to keep a regular check on the latest PIP updates on your PIP page.



ECCE



In light of the Budget 2016 announcements please see the following dates which now apply to ECCE

To avail of the ECCE programme with effect from	Children must have been born between the following dates (both dates inclusive)
September 2015—June 2016	2nd February 2011—30th June 2012
Now till June 2016 & Sept 16—June 17	2nd Feb 2012—30th June 2012
September 2016—June 2017	1st January 2012—31st August 2013
January 2017—June 2017	1st January 2012—31st December 2013
April 2017—June 2017	1st January 2012—31st March 2014

CCS 2015/16 Programme Call

Note: The 2015 CCS Expansion does not apply to private childcare providers.

A separate CCS expansion catering for a targeted number of private childcare providers will commence in early 2016. Further details will be made available soon.

For the ECCE payment Schedule please log onto DCYA Website
www.dcy.gov.ie



TEC Payment Schedule 2015/2016



Date receive payment	Type	Pay until
17/12/2015	Batch	15/01/2016
31/12/2015	Catch Up	15/01/2015
14/01/2016	Batch	12/02/2016
28/01/2016	Catch Up	12/02/2016
11/02/2016	Batch	11/03/2016
25/02/2016	Catch Up	11/03/2016
10/03/2016	Batch	08/04/2016
24/03/2016	Catch Up	08/04/2016
07/04/2016	Batch	06/05/2016
21/04/2016	Catch Up	06/05/2016
05/05/2016	Batch	03/06/2016
19/05/2016	Catch Up	03/06/2016
02/06/2016	Batch	01/07/2015
16/06/2016	Catch Up	01/07/2015
30/06/2016	Batch	29/07/2015
14/07/2016	Catch Up	29/07/2015
28/07/2016	Batch	26/08/2016
11/08/2016	Catch Up	26/08/2016
25/08/2016	Batch	26/08/2016



Please note When registering any CETS children please make sure to attach the eligibility letter which must state the Parent has **commenced** their course as apposed to being excepted for a course.





Healthy Ireland Smart Start Programme

Sligo County Childcare in partnership with National Childhood Network has just completed the first Healthy Ireland Smart Start Programme (HISSP) in Sligo. 10 Early Years settings participated. The Programme was delivered over 7 evenings covering the following units – Health Promotion, Oral Health, Nutrition, Health & Safety, Physical Activity and Emotional Wellbeing/Literacy.

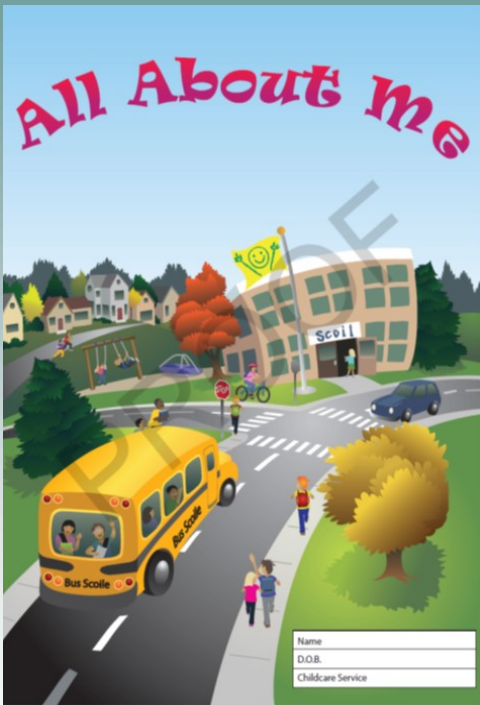
The Early Years settings that participated included – Acorn Montessori School, Collooney Montessori, Cre8ive Corner Crèche, Dreamchasers, First Friends, Footprints, Little Haven, Little Peoples Playworld Crèche, Lollipop Lane Crèche/Montessori, Learn Early Montessori Academy & Crèche.

Over the coming months each of the Early Years settings will be inviting parents of their Pre School children in to present different aspects of the programme and demonstrate activities taking place relating to the Healthy Ireland Smart Start Programme.

Early in 2016, Early Years' settings will be invited to put themselves forward for assessment. For this assessment the Early Years' setting will be required to put together a portfolio that will demonstrate the areas covered under the Programme. An assessor will visit the setting to observe activities and skills implementation.

Congratulations to all who participated.





All About Me

The importance of transitions between pre-schools and primary schools has been recognised in Sligo for a number of years. O’Kane (2009) tells us that successful transitions are supported by continuity and communication between pre-schools and primary schools. To support this process, our transitions programme endeavours to support the triad of communication between the school, pre-school and parents by placing the child at the centre.

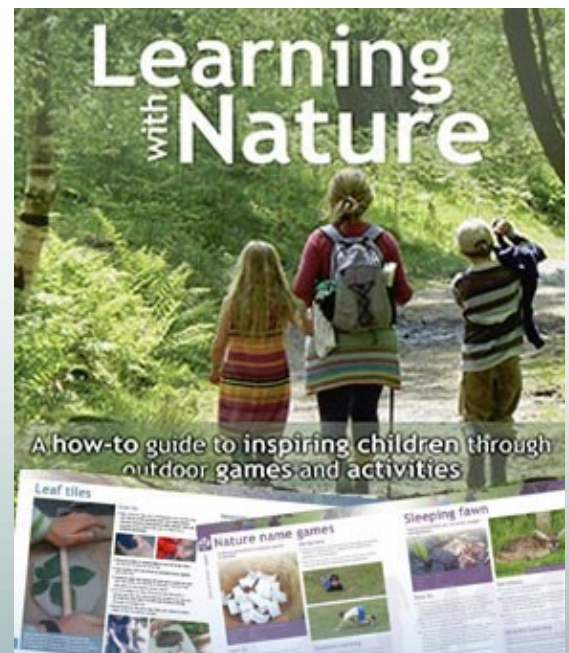
This communication tool has been reviewed and updated to reflect changes in curriculum approaches and to incorporate feedback from practitioners. The new All About Me book will be available in January for use with

the children who will be going on to Primary School in September 2016.

Further details will issue in our training calendar in January next.

This new publication has been developed as a ‘how-to’ guide to inspire children through outdoor games and activities.

The contents of the book have come from many sources which range from modern outdoor practices to ancient traditions. It has become apparent over recent years that there is a need to encourage children to get out and explore the outdoors. Richard Louv’s book *Last Child in the Woods* refers to ‘nature deficit disorder’ and talks about the negative consequences of children growing up without spending time in and connecting to nature. The best place for children and young people to learn about nature is in nature – to see it, hear it, feel it. How can this be conveyed by the internet or from TV ?





Chris Packham (TV Presenter and naturalist) suggests that “this book offers a chance to the youth of today and the nature of tomorrow. It has a wealth of structured, tried and tested projects, ideas and games designed to allow children to breathe fresh air and engage personally with a real world where their minds and bodies can develop and bloom, burst into life, and inspire them to love life”.

Should you wish to purchase a copy you may do so at www.circleoflifediscovery.com



Minister James Reilly visits Sligo County Childcare Committee, in April 2015 where he discussed ECCE in Sligo.



Minister James Reilly Launches the Interdepartmental report on investment in ECCE at IT Sligo July 2015





Parent & Toddler Groups

Parent & Toddler Groups receive funding to support their work within communities at local level.

SCCC, in collaboration with the Department of Children & Youth Affairs and Pobal were delighted to announce that € 3,280 in funding has been allocated to 8 Parent & Toddler

groups in County Sligo.

SCCC would like to congratulate these Parent & Toddler groups, and acknowledge the effort that went in to preparing the applications. SCCC will be following up with all groups who received the funding to further support them in their Parent & Toddler groups.



Childminder Development Grants 2015

What is the Childminder Development Grant?

The aim of the grant is to enhance the safety/quality of the childminding service through the purchase of childcare equipment, safety equipment and toys. It may also give financial assistance to new or prospective childminders with their initial set up costs.

How much funding is available under the Childminder Development Grant?

The maximum grant available to the childminder who fully meets the criteria of the scheme is 90% of the total receipted childcare expenditure, subject to a maximum grant of €1,000. i.e. spend €1,111 and claim back 90% = €1,000.

SCCC processed 4 childminder development grants (CMDG) in 2015. All of these applications were successful.





Sligo County Childcare Committee
MANAGING EARLY YEARS SERVICES AS A PROFESSIONAL BUSINESS



Our recent seminar, “Managing Early Years Services as a Professional Business” was hosted in the Glass House Hotel, November 14th, 2015. This seminar was designed for both Private and Community Early Years Services and all Early Years Professionals including members of Voluntary Boards of Management. The seminar was facilitated by a number of esteemed professionals with an abundance of experience working in and alongside the Early Years sector in Sligo. We were delighted to welcome Mark Tully, Meehan Tully and Associates, Roisin McGlone, Sligo Institute of Technology, our very own Sharon Boles, Sligo County Childcare Committee and Siobhan Keegan, Better Start. Here are a few highlights from the day.

Mark Tully highlighted that we all can raise our professional profile in everything we do. By increasing our levels of professionalism, promoting professional means of communication and marketing our service in a professional manner we can promote sustainability and confidence in our service from all of our associated stakeholders. It is true that those availing of our services are becoming more expert in our area of expertise than the professionals themselves. Top tip: remember to answer the phone on the third ring and



Roisin McGlone, Programme Chair of M.A. in Leadership in Early Childhood Care and Education and lecturer in the School of Business and Social Sciences at Sligo Institute of Technology. Roisin facilitated her workshop based on recruitment and employment practices; she talked us through recruitment policies, preparing for a recruitment campaign, shortlisting, offers of employment, induction and





probationary periods. Roisin reminded us to treasure our staff and provide support to them in fulfilling their roles through robust supervision practices.

Management Committee Roles and Responsibilities with Sharon Boles focused on the duties Voluntary Boards of Management have to their employees and the Early Years business that they manage. This session highlighted roles, responsibilities, policies, procedures, monitoring and reviewing in relation to voluntary boards of management and the role customs and practice can play in a service. Ensuring community based Early Years services operate in a professional manner at all stages of service delivery is paramount to good governance and quality service delivery.



The final presenter of the day was Siobhan Keegan from Better Start Quality Development Programme. Siobhan outlined the role of the quality development programme in supporting the Early Years sector to deliver quality service provision.

The quality development programme can engage with full day care services with over 25 full or part-time Children and over 50 children in total. Some exceptions are made and this is reviewed on a case by case basis. Referrals can be made under any of the seven pillars of the practice guide.

Remember you can refer your service for engagement with the quality development service (Better Start) through your local County Childcare Committee. For more information on the practice pillars visit www.aistearsiolta.ie.





On a final note, the feedback from the seminar was very positive.



We would like to thank all of those who attended on the day. Remember the children in your service are the best marketing tool you have. By providing quality, fulfilling and enjoyable early years experiences for them, they will increase your customer profile through their knowledge and experiences.



Please Note Helpful Tip

Where an ECCE child has been absent for 4 weeks due to illness then you need to fill out a leaver form for this child. Take note of the child's registration ID and when the child returns to the setting fill out a new registration and enter their original registration ID number, this will pull the existing information through and you won't need to go looking for PPS numbers again.





Making a wormery



In response to ongoing demand we continued our series of Aistear training by making Stage 1 available to those who have not had an opportunity to do so.



We will continue to offer Stage 1 to new participants in the Spring which will be supported through visits from the Development team. While all the themes are interlinked, each session has a strong focus on one of the themes and this in turn is focussed on an area of practice.



Communicating
Exploring & Thinking
Well Being
Identity & Belonging

- Reading and storytelling
- Aistear in the Outdoors
- Documenting
- Environment

For those who have completed Stage 2, we worked with two groups to explore **assessment of children’s learning through documentation**. This session explored in greater depth the essentials of assessment and how we use this to plan for children’s learning experiences. This promotes the necessary skills to capture, document and extend children’s learning as required under Regulation 5.

Aistear is also the curriculum for Junior and Senior Infants in primary school.

With this in mind SCCC delivered training for Afterschool childcare services which introduced Aistear into the Afterschool arena for staff working in this area.



Our Sound Tree



Playing with light and Nature





C

ongrats to our very own Joan McGrath who recently graduated from NUIG with a BA honours degree in Early Childhood Studies & Practice....



Keep an eye out for our website which is going live soon



From Sligo County Childcare Committee staff & management

Office reopens January 4th

see you all in 2016



January 2016

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1	1	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	3	3