



# Sligo County Childcare Committee Christmas Newsletter 2019



## The National Childcare Scheme



### The Scheme opened to online applications on November 20th

**2019.** It will replace all previous targeted childcare programmes with a single, streamlined and user-friendly Scheme to help parents meet the cost of quality childcare.

Online applications for the National Childcare Scheme opened on 20th **November 2019**, with the first subsidy payments flowing to providers from November 25th 2019. A paper based, postal application will be available from January 2020.

Subsidies are available for families with children aged between 24 weeks & 15 years who are attending any participating Tusla registered childcare service, including any Tusla registered childminder.

There are two types of subsidies:

- **Universal Subsidies** are available to all families with children under three years old. They are also available to families with children over three years who have not yet qualified for the free preschool programme (ECCE). This subsidy is **not means tested** and provides 50c per hour towards the cost of a registered childcare place for up to a maximum of 40 hours per week.
- **Income Assessed Subsidies** are available to families with children aged between 24 weeks and 15 years. This subsidy is **means tested** and will be calculated based on your Individual circumstances. Your rate will vary depending on **your level of family income, your child's age and educational stage, and the number of children in your family**. The subsidy can be used towards the cost of a registered childcare place for up to a maximum of 40 hours if you are working, studying or training, or in circumstances where you are unavailable for childcare, and a maximum of 15 hours if you are not working, studying or training.



**Childcare  
Committee**  
County Sligo  
Coiste Cúram Páistí Chunta Shligigh

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### *Manager*

*Sharon Boles*

### *Development Team*

*Viola Craig, Joan McGrath*

### *Meitheal Coordinator*

*Karen Folan*

### *Parent Hub Coordinator*

*Aolish Gormley*

### *Quality Worker*

*Yvonne Lynch*

### *Administration*

*Suzanne Scanlon & Laura Norman*

### *Receptionists*

*Barry Sullivan & Roisín McBreen*

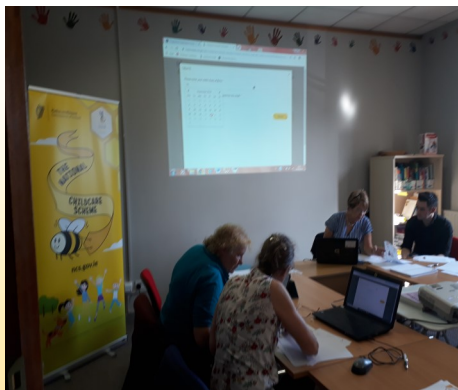


An Roinn Leanaí  
agus Gnóthaí Óige  
Department of Children  
and Youth Affairs





The National Childcare Scheme phase two training commenced in mid September. Sligo County Childcare Committee ran 10 sessions over 6 days, with 73 practitioners attending from 51 services.



### NCS Service Calendars for 2019 & 2020

Please be aware that all service providers contracted to the National Childcare Scheme should have two active service calendars on their Early Years Hive; one for the current programme year and one for the following programme year.

Service calendars are submitted for each programme year i.e. August to August. If a parent was awarded a 52-week award, then this would run from November 2019 until November 2020. Their chosen provider would then be required to have an active service calendar for the 2020/21 programme year to cover the entire award.

As such, you must **submit both a 2019 NCS service calendar and a 2020 NCS service calendar**. If you are unsure as to what your opening hours will in the next programme year, please replicate your 2019 hours. You will be able to amend this calendar at a later date.

#### NCS

Service Providers will need to submit an attendance return between 23:00hrs on Sunday night 22/12/19 to midnight Wednesday 25/12/19 in order to get paid for previous week registrations (week ending Sunday 22/12/19).

If services are closed (with a full closed paid week entered on their calendar) and are unable to submit the attendance return for week ending 22/12/19 and week ending 29/12/19, they have the option to request a bridging provision when submitting the return for week ending 15/12/19.

Because of Christmas bank holidays, returns submitted Sunday 22/12/19 to Wednesday 25/12/19 cannot be processed for payment until 27/12/19 and will be in service providers' bank accounts on Monday 30/12/19.

Returns submitted 29/12/19 to 01/01/20 will be paid as normal on Friday 03/01/20.

#### EYPC Contact Details:

Service Providers should continue to call 01 5117222 to talk to an EYPC representative. This phone line is available from 8am - 6pm Monday to Friday.

The EYPC Teams will also continue to support service providers through the following mailboxes:

**EYPC@pobal.ie** – This dedicated mailbox will be utilised for all early learning and care programme support queries, replacing the onlinesupport@pobal.ie mailbox

**pipdocuments@pobal.ie** – This mailbox is for all PIP account queries.

**highercap@pobal.ie** – This mailbox is for all queries relating to ECCE Higher Capitation Note:

**Please do not use onlinesupport@pobal.ie**



# Cultural Awareness Programme for Early Childhood Educators

Sligo County Childcare Committee completed a specific Cultural Awareness training programme on 10th October with an evening to mark the end of this project. The project was supported by the European Union's PEACE IV Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

The event took place in the Glass House Hotel Sligo, and our special guest for the occasion was Councillor Chris McManus Chairperson of Sligo Local Development Committee (LCDC) who commended Sligo County Childcare Committee on the development and rollout of this professional development programme for Early Years Educators working within the sector.

Chairperson of Sligo County Childcare Committee – Roisin Mc Gloin, also spoke on the success of the project and the opportunity educators availed of, enhancing their professional skills and supporting children to further understand the true meaning of Cultural Awareness.

Participants from 11 Early Years and School Age Childcare services took part in the training aspect of the project. Participants then cascaded their new skills and learning to their peers which included reflecting on their personal identity and the children's identity, understanding and promotion of an inclusive community and a programme of activities with children.





The night concluded with the launch of a video which outlines the journey and content of the Programme and captured visual, interviews and comments from the practitioners that engaged in the project. The video can be accessed via <http://www.sligochildcare.ie/?p=4681>

The success of this project is an example of the commitment of the Early Years Educators who participated in this project, there is confidence that the impact on the children currently attending those services and who attend these services into the future, will impact on society and contribute to a more inclusive culture into the future.

Feedback from one of the participants at this event stated that *“While completing the programme the children engaged in all types of activities that included dressing up in representation of a variety of cultures and religions, we were also able to read books and have a better understanding of what various types of cultural clothing meant and why differing religions chose to dress this way.”*

A common theme to arise from this evaluation was that of awareness and more specifically lack of awareness of communities, cultures and practises. Participants commented about having gained a deeper insight into some of the many cultures which make up their communities and helped them to understand the variations and similarities between communities, enabling open and inclusive relationships.



# Arts & Crafts targeted for staff who work with children with disabilities

On the 28<sup>th</sup> November, Sligo County Childcare Committee in collaboration with the Silgo/Leitrim Children and Young Peoples Services Committee (CYPSC) & Leitrim County Childcare Committee were pleased to be in a position to offer an Arts and Creativity workshop targeted towards staff who work with children with disabilities or who may do so in the future.

The workshop was facilitated by Jean Healy who has 20 years experience working with children and adults with disabilities – sensory, mental and physical – and Jean was happy to share her experience with the group.

Frequently within our settings, there are a range of abilities in our rooms and practitioners can have more than one child with a disability and this can challenge how we facilitate access of participation for all children.

Jean presented a range of activities all of which can be adapted to suit children's abilities using good practice guidelines with patience and understanding and bearing in mind that it is the process not the end result which is most important.

Everyone had an opportunity to try out the different techniques, stamping and stencilling – we were reminded that stamps can be made from many different items e.g. potato, apple or sponge. The images can then be used to create other items which the children may choose such as cards or hanging decorations for birthdays, festivals or cultural events.

Children of all abilities will be able to create paper crafts e.g. children can tear tissue if they cannot use scissors.

Practitioners were also shown how to use a Sizzex machine. This tool allows for the easy cutting out of shapes which some children may find difficult – however Jean has never come across a child who cannot turn the handle on the machine and be part of the magic of what a Sizzex machine can produce. This was particularly effective when the group had the opportunity to make fridge magnets.

We had 18 attending the training and everybody who attended found the information and the opportunity to try out everything really useful and informative indeed.

Thank you to Jean on the day and to Sligo Leitrim CYPSC for supporting the cost of rolling out this training, through funding from Quality and Capacity Building Initiative (QCBI) promoted by DCYA funding.

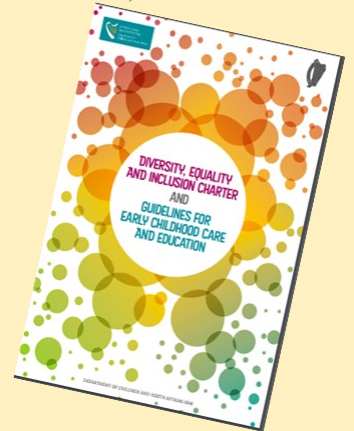






## Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter and Guidelines for Early Childhood Care and Education.

Sligo County Childcare Committee continued with the rollout of the training programme on Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion as part of the **Access and Inclusion Model (AIM)**. This training programme is funded under the AIM Model and is therefore **free of charge** to all staff working under the **ECCE Programme**.



The goal of AIM is to empower Early Years service providers to deliver an inclusive pre-school experience, ensuring that every child can fully participate in the ECCE Programme and reap the benefits of quality early years care and education.

In order to incorporate a deeper level of understanding around the subject of Diversity, Equality and Inclusion for all staff and to assist in meeting some of the challenges which it will pose, Sligo County Childcare Committee worked with 12 staff from services throughout the County throughout November.

Using the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter and Guidelines to support practice in ECCE we reviewed and discussed the following : –

*Terminology and concepts relating to Diversity, Equality and Inclusion*

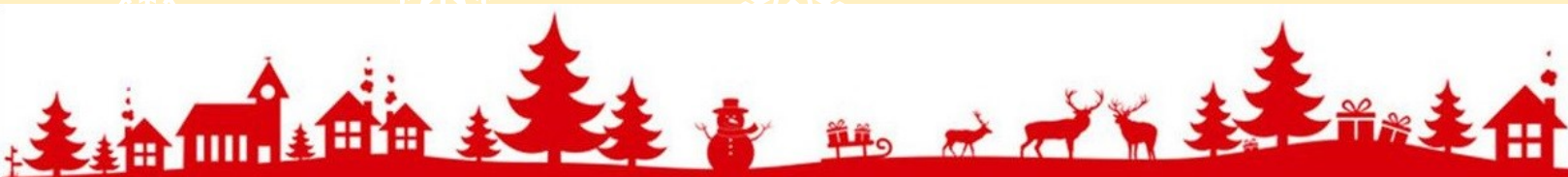
*Our own attitudes and values and those of the society we live in – Anti-Bias approach*

*Policy, Legislation and Guidelines – Equality Proofing the ECEC environment*

*Exploring issues and challenges – leadership relating to Diversity, Equality and Inclusion*

*Inclusion Policy*

The sector is currently in receipt of high level investment under the AIM Model and the impact of this will be reflected in the quality of our services. Quality is of course assessed through the inspection mechanisms that the sector is subject to and this training will support you in meeting the requirements under these inspections.





## *FAR Reimbursement*

To support services to meet their regulatory requirement of having one staff member trained in First Aid Response (FAR) by June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020; the Department of Children & Youth Affairs (DCYA) has opened a FAR Reimbursement Fund which will fund one FAR first aid training place per registered early learning and care services / registered childminders to a maximum of €225 per full course or €175 per refresher course.

**To apply for the FAR Reimbursement Fund, a registered service or registered childminder must:**

Have an employee who has completed or have themselves completed either the full 18 hours Far course or the 12 hours Refresher FAR course since January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019.

Have paid for the employee / registered childminder to participate in the training.

Must submit a copy of the receipt for training and a copy of the PHECC accredited FAR certificate.

### **Timeframe for applications:**

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
<b>Application closing date (for payment in that quarter)</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> June 2019	13 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2019	13 <sup>th</sup> March 2020
<b>Payment dates</b>	28 <sup>th</sup> June 2019	27 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	13 <sup>th</sup> December 2019	27 <sup>th</sup> March 2020

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

All forms must be fully completed and returned to your local CCC

- Incomplete application forms will not be accepted.
- All required documents must be attached to the application form.
- Information provided by the applicant will only be used for the purpose it was intended and will be retained by the CCC for recording purposes.
- The CCC will make the decision on funding and all decisions are final.



## A word from Karen - Meitheal Coordinator

Thank you to all of the services who have facilitated me to deliver Meitheal briefing sessions in your services. I will continue to deliver Meitheal briefing sessions in the coming months.

One of the many benefits of Meitheal is that it provides early help and intervention to families which improve outcomes for children.

The primary reason families request a Meitheal for their child is to support parents with the child's behaviour. Other reasons are mental health issues, bereavement, illness, financial difficulties and educational issues. Meitheal then coordinates a plan to help the family identify and meet their needs.

If you would like any further information on Meitheal, please do not hesitate to contact me on 071 9148860 or 0867978513.

### Parent & Toddler Groups

Parent & Toddler Groups receive funding to support their work within communities. Funded by the Department of Children & Youth Affairs and Pobal, Sligo County Childcare Committee are delighted to announce that € 4,675 in funding has been allocated to 7 Parent & Toddler groups in County Sligo.

This year we also had the pleasure of funding 1 new Group.

SCCC would like to congratulate these Parent & Toddler groups, and acknowledge the effort that went in to preparing the applications.



### *CCSP and TEC closing dates*

After November 15<sup>th</sup>, no new entrants will be permitted to the scheme, although providers will be required to adjust their days and/or session types for existing registrations to ensure compliance with scheme rules.

These changes can only be made during 'Saver Management Windows'. Please refer to Transitional Rules

for the DCYA Targeted Childcare Funding Programmes for more information.

In order to amend registrations during the Saver Management Window, registrations must have a status of 'Approved'.

CCSP permanently closed for new registrations at midnight on Friday 15th November, 2019 in advance of the commencement of the National Childcare Scheme.

After this date only CCSP registrations with a

Status of 'Submitted', 'Provisional' and 'Approved' will be eligible to remain on the programme and will be referred to as 'Savers'.

The proposed dates for the **CCSP Saver Management Windows** are as follows, and are subject to change:

- December - 20th December, 2019 - 13th January, 2020
- February - 14th February, 2020 - 2nd March, 2020
- April - 3rd April, 2020 - 20th April, 2020
- June - 26th June, 2020 - 20th July, 2020

TEC programmes will remain open for new registrations until February 2020





# Tusla Re-registration



All early years' services are required to be registered in order to provide an early years' service. This is a requirement under Part 12, of the Child & Family Agency Act 2013. Re registration of services takes place every three years. The current registration with Tusla for the majority of services in Sligo expires on the 31st December 2019 and services in recent months have been submitting their re registration on Tusla Portal in order to continue operating under their registration in 2020.

Over the last number of months Tusla have been in regular communication with service providers, with updates on documentation required and supports available via the Tusla website. The most recent update was emailed to all service providers on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019 and can be accessed at: [https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/20191205\\_Letter\\_to\\_providers\\_.pdf](https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/20191205_Letter_to_providers_.pdf)



Parenting Sligo Leitrim, West Cavan: Parenting Courses 2019/2020

Parenting is Busy and Challenging



It also influences your child's future Health and Happiness



Check out these sites/webpages for more helpful information about children,

parenting and services:

[www.mychild.ie](http://www.mychild.ie)

[www.sligoleitrimdirectory.ie](http://www.sligoleitrimdirectory.ie)

<https://www.tusla.ie/parenting-24-seven/>

Find us on Facebook at Sligo Leitrim Parent Hub

Parenting courses are provided in your community by HSE and Tusla, in partnership with Family Resource Centres and Community and Voluntary groups.

These courses give you as parents the opportunity to discuss parenting and explore and practice different ways of interacting with your children. This supports improved confidence and less stress for parents, and improved communication, quality family relationships and happy, confident and resilient children.

Click on the link below to view the upcoming Parenting courses

<http://www.sligochildcare.ie/?p=4740>

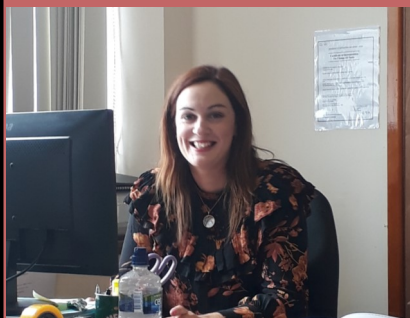




to our *New Staff Members*



**Parent Hub Coordinator**  
**Aolish Gormley**



**TUSLA**

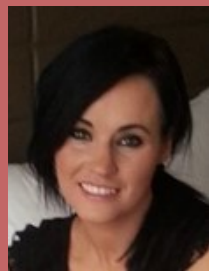
My role as Parent Hub Coordinator involves developing strong partnerships between agencies involved in the provision of parenting programmes & ensure services for parents are coordinated and provide an integrated response to the needs of children and families. As part of this role I develop a monthly parenting supports flyer which is being shared with schools, and early years' services in Sligo & Leitrim. The flyer is an excellent resource for services and schools to have in order for them to support parents. For the majority of parents, raising children is a positive and enjoyable experience and while most parents can cope with the challenges that may arise, all parents can benefit from additional support at some stage of parenthood. If you would like any additional information on the programmes and supports available for parents in your area please feel free to contact me on.

**Email:** aolishsligochildcare@gmail.com **Phone:** 087-7391569 .



**Our new Receptionist**

**Roisin McBreen**



**Merry Christmas & Happy  
New Year**

From all the  
staff and management of  
Sligo County Childcare Committee



**OUR OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED FROM  
DECEMBER 20TH AND WILL REOPEN  
ON THE 2ND OF JANUARY 2020**

