

# More Affordable Childcare Starts with You



**A Guidebook for Early  
Years Service Providers  
On Important Changes to  
the Childcare Subvention  
Programmes  
2017 - 2018**



An Roinn Leanaí  
agus Gnóthaí Óige

Department of  
Children and Youth Affairs

We want as many parents and families as possible to access new financial childcare supports when they become available in September.

We also want to make things as simple as possible for you.

All financial supports for children will be paid directly to you.

And registering for the new programme is easy.



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# Important Changes Starting Soon

From September 2017, greater financial supports will be available to more families at your Tusla-registered service.

This short guidebook sets out what you need to know about the new proposed ENHANCED SUBVENTION RATES and ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA under the Community Childcare Subvention Programme.

These initial changes are being introduced as our first step towards the new **Affordable Childcare Scheme**, the comprehensive new scheme of financial support for parents towards the cost of their childcare, which was made possible through funding secured in Budget 2017.

The Affordable Childcare Scheme will eventually combine all the existing targeted childcare schemes, including the Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) and the Training and Employment Childcare (TEC) Schemes, into one easy-to-use and more efficient, online system. It will be open to ALL childcare providers who are registered with Tusla, including centre-based childcare providers (eg. Crèches, pre-schools and day care centres) and childminders.



# More Affordable Childcare Starts with You



# Get More Help and Support



Our new website **affordablechildcare.ie** has a dedicated section just for Service Providers.

You can get further information on all changes outlined within this Guidebook from your local City/County Childcare Committee (CCC). The CCC will also support you to get set up and into contract.



Contact details for your local CCC are available on **affordablechildcare.ie**



# The Job You're Doing Is Invaluable

You are doing an invaluable job caring for and providing early education to our nation's children. The job you are doing is vital for all children and families and it is particularly vital to children from more disadvantaged backgrounds. All the evidence points to the critical role that early childhood care and education plays in helping EVERY child thrive and develop equally.

One of the key priorities of the Government is to ensure that Ireland can move from having one of the most expensive childcare systems in the world to having one of the best – for childcare providers as well as for children and parents.

Here are just some of the reasons why More Affordable Childcare is so important:

1. It supports quality across the childcare sector.
2. It facilitates labour market participation.
3. It promotes positive child outcomes.
4. It promotes equality in childcare provision by narrowing the gap in access to high, affordable childcare.
5. It contributes to poverty reduction in Ireland.



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# Making it Easier for You

We want to make things as simple and as hassle-free as possible for you. We are very aware of the demands and restrictions under which you work. For this reason, we have tried to keep changes and any administrative requirements to a minimum – freeing you to do the really important work you do – helping to give children a great start in life.

As far as possible, we have sought to work within existing systems and administrative arrangements, which are already very familiar to you.

## It's Simple

More Affordable Childcare is simple.

It means that from September 2017, EVERY FAMILY will be eligible for financial childcare support for ANY child aged between 6 – 36 months in full or part-time Tusla-registered childcare, like yours. And thousands more can receive further support for children up to age 15.

Here are the main changes:

1. From September there will be a new universal childcare subsidy for children between the ages of 6 and 36 months (or until they qualify for the free pre-school programme). Eligibility for this universal subsidy will not be means-tested; it will be available for families at any income level.
2. There will be significant increases of up to 50% in childcare subvention rates provided under the CCS Scheme for children from birth up to 15 years.
3. There will be a new eligibility Band 'D' aimed in particular at families in possession of a GP visit card for children over the age of 6.
4. There will be amendments to the existing eligibility criteria to help ensure that more families can benefit from more affordable childcare.

# Getting a Handle on the Revised Eligibility and Rates

## 1. Increased CCS Targeted Supports

Targeted support will continue. However, there are substantial revisions to the rates. The table below summarises the new rates, eligibility criteria and level of service. These rates are for guidance purposes only, and certain terms and

Band A (with medical card unless otherwise stated)	
<b>Eligibility criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One Parent Family Payment</li> <li>• Widows/Widowers Pension</li> <li>• Farm Assist</li> <li>• State Pension</li> <li>• Blind Pension</li> <li>• Guardian's Payment</li> <li>• Illness/Injury Benefit</li> <li>• Disability Allowance</li> <li>• Carer's Benefit/Allowance</li> <li>• Back to Work Enterprise/ Education Allowance</li> <li>• Community Employment/ Rural Social Scheme</li> <li>• Domiciliary Care Allowance</li> <li>• Family Income Supplement (FIS)</li> <li>• Secondary Students</li> <li>• Invalidity Pension</li> <li>• Disablement Pension</li> <li>• Official Tusla Referrals (no medical card required)</li> <li>• HSE Public Health Nurse referrals (no medical card required)</li> <li>• TÚS</li> <li>• Part-time Job Incentive Scheme</li> <li>• Gateway</li> </ul>
<b>Weekly rate</b>	
(Full-Day payment (5 hrs +))	€145
(Part-time payment (3:31-5:00))	€80
(Sessional payment (2:16-3:30))	€45
(Half-session payment (1:00 - 2:15))	€22.50



conditions may apply, which you will find in the Programme Rules Document on [www.pobal.ie](http://www.pobal.ie)

Band AJ (with medical card)	Band B	Band D
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job Seeker's Benefit/ Allowance*</li> <li>Supplementary Welfare Allowance**</li> </ul> <p>*parents who qualify for Band AJ under Jobseeker's allowance/benefit receive maximum subvented childcare of €80 for full day care per week.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medical Card</li> <li>Parents who are in receipt of Social Welfare payments listed under Band A/AJ but have no medical card</li> </ul> <p>**parents who qualify for Band AJ under Supplementary Welfare Allowance payments receive maximum subvented childcare of €80 for full day care per week.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GP Visit Card (over 6yrs+only)***</li> <li>Parents who no longer qualify for Band A/AJ this year but who were verified as being on Band A/AJ at the end of the previous school year</li> </ul> <p>***Please note GP visit card for children 0-6 years of age does not qualify for CCS/CCSP subvention funding.</p>
€80	€70	€50
€80	€35	€25
€45	€25	€17
€22.50	€12.50	€8.50

## 2. New Universal Subvention

The new universal band will be available for all children between the ages of 6 months and the time at which they may start the free pre-school programme, and who are not receiving any targeted CCS subvention. This is not means-tested and is available to families with children in Tusla-registered childcare - either community or private services.

To qualify, the parent must provide both the child and parent PPS number to you, the service provider. The available rates are outlined in this table.

CCS Session Type	Universal Band (CCS Band U) (Weekly Subsidy)
Full-time (i.e. 5 or more hours)	€20
Part-time (i.e. 3.31 to 5 hours)	€10
Sessional (i.e. 2.16 to 3.30 hours)	€7
Half-sessional (i.e. 1 to 2.15 hours)	€3.50

## 3. New Broader Eligibility

No family will lose out by the changes being introduced. In fact many more families will qualify for higher subvention because of the changes. A new Band D has been created which means that more families can qualify for the same support rates as those who were on Band B in 2016/2017.

This table outlines the new revised eligibility criteria.

2016/17	2017/18
3 Bands (A, AJ, B)	4 Bands (A, AJ, B, D)
TÚS (With Medical Card) was Band AJ	TÚS (With Medical Card) is Band A
Part-Time Job Incentive (With Medical Card) was Band AJ	Part-Time Job Incentive (With Medical Card) is Band A
Gateway (With MC) Band AJ	Gateway (With MC) Band A
GP Visit Cards – Band B	GP Visit Cards – Moved to Band D
Band A in previous year - Stepped down to Band B where not eligible to continue in Band A	Band A last year - Stepped down to Band D where not eligible to continue in Band A
Band AJ – Capped at €50	Band AJ – Capped at €80

# Signing Up and Re-Contracting is Easy

## Two Types of Contracts

Here are the main details of the two contracts which are now available through your PIP portal.

*Fees lists and Calendar functions will be available from mid-July.*

### 1. CCS

- This contract allows for retention of funding for the year based on registrations within a “snapshot” period in the Autumn. The opening and closing dates for the snapshot period will be notified to you by Pobal.
- It provides for a preliminary payment at the start of the year based on the previous year’s CCS funding.

### 2. CCS Plus

- This replaces and extends the “CCS Private” available in the 2016/2017 programme year.
- **Community providers must make any registrations for the universal subvention under this contract**
- **Community providers must make registrations outside of the snapshot period under this contract.**
- Where a child has been registered under a CCS Plus contract, funding is paid up to the last date entered on PIP as the last day of attendance. For CCS Plus services, the last day of attendance entered on PIP will include the two-week notice period.

Contact the Early Years & Young People Operational Team in Pobal, which is available to support you through the technical elements of the set-up process.

## Existing Providers

If you are an existing provider, the arrangements to access the new More Affordable Childcare subventions will be very familiar. There is no major change from the re-contracting process in 2016/2017. The steps are:

1. Log onto your PIP Portal
2. Recertify your organisation's PAU (Primary Authorised User)
3. The PAU for your organisation must activate your contract online
4. Submit the fees list and service calendar for your organisation on PIP

## Community Providers

If you are a CCS community provider and wish to access CCS Universal you must use the CCS Plus contract **in addition to the CCS contract for the targeted schemes.**

You are strongly advised to continue to make registrations under the CCS contract where allowable, as it provides additional protections to you, giving you more sustainable resources and allowing you to forward plan.

## Private Providers Currently Signed Up for CCSP

If you are a CCS Private provider and wish to access the targeted and/or the universal subsidy you must sign up to the CCS Plus contract.

- o It replaces and extends the "CCS Private" which was available in the 2016/2017 programme year.
- o Where a child has been registered under a CCS Plus contract, funding is paid up to the last date entered on PIP as the last day of attendance. This will include the two week notice period.

The terms of the contracts remain fundamentally the same. Some elements, which have caused uncertainties in previous years, have been clarified.

## **New Applicants to the CCS Funding Programmes**

If you have never participated in a subvented childcare scheme, all you have to do is contact your City/County Childcare Committee (CCC).

They will support you to submit an application to the DCYA and register with Pobal for access to the PIP Portal - an online system which will be your one-stop-shop on all matters relating to childcare administration, registrations, contracting and payments.

There are a number of steps to be taken on the PIP Portal, on a once-off basis, in order to establish your identity and authority to act for the company.

CCC staff can guide and support you through this application and set-up process. Once the initial set-up is complete you will then be guided through the contracting process by Pobal.

## **Registering children**

The PIP Portal on the Pobal website will host a series of how-to guides and videos, giving simple step-by-step guidance on registering children. Outside of the new contractual arrangements, the process is unchanged and will be very familiar to those who have used PIP previously.

Registration for the new universal subsidy will be very similar to that of the ECCE Programme.

To register a child for the new universal subsidy, you will register the child as normal and use the drop-down under 'session type' on the PIP registration form.

# Other Programmes

## 1. Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

There will be no changes to the ECCE Programme Call in 2017/2018. You may note in your contracts new references to AIM. The new contract integrates two separate programmes – AIM and ECCE - into one document.

The ECCE Fees List and Service Calendars will be available in mid June 2017.

## 2. Training and Employment Childcare (TEC)

TEC programmes remain as they were with regard to eligibility, but the rates have been amended.

The amended rates are set out in the table below:

	TEC Programmes (Existing and Proposed Weekly Subsidies)							
	CETS		ASCC		CEC AS		CEC PS	
	Current	From Sept 2017	Current	From Sept 2017	Current	From Sept 2017	Current	From Sept 2017
<b>Full-time</b>	145	145	105	145	-	-	-	-
<b>Part-time</b>	80	80	-	-	80	80	80	80
<b>After-school</b>	45	45	40	45	40	45	-	-
<b>After-school with Transport</b>	80	80	80	80	-	-	-	-

Every effort has been made to ensure the details in this guide are correct at the time of print. Full details of rates and eligibility are available in the programme rules and guidelines documents at [www.pobal.ie](http://www.pobal.ie).

## **More Affordable Childcare**

An important step  
towards the comprehensive  
new Affordable Childcare  
Scheme



**“Moving from one of the most expensive childcare systems in the world to the best is ambitious. It is a journey we will take one step at a time .... We are confirming that parents of tens of thousands of children will start feeling the benefit in their pockets from September. This is a significant step forward.”**

Dr. Katherine Zappone TD, Minister for  
Children and Youth Affairs

Go to **[affordablechildcare.ie](https://affordablechildcare.ie)** today. Find out how families can start to feel the benefit of more affordable, quality childcare from September.



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