Healthy Ireland Award and Showcasing Day for Pre-school Providers

Fourteen pre-school services in Mayo received their Healthy Ireland status at an awards ceremony celebrating the second annual Healthy Ireland Smart Start Awards in Athlone Institute of Technology. The award recognises pre-schools across Ireland that have participated and achieved Healthy Ireland status. Mayo’s early childcare providers now have a cumulative 18 Smart Start Awards (including the four awards received in 2016).

This year, 219 pre-school services at national level received their Healthy Ireland Award from the Health Service Executive (HSE). There are more than 300 additional pre-school services at national level currently undergoing training to deliver the programme.

The 14 pre-school services awarded representing Mayo were, Ballyhaunis Community Pre-school; Bernie’s Crèche; Carracastle Community Childcare; Claremont Crèche & Montessori; Coillte Childcare; First Steps Crèche; Glór na Nóg; Guardian Angel Montessori; Mount Carmel Academy Montessori School; Naíonra Céimeanna Beaga; Outdoor Explorers Preschool; Robeen Rascals; Smarties Montessori School and The Growing Tree.

Development and delivery of the programme has been a collaborative effort between HSE Health Promotion and Improvement and the National Childhood Network (NCN) (formerly Border Counties Childhood Network). The programme, built upon the Healthy Ireland Framework, is funded by the HSE and supported by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

The programme is open to all pre-school providers; private or community, sessional or full day care, regardless of size or location. Registered childminders are also welcome to participate in the training. A pre-school provider can retain the Healthy Ireland Smart Start award for three years by implementing the programme throughout their daily curriculum and upon completing an annual assessment process, and thereafter ensuring the programme is sustainable within the daily life of the service. For more information about the programme, parents and pre-school providers should visit: www.ncn.ie or telephone (047) 72469.

GLÓR na NOG CRECHE & PLAY SCHOOL CO. MAYO
Hello all, and welcome to the Summer edition of the Mayo CCC newsletter. Hope this note finds you well.

Here are some updates regarding the main elements of the national childcare funding programmes. As the local agent of the Department of Children & Youth Affairs, Mayo CCC aim to provide early years services in Mayo with as much support and guidance as possible, to provide positive outcomes for the children attending early years services. Please do not hesitate to contact Mayo CCC (or Pobal where appropriate) for this support and guidance.

The main development is of course the implementation of the Affordable Childcare Scheme from September 2017. Please see below detailed information for Early Years Services and information for Parents. We hope you find this information useful.

Information for Early Years Services & Parents

The Main Changes

- 1. There will be a new universal childcare subsidy for children from the age of 6 months to 36 months or until they are eligible to start the free pre-school programme.
- 2. There will be amendments to the existing Community Childcare Subvention (CCS/CCSP) eligibility criteria to help ensure that more families can benefit from more affordable childcare.
- 3. There will be increases of up to 50% in childcare subvention rates provided under CCS/CCSP.

ELIGIBILITY

Who is eligible to receive the universal subsidy? Every child, from the age of 6 months until they are eligible to start the free pre-school programme, is eligible for the universal subsidy.

Hi Everyone, great to see summer approaching and us having the hope of a good summer in our hearts. As all our practitioners know there is a strong movement towards higher qualifications among childcare practitioners. At present 12% of the Irish workforce in Early Years have degrees and I know many more are seeking to upskill. I returned to education as an adult and with volunteering, studying, work and well life, it has been a very demanding time, both emotionally juggling it all and financially in terms of costs and of course study time eating up weekends and evenings. Practitioners should be aware that to enrol in a course where you have to complete 60 credits per year is equivalent to a 40 hour a week workload (this is on top of your day job and family commitments).

I would encourage you to look carefully at what is on offer. In order to make an informed decision about whether to enrol in a third level course practitioners should get correct information of the questions below:

Apart from the obvious question of timetabling of lectures and the names of modules there are a number of other things to consider in order to make a fully informed decision before embarking on a level 7 or 8 degree course.

Is the course full time or part time?

Full time level 7 and 8 courses are composed of modules which total 60 credits per college year.

A college year is usually 23 weeks.

What is the total workload per week?

The workload inclusive of lectures for a full time course is approximately 40 hours per week. Therefore a course which has total class contact hours of 15 hours per week will have an additional workload of 25 hours which need to be dedicated to study for assignments and/or exams.

How much are the fees?

Information on eligibility for a student grant to cover the student fees is available on the SUSI website. This website has a user-friendly Eligibility Reckoner which you can use to check your eligibility for a student grant. Grant applications are completed online on this site and we recommend completing your application well in advance of accepting a college place. Practitioners should note that a SUSI grant means taking in to account the full financial situation of a ‘household’.

We at MCCC wish to encourage all childcare practitioners to increase their knowledge, skills and competencies, we appreciate how hard you all work to inform your practice but it is important to ensure that further study is right for you and that it will enhance your life and the work you do. Have a lovely summer and take care.

RÁITEAS AN CHATHAOIRLIGH
Chairperson Foreword

Edith Geraghty, Chairperson - Mayo County Childcare Committee
### Who is eligible for CCS/CCSP targeted subsidies?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA</th>
<th>Band A</th>
<th>Band AJ</th>
<th>Band B</th>
<th>Band D</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(with medical card unless otherwise stated)</td>
<td>(with medical card)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Parent Family Payment</td>
<td>• Job Seeker’s Benefit/Allowance*</td>
<td>• Medical Card</td>
<td>• GP Visit Card (over 6yr+only)**</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Widows/Widowers Pension</td>
<td>• Supplementary Welfare Allowance**</td>
<td>• Parents who are in receipt of Social Welfare payments listed under Band A/AJ but have no medical card</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farm Assist</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Pension</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blind Pension</td>
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<td>Guardian’s Payment</td>
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<td>Illness/Injury Benefit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disability Allowance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carer’s Benefit/Allowance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Back to Work Enterprise/Education Allowance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Employment/Rural Social Scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>Domiciliary Care Allowance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Income Supplement (FIS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondary Students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Invalidity Pension</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disablement Pension</td>
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<tr>
<td>Official Tusla Referrals</td>
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<tr>
<td>(no medical card required)</td>
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<tr>
<td>HSE Public Health Nurse referrals</td>
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<tr>
<td>(no medical card required)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TUS</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Part-time Job Incentive Scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gateway</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### What are the changes to CCS/CCSP targeted eligibility?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Bands Changed</th>
<th>Changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>3 Bands (A, AJ, B)</td>
<td>TUS (With Medical Card) is Band AJ, Part-Time Job Incentive (With Medical Card) is Band AJ, Gateway (With Medical Card) Band AJ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>4 Bands (A, AJ, B, D)</td>
<td>TUS (With Medical Card) is Band A, Part-Time Job Incentive (With Medical Card) is Band A, Gateway (With Medical Card) Band A, GP Visit Cards - Moved to Band D, Band A Last Year - Moved to Band D, Band AJ - Capped at €80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCS Session Type</th>
<th>Universal Band (CCS Band U) (Weekly Subsidy)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time (i.e. 5 or more hours)</td>
<td>€20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time (i.e. 3.31 to 5 hours)</td>
<td>€10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sessional (i.e. 2.16 to 3.30 hours)</td>
<td>€7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half-sessional (i.e. 1 to 2.15 hours)</td>
<td>€3.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### What are the new CCS targeted rates?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weekly rate</th>
<th>Band A</th>
<th>Band AJ</th>
<th>Band B</th>
<th>Band D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Full-Day payment (5 hrs +))</td>
<td>€145</td>
<td>€80</td>
<td>€70</td>
<td>€50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Part-time payment (3:31-5:00))</td>
<td>€80</td>
<td>€80</td>
<td>€35</td>
<td>€25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Sessional payment (2:16-3:30))</td>
<td>€45</td>
<td>€45</td>
<td>€25</td>
<td>€17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Half-session payment (1:15-2:15))</td>
<td>€22.50</td>
<td>€22.50</td>
<td>€12.50</td>
<td>€8.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Getting into Contract

**I am a Community Provider with a CCS contract**

CCS Universal is provided through the new CCS Plus contract. Community services can sign up to the CCS Plus contract in addition to the CCS contract. There is no major change from the 2016/2017 re-contracting process.

1. Log onto your PIP Portal
2. Certify the Primary Authorised User
3. Primary Authorised User activates the CCS Plus contract
4. Submit the fees list and service calendar for your organisation on PIP

**I am a Private Provider with a CCSP contract**

CCS Universal is provided through the new CCS Plus contract. This replaced the CCSP contract. There is no major change from the 2016/2017 re-contracting process.

1. Log onto your PIP Portal
2. Certify the Primary Authorised User
3. Primary Authorised User activates the CCS Plus contract
4. Submit the fees list and service calendar for your organisation on PIP

**I have a DCYA Reference Number but I do not have a CCS or CCSP contract**

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

**I am a new provider and I do not have a DCYA Reference Number**

If you have never participated in a DCYA childcare scheme, all you have to do is contact your City/County Childcare Committee (CCC). 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.
Hello Everyone. I hope this note finds you well. Over the last number of editions of the newsletter we have provided a brief overview of the Aistear Siolta Practice Guide. In the Spring edition of the Newsletter we concluded our series of articles. However, we did say that in future editions we would provide examples and ideas for Practice taken from the Aistear Siolta Practice Guide. These examples and ideas will be in the form of Learning Experiences. The learning experience will be an example or an idea for practice under one of the 6 pillars of practice. We hope you find these useful too.

This first learning experience is an example of how one service supports one of the learning goals in Aistear’s theme of Identity and Belonging.

**Learning Experience: The Nurse’s visit**

**Setting:** Bluebells Playschool, Ayle, Co. Tipperary

**Setting Type:** Sessional

**Age Group:** Young children

**Theme:** Identity and Belonging

**Aim 2:** Children will have a sense of group identity where links with their family and community are acknowledged and extended.

**Learning Goal 6:** In partnership with the adult, children will understand the different roles of people in the community.

One of the children in playschool was in hospital getting a tooth out and his mother mentioned that he found the experience very traumatic, especially the equipment. He had become very upset when the anaesthetist tried to put him to sleep. The child told us about this experience and the other children were interested and asked lots of questions. We decided to ask one of our parents who is a nurse if she would come to talk to the children. She brought in oxygen masks, syringes and bandages that the children could use in play to extend their learning over the following weeks. The experience provided lots of opportunities for the children to learn new vocabulary like blood pressure monitor, bandaging, stethoscope, syringe and oxygen mask.

The National Siolta Aistear Initiative has been developed to provide central support and coordination of Siolta and Aistear implementation across the early childhood sector.

Two national coordinators were appointed in Autumn 2016 to support the initiative.

The coordinators are working in close collaboration to provide central direction and oversight of Siolta and Aistear.

The initiative has two strands. The first will focus on Siolta, including the introduction of Siolta awareness raising workshops and the expansion of the Siolta Quality Assurance Programme (QAP). The second strand relates to Aistear, and will see the development of workshops and coaching to support practitioners to use Aistear in their setting.

The national Siolta Aistear Initiative welcomes your feedback and suggestions. Let them know what you would like to see in future editions of their newsletter by emailing them at earlychildhood@education.gov.ie.
The nurse showed the children how the equipment is used and talked about what it is like when you go to hospital. The children had lots of questions and she answered them all. The children used the equipment on each other and were totally engrossed in the experience for two hours and only stopped when their parents came to collect them!

**Ideas to extend the children’s learning**

- Provide books about going to the doctor or going to the hospital. These books should include male and female doctors and nurses to avoid stereo-typing.
- Organise small group activities where children can use the new vocabulary again, for example, small world play.
- Add props to the pretend play area to continue the focus on the hospital. Think about including a phone and note-book to make appointments, clipboard and pencils to record blood pressure readings, tomato sauce for blood!
- Display photos and encourage children to talk about them with their parents.

**This experience also links to:**

- Well Being Aim 1 Learning Goal 1
- Communicating Aim 2 Learning Goals 1, 3 and 4
- Exploring & Thinking Aim 1 Learning Goal 2

**The play leader’s reflections**

Some of the children showed a real caring side to their personality and the experience may have sparked an interest in the caring professions that might last a lifetime.

The child whose mother was the nurse was extremely proud of his Mum and learned a lot about what she does at work each day.

The child who had been in hospital was reluctant at the beginning to touch the oxygen mask but over time and watching the other children, he examined the mask and tried it on. After a few days he was as comfortable with the equipment as the other children.

**Conclusion**

We hope you have found this article useful and interesting. To find lots more examples and ideas for practice please use the Aistear Siolta Practice Guide by simply logging into www.aistearsiolta.ie.

Hope this helps. We will be printing more examples of practice in the Autumn edition of the Mayo CCC newsletter.

*Jim Power  
Co-ordinator Mayo CCC*

*Sourced from (www.ncca.ie)*
Mayo Children and Young People’s Services Committee or Mayo CYPSC brings together, around one table, the main statutory, community and voluntary agencies and organisations that provide services for children and young people in County Mayo. Our role is to improve local service provision and support children and young people in Mayo through joint planning, co-ordination of services and interagency working. Mayo CYPSC is chaired by Paddy Martin, Tusla Child and Family Agency. We aim to realise the best possible outcomes for children and young people aged 0-24 years in Mayo as set out in Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: the national policy framework for children and young people 2014 - 2020. We use the five national outcomes to measure how our children are doing across five areas:

- Active and healthy, with positive physical and mental health
- Achieving full potential in all areas of learning and development
- Safe and protected from harm
- Economic security and opportunity
- Connected, respected and contributing to their world.

Mayo CYPSC is in its early stages. Our immediate priority is to develop the Mayo Children and Young People’s Plan (2018-2020), the first of its kind in Mayo. To inform this plan, we are currently compiling a Socio-Demographic Profile of Mayo; an audit of existing services and a local needs analysis.

We are carrying out extensive consultation with children of all ages, young people, and parents as well as service providers. We have launched three surveys: one for young people (12-24 years); a second one for parents of children of any age; and a third survey for service providers. We welcome your participation and input, just click on the appropriate link below.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MayoCYPSC_Youth;
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CYPSC_Parents
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SPResponses

Focus groups/age-appropriate events with children, young people and parents are currently on-going as well.

Mayo CYPSC has identified Early Years and improving outcomes for children aged 0-6 years as a key priority. We have established a CYPSC Early Years Sub-Group to coordinate this work. Members include Mayo County Childcare Committee; GMIT Early Childhood Education and Care, Tusla, HSE, parents, FRCS, as well as childcare providers in the County. On International Children’s Day (June 1st), we are teaming up with the Early Years Team in GMIT to organise an outdoor event for Pre-school Children in the GMIT to mark this important day.

If you want to find out more about Mayo CYPSC, you can log onto www.cypsc.ie or contact Mayo CYPSC Co-ordinator Thérèse Ruane at therese.ruane@tusla.ie / 087 3506 830. You can also link with us Facebook, Twitter and Instagram (@mayocypsc).

Oh and please starting using #childfriendly mayo #youthfriendly mayo on social media. After all, it’s what we’re all working towards and aspiring to ... making Mayo a great place for children to grow up in.
To celebrate International Children’s Day, GMIT Mayo Campus hosted an ‘Outdoor Play Day’ for young children on June 1st in the Woodland Trail. This was carried out in conjunction with Mayo CYPSC (Mayo Children and Young People’s Services Committee) and Mayo County Childcare Committee.

Experiencing the outdoors can be a powerful stimulus for learning. Outdoor play spaces are places where children’s play can take off and flourish. In the Woodland Trail children had the opportunity to express themselves through running, jumping, climbing, hiding, digging and exploring the natural world.

Young children enjoy challenge and risk in a framework of security and safety. The outdoor environment lends itself to offering challenge.

Some comments made by children included

“I felt really brave”

“The rope was the best thing, I was balancing and it was very wobbly”

“I climbed down the rope it was exciting”

Children tend to develop a more positive attitude to learning when they are outdoors. They are usually more active, absorbed and involved, and they see a purpose in what they are doing.

‘The chance to connect with the natural world; first hand experiences of life and growth; endless opportunities for creativity and imagination; improved fitness and physical development - the countless benefits of outdoor play have a real positive impact on children’s lives.’ Into the Woods Outdoor Nursery, UK
Upcoming Childcare Seminar
Mayo County Childcare Committee together with Mayo Early Intervention Team will host a joint Seminar on Saturday 30th September in Ballina. Please keep this date free, details will follow later.

Update on AIM Equality & Diversity Training
To date 4 training sessions have been delivered on AIM Equality & Diversity in January, March, April & May.

This training will continue in the Autumn and will be ongoing for childcare practitioners. An email will be distributed to all services in early Autumn regarding next training session and bookings will be taken then.