



ECCE Update from DCYA

Expansion of ECCE programme:

Currently children can join the ECCE programme for a maximum of 38 weeks when they are aged between 3 years 2 months and 4 years 7 months from the 1st of September of the relevant year.

Budget 2016 announcements mean children will be able to join free pre-school when they reach the age of 3 and remain in free preschool until they join primary school (providing they are not older than 5 ½ years at the end of the pre-school year). Parents will be able to enroll their child in preschool at three different stages throughout the year—September, January and April.

Please see the table below to show age eligibility:

To avail of the ECCE Programme with effect from	Children must have been born between the following dates (both dates inclusive)
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

Please click [here](#) for the FAQ on Budget 2016.

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Qualifications in the ECCE Sector

Update from DCYA:

- The Child Care Regulations will require all staff working directly with children in early years services to hold a minimum qualification of Level 5 or equivalent by 31st December 2016.
- The requirement under the ECCE contract that all pre-school leaders must hold a Level 6 qualification will also come into effect on 31st December 2016, and not 1st September 2016 as previously advised.

The Published list of **DCYA Early Years Recognised Qualifications** can be downloaded [here](#).

Learner Fund Round 4

Learner Fund 4 is now open for applications (January 25th 2016 14:00hrs)

Learner Fund offers a subsidy towards the cost of training to support existing Early Years practitioners (working directly with children) to attain the appropriate qualification required under the revised Pre-School Regulations, and in accordance with the ECCE Programme requirements.

Please note that **Learner Fund 4** will subsidise eligible courses leading to a major award at **Level 6** on the NFQ. ECCE services that are planning to expand in 2016/7 funding year may apply for a **Learner Fund 4** subsidy on behalf of a staff member, as the potential ECCE room leader. To be eligible for a Level 6 subsidy, the staff member must be currently qualified at Level 5 on NFQ or equivalent.

Applications should be submitted by service providers on behalf of a staff member, and with the staff member's authorisation. Please note that **only one** Learner Fund 4 application can be submitted for each ECCE service.

Please click [here](#) for Information & FAQ document

Please click [here](#) for How to Apply document

Please click [here](#) for the list of training providers approved for Learner Fund 4

It is extremely important to **read through the Information & FAQ document** before making an application as strict criteria apply.

The closing date for applications is **Thursday March 10th 2016 at 18:00hrs**.

Learner Fund 3 will be re-opened shortly for Level 5. CCCs will continue to take expressions of interest from providers in respect of staff who still do not hold the Level 5 qualification.

Training Calendar

First Aid

FIRST AID (2-day course) –Please send cheque for €85 made payable to Irish Red Cross Galway to our office to book a place. Places are on a ‘First come, First Served’ basis on receipt of payment.

Menlo Park Hotel	27 th & 28 th February 10am - 5pm
Menlo Park Hotel	12 th & 13 th March 10am - 5pm

Please note: The Irish Red Cross has informed us that in future, ALL payments for 1st Aid are non-refundable. If you cannot attend these dates, you will be required to pay again if you have to re-book.

First Aid (1 Day Refresher) Please send a cheque for €55 made payable to Irish Red Cross Galway to our office to book a place. *To be eligible for this, staff must have a current Red Cross First Aid Certificate which was still be in date by 19th January 2016.*

Menlo Park Hotel	19 th March 10am - 5pm
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Please note: The Irish Red Cross has informed us that in future, ALL payments for 1st Aid are non-refundable. If you cannot attend these dates, you will be required to pay again if you have to re-book.

Network Meeting

Please see the details of a Network Meeting being held for all childcare services in Galway. To book a place please email mail@galwaychildcare.com with the name of the service and names of people who wish to attend. This meeting will cover updates and an information session about ‘This is Me’ booklet which will also be distributed on the night. The purpose of the Booklet is to:

- Promote an easy transition for children from Pre-school to Primary School
- Assist the infant teacher in getting to know the child
- Give parents memories of their child’s time in Pre-school

The booklet will be completed in the Pre-school by the Early Years Practitioner and will be sent to the school the child will attend as a Junior Infant. Parents will receive a copy of the booklet when it is completed.

Clayton Hotel	12 th April 2016 7-9pm
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Cluster Meetings

We will be organising Cluster Meetings in the coming weeks and will be in contact with services.

If there is an area you would like to see covered in these cluster meetings please email your suggestions to mail@galwaychildcare.com

We will try to cover these topics in future clusters.

The Aistear Síolta Practice Guide is intended to support practitioners in their role as early childhood care and education providers. It is a support tool aimed to develop the quality of a curriculum to better support children's learning and development.

It includes a range of resources including videos, tip sheets, pictures, evaluation templates and more. These can help practitioners to critically reflect on their curriculum and what works well. These resources can also be used to plan actions for positive change.

The Practice Guide includes curriculum foundations and six interconnected pillars. These pillars are:

1. Building Partnership with Parents
2. Creating & Using the learning environment
3. Learning through play
4. Nurturing & Extending children's reactions
5. Planning & Assessing using Aistear's themes
6. Supporting Transitions

The Practice Guide can be found at <http://www.ncca.ie/en/Practice-Guide>

Easter Activity



Flower Pot chocolate chip muffins

Method

1. Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Lightly oil the inside of the terracotta pots with a little vegetable oil and place on a baking tray. Place a paper mini muffin case in the bottom of each pot.
2. Put the flour, baking powder and cocoa in a bowl and stir in the sugar.
3. Crack the egg into a jug and whisk with the milk and remaining oil. Pour this over the flour and cocoa mixture, and stir in with 50g of the chocolate chips. Be careful not to overmix – you want a loose but still quite lumpy mixture. Spoon into the pots up to three-quarters full. Place in the middle of the oven and bake for 12-15 mins until risen and firm. Transfer to a wire rack (still in the pots) and leave to cool.
4. Put the rest of the chocolate chips in a small bowl and melt over a small pan of gently simmering water (don't let the water touch the bowl), or put in a microwave-proof bowl and heat on High for 1 min until melted.
5. Spread the tops of the muffins with the melted chocolate. Sprinkle over the chocolate decorations and add 2 rice paper wafer daisies to each pot to serve. Will keep for 2 days in an airtight container.

Prep: 10 mins

Cook: 10-15 mins

Makes 10 mini muffins.

Ingredients

- 3 tbsp vegetable oil
- 125g plain flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 25g cocoa powder
- 100g golden caster sugar
- 1 large egg
- 100ml milk
- 150g milk chocolate chips
- 25g chocolate cake decorations
- 20 rice paper wafer daisies

You will need

- 10 mini terracotta pots

Source: <http://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/flowerpot-chocolate-chip-muffins>

Pobal Compliance Checklist

Pobal Compliance Checklist for 2015/16 can be found [here](#). If you have any questions in relation to your Pobal Compliance Checklist please contact your Development Officer (091 752039)

Tax Clearance

Tax Clearance is confirmation from the Revenue Commissioners that an organisation's tax and customs affairs are in order at a particular date. From 1st January 2016, Revenue will be changing their tax clearance application and verification systems. Revenue will move to providing for real-time ongoing tax clearance (to be known as *eTax Clearance*).

From 1st January 2016, it is your organisation's responsibility to become familiar with this new real-time ongoing tax clearance process, to ensure there are no delays for Pobal making payments to your organisation.

You complete the Organisational Details template, providing the information below and submit the completed template to pipdocuments@pobal.ie as soon as you are in receipt of your TCAN and **before** your current paper Tax Clearance Certificate expires:

1. Name of your Organisation/Company
(as registered with Revenue Commissioners)
2. DCYA Reference Number/s
3. Your Tax Reference Number (TRN)
4. Your Tax Clearance Access Number (TCAN)

Please click [here](#) for the Organisational Details Template

Springtime

Lots of exciting changes happen in Spring and there are plenty of learning opportunities for children to explore. Ensure to go outside as often as possible and watch the wonderful changes as they occur.

- Baby farm animals are born including calves and lambs.
- Birds make their nests from natural materials including moss, grass, twigs, feathers or any other materials they can find.
- Plants get the conditions they need to begin to grow in Springtime. This is a great opportunity to prepare a garden with the children in your service. This activity is great for sensory play.