



An Roinn Leanai
agus Gnóthai Óige
Department of
Children and Youth Affairs

Department of Children and Youth Affairs

RULES FOR DCYA CHILDCARE FUNDING PROGRAMMES

Valid for the 2017/18 programme year

(published 24th July 2017)

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

Community Childcare Subvention (CCS)

Community Childcare Subvention Plus (CCSP) (Including Universal Subsidy (CCSU))

Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement (CCSR)

Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement (Transitional) (CCSR(T))

Training and Employment Childcare (TEC)

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Introduction

“Our vision is for Ireland to be one of the best small countries in the world in which to grow up and raise a family”

Katherine Zappone, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs

In the national policy framework for children and young people 2014-2020, *Better Outcomes Brighter Futures*, the Government committed to continue to increase investment in high-quality early years care and education for all children, prioritising families on low incomes. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs is in a period of significant policy development and change in the early years sector, working with our stakeholders to achieve our goal of achieving quality and accessible childcare for all. The Government has approved a range of financial measures that will see more than 70,000 families benefit from reduced childcare costs from September 2017, through their early years childcare programmes. To ensure that parents and childcare providers understand these childcare programmes and how to access them, the Early Years Unit has reviewed the *DCYA Childcare Funding Programmes Information and Frequently Asked Questions* document to ensure clarity around the specific rules and criteria pertaining to each individual programme. This document supersedes the *DCYA Childcare Funding Programmes Information and Frequently Asked Questions* document and any previous versions of it. This document should be read in conjunction with the following two key documents:

- Access and Inclusion Model (AIM): A new Model for Supporting Access to Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme for Children with a Disability (www.aim.gov.ie)
- Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines¹

This document aims to summarise each of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) Childcare Funding Programmes below, with separate chapters for each individual childcare programme. Namely:

- **Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE):** This programme is a universal childcare programme otherwise known as ‘free pre-school’;
- **Community Childcare Subvention (CCS):** This programme provides childcare funding support targeting low income families in community childcare services;
- **Community Childcare Subvention Plus (CCSP):** This programme provides childcare funding support targeting low income families in private childcare services and community childcare services who have children registered after the snapshot period (please see below for dates of snapshot period) and for those children aged between 6 months and 3 years under universal childcare subvention funding;
 - **Universal Subsidy (CCSU):** As part of its plan to make childcare more affordable, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs introduced a universal subvention

¹ Due to be published in October 2017

payment from September 2017, the payment of which is facilitated through the CCSP childcare programme.

- **Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement (CSSR):** This programme provides childcare support to Programme Refugees to support their resettlement and integration into Irish society;
- **Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement (Transitional) (CSSR(T)):** As part of the “Rebuilding Ireland – an Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness” the DCYA has provided access to free childcare for children of families experiencing homelessness; and
- **Training and Employment Childcare (TEC) Programmes:** These programmes provide childcare funding support for parents participating in eligible ETB/Solas vocational training courses, Community Employment (CE) programmes or returning to employment.

There is a commonality in the operational process and rules that are fundamental throughout all of the DCYA Childcare Funding Programmes. Namely:

- The Registered Provider shall be a limited company, a designated activity company, a sole trader, a school board of management, a not for profit organisation, or a partnership.
- The Registered Provider shall take all reasonable measures to safeguard the Health, Safety and Welfare of the children attending the service and to comply with the [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) Regulations 2016](#) and the [Child Care Regulations \(The Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\)\(Amendments\) Regulations 2016](#).
- The Registered Provider shall maintain annual accounts for each financial year and provide copies of such accounts within four months of their adoption to Pobal as agents of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and, on request, to the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG).
- The recording of attendance levels must always be an accurate record of a child’s level of attendance to include daily start-times and end-times, and must coincide insofar as possible with what is registered on PIP.
- It is an essential requirement that all public monies are appropriately accounted for and used for their intended purpose.
- All childcare programmes are processed online via the Programmes Implementation Platform (PIP). The PIP system is administered by Pobal, on behalf of the Department.
- The approved childcare funding is paid directly to the childcare service and must be deducted directly from the service’s fee for the service provision.
- The service provider must display a Fees List that indicates the exact fees as well as the reduced fee of the service based on the relevant approved programme funding i.e. the full fee less the funding approved.
- The service provider must display a Service Calendar to show parents the days and weeks they are closed during the programme year.

- Parents must sign a PIP Parent Declaration Forms and a service fees information letter to indicate that they understand the terms of the programme and that all child registration details are accurate.

A compliance checklist will be available on PIP in order to support services to be compliant with all programme rules. In order to ensure that an unannounced compliance visit can be accommodated efficiently and with minimum interruption, it is advised that a compliance folder/file is maintained onsite and made available to the Visit Officer upon arrival.

Any queries in relation to the DCYA Childcare Funding Programmes and the rules of the programmes should first be directed to the local City and County Childcare Committee (CCC). Please see the PIP Homepage on www.pobal.ie for CCC contact details. CCCs are funded by the DCYA and act as a local agent in the administration of aspects of national early education and childcare programmes. The CCCs are the first port of call for both parents and childcare providers when trying to access information and support on DCYA Childcare Funding Programmes.

Service Providers can also contact PIP Support at onlinesupport@pobal.ie or 01-5117222 for assistance in administering the rules of the Programmes as well as with any technical issues with their PIP Portal. The 'How to Guide' for each childcare programme is available on the PIP portal through www.pobal.ie.

Note: Information in this Guide is subject to change. Please check the PIP Homepage regularly for updates.

Chapter 1 Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

1.0 Overview of ECCE

The ECCE programme is a universal programme available to all children within the eligible age range. It provides children with their first formal experience of early learning prior to commencing primary school. The programme is provided for three hours per day, five days per week over 38 weeks² per year and the programme year runs from September to June. There are three points of entry throughout the programme year – September, January and April. Childcare services taking part in the ECCE scheme must provide an appropriate pre-school educational programme which adheres to the principles of Siolta and Aistear, the national frameworks for early years care and education. Staff of the local City/County Childcare Committees (CCCs) support participating services with assistive visits and advice. ECCE is only available through participating early years services; a list of these services is available through the relevant local CCC.

1.1 Eligibility for ECCE

The programme is available to all children from the age of three. The three entry points allow children to begin free pre-school as soon as possible after they have turned three years of age. The three eligibility points for the 2017/18 ECCE Programme are as follows:

Born between	Entry point
1 January 2013 and 31 August 2014	From 28 August 2017
1 January 2013 and 31 December 2014	From 02 January 2018
1 January 2013 and 31 March 2015	From 02 April 2018

For further information on eligibility please see ECCE calculator on www.dcy.gov.ie

1.2 ECCE Programme Rules

1.2.1 Age of eligible child

A child must have turned three years and not be older than 5 years and 6 months by the end of June of the programme year to be eligible.

1.2.2 Exceptions to upper age limit

In exceptional circumstances, exemptions from the upper age limit may be granted where a child has special needs for the 2017/18 programme year only. Applications for such exemptions must be submitted in writing to the DCYA and must include a letter of recommendation from a specialist stating support for the child to avail of a further year of preschool. (Exemptions will **not** be granted where a child will turn 6 during the pre-school year)

1.2.3 Required documents/information

Parent(s) must provide child's full name as per birth certificate or passport, child's date of birth and child's PPSN in order to register their child on the programme. Documentation containing PPSN information must be destroyed once no longer required.

1.2.4 When to register a child

Childcare provider can register a child up to seven days in advance of the childcare start date.

² A small number of services are permitted to run over 41 weeks as an exceptional matter. These existing arrangements will continue and are subject to all rules contained herein except that they can deliver the ECCE Programme for 4 days per week for 3.5 hours per day.

1.2.5 Child non-attendance from start date

If a child does not attend within three weeks of the start date then the registration must be cancelled immediately and any payment received for that child will be recovered.

1.2.6 Latest date for registration

The latest a childcare provider can register a child is eight weeks after the child's start date

1.2.7 Late registrations

- (i) DCYA reserves the right to decline or not back-date funding on any "late registrations" (i.e. more than eight weeks after child's start date)
- (ii) DCYA reserves the right to review the grant funding agreement of services who consistently submit "late registrations"

1.2.8 Optional extras

Childcare providers cannot charge for any activities/items which form part of the ECCE service. Childcare providers may charge for optional extras, but where a parent does not choose any of the optional extras, their child must be provided with the full ECCE service provision. Each optional extra must be identified individually on the fees list.

1.2.9 Additional time in sessional service

A sessional service provider may offer an additional 30 minutes per day as an optional extra.

1.2.10 Additional time in full-time or part-time service

A full or part-time provider may choose to prioritise a free pre-school place for a child who will be availing of a full- or part-time place over a child who wishes only to avail of the free pre-school element.

1.2.11 Child attendance

Where attendance differs from registration consistently over a four week period, registrations must be updated to reflect the actual number of days the child attends and this reduction must occur within four weeks of the reduced attendance pattern commencing.

1.2.12 Absenteeism

The service provider must contact the parent to establish the cause of the child's absence within the first week of the absence commencing. If a child leaves the service or has not attended for four consecutive weeks, the service must notify Pobal stating the date the child last attended the service. In exceptional circumstances e.g. serious illness, the service may apply to their local CCC to retain the registration beyond four weeks up to a maximum of six weeks.

1.2.13 Tusla registration

A childcare provider that provides childcare to children aged 0 – 6 must register with Tusla and is subject to the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

1.2.14 Adult to child ratio

The adult to child ratio for ECCE rooms is 1:11 (all children in room must be aged between 2.5 and 6 years). Please see www.dcy.gov.ie for further information.

1.2.15 Staff qualifications

A childcare provider must ensure all staff working with children hold, at a minimum, a qualification that meets the requirements of the Regulations.

1.2.16 Minimum qualifications for ECCE

Room Leaders must, at a minimum, hold a qualification that meets the grant funding agreement requirements for ECCE Room Leader as set out on the published list of DCYA 'Early Years Recognised Qualifications' or hold a Letter of Eligibility to Practice at this level issued by the DCYA (see more information relating to qualifications, including the published list on www.dcy.gov.ie)

1.2.17 Booking deposit

A childcare provider may charge a refundable booking deposit to hold a place for a child. The maximum deposit a provider may charge is equivalent to four weeks' ECCE payment. The deposit must be returned to the parent once the child's registration is approved on PIP.

1.2.18 Attendance records

Childcare providers must keep daily attendance records (for every ECCE session) for each child attending and records must include child's name, date of attendance, time of child's arrival and time of child's departure.

1.2.19 Notice when moving a child to another service

If a parent wishes to move their child to another childcare provider, they must provide four ECCE weeks' notice of this to the current childcare provider. Parents should note that, where a service is closed due to holidays, this time is not counted as part of the four weeks' notice.

1.2.20 Higher capitation

The ECCE higher capitation rate is equivalent to an additional €10.50 per child per week. Higher Capitation may be paid in respect of any ECCE room that meets the qualifying criteria (see 1.2.22 for qualifying criteria). Higher Capitation is paid in respect of the number of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) children in the qualifying room.

1.2.21 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Higher Capitation

Higher capitation is calculated on the basis of the number of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) children attending an ECCE room which is approved for higher capitation. Children on CETS, CCS and CCSP (and fee paying children) who attend the higher capitation session cannot be included in the FTE calculation, but must be included in the adult to child ratios.

1.2.22 Higher capitation eligibility

A childcare provider that has an ECCE room and meets the following requirements is eligible to apply for ECCE Higher Capitation payments in that room:

- i. a Room Leader with a qualification recognised as meeting the minimum requirements for ECCE "Higher Cap" as set out on the published list of 'Early Years Recognised Qualifications' (or otherwise be deemed eligible by the DCYA);
- ii. the same Room Leader has a minimum of three years' paid experience working in the childcare sector;
- iii. the regulatory adult to child ratio is met;
- iv. if a room assistant is required in the Higher Capitation room, this assistant must hold a full and relevant qualification that meets the minimum regulatory standards;
- v. Staff who have signed 'Grandfathering' declarations are not eligible for Higher Capitation

1.2.23 Higher capitation rate

Where a child is attending a part-time or full-time service that is in receipt of the higher capitation rate, the childcare provider must reduce the fees paid by the parent by the standard capitation rate.

1.2.24 Provision of ECCE programme

A childcare provider is required to provide three hours per day, five days per week for 38 weeks per programme year.³

1.2.25 Minimum enrolment

(i) A childcare provider must have a minimum enrolment number of eight ECCE-eligible children per session

(ii) Exceptions to the minimum enrolment number may be granted in some circumstances.

Applications must be submitted through County Childcare Committees

1.2.26 Fees List and Service Calendar

- i. Service Providers must complete a Fees List and Service Calendar at the beginning of each academic year. They must show details of all the fees charged to parents, as well as details of any additional charges, discounts or donations applied by the service.
- ii. Service providers are required to open for a minimum number of weeks per ECCE term, details of which can be found in the 'How to Guide'
- iii. A copy of the Fees List, together with copies of any standard letters issued to parents, must be on prominent display in an area accessible to parents.
- iv. Services must have a signed letter on file in respect of each parent of a child on the ECCE programme, showing the fees that have been approved. These fees must match those shown on the Fees List. An ECCE calendar must be distributed to all parents showing the days the service is due to be open under the ECCE academic year.
- v. Four weeks' notice of any change to the Fees List must be given to parents. Where the Fees List has been revised, amended Fees List letters must then issue and be signed by the parents for the service's files.

1.2.27 Service closure

If a childcare provider closes its service, notice must be submitted in writing to the local County Childcare Committee and to pipdocuments@pobal.ie

1.2.28 Change of circumstances

- i. In the case of a transfer of ownership of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new online Grant Funding Agreement.
- ii. In the case of a change of legal status of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new online Grant Funding Agreement.
- iii. In the case of a change of address of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new online Grant Funding Agreement.

1.2.29 Compliance Visits

- i. Services must facilitate compliance visits which may be made without notice, to include access to the premises, personnel and relevant records.
- ii. All documentation related to the financial affairs of the service, accounts, fees lists, registers and the list of children must be on-site at all times. These records must be kept for a minimum period of seven years.

³ With the historical exception of so-called "41 week" services which are permitted to run for 41 weeks at 3.5 hours per day, 4 days per week

1.3 Financial Requirements

The financial requirements of the registered provider are set out in the Grant Funding Agreement. The Grant Funding Agreement requires that:

“The Registered Provider shall maintain annual accounts for each financial year and provide copies of such accounts within four (4) months of their adoption to Pobal, as agents of the Department and, on request, to the Comptroller & Auditor General (C&AG);

The Registered Provider shall comply in full with the provisions of Circular 13/2014. In particular, the Registered Provider shall separately account for public funds received and ensure that appropriate financial records are maintained to ensure compliance with the requirements of Circular 13/2014.

The standard and form of the financial records maintained will be such that the records will enable Pobal, as an agent of the Department, to verify compliance with the financial requirements as set out in its Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines⁴ document published by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

The standard and form of the financial records maintained must enable the following to be clearly established:

- *The amount of all grants provided to the Registered Provider from any public funding source relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service including the grantor and purpose of the grant;*
- *That all grants have been appropriately spent (in the case of the childcare grant, that it has been used per section 3.1 of this agreement) and accounted for on an individuated basis in line with Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document;*
- *Details of other funding sources relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service*

The Provider shall respect and comply with the statutory role and regulatory and public accountability responsibilities of the Department, its agents and other relevant statutory bodies and at all times co-operate fully with the Department, its agents and all other statutory bodies in this regard”

1.4 FAQs for ECCE Programme

1.4.1 Can a child attend ECCE in more than one service?

For continuity of the care, education and socialisation needs of the child, the DCYA strongly recommends that children attend one service wherever possible. However, a child’s ECCE place can be split between two services in the following exceptional cases:

- Where there is a joint custody arrangement and, because of this, it is not possible for the child to attend the same service every day
- Where a child has special needs and it has been recommended by the specialist pre-school that the ECCE place be split between a specialist and mainstream pre-school on the grounds that this is in the interest of the child

1.4.2 Can a child transfer from one service to another?

⁴ The Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document will be published by the Grantor and will be a tool for providers to use to support compliance with the requirements for bodies in receipt of public funding. It will include templates that may be used by the grantee to support reporting to Pobal as agents of the Department

Yes. A parent must give the childcare provider four ECCE weeks' notice of their intention to transfer their child to another service or to leave the current service. (Please note ECCE weeks do not include weeks a service is closed for holidays)

1.4.3 A child is registered for a certain number of days per week and misses different days each week. What should the childcare provider do?

The provider must engage with the parent to establish and agree the days of attendance. After enquiring with the parent and where it is shown that the child does not require the number of days of ECCE they initially registered for, the service must reduce the child's level of attendance to reflect actual number of days' attendance. This reduction must occur within four weeks of the reduced attendance pattern commencing.

1.4.4 Can a parent increase or decrease the number of days they wish their child to avail of?

Yes, if the childcare provider can cater for the request. The service must notify Pobal immediately (through PIP).

1.4.5 If a child has been absent without notice from the ECCE programme for four weeks, can a childcare provider claim a further four weeks' payment period when submitting the leaver form?

No. The ECCE leaver form must be completed up to a maximum of four weeks from the last week the child has attended

1.4.6 Can a child-minder apply to enter into the ECCE grant funding agreement?

Yes. A child-minder must have five ECCE eligible children in order to provide the ECCE programme and be registered with Tusla.

1.4.7 What are compliance visits?

Compliance visits are onsite checks undertaken by Pobal on behalf of the DCYA. The purpose of these visits is to ensure that the service is administering the programmes in line with their ECCE grant funding agreement as well as the *Rules for DCYA Childcare Funding Programmes* and the *ECCE How to Guide for Service Providers*.

1.4.8 What should a provider in receipt of higher capitation do if their Level 7 room leader resigns?

If a staff member resigns, a Higher Cap Staff Amendment form must be completed and returned to the DCYA. This must indicate the leaving date of the staff member and the commencement date of the replacement staff member. If the replacement staff member is not eligible for Higher Capitation, the service will revert to Standard Capitation after four weeks. Non-compliance will result from:

- Failure to notify DCYA of a change in Higher Capitation room staff
- Failure to record correct leaving / starting dates of staff on the Higher Cap Staff Amendment form

1.4.9 I have a room leader who is eligible for higher capitation who does not work every day. Can I receive higher capitation for the days this staff member works?

No. Higher capitation payments cannot be broken up in this manner. Approved staff should be working in the higher capitation room every day under regular circumstances.

1.4.10 What should a provider in receipt of higher capitation do if their Level 7 room leader is out sick or on annual leave?

Irregular patterns of non-attendance or short-term absences by the Higher Capitation room staff are allowable for reasonable causes (such as annual leave, sick leave, bereavement, force majeure). The service provider should keep records of such absences and the reason for non-attendance, for compliance purposes.

1.4.11 Prolonged Staff Absenteeism

Where a higher capitation room staff member will be absent for a period of more than four weeks, for whatever reason, the service must notify DCYA through the Higher Capitation Staff Amendment Form. The same conditions apply in cases of prolonged absence as apply in cases of a staff member leaving.

1.4.12 What happens to the higher capitation FTE figure if a child leaves a service?

Registering a child as a “leaver” on PIP does not automatically update the higher capitation FTE figure. A *Session Capitation FTE Amendment Form* must also be submitted to the DCYA.

1.4.13 Can I have one Level 7 room leader for two inter-connecting ECCE rooms?

No. Higher capitation payments can be applied for on the basis of each ECCE room within your service. In this case, you would need to have a Level 7 room leader in each room to qualify for higher capitation.

1.4.14 What if I want to expand my service and open another room?

If the new room is located in the same facility you should ensure relevant notification/registration is sent to Tusla and details of the proposed expansion are sent to your local CCC.

If the new room is at another location this is considered a new facility and will require a separate grant funding agreement. Provision of a grant funding agreement is dependent on the new facility being appropriately registered with Tusla. You should contact your local CCC and apply for a new DCYA reference.

1.4.15 When are payments made?

Payment schedules, including non-payable weeks, for Childcare Funding Programmes can be downloaded from the PIP homepage at www.pobal.ie

1.4.16 What is the Access and Inclusion Model?

The Better Start Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) is a model of supports designed to ensure that children with disabilities can access the ECCE programme. Further information on AIM can be found [here](#)

Chapter 2 Community Childcare Subvention (CCS)

2.0 Overview of CCS

The Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) Programme is a childcare programme targeted to support parents on a low income to avail of reduced childcare costs at participating community childcare services. The [Department of Children and Youth Affairs](#) pays for a portion of the childcare costs for eligible children, a payment described in this document as a subvention payment, with the parent paying the remainder.

The CCS is only available through participating community not-for-profit childcare services; a list of these services is available through the relevant local CCC. The service provider submits an application for CCS on behalf of the parent to Pobal. CCS subvention is available for 52 weeks of the year. The CCS programme covers the academic year, starting in September and finishing in August. This is referred to as the Programme year.

CCS services may cater for infant, pre-school and afterschool places. They may also incorporate a breakfast club. Some CCS services may be stand-alone services and cater for just one type of service e.g. afterschool.

2.1 Eligibility for CCS

A child must be under 15 years of age to be eligible for the 2017/18 CCS programme. A child will not be eligible if they are enrolled on any other DCYA childcare programme. The eligibility criteria are set out in Table 1 below.

2.2 CCS Programme Rules

2.2.1 Required documents/information

The eligibility of the applying parent is determined by their status with the Department of Social Protection (DSP). The level of the subvention is determined by the parent's DSP status and also by the level of childcare required. The eligibility criteria and subsequent childcare and subvention options are set out in Table 1 of this document.

In order to confirm eligibility, both the parent's and child's Personal Public Service Number (PPSN) are required when the CCS Child Registration Form is being completed. The Department of Social Protection then provides verification of their eligibility and band category as per Table 1 below. Documentation containing PPSN information must be destroyed once no longer required.

Table 1 CCS/CCSP Band Eligibility

Level of service	Band A (with medical card)	Band AJ (with medical card)	Band B	Band D
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One Parent Family Payment ▪ Widow's/Widower's Pension ▪ Pre-retirement Allowance ▪ Farm Assist ▪ State Pension ▪ Blind Pension ▪ Guardian's Payment ▪ Illness/Injury Benefit ▪ Disability Allowance ▪ Carer's Benefit/ Allowance ▪ Back to Work Enterprise/Education Allowance ▪ Community Employment / Rural Social Scheme ▪ Domiciliary Care Allowance ▪ Family Income Supplement (FIS) ▪ Secondary School students ▪ Invalidity Pension ▪ Disablement Pension ▪ Official Tusla Referrals (no medical card required) ▪ HSE Public Health Nurse referrals (no medical card required) ▪ TÚS ▪ Part-time Job Incentive Scheme Gateway ▪ Gateway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Job Seekers Benefit/ Allowance* ▪ Supplementary Welfare Allowance** 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Medical Card ▪ Parents who are in receipt of Social Welfare payments listed under Band A/AJ but have no medical card 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GP Visit Card*** (6yrs+ only) ▪ 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
Full-day payment (5 hrs +)	€145	€80	€70	€50
Part-time payment (3:31 – 5:00)	€80	€80	€35	€25
Sessional payment (2:16 – 3:30)	€45	€45	€25	€17
Half-session payment (1:00 – 2:15)	€22.50	€22.50	€12.50	€8.50

*parents who qualify for Band AJ under Jobseeker's allowance/benefit receive maximum subvented childcare of €80 for full day care per week

**parents who qualify for Band AJ under Supplementary Welfare Allowance payments receive maximum subvented childcare of €80 for full day care per week

2.2.2 Note on Table 1

*Jobseeker's allowance/benefit:

Parents who qualify for Band AJ (with medical card) qualify for subvented childcare to a maximum of €80 subvention for full day-care per week. (For the first and second day the subvention is based on the same daily rate as Band A). This cap applies where a child attends from 3 full days to 5 full days per week.

Parents in receipt of Jobseekers Benefit/Allowance (JB / JA) and do **not** have a medical card qualify for subvented childcare under Band B.

** Supplementary Welfare Allowance Scheme

Parent receiving basic payments under the Supplementary Welfare Allowance Scheme, and awaiting a decision on a Jobseekers Benefit/Allowance claim may appeal the band AJ awarded if the claim is successful. **Please note a valid medical card must also accompany the DSP evidence in order to qualify for band AJ, otherwise Supplementary Welfare Allowance is Band B.**

*** GP visit card is 6yrs+ only

The universal GP Visit card for children under 6 years of age is not CCS eligible.

Please note: No Band is automatically applied to those parents on **Maternity Benefit**, partaking in a **Springboard course** and/or a First Steps –Youth Developmental Internship or in receipt of the ETB/SOLAS Training Allowance during the CCS eligibility period. The appropriate band will be based on the allowance received immediately prior to the course/training/benefit. A verification form (on the PIP homepage) must be completed by the service provider and the DSP, attached to the registration and forwarded to Pobal for review. The appropriate entitlement band registration will be made manually.

2.2.3 Types of Places under the CCS Programme

CCS services must offer childcare places from one or more of the following placements. A different payment rate is attributed to each type of placement:

- Full day-care places (more than 5 hours per day)
- Part-time places (between 3 hours 31 minutes and 5 hours per day)
- Sessional places (between 2 hours 16 minutes and 3 hours 30 minutes per day)
- Half-session places (between 1 hour and 2 hours 15 minutes per day)

2.2.4 Tusla registration

CCS providers must be registered with Tusla for the places being provided as defined under 2.2.3, e.g. services cannot be funded for part-time places when registered with Tusla as a sessional service. This does not apply to services which are limited to the care outside of normal school hours of school aged children.

2.2.5 Entering a child on the CCS Programme

The Service Manager must confirm the number of days the child is being enrolled for and the type of childcare required when registering the child for a CCS place. Further instructions on Child Registration are available in the 'How to Guide'.

2.2.6 Booking deposits

A childcare provider may charge a refundable booking deposit to the parent to hold a place for a child. The maximum deposit a provider may charge is equivalent to two weeks' payment. The deposit must be returned to the parent once the child's registration is approved on PIP.

2.2.7 Optional extras

Childcare providers may charge for optional extras, but a parent may choose not to avail of any of the optional extras. Optional extras must be identified on the fees list at the start of the programme year. Each option must be individually identified.

2.2.8 CCS Child Registration on PIP

CCS services must register the child under their CCS grant funding agreement on the PIP online system. Please refer to the PIP 'How to Guide' via the PIP Homepage.

2.2.9 Child Registration window

Children must be registered on PIP during the snapshot period of 18 September to 13 October 2017. This is a four-week period during which the children must be in attendance in a service and gives an overview of the number of children who will be in the programme for the programme year. An allocation is given to the service provider for the year based on the number of children in attendance during this snapshot period. This allocation cannot increase after the snapshot period.

2.2.10 Appeal of Band Rate

Parents have the right to appeal their band rate if they believe an error has occurred, or the information from the Department of Social Protection is incorrect. This appeal is processed through the service provider. Please refer to 'How to Guide' chapter on Appeals.

2.2.11 Requirement for CCS Services to participate in ECCE Programme

CCS services must have signed the grant funding agreement for the ECCE Programme. CCS providers may apply to the DCYA in writing for an exemption from participation in the ECCE programme, e.g. afterschool-only services.

2.2.12 If a child leaves the CCS Programme

When a child leaves the CCS service or has not attended the service for four consecutive weeks, Pobal must be notified (through PIP), stating the date the child last attended the service. Subject to paragraphs 2.2.12 to 2.2.13 below, this funding may be retained towards a replacement child.

2.2.13 If a child leaves the CCS Programme to attend ECCE

If the child falls eligible in the January or April entry point to attend ECCE, and the parents choose a different provider, the service must release the funding.

2.2.14 Reporting leavers

All services must report leavers through PIP and reduce registration levels within four weeks. PIP must be updated within four weeks to reflect the actual position.

2.2.15 Replacing leavers

The DCYA reserves the right to withdraw funding where a replacement child is not in place within four weeks of the end date registered for the original child. Where, in the opinion of the DCYA, there are systemic and/or significant variations between the child registrations and attendance, the DCYA will withdraw funding for those registrations and seek repayment of over-claimed amounts. A 25% or greater variation will initiate a review of the variation and these variations will result in a finding of non-compliance. However, the DCYA may find significant variation below this figure.

2.2.16 Filling the vacant CCS place

A CCS-eligible child may replace a child funded under the CCS Programme who has left the service. The funding must still be utilised for the provision of childcare to eligible children in line with the

Grant Funding Agreement. The details of the replacement child and proof of eligibility must be recorded on PIP for compliance purposes.

2.2.17 Child attendance

Where a service is notified that a child is reducing their number of days' attendance, the remaining subvention must be used to subvent other children. Records of where the CCS funding has been reallocated must be retained⁵.

2.2.18 Absenteeism

The service provider must contact the parent to establish the cause of the child's absence within the first week of the absence commencing. If a child leaves the service or has not attended for four consecutive weeks, the service must notify Pobal stating the date the child last attended the service. In exceptional circumstances e.g. serious illness, the service may apply to their local CCC to retain the registration beyond four weeks up to maximum of six weeks.

2.2.19 Child leaves before snapshot period commences

If a child leaves before the snapshot period commences they will not be deemed to be enrolled in the CCS Programme and no payment will be made on their behalf.

2.2.20 Transfer from the CCS programme to the TEC programme

- i. If a child is registered on PIP for the CCS Programme 2017/2018 and wishes to transfer to TEC in the same service, the service must apply to the CCC for the TEC place. CCS funding will cease for this child with effect from the CCS end date. For details on how to enter the TEC Programme, please consult the TEC section of this document or alternatively on: www.dcy.gov.ie
- ii. If a child leaves CCS to join the TEC programme in a different service, this must be recorded on PIP immediately with the child's leaving date. Please note that when a child leaves to join a different service under the TEC programme the original CCS service may fill the place with another child – see Section: 'Filling the Vacant CCS Place' at 2.2.14 above.

2.2.21 Transfer from the TEC programme to the CCS programme

- i. A child entered on PIP for the TEC Programme 2017/2018 who wishes to register for the CCS Programme after the snapshot period in the same service, must not have a break between the two Programmes (i.e. child who finishes TEC on a Friday should start CCS on the following Monday). The Transfer must be recorded immediately on PIP so as to enable payment. The CCS place is still based on the eligibility criteria as per the snapshot period of 18 September – 13 October.
- ii. If a child is being funded under the TEC programme but ceases on this programme before the CCS snapshot period has ended (18 September – 13 October), the child **must** be registered under the CCS Programme through PIP. The start date for the child under CCS must be recorded. The CCC must be notified by e-mail that the child has ceased being on the TEC programme.
- iii. If a child was on the CCS Programme prior to the TEC Programme but in a different service, they may only avail of CCS within the new service as a replacement child – see paragraph on 'Filling the Vacant CCS Place' at 2.2.14 above.

⁵ This exercise should be facilitated through the use of monthly FTE calculators

2.2.22 No CCS children

If a CCS service had no children participating in the programme at the time of the snapshot they must notify the DCYA at ccs@dcya.gov.ie and Pobal as any preliminary payments made must be refunded to Pobal.

2.2.23 Tusla/ PHN referrals

The service provider must not ask for voluntary donations or apply a fee to parents who are Tusla or PHN referrals.

2.2.24 Fees List and Service Calendar

- i. Service providers must complete a Fees list and Service Calendar at the beginning of each academic year. This must show details of all fees charged to parents, to include details of any additional charges, discounts, or donations applied by the service.
- ii. A copy of the Fees List, together with copies of any standard letters issued to parents, must be on prominent display in an area accessible to parents.
- iii. Service providers must have a signed letter on file in respect of each parent of a child on the CCS programme, showing the fees that have been approved (“The Service Fees Information Letter”). These fees must match those shown on the Fees List. A CCS calendar must be distributed to all parents showing the days the service is due to be open under the CCS academic year.
- iv. Any changes to Fees List or CCS Calendar must be approved by the CCC. Four weeks’ notice of any change to the Fees List must be given to parents. Where the Fees List has been revised, amended Fees List letters must then be issued and signed by the parents for the service’s files.

2.2.25 Compliance Visits

- i. Services must facilitate compliance visits which may be made without notice, to include access to the premises, personnel and relevant records.
- ii. All documentation related to the financial affairs of the service, accounts, fees lists, registers and the list of CCS children must be on-site at all times. These records must be kept for a minimum period of seven years.

2.2.26 De-committal and Recovery Procedures

Service providers may at times be overpaid over the course of the year for a variety of reasons. If at the end of the year, or on closure, a service has been overpaid, a revised CCS allocation notification will issue and any excess CCS funding must be returned to Pobal.

2.2.27 Service Provider Closures

If a childcare provider closes its service, notice must be submitted in writing to their local County Childcare Committee and to pipdocuments@pobal.ie

2.2.28 Change of Circumstances

- i. In the case of a transfer of ownership of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new online Grant Agreement.
- ii. In the case of a change of legal status of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new online Grant Funding Agreement.

- iii. In the case of a change of address of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new online Grant Funding Agreement.

2.3 Financial Requirements

The financial requirements of the registered provider are set out in the Grant Funding Agreement. The Grant Funding Agreement requires that:

*“The Registered provider shall maintain appropriate records to enable verification by the Department or agents acting on its behalf (including Pobal) that the general terms of the grant are complied with. The specific requirements will be as described in a Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document, published by the Grantor. In particular such records **will include an attendance register which** clearly shows the **dates, times and durations of attendance for each individually identified child for every day that the child is in attendance.** Records of income and expenditure should be kept up to date and available for verification purposes.”*

The Provider shall maintain annual accounts for each financial year and provide copies of such accounts within four (4) months of their adoption to Pobal, as agents of the Department and, on request, to the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG);

The Registered Provider shall comply in full with the provisions of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2014 Management of and Accountability for Grants from Exchequer Funds. In particular, the Registered Provider shall separately account for public funds received and ensure that appropriate financial records to ensure compliance with the requirements in respect of the Funding set out in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2014.

The standard and form of the financial records maintained will be such that the records will enable Pobal, as an agent of the department, to verify compliance with the financial requirements as set out in its Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines⁶ document published by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

The standard and form of the financial records maintained must enable the following to be clearly established:

- *The amount of all grants provided to the Registered Provider from any public funding source relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service including the grantor and purpose of the grant*
- *That all grants have been appropriately spent (in the case of the childcare grant, that it has been used per section 3.1 of this agreement) and accounted for on an individuated basis in line with Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document*
- *Details of other funding sources relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service*

The Provider shall respect and comply with the statutory role and regulatory and public accountability responsibilities of the Department, its agents and other relevant statutory bodies and at all times co-operate fully with the Department, its agents and all other statutory bodies in this regard”

⁶ The Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document will be published by the Grantor and will primarily be a tool for providers to use to support compliance with the requirements for bodies in receipt of public funding. It will amongst other things, include templates that may be used by the Grantee to support reporting to Pobal as agents of the Department

2.4 FAQs for CCS Programme

2.4.1 Can a child attend CCS in more than one service?

Yes. This is allowed provided the child is attending both services during the snapshot period of 18 September to 13 October and the total days attended are not more than five full days.

2.4.2 What is accepted as a CCS eligibility document?

- i. Evidence will not be accepted if it does not contain the name and PPSN of the person.
- ii. The document should contain the name of the parent, PPSN, the name of the allowance/benefit and should encompass the dates of the CCS eligibility period.
- iii. Medical Card or GP Visit Card (GPVC) must be valid during the childcare start date.
- iv. Please check bottom right hand corner for type of card e.g. Doctor's Visit Card (DV) or GPVC instead of MC (medical card).
- v. Please note, bank statements are not accepted as evidence of DSP payments
- vi. Please note, letters from doctors or pharmacists are not accepted as evidence of MC/GPVC

2.4.3 When will bands be approved?

Approved bands will be published on PIP in December of the programme year. Further information will be updated on the PIP homepage in October.

2.4.4 Do I have to give a parent subvention prior to the band rate being approved by the DCYA?

No. Service providers are not obliged to give subvention until the DCYA verifies and approves bands. However, on approval, the parent must be refunded the full subvention amount they are eligible for under the rules of the programme.

2.4.5 Can I give the parent subvention prior to the subvention band rate being approved?

If a service wishes to oblige the parents/guardians by giving them subvention on their childcare costs prior to the bands being approved by the DCYA, they do so at their own risk and are encouraged to ask the parent/guardian for proof of CCS eligibility as reassurance that the band requested is likely to be approved.

2.4.6 How does a parent appeal their assigned band rate?

When the bands are published on PIP, parents may appeal their assigned rate, via the service provider. Please refer to the 'How to Guide' on the PIP Homepage.

2.4.7 I wish to appeal the band given, but parent has since left?

A service cannot appeal a band without supporting evidence. It is important that if a service is to grant subvention to a parent from the start of the programme year in September, they request proof of CCS eligibility. Please note that CCS funding approved by the DCYA will be based only on parent/child's CCS eligibility during the CCS snapshot period.

2.4.8 CCS appeal, service has parent's medical card number but unable to get copy of card, will this suffice?

No. Proof of medical card must be attached as it states name, PPSN and valid end-date

2.4.9 Is Band approval based on status during CCS snapshot period or at time of verification with DSP?

Band approval is strictly based on CCS eligibility during CCS eligibility period of 11 September to 13 October inclusive.

2.4.10 CCS parent approved Band B from snapshot period but their circumstances have now changed and they are eligible for Band A, can they apply for a review of their Band?

No. CCS eligibility is determined and fixed at the band level from the snapshot period of 18 September to 13 October inclusive. A parent's CCS funding will remain at Band B for the CCS programme year. However, a service may enter the child under the CCS Plus programme provided they release the CCS funding and input a leave date on the original registration.

2.4.11 Which parent should register for CCS to ensure appropriate band approval?

Parents should consider which of them has the greater CCS eligibility. Please note that the parent on the registration will be the parent verified by DCYA. The childcare manager may assist in determining the parent who will gain the highest subvention. Alternatively the service or parent may contact their local CCC with this query.

2.4.12 How is CCS band eligibility confirmed?

PPSNs are submitted to the Department of Social Protection and to the HSE to determine eligibility and verify entitlement to subvention. The lists of parental bands assigned to CCS Services will be made available approximately four weeks after the snapshot period has closed.

2.4.13 If a child leaves to attend a different service under CCS, does the first service have to release their CCS funding?

No. While a parent is free to remove their child from a service at any point, they will not be allowed to avail of further childcare funding (from any programme) while the approved funding is committed to the CCS Service. The release of this funding is contingent on the capacity of the CCS service to do so. Notwithstanding this, services are strongly urged to release this funding unless there is a very compelling reason to do otherwise. As a general principle, freedom to move between services benefits all concerned.

2.4.14 If a child leaves to attend a different service under ECCE, does the first service have to release their CCS funding?

Yes. When registering children, services should take appropriate account of the eligibility window for the child concerned. A child cannot be prevented from attending ECCE with the provider of parents' choice should their first point of eligibility fall in January or April.

2.4.15 If a parent was availing of TEC funding during CCS snapshot period but was also eligible for CCS, can CCS funding be requested once the course/TEC funding ends?

Yes, this is called a TEC Exemption and can only be applied if the parent is on the TEC Programme in the same service.

2.4.16 If a parent was on Maternity benefit during the CCS eligibility period, can CCS Funding be requested later in the year when childcare is needed?

Yes, the parent may be eligible for the CCS Programme if they are in receipt of Maternity Benefit during the CCS eligibility period, providing she was CCS eligible immediately prior to commencement of Maternity Benefit or if she held a medical card/GPVC during the snapshot period. Please see Table 1 on this document.

2.4.17 Can an older child who did not attend in the service over snapshot period, as the mother was on Maternity Leave, avail of CCS?

Children should be enrolled and attending the service. The Maternity Leave exemption is to allow for CCS eligibility to be considered for immediately prior to the parent going on Maternity Leave; Maternity Leave is not an eligible benefit for CCS Funding.

2.4.18 CCS Leaver completed on PIP and 'released' funding in error?

Once submitted on PIP, the CCS Leaver form will confirm for the parent if funding has been released or not. Where funding has been released, the parent can present this leaver to another service to avail of their remaining CCS funding. The CCS leaver form verifies what leaving arrangement was agreed with parent.

The Service can contact Pobal at onlinesupport@pobal.ie and inform them of the error; however, any amendment to reinstate funding to a service is fully dependent on written agreement from the parent.

2.4.19 CCS Leaver completed on PIP and funding not released. CCS parent presents at a new service and the first is willing, due to the needs of the family, to retrospectively release funding?

The service must contact Pobal onlinesupport@pobal.ie and request assistance with this.

There is no cut-off point if the first service wishes to release funding retrospectively due to the needs of the family. Funding will be retrieved as an overpayment if the final CCS payment has already been paid.

2.4.20 Can a child attend two programmes at the same time?

Please see Appendix 1 programme attendance permissions.

2.4.21 Can a parent increase or decrease the number of days they wish their child to avail of in CCS?

No. CCS funding is based on a snapshot period and calculated according to attendance during that time. CCS funding will not be increased. If level of attendance has decreased, the provider is expected to use the funding for a 'replacement child'. The provider must retain records where CCS funding has been re-allocated as this will be required for compliance.

2.4.22 Can a child-minder apply to enter a CCS grant funding agreement?

No.

2.4.23 What are compliance visits?

Compliance visits are onsite checks undertaken by Pobal on behalf of the DCYA. The purpose of these visits is to ensure that the service is administering the programmes in line with their CCS grant funding agreement as well as the *Rules for DCYA Childcare Funding Programmes* and the *CCS How to Guide for Service Providers*.

2.4.24 When are payments made?

Payment schedules for Childcare Funding Programmes can be downloaded from the PIP homepage at www.pobal.ie. Payments are issued by Pobal on a fortnightly basis during the year. A preliminary payment is made to CCS services only at the start of the programme year. The first payment is a percentage of the CCS funding amount from the previous year.

Chapter 3 Community Childcare Subvention Plus (CCS Plus)

3.0 Overview of CCS Plus

The Community Childcare Subvention Plus (CCS Plus) Programme provides support for parents on a low income to avail of reduced childcare costs at participating privately owned childcare services and at community not-for-profit childcare services; a list of these services is available through the relevant local CCC. It also provides access to a universal payment available to eligible children. The [Department of Children and Youth Affairs](#) pays a portion of the childcare costs for eligible children (a payment described in this document as a subvention payment) with the parent paying the remainder. The eligibility of the parent is determined by their status with the Department of Social Protection and is set out on Table 2 in this document. Interested parents should contact their local participating childcare service in the first instance.

The CCS Plus programme covers the academic year starting in September and finishing in August. This is referred to as the Programme Year. CCS Plus services may cater for infant, pre-school and afterschool places. They may also incorporate a breakfast club. Some CCS Plus services may be stand-alone services and cater for just one type of service e.g. afterschool.

The new universal subsidy (CCSU) has been introduced within the framework of the CCS under CCS Plus.

Note: CCS Resettlement/Relocation/Transition are dealt with in individual chapters for clarity although they are provided under the CCS Plus grant agreement.

3.1 Eligibility for CCS Plus

3.1.1 Age of eligible child

A child must be under 15 years of age to be eligible for CCS Plus, that is, the child must be born on or after 1 September 2002 to be eligible. CCS Plus subvention is available for up to 52 weeks of the programme year. The Band Rates and Subvention table can be found on Table 1 in this document.

3.1.2 Required documents

CCS Plus eligibility documents must be dated within one month prior to and/or including the week of the child start date on the Programme.

3.1.3 Appeal of Bands

Once a band has been approved there is no appeal process. However, if a service wishes to change level of attendance or amend bands they can end-date current child registration and re-register attaching valid CCS eligibility documents with new start date for changes to take effect.

3.1.4 Duplicate childcare programmes

A child cannot be attending another DCYA childcare programme and be eligible for CCS Plus.

3.1.5 Band eligibility

The eligibility of the applying parent is determined by their status with the Department of Social Protection (DSP). The amount of the subvention by the DCYA is determined by the parent's DSP status and also by the level of childcare required. The eligibility criteria and subsequent childcare and subvention options are set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1 CCS/CCSP Band Eligibility

Level of service	Band A (with medical card)	Band AJ (with medical card)	Band B	Band D
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One Parent Family Payment ▪ Widow's/Widower's Pension ▪ Pre-retirement Allowance ▪ Farm Assist ▪ State Pension ▪ Blind Pension ▪ Guardian's Payment ▪ Illness/Injury Benefit ▪ Disability Allowance ▪ Carer's Benefit/ Allowance ▪ Back to Work Enterprise/Education Allowance ▪ Community Employment / Rural Social Scheme ▪ Domiciliary Care Allowance ▪ Family Income Supplement (FIS) ▪ Secondary School students ▪ Invalidity Pension ▪ Disablement Pension ▪ Official Tusla Referrals (no medical card required) ▪ HSE Public Health Nurse referrals (no medical card required) ▪ TÚS ▪ Part-time Job Incentive Scheme Gateway ▪ Gateway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Job Seekers Benefit/ Allowance* ▪ Supplementary Welfare Allowance** 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Medical Card ▪ Parents who are in receipt of Social Welfare payments listed under Band A/AJ but have no medical card 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GP Visit Card*** (6yrs+ only) ▪ 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
Full-day payment (5 hrs +)	€145	€80	€70	€50
Part-time payment (3:31 – 5:00)	€80	€80	€35	€25
Sessional payment (2:16 – 3:30)	€45	€45	€25	€17
Half-session payment (1:00 – 2:15)	€22.50	€22.50	€12.50	€8.50

*parents who qualify for Band AJ under Jobseeker's allowance/benefit receive maximum subvented childcare of €80 for full day care per week

**parents who qualify for Band AJ under Supplementary Welfare Allowance payments receive maximum subvented childcare of €80 for full day care per week

3.1.6 Note on Table 1

*Jobseeker's allowance/benefit:

Parents who qualify for Band AJ (with medical card) qualify for subvented childcare to a maximum of €80 subvention for full day-care per week. (For the first and second day the subvention is based on the same daily rate as Band A). This cap applies where a child attends from 3 full days to 5 full days per week.

Parents in receipt of Jobseekers Benefit/Allowance (JB / JA) and do **not** have a medical card qualify for subvented childcare under Band B.

** Supplementary Welfare Allowance Scheme

Parent receiving basic payments under the Supplementary Welfare Allowance Scheme, and awaiting a decision on a jobseekers Benefit/Allowance claim may appeal the band AJ awarded if the claim is successful. **Please note a valid medical card must also accompany the DSP evidence in order to qualify for band AJ, otherwise Supplementary Welfare Allowance is Band B.**

*** GP visit card is 6yrs+ only

The universal GP Visit card for children under 6 years of age is not CCS Plus eligible.

Please note: No Band is automatically applied to those parents on **Maternity Benefit**, partaking in a **Springboard course** and/or a First Steps –Youth Developmental Internship or in receipt of the ETB/SOLAS Training Allowance. The appropriate band will be decided based on the allowance received immediately prior to the course/programme/training/benefit.

3.2 CCS Plus Programme Rules

3.2.1 Types of places under the CCS Plus Programme

CCS Plus services must offer childcare places from one or more of the following bands. A different payment rate is attributed to each type of placement.

- Full day-care places (more than 5 hours per day)
- Part-time places (between 3 hours 31 minutes and 5 hours per day)
- Sessional places (between 2 hours 16 minutes and 3 hours 30 minutes per day)
- Half-session places (between 1 hour and 2 hours 15 minutes per day)

3.2.2 Tusla registration

CCS Plus providers must be registered with Tusla for the places being provided as defined under 3.2.1, e.g. services cannot be funded for part-time places when registered with Tusla as a sessional service. This does not apply to services which are limited to the care outside of normal school hours of school aged children.

3.2.3 To enter a child on the CCS Plus Programme

The CCS Plus Programme covers the academic year, starting in September 2017 and finishing in August 2018. When children are being registered for a CCS Plus place, the Service Manager must confirm with the parents the number of days the child is being enrolled for, and the type of childcare place required. Parents must be informed that both their own and their child's Personal Public Service Number (PPSN) will be required when the CCS Plus Child Registration Form is being completed. They will also require the child's date of birth. Further instructions on Child Registration are available on the PIP homepage. Documentation containing PPSN information must be destroyed once no longer required.

3.2.4 Booking Deposits

A childcare provider may charge a refundable booking deposit to the parent to hold a place for a child. The maximum deposit a provider may charge is equivalent to two weeks' payment. The deposit must be returned to the parent once the child's registration is approved.

3.2.5 Optional extras

Childcare providers may charge for optional extras, but a parent may choose not to avail of any of the optional extras. Optional extras must be identified on the fees list at the start of the programme year. Each option must be individually identified.

3.2.6 Exemptions for CCS Plus Services from ECCE Programme

CCS Plus services must have signed the grant funding agreement for the ECCE Programme. CCS Plus providers must apply to the DCYA in writing for an exemption to participate in the ECCE programme e.g. afterschool only services, childminders.

3.2.7 CCS Plus child registration on PIP

CCS Plus services register under their CCS Plus grant funding agreement on the PIP online system. Please refer to PIP 'How to Guide' via the PIP Homepage. Subvention will only be paid in respect of eligible children with effect from the child start date.

3.2.8 Child attendance

Where a service is notified that a child, entered on the CCS Plus, is reducing their level of attendance e.g. from four full days per week to two full days per week or from full-time to part-time, this must be notified to Pobal immediately. Service will set a leave date on current registration and re-register child with new level of attendance.

3.2.9 Absenteeism

The service provider must contact the parent to establish the cause of the child's absence within the first week of the absence commencing. If a child leaves the service or has not attended for two consecutive weeks, the service must notify Pobal stating the date the child last attended the service. In exceptional circumstances e.g. serious illness, the service may apply to their local CCC to retain the registration beyond two weeks up to maximum of four weeks.

3.2.10 Fees List and Service Calendar

- i. Service providers must complete a Fees List and Service Calendar at the beginning of each academic year. They must show details of all the fees charged to parents, as well as details of any additional charges, discounts or donations applied by the service.
- ii. A copy of the Fees List, together with copies of any standard letters issued to parents, must be on prominent display in an area accessible to parents.
- iii. Service providers must have a signed letter on file in respect of each parent of a child on the CCS Plus programme, showing the fees that have been approved. These fees must match those shown on the Fees List. A CCS Plus calendar must be distributed to all parents showing the days the service is due to be open under the CCS Plus academic year.
- iv. Any changes to Fees List or Service Calendar must be approved by the CCC. Four weeks' notice of any change to the Fees List must be given to parents. Where the Fees List has been revised, amended Fees List letters must then issue and be signed by the parents for the service's files.

3.2.11 Compliance Visits

Pobal carries out compliance visits of services on behalf of the DCYA and must be allowed access to the service and personnel. All documentation related to the financial affairs of the service, accounts, fees policies, registers and the list of CCS Plus children should be on-site at all times as Pobal does not have to provide notice to a provider for a compliance visit. These records must be kept for a minimum period of seven years. Pobal reports to the DCYA in respect of their compliance visits.

3.2.12 Tusla/ PHN referrals

The service provider must not ask for voluntary donations or apply a fee to parents who are Tusla or PHN referrals.

3.2.13 De-committal and Recovery Procedures

Service providers may at times be overpaid during the course of the year due to transfers, closures etc. If, at the end of the year, or on closure, a service has been overpaid a revised CCS Plus allocation notification will issue and any excess CCS Plus funding must be returned to Pobal.

3.2.14 Changes/Closures

If a childcare provider closes its service, notice must be submitted in writing to their local County Childcare Committee and to pipdocuments@pobal.ie

3.2.15 Change of Circumstances

- i. In the case of a transfer of ownership of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new online Grant Funding Agreement.
- ii. In the case of a change of legal status of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new online Grant Funding Agreement.
- iii. In the case of a change of address of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new online Grant Funding Agreement.

3.3 Universal Subsidy (CCSU)

3.3.1 Overview of Universal Subsidy

As part of the Government policy to make childcare more affordable, the DCYA has introduced a universal childcare subvention payment of up to €20 per week for families using eligible childcare providers for the care of children aged from 6 months to the first eligible point of entry to the ECCE scheme. This scheme is administered via an enhancement to the CCS scheme.

3.3.2 Eligibility for the Universal Subsidy

The childcare subsidy is available to all children aged from 6 months to the first eligible point of entry to the ECCE programme.

3.3.3 Required documents

The parent must provide the child's PPS Number and date of birth as well as the parent's PPS Number. Documentation containing PPSN information must be destroyed once no longer required.

3.3.4 Programme Rates

The maximum weekly universal childcare subsidy is €20. As CCS subsidies are currently paid according to session type, i.e. full-time, part-time, sessional, half-sessional, this maximum weekly universal subsidy rate of €20 will be paid on a pro-rata basis according to session type.

Table 2 Universal Subsidy (CCSU) rates	
UCS Session Type	Weekly Subsidy
Full-time (i.e. 5 hours plus per day)	€20
Part-time (i.e. 3:31 to 5 hours per day)	€10
Sessional (i.e. 2:16 to 3:30 per day)	€7
Half-sessional (i.e. 1:15 to 2:15 per day)	€3.50

3.3.5 CCSU and Child-minders

A child-minder can access CCSU provided they meet all CCS Plus eligibility criteria, and are registered with Tusla. (Please note that a childminder must be minding four or more children to qualify for Tusla registration).

3.3.6 Child absenteeism

When a child who is entered on PIP for the CCS Plus Programme for 2017/2018 leaves the service or has not attended the service for two consecutive weeks, this information must be entered on PIP, stating the date the child last attended the service. Two weeks' CCS Plus funding will be paid in lieu of notice.

3.4 Financial Requirements

The financial requirements of the registered provider are set out in the Grant Funding Agreement. Fundamentally the Grant Funding Agreement requires that:

*“The Registered provider shall maintain appropriate records to enable verification by the Department or agents acting on its behalf (including Pobal) that the general terms of the grant are complied with. The specific requirements will be as described in a Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document published by the Grantor. In particular such records **will include an attendance register which** clearly shows the **dates, times and durations of attendance for each individually identified child for every day that the child is in attendance**. Records of income and expenditure should be kept up to date and available for verification purposes.*

The Provider shall maintain annual accounts for each financial year and provide copies of such accounts within four (4) months of their adoption to Pobal, as agents of the Department and, on request, to the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG);

The provider shall comply in full with the provisions of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2014 Management of and Accountability for Grants from Exchequer Funds. In particular, the provider shall separately account for public funds received and ensure that appropriate financial records to ensure compliance with the requirements in respect of the Funding set out in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2014

The standard and form of the financial records maintained will be such that the records will enable Pobal, as an agent of the department to verify compliance with the financial requirements

as set out in its *Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines*⁷ document published by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

The standard and form of the financial records maintained must enable the following to be clearly established:

- The amount of all grants provided to the Registered Provider from any public funding source relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service including the grantor and purpose of the grant
- That all grants have been appropriately spent (in the case of the childcare grant, that it has been used per section 3.1 of this agreement) and accounted for on an individuated basis in line with *Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines* document
- Details of other funding sources relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service

The Provider shall respect and comply with the statutory role and regulatory and public accountability responsibilities of the Department, its agents and other relevant statutory bodies and at all times co-operate fully with the Department, its agents and all other statutory bodies in this regard”

3.5 FAQs for CCS Plus Programme

3.5.1 Can a child attend CCS Plus in more than one service?

Yes. This is allowed provided total days attended are not more than five full days.

3.5.2 What is accepted as a CCS Plus eligibility document?

- i. Evidence will not be accepted if it does not contain the name and PPSN of the person.
- ii. The document should contain the name of the parent, PPSN, the name of the allowance/benefit and should be dated within one month prior to or including the first week of registration.
- iii. Medical Card or GP Visit Card (GPVC) must be valid during the childcare start date.
- iv. Please check bottom right hand corner for type of card e.g. Doctor’s Visit Card (DV) or GPVC instead of MC (medical card).
- v. Please note, bank statements are not accepted as evidence of DSP payments
- vi. Please note, letters from doctors or pharmacists are not accepted as evidence of MC/GPVC

3.5.3 When will bands be approved?

Processing of CCS Plus Registrations takes approximately three to four weeks.

3.5.4 Do I have to give a parent subvention prior to the Band rate being approved by DCYA?

No. Service providers are not obliged to give subvention until the DCYA verifies and approves bands. However, on approval, the parent must be refunded the full subvention amount.

3.5.5 Can I give the parent subvention prior to the subvention band rate being approved?

If a service wishes to oblige the parents/guardians by giving them subvention on their childcare costs prior to the bands being approved by DCYA, they do so at their own risk and are encouraged to ask the parent/guardian for proof of CCS eligibility as reassurance that the band requested is likely to be approved.

⁷ The *Financial Procedures, Reporting and Requirements and Guidelines* document will be published by the Grantor and will primarily be a tool for providers to use to support compliance with the requirements for bodies in receipt of public funding. It will amongst other things, include templates that may be used by the Grantee to support reporting to Pobal as agents of the Department

3.5.6 Under which parent should the CCS Plus registration be made to ensure appropriate band approval?

Parents should consider the CCS Plus eligibility when deciding this. Please note that the parent on the registration will be the parent verified by the DCYA. The childcare manager may assist in determining the parent who will gain the highest subvention. Alternatively, the service or parent may contact their local CCC with this query.

3.5.7 CCS child moving from another service where CCS funding has not been released?

When a child transfers from a CCS service to a CCS Plus service and funding is not released the child will be unable to join the CCS Plus Programme

Please see Appendix 1 for programme transfer permissions.

3.5.8 Can a child-minder apply to enter into a CCS Plus grant funding agreement?

A child-minder can be in CCS Plus once they meet all other eligibility criteria but the child-minder can only access CCS Universal.

3.5.9 What are compliance visits?

Compliance visits are onsite checks undertaken by Pobal on behalf of the DCYA. The purpose of these visits is to ensure that the service is administering the programmes in line with their CCS Plus grant funding agreement as well as the *Rules for DCYA Childcare Funding Programmes* and the *CCSP How to Guide for Service Providers*.

3.5.10 When are payments made?

Payment schedules for Childcare Funding Programmes can be downloaded from the PIP homepage at www.pobal.ie.

3.5.11 Can a family access the universal payment for an ECCE-eligible child while awaiting an ECCE place?

No. The universal payment ceases once the family reaches the first available entry point for their eligible child. The payments ceases whether or not the child has taken up a place.

Chapter 4 Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement (CCSR)

4.0 Overview of CCSR

As per a government approval, the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs supported a decision to increase Ireland's resettlement quota to cater for up to 4,000 Programme Refugees. To support the Programme Refugees (PRs) in their resettlement and integration into Irish society, the need to provide dedicated childcare funding was recognised. Childcare funding was incorporated into the existing CCS and CCSP Programmes to enable parents to attend a language and orientation course within their reception centre for eight weeks and then a full year following their move into the community (i.e. 60 weeks in total) at a flat rate of €145 per week, for part-time childcare (up to 5 hours per day), over 4 days per week for each approved child (all preschool children aged 0 – 5yrs and school aged children 6 – 12yrs for primary school holidays periods only) for the eligible duration of their childcare place. Originally, there were two strands of Programme Refugees; however, with effect from 26 June 2017, the two strands have been aligned into one.

4.1 Eligibility for CCSR

4.1.1 Age of eligible child

Participating pre-school going children must be between 0 and 5 years old on their start date. School-aged children (between 6 and 12 years) can access childcare for the primary school holiday periods only.

4.2 CCSR Programme Rules

4.2.1 Required documents/information

Parent/s must supply a completed eligibility letter submitted and signed by the Department of Justice and Equality. Template available on the PIP Homepage www.pobal.ie

4.2.2 Types of Places under the CCSR Programme

Only part-time places (between 3hrs 31mins and 5 hrs) are provided under the CCSR programme.

4.2.3 Tusla Registration

Service providers must be registered with Tusla for the part-time session in order to be funded for same.

4.2.4 Entering a Child on the CCSR Programme

Services must have signed up to the grant agreement for the CCSP programme in order to submit a CCSR registration. When children are being registered for a CCSR place, the Service Manager must confirm with the parents the number of days the child is being enrolled for. Instructions on Child Registration are available on the PIP homepage.

4.2.5 Child Attendance

Once the child is registered and approved for CCSR funding, the service will receive a minimum of four weeks' funding for the child from the start date of child's attendance.

4.2.6 Change of attendance schedule

Where attendance differs from registration consistently over a four week period, e.g. from four days per week to three days per week, the change in registration must be notified to Pobal to reflect the actual number of days the child attends, within two weeks of the change in attendance

commencing. This is achieved through PIP. The service will receive a minimum of four weeks' funding, plus two weeks' notice in lieu, giving a total of six weeks' payment after which the service will be paid pro rata. The service will set a leave date on current registration and re-register child with new level of attendance.

4.2.7 CCSR Child registration on PIP

CCS Plus services must register the child under their CCSR grant funding agreement on the PIP online system. Please refer to PIP 'How to Guide' via the PIP homepage. Subvention will only be paid in respect of eligible children with effect from the child start date.

4.2.8 Child Registration Window

Registration can occur anytime from the start of the programme year 21 August 2017 up to 17 August 2018. If a child is eligible for 60 weeks this carries into the following programme year (2018/2019). A child will only receive up to a maximum of 60 weeks in total over two programme years.

4.2.9 If a child leaves the CCSR Programme

When a child leaves the CCSR service, all services must report leavers and the information must be entered on PIP, stating the date the child last attended the service.

4.2.10 Child Absenteeism

The service provider must contact the parent to establish the cause of the child's absence within the first week of the absence commencing. If a child leaves the service or has not attended for two consecutive weeks, the service must notify Pobal stating the date the child last attended the service. In exceptional circumstances e.g. serious illness, the service may apply to their local CCC to retain the registration beyond two weeks up to maximum of four weeks.

4.2.11 Fees Policy and CCSR

Parents **cannot** be asked to make any financial contribution towards their child's childcare cost.

4.2.12 Calendar Policy

The service should provide a calendar to the parents to show them the dates they are open throughout the academic year.

4.2.13 Compliance Visits

- i. Services must facilitate compliance visits which may be made without notice, to include access to the premises, personnel and relevant records.
- ii. All documentation related to the financial affairs of the service, accounts, registers and the list of CCSR children must be on-site at all times. These records must be kept for a minimum period of seven years.

4.2.14 De-committal and Recovery Procedures

Service providers may at times be overpaid during the course of the year due to transfers, closures etc. If at the end of the year, or on closure, a CCSR service has been overpaid, a revised CCSR allocation notification will issue and any excess CCSR funding must be returned to Pobal.

4.2.15 Closures

If a childcare provider closes its service, notice must be submitted in writing to their local County Childcare Committee and to pipdocuments@pobal.ie

4.2.16 Change of circumstances

- i. In the case of a transfer of ownership of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new online Grant Funding Agreement.
- ii. In the case of a change of legal status of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new online Grant Funding Agreement.
- iii. In the case of a change of address of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new online Grant Funding Agreement.

4.2.17 Duration of programme

The total duration of the programme is 60 weeks.

4.2.18 Programme Rates

A flat rate of €145 per week, for part-time childcare (up to 5 hours per day), over 4 days per week for each approved child (children aged 0 - 5yrs) for the eligible duration of their childcare place.

4.3 Financial Requirements

The financial requirements of the registered provider are set out in the Grant Funding Agreement.

The Grant Funding Agreement requires that:

*“The Registered provider shall maintain appropriate records to enable verification by the Department or agents acting on its behalf (including Pobal) that the general terms of the grant are complied with. The specific requirements will be as described in a Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document published by the Grantor. In particular such records **will include an attendance register which** clearly shows the **dates, times and durations of attendance for each individually identified child for every day that the child is in attendance.** Records of income and expenditure should be kept up to date and available for verification purposes.*

The Provider shall maintain annual accounts for each financial year and provide copies of such accounts within four (4) months of their adoption to Pobal, as agents of the Department and, on request, to the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG);

The provider shall comply in full with the provisions of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2014 Management of and Accountability for Grants from Exchequer Funds. In particular, the provider shall separately account for public funds received and ensure that appropriate financial records to ensure compliance with the requirements in respect of the Funding set out in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2014

The standard and form of the financial records maintained will be such that the records will enable Pobal, as an agent of the department to verify compliance with the financial requirements as set out in its Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines⁸ document published by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

The standard and form of the financial records maintained must enable the following to be clearly established:

- *The amount of all grants provided to the Registered Provider from any public funding source relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service including the grantor and purpose of the grant*

⁸ The Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document will be published by the Grantor and will primarily be a tool for providers to use to support compliance with the requirements for bodies in receipt of public funding. It will amongst other things, include templates that may be used by the Grantee to support reporting to Pobal as agents of the Department

- *That all grants have been appropriately spent (in the case of the childcare grant, that it has been used per section 3.1 of this agreement) and accounted for on an individualised basis in line with Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document*
- *Details of other funding sources relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service*

The Provider shall respect and comply with the statutory role and regulatory and public accountability responsibilities of the Department, its agents and other relevant statutory bodies and at all times co-operate fully with the Department, its agents and all other statutory bodies in this regard”

4.4 FAQs for CCSR

I have been given the correct eligibility letter but the child has already been funded for CCSR in another service?

Children eligible for CCSR may move between services in order to facilitate their movement between Reception Centres and their new communities. Please consult the ‘CCS Resettlement PIP How to Guide for Service Providers’, available on the PIP Homepage, for more details of how to manage the child’s registration.

Chapter 5 Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement (Transitional) (CCSR(T))

5.0 Overview of CCSR(T)

As part of the “Rebuilding Ireland – an Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness”, the DCYA launched a special provision under the current Community Childcare Subvention Programme (entitled CCSR (Transitional), which provides access to free childcare for children of families experiencing homelessness. The provision provides subvention for all pre-school children, including those of ECCE eligible age range aged 0 to 5 inclusive. The scheme is also designed to help those transitioning from homelessness to permanent accommodation.

The scheme comprises a flat rate of €160 per week, for part-time childcare (3hrs 31mins to 5hrs) over five days per week and paid in relation to each child attending under CCSR(T), for the eligible duration of their childcare place. A daily meal is also provided for each child, the cost of which is included in the subvention rate.

CCSR(T) is only available through participating early years services; a list of these services is available through the relevant local CCC.

CCSR(T) expanded to include a sessional rate option of €87.50 for 2hrs 16mins – 3hrs 30mins over five days per week in relation to each child attending under CCSR(T) and was introduced with effect from 26th June 2017.

5.1 Eligibility for CCSR(T)

5.1.1 Age of eligible child

Participating pre-school going children must be between 0 – 5yrs on their start date.

5.2 CCSR(T) Programme Rules

5.2.1 Documents/information required

- i. A verification letter from Focus Ireland (if in the Dublin area) or from their local authority (for all counties outside Dublin) is required.
- ii. A CCSR(T) Parental Declaration Form will be made available to the relevant service providers who must complete this form manually and retain for compliance.
- iii. In order to confirm eligibility, both the Parent’s and Child’s Personal Public Service Number (PPSN) are required, as well as the child’s date of birth, when the CCSR(T) Child Registration Form is being completed.
- iv. Documentation containing PPSN information must be destroyed once no longer required.

5.2.2 Duration of programme

The CCSR(T) programme runs for the duration of the programme year. The programme call year for the academic year 2017/2018 is 21 August 2017 to 17 August 2018.

5.2.3 CCSR(T) eligibility

The eligibility of the applying parent is determined by Focus Ireland/Local Authority (if outside of Dublin).

5.2.4 Childcare sessional types

CCSR(T) services will only offer childcare places for the following session types:

- Part-time places (between 3 hours 31 minutes and 5 hours per day)
- Sessional places (between 2 hours 16 minutes and 3 hours 30 minutes per day)

5.2.5 Programme rates

A different payment rate is attributed to each type of placement.

- i. For part-time childcare over 5 days per week, a flat rate of €160 per week, will be paid in relation to each child attending under CCSR(T), for the eligible duration of their childcare place. A daily meal must be provided for each child, the cost of which is included in the subvention rate.
- ii. For sessional childcare over 5 days per week, a rate of €87.50 will be paid in relation to each child attending for the eligible duration of their childcare place. A daily meal is also to be provided for each child, the cost of which is included in the subvention rate.

5.2.6 Entering a Child on the CCSR(T) Programme

The CCSR(T) covers the academic year, starting on 21 August 2017 and finishing on 17 August 2018. When children are being registered for a CCSR(T) place, the Service Manager must confirm with the parents the number of days the child is being enrolled for, and the type of childcare place required. Further instructions on Child Registration are available on the PIP homepage.

5.2.7 CCSR(T) Child Registration on PIP

CCSR(T) services must register the child under their CCSR(T) grant funding agreement on the PIP online system. Please refer to PIP 'How to Guide' via the PIP homepage. Subvention will only be paid in respect of eligible children with effect from the child start date.

5.2.8 Change of attendance schedule

Where attendance differs from registration consistently over a four week period, e.g. from four days per week to three days per week, the change in registration must be notified to Pobal to reflect the actual number of days the child attends, within two weeks thereafter. This is achieved through PIP. Service will set a leave date on current registration and re-register child with new level of attendance.

5.2.9 If a child leaves the CCSR(T) Programme

When a child leaves the CCSR(T), all service providers must report leavers and the information must be entered on PIP, stating the date the child last attended the service.

5.2.10 Child Attendance

Once the child is registered and approved for CCSR(T) funding, the service will receive a minimum of four weeks' funding for the child from the start date of the child's attendance.

5.2.11 Absenteeism

If there is non-attendance for two weeks or more, the relevant service must end-date the child on the PIP registration system. The childcare service will receive two weeks' funding in lieu of notice. If the child leaves on or after the third week of attendance, the service shall receive the minimum one month's funding plus two weeks' notice in lieu, giving a total of six weeks payment. All services must report leavers through PIP.

5.2.12 Transfer from the TEC programme to the CCSR (T) programme

The service provider must insert an end date on the child's registration on PIP and re-register the child on PIP under CCSR(T).

5.2.13 Fees Policy

Parents **cannot** be asked to make any financial contribution towards their child's childcare cost.

5.2.14 Calendar Policy

The service is to provide a calendar to the parents to show them the dates they are open throughout the academic year.

5.2.15 Compliance Visits

- i. Services must facilitate compliance visits which may be made without notice, to include access to the premises, personnel and relevant records.
- ii. All documentation related to the financial affairs of the service, accounts, registers and the list of CCSR(T) children must be on-site at all times. These records must be kept for a minimum period of seven years.

5.2.16 De-committal and Recovery Procedures

CCSR(T) providers may at times be overpaid during the course of the year due to transfers, closures etc. If at the end of the year, or on closure, a CCSR(T) service has been overpaid, a revised CCSR(T) allocation notification will issue and any excess CCSR(T) funding must be returned to Pobal.

5.2.17 Closures

If a childcare provider closes its service, notice must be submitted in writing to their local County Childcare Committee and to pipdocuments@pobal.ie

5.2.18 Change of circumstances

- i. In the case of a transfer of ownership of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new online Grant Funding Agreement.
- ii. In the case of a change of legal status of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new online Grant Funding Agreement.
- iii. In the case of a change of address of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new online Grant Funding Agreement.

5.2.19 Duration of programme

The CCSR(T) programme runs for the duration of the programme call year.

5.2.20 Split placement

Once the child is registered and approved for CCSR(T) funding, the service will receive a minimum of four weeks' funding for the child from the start date of child's attendance. If there is non-attendance for two weeks or more, the relevant service must end-date the child on the PIP registration system. The childcare service will receive two weeks' funding in lieu of notice. Non-attendance may occur due to the family being moved to alternative accommodation and the need for the family to register in another childcare service. In this instance, it may be necessary to afford the necessity of a cross over in funding in both services for the two weeks' transition from one service to another.

Note: the parent must submit the same DCYA eligibility letter to both the first and second service providers.

5.2.21 Funding of CCSR(T) child leaving the service

If the child's place is no longer needed or the child has not attended for two weeks or more, the CCS/CCSP funding will cease. The provider will receive two weeks funding in lieu of notice.

5.3 FAQs for CCSR(T) Programme

5.3.1 Can any service register a child under this programme?

Service providers must already have a grant funding agreement with the DCYA under the CCS Plus programmes to be eligible. Access to CCSR(T) will be on an 'as requested' basis only, and must be requested by service providers. Service providers can request that their service be enabled to provide CCSR(T) on PIP by contacting their local CCC.

5.3.2 What do parents need to provide?

Parents should provide a verification letter which is available for parents from Focus Ireland in the Dublin region and from local authorities outside of Dublin. The prescribed letter must be attached to the registration under the Parent Eligibility Info section.

5.3.3 A child in my service may be eligible for CCSR(T) but is already in CCS/CCSP/ECCE, can they join CCSR(T)?

Yes, if a child is already in a DCYA childcare programme, the service will end-date the child's registration on PIP and re-register the child on PIP under CCSR(T).

Please note for CCS registered children who wish to join CCSR(T) in the same service, the childcare service must release the funding.

5.4 CCSR(T) Financial requirements

The financial requirements of the registered provider are set out in the Grant Funding Agreement. The Grant Funding Agreement requires that:

*"The Registered provider shall maintain appropriate records to enable verification by the Department or agents acting on its behalf (including Pobal) that the general terms of the grant are complied with. The specific requirements will be as described in a Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document published by the Grantor. In particular such records **will include an attendance register which** clearly shows the **dates, times and durations of attendance for each individually identified child for every day that the child is in attendance**. Records of income and expenditure should be kept up to date and available for verification purposes.*

The Provider shall maintain annual accounts for each financial year and provide copies of such accounts within four (4) months of their adoption to Pobal, as agents of the Department and, on request, to the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG);

The provider shall comply in full with the provisions of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2014 Management of and Accountability for Grants from Exchequer Funds. In particular, the provider shall separately account for public funds received and ensure that appropriate financial records to ensure compliance with the requirements in respect of the Funding set out in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2014

The standard and form of the financial records maintained will be such that the records will enable Pobal, as an agent of the department to verify compliance with the financial requirements

as set out in its Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines⁹ document published by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

The standard and form of the financial records maintained must enable the following to be clearly established:

- The amount of all grants provided to the Registered Provider from any public funding source relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service including the grantor and purpose of the grant*
- That all grants have been appropriately spent (in the case of the childcare grant, that it has been used per section 3.1 of this agreement) and accounted for on an individuated basis in line with Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document*
- Details of other funding sources relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service*

The Provider shall respect and comply with the statutory role and regulatory and public accountability responsibilities of the Department, its agents and other relevant statutory bodies and at all times co-operate fully with the Department, its agents and all other statutory bodies in this regard”

⁹ The Financial Procedures, Reporting and Requirements and Guidelines document will be published by the Grantor and will primarily be a tool for providers to use to support compliance with the requirements for bodies in receipt of public funding. It will amongst other things, include templates that may be used by the Grantee to support reporting to Pobal as agents of the Department

Chapter 6 Training and Employment Childcare (TEC)

6.0 Overview of TEC

The TEC Programme is an overarching childcare programme specifically designed to support parents on eligible training courses as well as certain categories of parents returning to work, by providing subsidised childcare places. The TEC Programme provides childcare support for parents on certain education and training courses (CETS), parents working on Community Employment programmes (CEC), and also for families on Family Income Support (ASCC):

Childcare Education and Training Support programme (CETS)

The CETS Programme provides childcare to certain training course participants on courses provided by the Education and Training Boards (ETB, formerly FAS and VEC) and Secondary Schools.

Community Employment Childcare programme (CEC)

The CEC is administered on behalf of the Department of Social Protection (DSP) and provides childcare for children of parents who are participating on Community Employment schemes.

After-School Child Care programme (ASCC)

The ASCC is administered on behalf of the Department of Social Protection (DSP) and provides afterschool care for primary school children for certain categories of working parents and parents on DSP employment programmes (not including Community Employment).

Extra funding is provided to compensate for school holidays. This is referred to as a 'top-up'. TEC is only available through participating early years services; a list of these services is available through the relevant local CCC.

6.1 Eligibility for TEC (CETS, CEC and ASCC)

All TEC participants' eligibility is determined by the Department of Social Protection (DSP) and is outlined below for each programme.

6.1.1 Eligibility Criteria for CETS

Participants on the following Further Education Programmes are eligible to apply for **CETS** funding:

- CETS approved Education and Training Board (ETB) courses
- CETS approved Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)
- CETS approved Youthreach
- Back to Education Initiative (BTEI)
- Secondary school students completing Junior or Leaving Certificate cycle

6.1.2 Documents/information required for CETS

Parent must provide a letter from their training provider to include hours of course and start and finish dates.

6.1.3 Eligibility Criteria for CEC

Under the **CEC** programme (pre-school and after-school), a Community Employment (CE) participant who requires childcare in order to begin or continue on a CE scheme is eligible for a childcare place.

6.1.4 Documents/information required for CEC

Parent must provide a letter from their CE Sponsor to include hours of work and start and finish dates.

6.1.5 Eligibility Criteria for ASCC

In order to be eligible for **ASCC** a client must be in receipt of Family Income Supplement (FIS) and increase hours of work or satisfy the below:

- Be in receipt of Jobseekers' Benefit (JB) or Jobseekers' Allowance (JA), Jobseekers' Transitional payment (JST) or One-parent Family Payment (OFP) or be on a DSP employment programme (or any combination of the above) for at least three months (78 days) AND have one or more children aged between 4 and 13 years who are in primary school

AND

- Commence any one of the following: employment (either full-time or part-time) OR increase their employment OR a specified DSP employment programme as follows (except Community Employment): WPP, BTWEA, TUS, Gateway or RSS

6.1.6 Documents/information required for ASCC

Parents must provide a letter from the Department of Social Protection (DSP) confirming their DSP status.

NOTE: Availing of ASCC does not preclude subsequent application for FIS, where other FIS eligibility criteria are met

Please see table 3 on the following page containing TEC programme rates.

Table 3

Targeted Programmes: Funding Amounts	Childcare Education and Training Support (CETS) (pro-rata up to 5 days per week)	After-School Childcare (ASCC) (pro-rata up to 5 days per week)	Community Employment Childcare Pre-school (CEC PS) Flat Rate*- 5 days per week)	Community Employment Childcare After-School Childcare (CEC AS) Flat Rate - 5 days per week)	
Full-Day Weekly Payment (5 to 10 hours per day)	€145pw	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Part-time Weekly Payment (3:31-5:00 hours per day)	€80pw + 14wk top-up at €65 extra per week	N/A	€80pw * pro-rata when full-time childcare used a couple of days and child is in ECCE also	N/A	
Sessional Weekly Payment (2:16-3:30 hours per day)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Half Session Weekly Payment(1:00-2:15 hours per day)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
After-School (up to 3:30 hours per day)	€45pw + 14wk top-up at €100 extra per week	€45pw + 10 wk top-up at €100 extra per week	N/A	€45pw + 10wk top-up to part-time at €35 extra per week	
After-School + Transport	€80pw + 14wk top-up at €65 extra per week	€80pw + 10 wk top-up at €65 extra per week	N/A	N/A	
Maximum Parental Contribution (pro-rata applicable) <small>*Subvention plus parental contribution combined cannot exceed the cost of the place as per service fees list</small>	Full-Day Part-time After-School After-School with Transport	€25pw €15pw €5pw €15pw	€15pw	€15pw	€15pw

6.2 TEC Programme Rules

6.2.1 Types of Places under the TEC Programme

- Full day-care places (more than 5 hours per day, CETS only)
- Part-time places (between 3 hours 31 minutes and 5 hours, CETS, CEC (CEC AS under top-up arrangements)
- After School (up to 3 hours 30 minutes, CETS, CEC AS and ASCC)
- After School + Transport (CETS and ASCC)

6.2.2 Tusla registration

TEC providers must be registered with Tusla for the places being provided as defined under 6.2.1, e.g. services cannot be funded for part-time places when registered with Tusla as a sessional service.

6.2.3 Entering a child on the TEC Programme

The Service Manager must confirm the number of days the child is being enrolled for and the type of childcare required when registering the child for a TEC place. Further instructions on Child Registration are available on the PIP homepage. Documentation containing PPSN information must be destroyed once no longer required.

6.2.4 Booking deposits

A childcare provider may charge a refundable booking deposit to the parent to hold a place for a child. The maximum deposit a provider may charge is equivalent to two weeks' payment. The deposit must be returned to the parent once the child's registration is approved on PIP.

6.2.5 Optional extras

Childcare providers may charge for optional extras, but a parent may choose not to avail of any of the optional extras. Optional extras must be identified on the fees list at the start of the programme year. Each option must be individually identified.

6.2.6 Child attendance

Where a service is notified that a child is reducing their level of attendance e.g. from four days per week to two days per week or from full-time to part-time, this must be notified to Pobal immediately. Service will set a leave date on current registration and re-register child with new level of attendance.

6.2.7 Absenteeism

The service provider must contact the parent to establish the cause of the child's absence within the first week of the absence commencing. If a child leaves the service or has not attended for two consecutive weeks, the service must notify Pobal stating the date the child last attended the service. In exceptional circumstances e.g. serious illness, the service may apply to their local CCC to retain the registration beyond two weeks up to maximum of four weeks.

6.2.8 TEC Child Registration on PIP

TEC services must register the child under their TEC grant funding agreement on the PIP online system. Please refer to PIP 'How to Guide' via the PIP Homepage.

6.2.9 Reporting of Leavers

When a child leaves the TEC service or has not attended the service for two consecutive weeks, this information must be reported to Pobal through the PIP system, stating the date the child last attended the service.

6.2.10 Transfer from the CCS programme to the TEC programme

If a child is registered on PIP for the CCS/P Programme 2017/2018 and wishes to transfer to TEC in the same service, the service must apply to the CCC for the TEC place. CCS funding will cease for this child with effect from the CCS end date.

6.2.11 Transfer from the TEC programme to the CCS programme

- i. A child entered on PIP for the TEC Programme 2017/2018 who wishes to register for the CCS Programme after the snapshot period in the same service, must not have a break between the two Programmes (i.e. child who finishes TEC on a Friday should start CCS on the following Monday). The Transfer must be recorded immediately on PIP so as to enable payment. The CCS place is still based on the eligibility criteria as per the snapshot period of 18 September – 13 October.
- ii. If a child is being funded under the TEC programme but ceases on this programme before the CCS snapshot period has ended (18 September – 13 October), the child **must** be registered under the CCS Programme through PIP. The start date for the child under CCS must be recorded. The CCC must be notified by e-mail that the child has ceased being on the TEC programme.

6.2.12 Fees Policy

Please refer to table 3 with regard to the maximum parental contribution under the different programmes.

6.2.13 Service Calendars

Service providers must complete a Service Calendar for each TEC programme at the beginning of each academic year and provide a copy to all TEC parents.

6.2.14 Compliance Visits

- i. Services must facilitate compliance visits which may be made without notice, to include access to the premises, personnel and relevant records.
- ii. All documentation related to the financial affairs of the service, accounts, fees policies, registers and the list of children must be on-site at all times. These records must be kept for a minimum period of seven years.

6.2.15 De-committal and Recovery Procedures

Service providers may at times be overpaid over the course of the year for a variety of reasons. If at the end of the year, or on closure, a service has been overpaid, a revised TEC allocation notification will issue and any excess TEC funding must be returned to Pobal.

6.2.16 Service Provider Closures

If a childcare provider closes its service, notice must be submitted in writing to their local County Childcare Committee and to pipdocuments@pobal.ie

6.2.17 Change of Circumstances

- i. In the case of a transfer of ownership of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new online Grant Agreement.
- ii. In the case of a change of legal status of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new online Grant Funding Agreement.

- iii. In the case of a change of address of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new online Grant Funding Agreement.

6.2.18 Age of child for CETS

A child must be under 15 years of age on the childcare start date for CETS

6.2.19 Duration of CETS

The duration of CETS corresponds with the start and end dates stated on the eligibility letter up to a maximum of 50 weeks per year

6.2.20 Age of child for CEC (Pre-school)

A child must be under 5 years of age on the childcare start date for CEC (Pre-School)

6.2.21 Age of child for CEC (After-school)

A child must be under 13 years of age on the childcare start date for CEC (After-school)

6.2.22 Duration of CEC

The duration of CEC corresponds with the start and end dates stated on the eligibility letter up to a maximum of 50 weeks per year

6.2.23 Age of child for ASCC

A child must be in primary school and less than 13 years of age on the childcare start date for ASCC (including summer prior to starting primary school)

6.2.24 Duration of ASCC

ASCC is available for a once off maximum of 52 weeks and this allowance does not have to be used consecutively

6.2.25 Registering on more than one programme

See Appendix 1 for information on registering a child on more than one DCYA programme

6.2.26 Notice when moving a child to another service

If a parent wishes to transfer their child to another childcare provider they must provide two weeks' notice to the current provider

6.2.27 Transport service

- i. "With transport" means that the child will be transported to school (drop-off) and from school (pick up) by the service.
- ii. CETS part-time childcare does not include transport. Parents must choose between having the extra hours of childcare through a part-time place, i.e. more than 3.5 hours, and paying for transport as an optional extra or choosing the after-school with transport session and paying for the extra care (time) needed beyond 3.5 hours

6.2.28 Childcare extends into another programme year

When TEC childcare dates run over into another programme year the child must be re-registered once the new programme year commences (please see How to Guide for details)

6.2.29 Sign-in

- i. The TEC parent must sign-in on a weekly basis with the childcare provider to declare to the service that they are still in attendance at their relevant course/work placement; sign-in sheets cannot be pre-signed. Failure to sign in will result in the service submitting a leaver form for that child

- ii. The childcare provider must contact their local CCC where a parent hasn't signed in, due to exceptional circumstances, for authorisation to keep the TEC place open
- iii. An additional adult may sign-in on behalf of a parent who is not in a position to drop off/collect their child. A signed letter of permission must be provided by the parent to the childcare provider to this effect

6.2.30 Mid-term/summer periods

A parent may seek childcare to cover mid-term and summer periods under CETS, CEC and ASCC. This holiday time is referred to as a 'top-up' and is up to 14 weeks for CETS, and 10 weeks for CEC and ASCC.

6.3 Financial Requirements

The financial requirements of the registered provider are set out in the Grant Funding Agreement. The Grant Funding Agreement requires that:

"The Grantee agrees to maintain up to date child registration information on the Programmes Implementation Platform in compliance with the 'Rules for the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) Childcare Funding Programmes' the 'ECCE How to Guide for Service Providers', Policy on the Operation of the Access and Inclusion Model and related information and any additional requirements of the Programmes Implementation Platform.

*The Grantee shall maintain appropriate records to enable verification by the Department or agents acting on its behalf (including Pobal) that the general terms of the grant are complied with. The specific requirements will be as described in a Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document published by the Grantor. In particular such records **will include an attendance register which** clearly shows the **dates, times and durations of attendance for each individually identified child for every day that the child is in attendance.** Records of income and expenditure should be kept up to date and available for verification purposes.*

The Grantee shall maintain annual accounts for each financial year and provide copies of such accounts within four (4) months of their adoption to Pobal, as agents of the Department and, on request, to the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG);

The Grantee shall comply in full with the provisions of Circular 13/2014. In particular, the Grantee shall separately account for public funds received and ensure that appropriate financial records are maintained to ensure compliance with the requirements of Circular 13/2014.

The standard and form of the financial records maintained will be such that the records will enable Pobal, as an agent of the Department to verify compliance with the financial requirements as set out in its Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines¹⁰ document published by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

The standard and form of the financial records maintained must enable the following to be clearly established:

- *The amount of all grants provided to the Registered Provider from any public funding source relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service including the grantor and purpose of the grant*
- *That all grants have been appropriately spent (in the case of the childcare grant, that it has been used per section 3.1 of this agreement) and accounted for on an individuated basis in line with Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document*

¹⁰ The Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document will be published by the Grantor and will primarily be a tool for providers to use to support compliance with the requirements for bodies in receipt of public funding. It will, amongst other things, include templates that may be used by the grantee to support reporting to Pobal as agents of the Department

- *Details of other funding sources relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service*

The Grantee shall respect and comply with the statutory role and regulatory and public accountability responsibilities of the Department, its agents and other relevant statutory bodies and at all times co-operate fully with the Department, its agents and all other statutory bodies in this regard”

6.4 FAQs for TEC Programme

6.4.1 What if a parent’s eligibility is extended within the programme year?

The existing registration should be allowed to expire on PIP and a new registration covering the extended eligibility dates should be submitted.

6.4.2 When does an ASCC letter of eligibility expire?

ASCC eligibility letters must be first registered for approval within 26 weeks of the date of the letter. As soon as they are used once there is no expiry date. A maximum of 52 weeks is allowed (which can include ten of those weeks topped up to full-time childcare) but they do not need to be used over consecutive weeks.

6.4.3 Can a child still attend the service if the parent is not attending course/work placement due to sickness?

This will be considered on a case by case basis and a childcare provider must contact their local CCC for authorisation to keep the childcare place open. Documentary evidence of this must be retained for compliance purposes

6.4.4 Is it possible to have changeable care arrangements (no fixed pattern)?

This is subject to the agreement of the childcare provider. The parent may need to seek an alternative childcare provider if their provider cannot accommodate changeable arrangements.

6.4.5 Is it possible to have week-on/week-off childcare?

Yes. Instructions for the provider on how to do this can be found in the ‘How to Guide’

6.4.6 If a CETS child does not attend for childcare for one week does the parent have to pay the parent contribution?

As part of the CETS registration, the service provider must request the parent’s course calendar to note the weeks the parent is not on the course. The parent does not have to pay the parent contribution for the weeks the course is not running.

6.4.7 What should a childcare provider do if a child attends two days in one week and three days the next as an on-going pattern?

A childcare provider should submit registration on PIP for the two days per week with a request for PIP support to allocate an extra day every second week.

Appendix 1

Rules on attending more than one programme

Programme	ECCE	CCS	CCS Plus	CCSRT	TEC
ECCE	No [^]	No [~]	No [~]	No	Yes*
CCS	No [~]	No	No	No	No**
CCS Plus	No [~]	No	No***	No	No**
CCSRT	No	No	No	No	No
TEC	Yes*	No**	No**	No	Yes#

[^]ECCE place can be split between two services in exceptional circumstances, e.g. parental separation and joint custody arrangement which geographically makes it impossible for child to attend same service every day **OR** child with disability attending a specialist pre-school and mainstream pre-school on the recommendation of an early intervention team

[~]May be allowed avail of part-time CCS in separate service in exceptional circumstances, case by case basis

*Allowed if TEC eligibility is outside ECCE hours, e.g. course is on in the afternoon and ECCE is on in the morning

**Only allowed in exceptional circumstances

***Places can be split where the total does not exceed five days

Allowed in the same service where a parent is eligible for CEC and CETS and the childcare needs are for alternative times. Allowed in separate services where TEC eligibility is for outside of the days/hours registered in the other service