

Dear

Colleagues,

These are the deadlines, information, and announcements for the week of 26th – 30th August 2024

DEADLINES / IMPORTANT DATES:

Now Open: 2024/25 - ECCE, NCS & CCSP Saver programmes

1st August – 31st August

Core Funding Review & Confirm window

Monday 2 September 2024

Process for completing AIM Plus and AIM Non-Term applications open on the Early Years Hive

Monday 2 September:

NCS subsidy increasing

Friday 27th September 2024 5pm:

Deadline for 2024 Learner Fund Graduate and Childminder Bursary Applications

Kerry County Childcare Committee – Office Closures

Wednesday 5th September 2024 - office closed due to Electricity disruption.

Staff can be contacted on their mobile numbers or via email.

Thursday 6th September 2024 - office closed to facilitate a staff training/planning day.

For urgent queries please contact individual staff members on their mobile number.

Staff will respond to email queries on their return to the office.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

AIM Expansion

The expansion of the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) programme will enable children with additional needs to be supported and participate in Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings beyond the time spent in the ECCE programme, both in and out of term, as announced as part of Budget 2024. The process for completing AIM Plus and AIM Non-Term applications will be available on the Early Years Hive on **Monday 2 September 2024**.

Training sessions

Training sessions have been scheduled for **Monday 2 September** and **Tuesday 3 September** for service providers and the training will cover the following:

- Pre-requisites of the AIM Expansion
- AIM Terminology (Standard, Plus and Non-term)

- AIM Service Profile and Sessions
- System Training on the Application Types

The links to register are as follows:

AIM Expansion Session 1

Monday 2 September @ 9:30am – 11:00am

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2785482308494529627>

AIM Expansion Session 2

Monday 2 September @ 6:30pm – 8:00pm

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4688651174267859802>

AIM Expansion Session 3

Tuesday 3 September @ 2:30pm – 4:00pm

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2453251676022541911>

Queries in relation to the AIM programme can be made to the Early Years Provider Centre (EYPC) by raising a [Request](#) on the Early Years Hive using the following categories:

- Programme: (select the AIM level)
- Request type: Application.
- Request type detail: How To

Core Funding 2024/2025 payments

- The August payment for the 2024/2025 Core Funding programme year will be paid today Friday 30th August for Partner services that have completed their August review *on or before* 27th September and have an approved CF application. The first payment covers 1st September to 30th September.
- For Partner Services who submit their original Core Funding application *on or before* 31 August 2024, Core Funding payments will *only* continue to be processed as per the [Core Funding Payment Schedule](#), when the August Review and Confirm is completed and is at an 'Approved' status.
- For Partner Services who submit their original Core Funding application on or after 1 September 2024, Core Funding allocations will be representative of an entitlement from the first Monday after which the programme year begins, or the Monday of the week the Funding Agreement is accepted, whichever is later.
- Partner Services in Core Funding for less than a full programme year will be allocated the appropriate number of weekly payments. Core Funding payments will only be processed as

per the payment schedule once a Partner Service's original application has reached an 'Approved' status.

- Future Core Funding payments will be paid in advance and equate to four or five weekly allocations depending on the number of weeks in the month as per the [Core Funding Payment Schedule](#).

Core Funding allocations can be viewed on the [Programme Funding](#) page of the Early Years Hive.

August Review and Confirm

Partner Services who have submitted their 2024/2025 Core Funding application on or before 31st August **must** complete the August Review and Confirm by **31st August 2024**. For Core Funding payments to begin, the August Review and Confirm must be at an approved status. If a Partner Service does not complete the Review and Confirm process within the required timeframe, Core Funding payments will be placed *on hold* until such a time as the process is completed.

Base rate cap for the 2024/2025 Core Funding programme year

Partner Services who submit their 2024/2025 Core Funding application on or before 31 August will have their base rate capped at their approved August Review and Confirm for the 2024/2025 programme year.

For Partner Services who submit their Core Funding application from 1 September onwards, they will not be required to complete the August Review and Confirm window, and their base rate will cap on the approval of their original Core Funding application.

Core Funding Partner Service funding agreement 2024/2025

Following submission of the Core Funding application 2024 2025, Partner Services must activate the Core Funding Partner Service funding agreement 2024/2025. The funding agreement is the contract for Core Funding. Partner Services have 21 days from the submission date of their original Core Funding Application Module to activate the funding agreement. After 21 days, the Core Funding Application Module will be cancelled if the funding agreement is not activated. If the 21 days passes without activating the Funding agreement, Partner Service are then required to start a new application submission on the Early Years Hive. Step-by-step guidance on how to activate a Core Funding Partner Service funding agreement 2024/2025 can be found here [Core Funding Applicant Guidelines 2024/2025](#)

Any queries can be directed to the EYPC by raising a [Request](#) using the following categories:

- Programme: Core Funding
- Request Type: Application
- Request Type Detail: (Please select relevant option)

**Notification from the National Fee Review Team: Review of Fee Table and Parent Statement
Required in Advance of Programme Year**

Where a Service Provider has signed a Core Funding Partner Service Funding Agreement for the 2024/2025 Programme Year, they have agreed to uphold certain contractual obligations regarding the fees charged to parents. One of these obligations is that they would not increase their fees beyond what they were on 30 September 2021. For New Partner Services that were not in existence on 30 September 2021, and which subsequently joined Core Funding, they must adhere to their Fees charged by them for the same service as set on the date that they signed the first Core Funding Partner Service Funding Agreement.

Action for 2024/25 Programme Year

In instances where a Partner Service has made changes to their fee table and parent statement for the upcoming Programme Year, it is strongly recommended that they ensure these changes are compliant with the terms of the Core Funding Partner Service Agreement. If a Partner Service identifies a potential issue with their fee table and parent statement for the 2024/25 Programme Year, they should reach out to their local City/County Childcare Committee (CCC) at the earliest opportunity possible to get this rectified.

Please be aware that at the Commencement of the Core Funding Partner Service Agreement on 1 September 2024, Partner Services which are suspected of being breach of the Core Funding Partner Service Agreement for 2024/25, may become subject of the Fee Review Process. This process will be utilised to determine whether a breach of the Agreement has occurred. If at the conclusion of this process a determination is made that a breach of the Core Funding Partner Service Agreement or associated Rules has occurred, a Partner Service may be asked to provide evidence of remediation of the breach. Evidence of remediation may include the provision of evidence that demonstrates that a Partner Service has restored fees to the correct level or informed and refunded all parents who have been overcharged the full amount that they have overpaid or agreed a repayment plan with them.

NCS subsidy increasing on Monday 2 September

The minimum rate for the National Childcare Scheme (NCS) subsidies will increase from €1.40 to €2.14 on Monday 2 September. The increase means that if parents are in receipt of a subsidy which is less than the maximum, they will receive a higher subsidy towards their childcare fees. There will be no change to the sponsor rate for children aged 0-52 weeks. The remaining sponsor rates will have the max rate increased to €5.30 as demonstrated below.

	Current Max Rate	New Max Rate
1 to 2 years	€5.00	€5.30
3+ years	€4.54	€5.30

School Age	€4.31	€5.30
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Awards will be recalculated with this new rate and updated accordingly. Claims will automatically be updated with the new rate for these applicants. Parents will not confirm these claims again, however if parents have not yet confirmed their claims, they will still be required to do so. Claims must be confirmed by the applicant before payments can flow to the provider. **It should be noted that where rates change, the parents' co-payment must be updated, and the parent informed.**

Service Providers can identify affected claims on the [Budget 2024 Claims](#) affected page. This page is in the NCS section of the Programmes menu. Service providers do not have to create any new documents or have new signatures in old documents due to the uplift.

For further support, please raise a [Request](#) on Hive as follows:

Request program type: NCS Request type: Registrations Request type detail: Claim

ECCE Calendars

ECCE calendars cannot be changed retrospectively during the 2024/25 programme call. ECCE programme rules state, if you want to make a change to the ECCE calendar you must firstly contact your CCC to have it approved; give parents 20 working days written notice and display the revised calendar in your service.

Fee Increase Assessment and Approval Process

To submit an expression of interest in the Fee Increase Assessment and Approval Process, Partner Services can contact their Development Worker directly or info@corkchildcare.ie. Applicant Guidelines can be found on the Hive> Resources> Programme Documents> Guidelines on Fee Management

2024 Learner Fund Graduate and Childminder Bursary

Learner Fund Graduate and Childminder Bursary 2024 offers a bursary to early years educators and registered childminders, who are working in the sector, and have obtained a recognised Level 7/8/9 award. There is also a bursary available for registered childminders who have completed a Level 5 or 6 award. Please contact eilish@kerrycountychildcare.com for application forms and guidance.

Covid Case Advice

Please see below links to relevant information:

[Preventing the spread of covid 19 in school or childcare - HSE](#)

[Management of Infectious Disease in Childcare Facilities and Other Childcare Settings \(2012\)](#)

General Covid-19 queries: Contact HSE on 1800 700 700 between 8 am and 8 pm Monday to Friday and 9 am - 5 pm Saturday and Sunday / [HSE Covid 19](#)