

## Weekly Bulletin – This Week in Childcare: 20<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Dear Colleagues

These are the deadlines, information, and announcements for the week of 20<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

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### DEADLINES / IMPORTANT DATES:

#### 27<sup>th</sup> January 2025 @12 noon

Deadline for Building Blocks Extension Grant Scheme

#### 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025

AIM Plus and AIM Non-term reviews (eligibility deadline for backdated payments)

#### 1<sup>st</sup> February 2025

New Garda Vetting Procedures come into effect

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### FOR YOUR INFORMATION

#### Storm Éowyn Guidance

Following previous communications on Storm Éowyn, the DCEDIY confirms that funding for ELC and SAC schemes will be maintained nationally for Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

Services **will not be required** to apply for force majeure for today's closure. The Department would encourage services providing ECCE to offer an alternative day if possible.

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#### Building Blocks Extension Grant Scheme

The Building Blocks - Extension Grant Scheme application window will close at **12 noon on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2025**. There will be no extensions to this date.

**Application forms must be submitted via the online application form on the [Building Blocks Application](#) page of the Early Years Hive. Application forms should not be submitted by email, service request or post. Only application forms submitted via the online form will be accepted.**

Queries on the scheme should be submitted to the Early Years Provider Centre (EYPC) by raising a [service request](#) under the programme 'Building Blocks Extension Grant Scheme' and selecting the relevant sub-categories.

Information on the Scheme can be found [HERE](#) with detailed application templates, applicant guidelines and FAQ's available [HERE](#) in the resources section on the Hive.

**Please note:** If applicants contact Pobal with an ICT issue within 48 hours of the closing date and time, Pobal cannot guarantee that the ICT issue will be resolved in time to submit the application.

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## New Garda Vetting procedures

New Garda Vetting procedures for ELC and SAC services are coming into effect on February 1st. The following changes will take effect:

- Early Childhood Ireland (ECI) will manage Garda Vetting services for all ELC & SAC employees. Membership with ECI is not a requirement to avail of vetting services.
- Tusla will manage Garda Vetting services for registered providers including Chairpersons of Boards of Management and Childminders.
- As part of these changes, Barnardos will no longer provide vetting services.

More detailed information on the new Garda Vetting procedures can be found on the gov.ie website [HERE](#).

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## AIM Plus and AIM Non-term reviews

### Reviews backdating cut-off

Review functionality for AIM Plus and AIM Non-term applications became available from Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

AIM Plus and AIM Non-term reviews submitted by **24<sup>th</sup> January 2025** will be eligible for backdated funding (for this programme call only). Reviews submitted **after 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025** will not be eligible for backdated funding.

### Submitting a Review

Guidance on how to submit AIM reviews is available [HERE](#).

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## Critical Incident Information Session

All Early Learning and Care (ELC) and School Age Childcare (SAC) services are required to have a service level Critical Incident Plan as part of your Safety Statement (outlined in the Tusla Quality and Regulatory Framework (QRF) and the National Quality Guidelines for School Age Childcare Services).

A guide has been developed from previous guidance on critical incidents planning, including the Critical Incident Plan Toolkit and the extensive work of the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), to support ELC and SAC services to think about and plan for critical incidents and to have practical supports in place should it be necessary to respond to a critical incident.

We will deliver a short briefing session to outline the requirements and to consider the guidance. This will take place on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February at 6.30pm at the KCCC offices in Monavalley, Tralee.

If you would like to **attend, please email [info@kerrycountychildcare.com](mailto:info@kerrycountychildcare.com) with details of attendees no later than 20<sup>th</sup> February**. Please note places are limited so early booking is advised.

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## Kerry County Childcare Committee Website and Facebook Page

We invite you to visit our website [here](#) and like and follow our Facebook page [here](#) for lots of updates and relevant information.

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## Covid Case Advice

Please see below links to relevant information: [Preventing the spread of covid 19 in school or childcare - HSE & Pre School ManagementInfectiousDisease.pdf](#)

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](#)

Kind Regards,

Kerry County Childcare Committee