

Weekly Bulletin – This Week in Childcare: 31st March – 4th April 2025

Dear Colleagues

These are the deadlines, information, and announcements for the week of 31st March – 4th April 2025.

DEADLINES / IMPORTANT DATES:

4th April 2025

Deadline for Childminding Development Grant 2025 ****Today****

1st May 2025

Nurturing Skills Learner Fund application process closes

7th April 2025

EOI to attend Aistear National conference

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Childminding Development Grant 2025



The deadline for applications for the Childminding Development Grant 2025 is **5pm today, 4th April**. All current childminders and childminders planning to open in 2025 are eligible to apply. The grant aims to enhance quality and safety in childminding services and allows for the purchasing of IT equipment to assist with training and Tusla registration processes later in the year. For further information or to receive an application form, contact amy@kerrycountychildcare.com or 066 7181582

National Aistear Conference

DCEDIY will host a national Aistear Conference on **May 24th, 2025**, from 10am to 4pm at the Dublin Royal Convention Centre. This National Early Years Conference will provide a forum for educators, policy makers, academics, students and support organisations to collaboratively explore the updates, new concepts and key messages within the updated Aistear. In partnership with DCEDIY, Kerry County Childcare Committee is pleased to offer the following opportunity to Early Years Educators and Childminders in the county.



1. Entrance tickets to the event, which will include lunch and a conference bag containing a copy of the updated Aistear and other resources.

2. Transportation to the event.

3. A certificate of attendance, which will support your service's QIPP 2025.

Please note, that places are limited to 10, and random selection will apply.

If you are interested in attending the conference, please email

pamela@kerrycountychildcare.com including the following information:

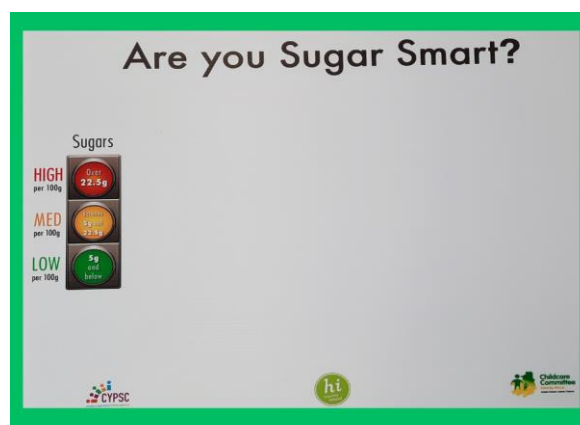
- Your name
- The name of your service
- Your role
- Your email address

Sugar Smart Boards - Are you Sugar Smart?

We have a number of Sugar Smart Activity Boards (see picture below) available for services.

Boards are 80cm by 60cm in diameter and made from pp corrugated board. They can be collected from our office in Tralee (unfortunately due to their size we are unable to post them out).

If you are interested please contact info@kerrycountychildcare.com to organise a pick up time.



Nurturing Skills Learner Fund 2025 /2026

The Nurturing Skills Learner Fund (NSLF) is now open to applicants for the academic year 2025/2026. NSLF will cover 90% of the course fees for successful applicants. Information on the Nurturing Skills Learner Fund can be found [here](#). Applicants should contact NSLF@pobal.ie to request a link to register on the NSLF Student Portal, upload their employment details and complete the new application process. The application process closes on **1st May 2025**.

Easter Closures and Compliance

As some services may close for the Easter break, dates during 14-18 and/or 21-25 April, it may be necessary to make the following changes on your Early Years Hive.



Please note Good Friday, 18 April 2025, is not a public holiday.

We advise making any necessary changes as soon as possible to ensure there are no issues when returns are submitted and payments processed.

NCS: Service calendar and returns

If your service is closed, you must mark the closures on your NCS service calendar accordingly. You must also note whether it is a subsidised (paid) closure or not.

For more information, please see ‘*How to add a closure*’ on the [NCS Service Calendar](#) section of Help & Support.

Changes cannot be made to service calendar opening hours or claim hours once a return for that week has been submitted on the Early Years Hive.

If you require further assistance, please raise a [Service Request](#) using the following categories ensuring that you include the CHICK number in the request:

- Programme: NCS
- Request Type: NCS Calendar
- Request Type Details: General

NCS: Updated bridging payments

A ‘bridging payment’ is available to service providers during periods of subsidised closure, if they are unavailable to submit their weekly NCS return, for example, mid-term breaks, Easter, Christmas etc.

For guidance on returns, as well as updated guidance on bridging payments, please see the [NCS Attendance Returns Guide](#).

ECCE: Service calendar



Providers in contract for the ECCE programme are reminded that changes to service calendars must be first approved by County Childcare Committees (CCCs) and parents must be given 20 working days’ notice in writing of any change to the service’s calendar. Copies of such notices must be kept on file for compliance purposes. For further information on service calendars,

please contact your local CCC or refer to the [ECCE Service Calendar](#) section of Help & Support. If you require further assistance, please raise a [Service Request](#)

Early Childhood Ireland Childminding Research

Are you a Childminder who would like to collaborate and share your expertise with Early Childhood Ireland on new research that will help shape future childminding practice and policies?

Your collaboration will help us better understand the valuable work of childminders and children's experiences of home-based care. Your expertise and participation are crucial to help us learn about:

1. Children's and childminders' experiences of mixed age groups in a home setting
2. Childminders' perspectives and application of Aistear and Síolta in practice.

Please see attached document for further information.

Kerry County Childcare Committee Website and Facebook Page



Have you visited our [Providers Information section](#)? Updates and information posted regularly.

Missing a Bulletin and need to check some information? All editions can be accessed on our website - [Weekly Bulletins](#)

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

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