

This Week in Childcare Weekly Bulletin



Issue 11:2026 Week: 16th – 20th March 2026

Dear Colleagues

These are the announcements for the 16th – 20th March 2026

DEADLINES / IMPORTANT DATES

MARCH 2026

Key Dates



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 Nurturing Skills Learner Fund opens	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24 Online AIM Information Session: Providers	25 Online AIM Information Session: Parents	26	27 Creative Fun Application Deadline	28
29	30	31 Portal closes for year 3 Core Funding Trial Balance	1	2	3 CMDG Applications Close 15/4/2026	4 NS Leaner Fund Applications Close 01/05/2026

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

NCS, ECCE & CCSP over Easter 2026



Just a reminder to check NCS, ECCE & CCSP calendars to reflect closures over the upcoming Easter period.

NCS: Service Calendar and Returns

Update your NCS service calendar to reflect any changes to your opening hours during the mid-term.

- Update your NCS service calendar with all planned closures noting that all service providers have 10 allowable subsidised closures per programme year.
- Update claims to reflect any increased hours of attendance during the mid-term and ensure that this is confirmed with the parent/guardian.

- Any increased claims must be amended once the children return to ECCE/school post mid-term. NCS subsidies cannot be claimed for hours that a child is in ECCE/school, or hours that your service is closed. Any over-claimed hours are liable to be recouped.
- If you are intending on closing for an extended period, please end date any existing claims for this period.

For further information on service calendars, please see the guidance available on the Early Years Hive [here](#).

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.

Nurturing Skills Learner Fund 2026/27



Applications for the Nurturing Skills Learner Fund (NSLF) for the academic year 2026/2027 opened on 10th March 2026. NSLF aims to assist early year's educators to pursue early learning and care (ELC) qualifications at level 7 and level 8 that have been approved by the Qualifications Advisory Board (QAB) while continuing to work in the sector.

Applications are submitted via the NSLF student portal. Register on the NSLF student portal by sending a request to NSLF@poba.lie. The portal will close for applications on 1st May 2026 at 5 pm.

A training session on the NSLF Registration, Employment Record and Student Application will be held on 19th March 2026 from 2:30pm to 3:30pm. To register follow the link [here](#). A recorded training webinar is now available on the [Early Years Hive](#) and the NSLF Student Portal, along with the PowerPoint slides from the training sessions.

Students who successfully received NSLF funding for the Academic Year 2024/2025 and/or 2025/2026 and wish to continue to receive NSLF funding for 2026/2027 will be contacted directly in early summer asking individuals to verify their continuing eligibility for NSLF. Once eligibility is confirmed a new letter of Conditional Funding will issue to the student for the Academic Year 2026/2027.

Core Funding Financial Reporting Requirements for 2024/25 Programme Year

All Partner Services who received Core Funding during the 24/25 Programme Year are required to engage an accountant to submit a full Trial Balance for Year



3 of Core Funding. The [CFCRRS portal](#) opened on Friday, 27th February and will **close 31st March 2026**. Supporting documents are available [here](#).

NeuroKind: Supporting Every Child



Kerry County Childcare Committee are delighted to announce that we are facilitating the following seminar: **NeuroKind: Supporting Every Child**

This seminar will take place on Saturday, 18th April 2026 in The Rose Hotel, Tralee.

We invite early years and school aged educators and Childminders to join us for this engaging and informative session focused on fostering neuro-inclusive, supportive environments for all children.

Event Summary

Ciara Watson and Stef McSherry will be delivering three exciting and impactful workshops:

- Supporting Neurodivergent Children in Your Setting - Ciara Watson
- Building Positive Partnerships with Parents: Approaching Concerns – Ciara Watson
- Mindfulness, Emotions & Regulation Interactive Workshop - Stef McSherry

These sessions are designed to inspire, support, and empower early years and school-age practitioners with practical, real-world tools they can use immediately in their settings.

For full event details please see the attached brochure.

To ensure fair access, each service may book up to 3 participants.

However, you will have the option to request additional staff to be placed on a waiting list, and we will allocate extra spaces if they become available.

Booking link below:

[Kerry County Childcare Committee: NeuroKind: Supporting Every Child. 18th April 2026 – Fill in form](#)

The brochure features the Childcare Committee logo at the top left. The main title is 'NEUROKIND: SUPPORTING EVERY CHILD'. Below this, it states: 'Kerry County Childcare Committee invites early years and school aged educators to join us for this engaging and informative session focused on fostering neuro-inclusive, supportive environments for all children.' The event details are listed in a yellow box: 'April 18th April 2026', '9.30am – 5.00pm', 'The Rose Hotel, Tralee', and 'Lunch and Refreshments provided'. A circular photo shows three children sitting on the ground. Below the event details, there are two sections: 'Our Workshops:' with a list of three topics, and 'Our Speakers:' featuring Ciara Watson (Autism Supports) and Stef McSherry (Kinderam, Kist Fairy Tails). At the bottom, a green banner reads 'Places are limited so early booking is advised'.

Creative Fun Initiative

Kerry County Childcare Committee and Kerry LCYP are inviting six ECCE service providers in Kerry (one ECCE session per service) to participate in a new pilot initiative, "Creative Fun." The six services will be an even mixture of Community and Private providers.

This pilot programme is grounded in the principles of child-led participation and delivered through a series of creative, play-based workshops. It aims to strengthen and enhance child participation and educators' confidence and skills in the creative arts.

If your service is interested in taking part, you can access the application form here: [Creative Fun Application Form – Fill in form](#)

Please complete the application form with as much detail as possible. Selection will be based on:

- your service's current level of child participation,
- experience in delivering creative arts projects
- relevant training or CPD previously undertaken.

In the event of being oversubscribed after the selection criteria has been met, we will use a random selection process to decide the six successful services.

Successful services must be able to commit to accommodating six, two-hour workshops in their ECCE session, and an initial meeting with facilitators of programme.

Application Deadline: 27th March 2026.

If you have any questions regarding the Creative Fun Programme, please contact Rachel:

rachel@kerrycountychildcare.com / 066 7181582



Online AIM Information Sessions – Parents and Providers

****Taking place next week ****

The Better Start AIM team are hosting two online AIM information sessions, one for Providers and one for Parents. Details for both are outlined below. We would be grateful if you could pass this information on to any parents that you know who might be interested.

AIM Information Sessions for Providers

Date: Tuesday 24/03/2026 Time: 19.00- 20.00

Bookings: eilish@kerrycountychildcare.com

AIM Information Sessions for Parents

Date: Wednesday 25/03/2026 Time: 19.00- 20.00

Bookings: info@kerrycountychildcare.com or phone on 066 7181582



QIPP Report Template 2025/26 is Open for Completion

The Core Funding QIPP Report Template 2025/26 is now open on the [CFCRRS Portal](#). The deadline for completion of the 2025/26 QIPP Report is **Friday, 31 July 2026**.



For support please contact Rachel: 066 7181582 / rachel@kerrycountychildcare.com

Childminding Development Grant 2026

The Childminding Development Grant is open for applications until Wednesday, 15th April 2026.

For further information about the Childminding Development Grant 2026, including the application form, contact Amy: 087 7885114 / amy@kerrycountychildcare.com



**National Action Plan
for Childminding
2021-2028**

Free Job Vacancy Advertising on our Website

<https://www.kerrycountychildcare.com/local-jobs-board-for-kerry/>

If you would like to post an advert please contact kathryn@kerrycountychildcare.com

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

Enjoy the sun!

Kerry County Childcare Committee