



An overview of the National Childcare Investment Programme 2006-2010

Under the Office for the Minister for Children

Responsibilities now include all aspects of Childcare funding, Child Protection & Welfare, Juvenile Justice & Early Years Education

Minister for Children - Brian Lenihan

Director General - Sylva Langford

Childcare Programme 2006-2010

Finance of €575 million over 5 years announced in December 2005.

Identified as exchequer funding, the new National Childcare Investment Programme (one element of the childcare funding) to provide a proactive response to the development of quality childcare supports and services, which will be planned for & developed locally and centred on the needs of the child & family.

Aim & Key Objectives

The Childcare Programme 2006-2010 aims to deliver quality early childhood care & educational services centred on the needs of the child.

Its key objectives are to:

- Improve the supply of early childhood care & education services for 3- 4 year olds
- Target the unmet need for school age childcare services
- Support families & break the cycle of disadvantage
- To further develop the structures for co-ordination between statutory & non-statutory agencies in the sector
- Programme Targets;
 - 50,000 new childcare places to be created
 - 56% - community sector : 44% - private providers
 - 20% (10,000 places) 3-4 year olds to provide early childhood care & education focus
 - 10% (5,000 places) School Age Childcare

Overview of New Programme Criteria

The following range of factors will normally be taken into account:

- Location in an area of identified need
- Increased provision of childcare places
- Operating hours of the service, open 48 weeks in the year
- Provision for babies, full day care places & part time places

- Provision for pre-school places aimed at 3-4 year olds
- Provision for School Aged Childcare & wrap around services
- Focus on the needs & development of the child
- Affordable childcare to disadvantaged families
- Compliance with regulatory and other legal obligations

Capital Funding – Community Providers

A benchmark of €20,000 per childcare place
Maximum grant available set at €1 million

Applicants are encouraged to:

Include SAC as part of the service proposed
Provide pre-school services aimed at 3 to 4 year olds

Capital Funding - Private Providers

A maximum grant of €100,000 per service
Subject to 25% minimum contribution by the provider
A maximum grant of €500,000 for multiple services located in different catchment areas will be available, subject to a 25% minimum contribution
A benchmark of €15,000 per childcare place will apply
Normally, provision of a minimum of 5 extra childcare places will apply

Applicants are encouraged to:

Include School Aged Childcare as part of the service proposed
Provide pre-school services aimed at 3 to 4 year olds

Other Funding to be detailed shortly, includes programmes for ;

- Childminders
- Parent & Toddler
- Groups In Disadvantaged Areas
- Staffing Grants
- Training

New **staffing grant schemes** will be available under the Childcare Programme 2006-2010. Recipients of existing staffing grants (under EOCP) will continue to avail of them to end 2007. These recipients will be encouraged to move towards cross-subsidisation within services based on a tiered fee structure

Community/not for profit enterprises

Initial start up (to be phased out) staffing support for up to 3 years
These groups will be expected to achieve self-sustainability supported by parental contributions based on income

Community/not for profit social inclusion groups

Longer term staffing support. Funding to support families and communities to break the cycle of poverty/disadvantage

Training

Provision of training for 17,000 Childcare Workers on Accredited Training courses by 2010. New national childcare training strategy, founded on the "quality childcare and lifelong learning: model framework". Integration of existing training programmes and resources

Aims:

To facilitate quality childcare provision in the sector
To promote a more uniform approach to training and delivery

Continued Coordination Programme Supports

- Integration between local authorities e.g. CDBs & CCCs to develop local spatial planning for childcare provision.
- Co-ordination of programmes and policies aimed at school age children, pre-school children and disadvantaged children, supported by Dept. Education & Science