

# Early Years e-bulletin



## June edition



**Dear all,**

Welcome to your latest Early Years e-Bulletin,

Over the past year and a half, the country has seen first-hand how important early learning and childcare services are for children, families and society. I am incredibly proud to be the Minister with responsibility for a sector of professionals who have shown such leadership during the most difficult of times, who have continued to provide high-quality, early learning and childcare opportunities to children, enabling the delivery of other essential services, in the context of a global pandemic.

Since the onset of Covid-19, I have delivered a range of State supports to the sector. I was particularly pleased to announce recently the extension of the EWSS at the enhanced rates until end September, with a continued exemption to the turnover rule specifically for this sector. This, and other State supports, have been effective in supporting the sustainability of the sector throughout Covid-19 with recent data showing the number of services and staff in the sector to be similar to pre-Covid-19 levels.

While a key focus has been to support services throughout the pandemic, I am pleased to update also on progress made on long-term and long-lasting reform projects, led by my Department – with work on a new Workforce Development Plan and a new funding model for the sector in the final stages. I expect both reports to be finalised later this year.

Under the 'First 5 *Little Libraries*' initiative, the first in a series of book bags were made available to more than 4,500 early learning and childcare services through the national library network - strengthening the links between early learning and childcare services and libraries and supporting early language and literacy development among young children

To mark the 'Summer of Play' campaign, €5.5 million in grants for early learning and childcare services was made available to support enhancements to outdoor areas. I hope that over the coming weeks, with some good weather, children and staff get to go outside, explore and have fun in these enhanced spaces.

Finally, you will be aware that I wrote to the Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail, Damien English T.D., recommending the establishment of a Joint Labour Committee (JLC) for the early learning and care and school-age childcare sector last March. This followed an 8-week pre-JLC consultation process I initiated in partnership with SIPTU and CSI/IBEC, which was independently chaired by Dr Kevin Duffy, former Chair of the Labour Court.

I am delighted to see further progress being made on the establishment of the Joint Labour Committee, with the Establishment Order coming into effect on 1 July. This marks important milestone in the journey towards improved pay and conditions for those working in the sector. I look forward to further progress being made.

All the best,



Roderic O'Gorman T.D.

Minister for Children, Disability, Equality, Integration and Youth.



**An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,  
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige**  
Department of Children, Equality,  
Disability, Integration and Youth

### **Grandfathering Declaration for the Early Learning and Care Sector**

A limited extension to the Grandfathering Declaration has been announced for practitioners who agree to undertake a relevant qualification during the period of the extension.

Practitioners interested in obtaining an extension to their Grandfathering Declaration must contact their local City/County Childcare Committee (CCC) at the earliest opportunity. The CCC will be the relevant contact point for approval of extensions and for providing supports and advice. For those who do not wish to avail of this extension, the original terms of the Grandfathering Declaration will continue to apply.

### **AIM Website**

This month, the AIM team launched a re-design of the aim.gov.ie website. The website was re-designed with accessibility in mind and took into account feedback from parents, providers, agencies and other Departments.

On the new website, information on AIM, the supports available and how to access these supports can be found. As well as this, the website has up to date news, media content and useful resources.

See for yourself at: [www.aim.gov.ie](http://www.aim.gov.ie).





### Pobal Annual Early Years Service Profile

The Annual Early Years Service Profile is the primary data source on the Irish Early Learning and Care (ELC) and School-Age Childcare (SAC) sector. Administered by Pobal on behalf of the Department, it has captured crucial data on the sector for the past 18 years, and continues to form a key input into policy development and reform. It provides a comprehensive national analysis of over 4,500 services throughout Ireland on key issues, such as capacity and staff.

This year's Annual Early Years Service Profile, includes a new supplementary Income and Costs survey. This survey will feed into cost modelling by the Department and is intended to inform the development of funding supports in the future and will be used in the design of a new funding model for ELC and SAC.

Providers are urged to participate in the Annual Early Years Sector Profile survey and the new supplementary Income and Costs Survey. Participation in this survey in 2021 is more important than ever given the challenges the pandemic has presented for the sector. The information provided will be essential to assess the impact of the pandemic on the sector and to inform future policy development and future funding.

### The 2019/2020 Annual Early Years Sector Profile Report was published on 15 June 2021

The Annual Early Years Sector Profile 2019/2020 was published on 15 June.

#### Key findings include:

- During the 2019/2020 programme year, a total of 180,149 children were supported under at least one Government subsidy programme. A total of 53,513 children from 42,557 households received subsidies under the National Childcare Scheme.
- A total of 2,428 ELC and SAC services and 5,708 children with additional needs were supported under AIM. The number of services receiving support under AIM as well as the number of children receiving targeted supports has increased on the previous year, by 1.7% and 3.5% respectively.



## Annual Early Years Sector Profile Report 2019/2020

Available Now!

An Roinn Áraoib, Coimisiúnairí,  
 Mionairí, Langhúisí agus Uige  
 Department of Children, Equality,  
 Disability, Integration and Youth

pobal  
 government supporting communities

- Fees have remained broadly static across all types of provision. In 2019/2020, an average weekly fee for a full time place was €186.12.
- It is estimated that 30,883 staff work in the sector, 85% of whom worked directly with children.
- Wages of staff working in the ELC and SAC sector have increased year-on-year. The average hourly wage of ELC and SAC staff (excluding managers) in 2019/20 was €12.45, 4% higher than in 2018/2019.
- The level of staff qualifications has continued to grow steadily over the last few years, with 27% of staff working directly with children now holding a qualification at NFQ Level 7 or higher.
- The staff turnover in the sector decreased for two years in a row and in 2019/20 was 18%, down 7% from two years ago.

The full report is available [here](#).



### First 5 Little Library Initiative

The roll out of the First 5 Little Library initiative commenced on 5 May which saw 4,500 ELC settings, including registered childminders, receiving free book bags in the English and Irish language. The First 5 Little Library Initiative aims to develop a consistent link between ELC settings and their local libraries to encourage a love of books and reading among young children. The project is a collaboration between DCEDIY, Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) and Local Government Management Agency (LGMA). €650,000 has been provided for the project from DCEDIY and DRCD.

### Let's Get Ready 2021

The Let's Get Ready 2021 annual campaign was launched on 14 May to support young children and their parents/guardians plan for the transition to pre-school or primary school later this year. The Let's Get Ready campaign was developed by the DCEDIY and DE with support from a range of agencies and organisations.

The website [gov.ie/letsgetready](http://gov.ie/letsgetready) will be updated regularly over the coming months with new material added as it becomes available.



### Summer of Play Initiative – Let's Play 2021

Let's Play Ireland 2021 will focus on promoting a summer of play, with online access to content on activities for parents to enjoy with their children, tips on supporting children with their feelings, and ideas and activities for learning through play.

Among funding opportunities is the Playing Outside Grant for ELC and SAC settings. Other funded initiatives under the Let's Play Ireland 2021 Campaign will be announced throughout the summer.

The online resources are available at [gov.ie/letsplayireland](http://gov.ie/letsplayireland).

### Update of Aistear by the NCCA

Aistear will be updated by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) over the next three years. A series of online consultations are already underway. If you would like to participate in the consultation process, please follow the links below.

**Online questionnaires:**

If you are working or involved in the field of education and would like to complete the online questionnaire, please click [here](#).

If you are a parent or guardian and would like to complete the online questionnaire, please click [here](#).

**Written submissions:**

If you or your organisation would like to make a written submission, please use the written submission template available [here](#).

**Consultation events:**

A series of online consultation seminars will take place throughout Autumn and Winter 2021.

If you would like to attend an online face-to-face consultation, please [register](#) your interest and you will be notified of the events.



**Programme Support Payments**

Programme Support Payments (PSP) are paid to ELC and SAC providers in recognition of the additional time required to complete the administrative work associated with the various Departmental ELC and SAC funding schemes.

The PSP also recognises the time required to perform activities outside of contact time with children, such as preparing materials for ELC sessions and assisting parents in understanding how they might benefit from the various ELC and SAC funding schemes

The PSP opened for applications on the Early Years Hive on 4 June and will remain open until 25 June 2021.

The PSP for this programme cycle has a budget of €19.4 million and is calculated based on a period in time referred to as the "snapshot" period. This year, December 2020 was selected as an equitable point on which to base the PSP payment for ECCE, CCSP and TEC and April 2021 was the base used for NCS. PSP is calculated as equal to 8 days' (1.6 weeks') registrations for ECCE at Standard Capitation, 1.25 weeks for NCS, and 20 days' (4 weeks') registrations for CCSP and TEC, in respect of the 2020/21 programme cycle.

**Programme Support Payment  
(PSP) 2021 / 2022 application  
is LIVE on EY Hive!**



## Public Health Updates

### Webinar

The DCEDIY will hold a Covid-19 public health webinar for ELC and SAC setting on 7 July. The webinar will include speakers from the HSE and Tusla and will cover the current public health advice and provide some useful feedback from cases in services. Further detail will follow in the coming days.



### Testing and tracing

Following the recent cyberattack on the HSE, contingency arrangements have been put in place to ensure the dedicated public health pathway for Covid-19 cases in ELC and SAC settings can continue to operate. Close contacts and appointments are being managed in the normal way.



### Symptoms

The HSE has advised the DCEDIY that it is seeing a number of cases where people (children and adults) are attending services while symptomatic. They are also seeing cases where parents who are symptomatic and awaiting testing are bringing children to services. Please note that the public health advice regarding symptomatic individuals has not changed. **Anyone with symptoms consistent with Covid-19 should stay home, self-isolate and contact their GP.**

**Anyone with a family member who is symptomatic should not attend.**

### Play-pods

As we enter the summer period, you may have changes in attendance patterns which will potentially impact on the structure of your play-pods. Services are reminded that any changes to play-pods should be done only where absolutely necessary and on a once-off basis.

Where children and staff are assigned to a play-pod, they should remain consistently with the play-pod. It is acknowledged that some element of floating staff to provide relief for breaks, etc. is required; however, this should be kept to a minimum.

### Onsite events

While certain restrictions in relation to indoor and outdoor gatherings are being eased over the coming period, the public health guidance in relation to the operation of ELC and SAC during the pandemic has not changed.

In order to reduce the risk of introducing Covid-19 into ELC and SAC settings, providers are asked to restrict visitors to the premises as far as possible. Visitors should only attend where necessary e.g. parents settling in a new child, contractors coming onsite to complete works or an Early Years Inspectors conducting an inspection.

Services who wish to host events such as graduations ceremonies or open days should consider alternative approaches which can be conducted within the play-pod system and within the public health guidance for the sector. **In order to reduce the risk of bringing Covid-19 into the setting, parents, guardians and other family members should not attend events in person.**

We appreciate that the transition from ELC to primary school is a significant occasion for the children concerned and for their families but we are sure you will appreciate that public health measures must take precedence at this time.

### **CCC Covid-19 Out of Hours Helpline**

CCC are currently providing a 'Covid-19 National Out of Hours Helpline'. The purpose of this helpline is to provide out-of-hours support to ELC and SAC providers who have suspected or confirmed case of Covid-19 in their service. CCC are currently providing support and guidance to services who find themselves in this position, and so the out of hours national helpline is an extension of this support for the sector.

The helpline is available **on Saturday between the hours of 10am and 4pm and on Sunday between the hours of 10am and 4pm**. The helpline number: 1800 940341

### **OECD Starting Strong VI**

The OECD has established a solid knowledge base in the early learning and care sector, through thematic policy reviews (Starting Strong series), the collection of survey data, and work with individual countries through independent tailor-made reviews.

To support countries in better understanding different quality dimensions in early learning and care, including human interactions that define process quality, and to better support child development, learning and well-being, the OECD has been undertaking a Policy Review on "Quality beyond Regulations". Ireland is one of six countries that have been participating intensively in this project. The Starting Strong VI publication and its accompanying website present the main outcomes of the project. Following the official launch of Starting Strong VI on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> June at 10am you will be able to use this [website](#) to access all related project resources (e.g. report, country notes, country background reports, complementary data/indicators website, among others). The OECD Country Policy Review on Ireland will be published later in the year.

### **Message from the National Child Safeguarding Programme**

The safety and welfare of children is of paramount importance. It is imperative that all who work with children know how to recognise and respond to the possibility that a child they have contact with may be experiencing abuse or neglect. The responsibility to report child protection and welfare concerns applies to everyone working with children and their families.

All workers must understand their service's Child Safeguarding Procedures and must ensure to follow all procedures to keep children safe. All staff must also complete the Tusla Children First eLearning Programme which can be accessed here <https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-first-e-learning-programme/>

While the Tusla Web Portal is unavailable, child protection and welfare reports must be made through the dedicated contact points, available here <https://www.tusla.ie/get-in-touch/duty-social-work-teams/>. As always, Tusla social workers are also available for informal consultation.

If you have a concern outside of office hours or in an emergency you must contact An Garda Síochána.

Further supports and resources are available at [www.childsafeguardingelc.ie](http://www.childsafeguardingelc.ie)





An Roinn Oideachais  
agus Scileanna  
Department of  
Education and Skills

## Insights: Quality in Education webinars



The Department of Education Inspectorate supports quality development in ELC settings through the *Insights: Quality in Education* materials, which are published at <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/c71c0-insights/>

The next series, focussing on theme of *Resilience* will be published soon. This four-part series includes an introduction to the theme, and materials for ELC practitioners; parents; and for teachers of junior classes in primary schools. The series explores the topic and provides insights on promoting resilience with tailored content for each audience. The insights take account of research, as well as inspectors' findings in ELC settings and the advice provided by inspectors to promote improvement. The materials consider practical ways to support and promote a child's resilience through every-day opportunities and activities. In addition, the materials explore key messages that will support adults to enhance and develop children's emerging capacity to be resilient, to help them to successfully adapt and cope in times of adversity and challenge.

Previous themes include: Transitions; Developing Children's Physical Skills; Assessment; Early Years Education Inspection; Self-Evaluation; Developing Children's Literacy Skills; Effective Outdoor Learning Environments; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

See <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/c71c0-insights/>.



## Early Years Inspectorate

### **Cyber Attack**

As you will all be aware, all Tusla ICT systems were disabled as a precaution in response to the cyber-attack on 14 May 2021.

This obviously had very significant consequences for the Early Years Inspectorate in terms of how we interact with the Early Years and School Age services and how we respond to information that is submitted to us.

We are committed to continuing to operate and to work with services as effectively as we can. A tremendous amount of work has been undertaken to keep our regulatory processes functioning and where





necessary to put alternative systems in place. We now have some access to email and to information submitted to us via the Registration Portal again which is a positive step forward.

Immediately after the attack we posted a note on our website explaining our position and providing telephone numbers for our key processes. We are very grateful to all Early Years and School Age Services for working with us through this challenging time and for continuing to provide us with vital information. We will continue to use our website to provide updated information. Please see the [Tusla Early Years Inspectorate website](#) for further information.

## **Registration**

### ***Notifications of Incident***

Please continue to submit Notifiable Incidents by first calling us on **061 461706** or **061 461711**

### ***School Age service applications***

Whilst the Registration portal is not yet fully functional we are now able to access information that was submitted through the portal prior to the 14 May. We are assessing the information we have received and are contacting all services that have commenced an application. We urge you to review any emails you receive from us regarding any outstanding documentation and ensure you have everything that is required as this will make the process of registration much quicker. You can continue to contact your CCC for support - [www.myccc.ie](http://www.myccc.ie). You can contact us regarding all School Age Services applications on **061 461718** (or your assigned application assessment officer directly) and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

### ***Early Years Service registration***

As with School Age Service applications, we are reviewing the information submitted to us via the portal on Early Years Service registration and will be in contact with each proposed provider. Again, we urge you to ensure you have all the required documentation ready to support your application as this will make the process of registration much quicker. You should use the Quality and Regulatory Framework sample policies to support your own policies and again you can contact your CCC for support - [www.myccc.ie](http://www.myccc.ie).

If you are just commencing an application for a new Early Years Service, you should contact us by telephone as soon as possible. We cannot guarantee how quickly we will be able to process these applications but again it is really important that you have all the required documentation ready so that we can move your application forward swiftly. Again your local CCC can help.

You can contact us regarding new Early Years Service applications on **061 461715** and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

### ***Early Years Service Re-registrations***

For Early Years Service re-registration, again we are reviewing all information submitted to us and will contact you as soon as we are able. Again we urge you to review any emails you received from us regarding any outstanding documentation and ensure you have everything that is required as this will make the process of registration much quicker. You can continue contact your CCC for support - [www.myccc.ie](http://www.myccc.ie). You can contact us regarding Early Years Service applications on **061 461715** and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

### ***Feedback and Concerns***

We continue to receive Feedback and Concerns by phone in relation to any Early Years or School Age Service. Feedback and concerns should



relate to the operation of the service and fall within the remit of the regulations. If you wish to submit feedback or concerns or if you have a query regarding an existing concern please call us on **061 461743** or **061 461703**.

**Cessations and Change in Circumstances**

We are reviewing and actioning all change in circumstance and cessation applications submitted prior to the cyber-attack and are contacting all those who have submitted information.

If you need to follow up on a submitted change in circumstance or you need to submit a cessation form please contact us on **061 461726**.

**Inspections**

Our priority remains the safety and wellbeing of children using Early Years Services and as such we are continuing to inspect services.

Our capacity to continue with a blended approach (remote and onsite) to inspections is reduced and therefore most of our inspections will be onsite with no remote component.

We have some access to email again and we use this method as well as by telephone to communicate with services. However, there will still be some unavoidable delay in responding to documentation (CAPAs, Factual Accuracy etc.) submitted in relation to inspections that have already taken place.

If you have queries regarding inspections, you can use our existing Covid-19 helpline numbers:

<b>West</b>	<b>091 775823</b>
<b>Dublin Mid Leinster</b>	<b>087 6873904</b>
<b>South</b>	<b>087 9115333</b>
<b>Dublin North East</b>	<b>087 1784593</b>

**Measures to reduce risks at entrances/exits to services**

Registered Providers are advised to examine all entry and exit points and assess how they are managed to maximise child safety.

We have received an increase in the number of Notification of incident reports relating to children exiting Early Years services. Where this has happened a common theme has emerged. In their attempt to avoid close contact at entry/exit points between children, pods and adults, services have

- a) been using separate entry and exit doorways and in some cases multiple entry and exit points and;
- b) changed drop off and collection systems.

This can create an additional risk that children might be able to leave the premises unsupervised, particularly if the entrance and/or exit door or external gates are not secured following drop off or collection. There is also a risk that children may exit services during outdoor play unless appropriate measures are in place. Regular roll calls reduce the risk of children exiting unnoticed.



**Playing Outside Grant 2021**  
**Apply on Early Years Hive now!**

**Early Years hive**

**#EYHive**  
**#Service Providers**



**Early Learning and Care School Age Capital Programme 2021**

- The online application process for the Playing Outside Grant 2021 opened on the Early Years Hive, on 18 June 2021.
- To be eligible, applicants must have been contracted with DCEDIY to provide ELC and SAC funding schemes on 3 May 2021 and have a minimum of one child registered in respect of one or more of the DCEDIY registration based schemes.
- The amount of grant available is pre-determined and calculated based on the number of individual children registered with the service as at 3 May 2021.

Number of children registered	Grant Allocation
1-49	€1,000
50-100	€2,000
101+	€2,500

- The timeframe for eligible expenditure under the grant is from **1 June 2021 to 31 December 2021**. Please see the Early Years Hive for more details.

## Early Years Programme Readiness 2021/2022



# Be Ready!

Early Years  
Programme  
Readiness

#EYPR

### 2021/22 Programme Readiness

- Programme Readiness 2021-22 for ECCE, NCS and CCSP Saver programmes opened for ELC and SAC Service Providers on 28 May 2021.
- Both **ECCE** and **NCS** are administered on the **Early Years Hive** and all Programme Readiness tasks must be completed on the Early Years Hive.
- The **CCSP Saver Programme** is administered on the **PIP** portal and all Programme Readiness tasks must be completed on PIP. The **TEC Saver Programme** will merge with the CCSP Saver Programme at the end of the 2020/2021 programme year.
- Please see the announcement posted on [PIP](#) and [EY Hive](#) on 27 May for more information on each programme.

### Resources

- You can find guidance for ECCE Programme Readiness on the Early Years Hive [here](#) and for NCS Programme Readiness on the Early Years Hive [here](#).
- You can find how-to guides for CCSP Programme Readiness on the PIP Portal in the Resources section.

### Training

- Pobal's training team organised a webinar for ELC and SAC Service Providers to cover the enhancements for this year's Programme Readiness. A link to the slides for the training webinar can be found [here](#) and the recorded version of the webinar [here](#).

## New features on Early Years Hive

The Early Years Team at Pobal has made some changes to the Early Years Hive based on service provider feedback. The team continues to work with ELC and SAC providers on ways to improve the portal user experience.



### Announcements calendar

- A new [calendar feature](#) has been added to the Early Years Hive, located under the announcements menu dropdown. This calendar displays **key dates** and upcoming deadlines for services on a monthly basis and should be particularly useful during the busy summer months.

### Resources menu

- The Resources menu on the Early Years Hive has been reorganised and updated to provide a more helpful and intuitive experience for providers.

- All guidance material is available in the [Help & Support](#) section. Here you will find guides on using the Early Years Hive portal, NCS, ECCE, AIM and Better Start. You'll also find [FAQs](#) and [Training Videos](#) in this section of the Early Years Hive.
- ELC and SAC providers specifically asked for new guidance around viewing payment information on the Early Years Hive. You can learn how to view programme funding, payments issued and allocations [here](#).
- All documents and forms used in the day-to-day running of programmes are available under the [Programme Documents](#) section. This is where you will find copies of funding agreements, programme rules, templates for parents and much more.

## Early Years Provider Centre

### EARLY YEARS PROVIDER CENTRE

#### Incoming Contacts from Service Providers – May 2021



Phone queries  
2,240



Hive - Provider Cases  
1,214



Mailbox queries  
645

**Total: 4,099**



01 5117222



A reminder to ELC and SAC providers that the Early Years Hive notifications and portal comments are the primary ways we will communicate with you. Please keep a close eye on your notifications.

If you're contacting the Early Years Providers Centre please consider raising a request on the Early Years Hive first. Thanks!

**#ServiceProviders**

**Please check your  
EY Hive  
notifications and  
portal comments  
regularly**



## NCS Parent Centre – Dedicated Sponsor Services



# Dedicated Phone and Email for NCS Sponsors



Call 01 906 8565

Email [sponsors@ncs.gov.ie](mailto:sponsors@ncs.gov.ie)



Dedicated Sponsor team available 9am-5pm  
Mon-Fri

- NCS Sponsors can now avail of a new phonenumber and dedicated email.
- Please note that the NCS Sponsors Team can only deal with Sponsor-related queries. ELC and SAC providers looking for operational support (e.g. attendance returns for Sponsor CHICKS) should still raise a request through the Early Years Hive or contact the Early Years Providers Centre

## Better Start

- Better Start's **Quality Development Service** (QDS) offers a blended approach to mentoring and coaching. It provides more flexibility and accessibility to ELC settings through a combination of online and onsite appointments. If you have any queries or would like to find out more about any of Better Start's mentoring and coaching services, please contact [quality@betterstart.ie](mailto:quality@betterstart.ie) or contact your local CCC.
- **Better Start's** AIM Early Years Specialists are available to provide advice and mentoring supports through remote mentoring, phone calls, emails and videoconferencing using Microsoft Teams.
- Better Start AIM has produced a Social Story™ on **transitioning to primary school** for practitioners, children and their parents. It includes a Tip Sheet for Practitioners, 'I am Going to Primary School – a sample social story™' with images, and a template story for pre-school practitioners. It can be personalised with photographs and sent to parents to adapt and read to their own child over the summer.



Forbairt Cáilíocht  
Luathbhlianta Náisiúnta  
National Early Years  
Quality Development

## AIM (Access and Inclusion Model)

### AIM application process for September 2021 pre-school year

- AIM is a model of supports designed to ensure that children with disabilities can access the ECCE Programme. Its goal is to empower pre-school providers to deliver an inclusive pre-school experience, ensuring that every eligible child can meaningfully participate in the ECCE Programme and reap the benefits of quality early years care and education. Further information on the programme and the range of supports available can be found [here](#).

### AIM Level 4 and 7

- The application process for AIM Level 4 and 7 for the 2021/22 pre-school year opened on the Early Years Hive on 14 May. Pobal provided 4 sectoral training events, with approximately 750 attendees. A copy of the webinar including details of the questions raised at the sessions is available on the Early Years Hive. Should you have any queries in relation to the AIM application process, please contact the Early Years Provider Centre by raising a Request on the Early Years Hive.
- Pre-schools can contact their Better Start AIM Early Years Specialist for assistance with the process for AIM Level 4.



## AIM levels 4 & 7 are now on Early Years Hive



### AIM Level 5

- The application process for AIM Level 5 for the 2021/22 pre-school year is open. Application remains on **PIP** this year.

### Super-User Forum

- Earlier this year Pobal, in partnership with organisations affiliated with the ELC and SAC sector, established a Super-User Forum. The meetings give early years representatives a chance to have their say on their experience of the Early Years Hive, through a structured consultation and discussion process.
- Seven meetings have been held so far looking at various topics including: Programme Readiness, the AIM Programme transition to the Early Years Hive, NCS and ECCE and Early Years Hive Registrations. Monthly meetings have been scheduled for the rest of the year, and thanks to everyone who has contributed so far.

Tá an ríomhbhullaitín seo á haistriú faoi láthair agus beidh leagan Gaeilgear fáil go luath.

This e-bulletin is currently being translated and an Irish version will be available soon.