



TÚSLA

An Ghnóthaireacht um
Léarnádas an Teaghlaigh



**CHILDRENS
SERVICES
REGULATION**

**SCHOOL AGE SERVICE
REGISTRATION &
RE-REGISTRATION OF EARLY
YEARS SERVICE ONLINE
PORTAL GUIDANCE**

Version Number	Version 1
Dated	6 th August 2019
Author	School Age Childcare Department

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Structure of the School Age Service Registration & Re-Registration of Early Years Service Online Portal Guidance

This document is broken down into several sections. The information boxes here describe what each section contains.

Introductory Information

Acronyms – List of the abbreviated terms throughout the document.

Introduction – Information on School Age Registration and Re- Registration of Early Years Services, including the different categories of application depending on the original registration date of the service.

Section 1 - Services Registered through the SDF Process (in June 2016)

Overview of the registration process – A representation in pictures and words of how Early Years Services who were originally registered in June 2016 through the SDF process are required to register online.

Summary – Further information which may be useful for services in this category

Section 2 - Services Registered after the SDF process (after June 2016)

Overview of the registration process – A representation in pictures and words of how Early Years Services who were originally registered after June 2016 (not through the SDF process) are required to register online.

Summary – Further information which may be useful for services in this category

Further Information

Questions and Answers - Some further information that may answer any questions that you might have.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

BOM	Board of Management	CCC	City/County Childcare Committee
CIC	Change in Circumstance	DCYA	Department of Children and Youth Affairs
EYI	Early Years Inspectorate	FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
NVB	National Vetting Bureau	PAC	Personal Access Code
PIC	Person in Charge	QRF	Quality and Regulatory Framework
RP	Registered Provider	SAC	School Age Care
SAS	School Age Service	SDF	Statutory Declaration Process

Introduction

The portal through which to register your School Age Service and to renew your registration of your Early Years Service is now live. This document outlines the application arrangements that are now in place to assist service providers in meeting the registration requirements under legislation.

The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Registration of School Age Services) Regulations 2018 require providers of School Age Services who operate within a registered Early Years Service to make a registration application by 18th August 2019. We understand that this timeframe will not be attainable and ask instead that you make your application as soon as is practicable.

Additionally, Early Years Providers who were first granted registration under the Statutory Declaration Form process (SDF) in June 2016 will have to reapply for registration (re-registration or registration renewal) by the end of 2019. Registration under the Early Years Regulations (2016) is only permitted for a period of three years, an application for renewal of registration is then required.

To assist you in this process Tusla have developed an online application process which will facilitate providers who are operating a School Age Service within their Early Years Service as a wraparound type service to apply to register both service types using one application portal.

The online registration process, and this guidance document, is broken down into two types **depending on the original registration date of your service:**

- 1. Services that were originally registered as an Early Years Service under the SDF process in June 2016.** Information on the online application process for these services is outlined in Section 1 of this document, pages 6 – 9.
- 2. Services that were originally registered as an Early Years Service after June 2016 (not through the SDF process).** Information on the online application process for these services is outlined in Section 2 of this document, pages 10 - 12.

Further information is available for all services on pages 13 – 16.

Section 1 - Services Registered through the SDF Process (in June 2016)

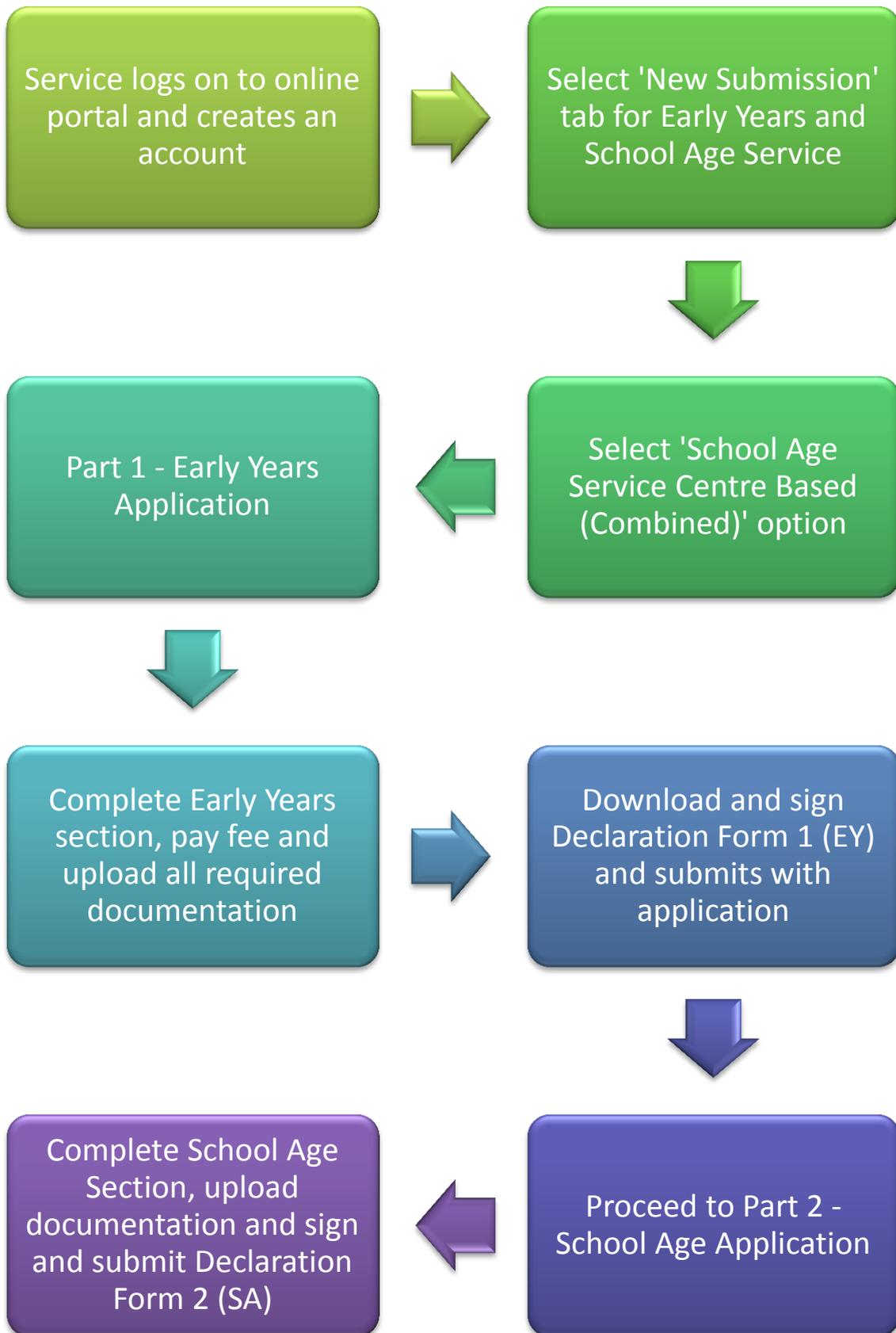
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This section contains:

Overview of the registration process – a representation in pictures and words of how Early Years Services who were originally registered in June 2016 through the SDF process are required to register online.

Summary – Further information which may be useful for services in this category.

Overview of the Registration Process for Early Years Services Registered under SDF
process in June 2016



Do I have to complete both parts to be registered?

Yes, however you do not have to complete both at the same time, you must complete the Early Years part first, then you can take a break and come back to it. However, as all School Age services must be registered by October 2019 to avail of the Child Care Schemes we would urge that applications are made without too much delay.

How do I use the application portal?

The portal is designed to be user friendly and great care has been taken in its design to reduce the burden of administration on the applicant. The first step is to open the online portal via <https://portal.tusla.ie> and create an application account, by clicking 'Register'. Providers can create an account directly, a valid email address and mobile phone number is required to do so.

I have an account what do I do next?

Once you have made your way past the login into the application area, you must click on the new submission tab, then choose Early Years & School Age Service.

Providers who were registered as an Early Years' Service under the SDF process (in June 2016) and operate a school age service on the same premises must choose the School Aged Service Centre Based (Combined) option.

What are the stages of the online application process?

When you open the portal and get to the Start Tab you will find a detailed user guide which will assist you through the application process. We have made every effort to focus on the user experience throughout the design. It is a two stage application process.

Applicants must first enter the information for their Early Years' Service, this is essential as the application will not progress without this section being completed in full.

Once you proceed through the Early Years application you will be required to pay your fee, this is the only point where you will pay an application fee. Providers who are making an application to re-register their Early Years' service and register their school age service, will only pay one fee for both applications which is embedded in the application process. You will need a credit card, debit card or similar alternative to make your payment. Bank transfer payments are not available through the portal.

At the end of the Early Years component of the application you will be required to upload the required supporting documentation for your Early Years' Service. You will need to download and sign the required declaration form and then submit this aspect of the application. This concludes the first part of the application process. Please note that the portal will display a unique ID application number at this point, however **this is not the end of the application**. You will then be invited to proceed to Part 2 of the application process which focuses on the School Age element of your registration application. Both parts are required and compulsory for completion.

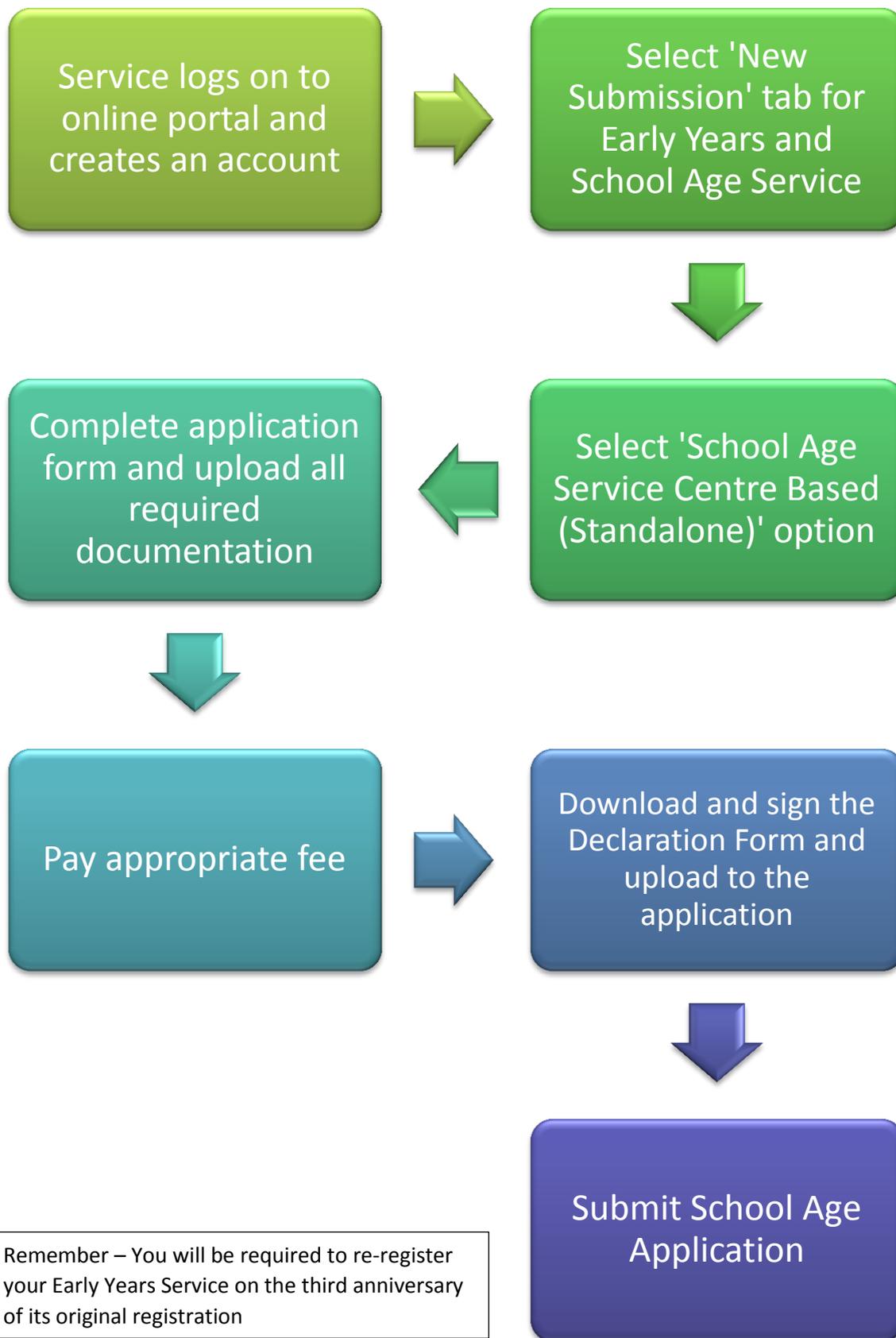
When you proceed into the School Age aspect of the application the portal will prepopulate the relevant information from the Early Years content into your School age application. This will speed up the process and remove unnecessary duplication.

When you come to the end of the School Age application you will be asked to download and complete another declaration form. It is not a duplication of the Early Years declaration but one specifically required for the School Age Service registration application. This is the second of two declaration forms required in this process and it will be clearly indicated on the form itself.

The final aspect of the application will be the uploading of the supporting documents required for the School Age application. Whilst in many cases some of these documents will be the same for your Early Years Service, they will need to be uploaded a second time. The application process is designed to combine two registration applications for distinct service types into as near to singular process as possible.

You will receive another unique application ID number and receive confirmation that both parts of the application process were submitted, this confirmation will appear on the screen and then via an automated email from the portal.

Overview of the Registration Process for Early Years Services Registered after SDF
process (after June 2016)



Remember – You will be required to re-register your Early Years Service on the third anniversary of its original registration

My Early Years' Service and School Age Service opened and was registered after June 2016 (after the SDF process). What should I do?

You are required to register your School Age Service now, but your Early Years Service is not due for re-registration until the third anniversary of your original registration date.

Therefore, when selecting a registration option on the portal, please choose 'School Age Service Centre Based (Standalone)' to make your application. By doing so, your School Age Service will be eligible to partake in the affordable child care scheme when it opens this year. Your Early Years' Service will still be subject to re-registration on the third anniversary of your original registration date. If for example, you opened an Early Years' Service with a combined School Age setting in February 2018, you will need to register your School Age Service now and re-register your Early Years' Service in February 2021.

How do I use the application portal?

The portal is designed to be user friendly and great care has been taken in its design to reduce the burden of administration on the applicant. The first step is to open the online portal via <https://portal.tusla.ie> and create an application account, by clicking 'Register'. Providers can create an account directly, a valid email address and mobile phone number is required to do so.

I have an account what do I do next?

Once you have made your way past the login into the application area, you must click on the new submission tab, then choose Early Years & School Age Service. Providers who were registered as an Early Years' Service after June 2016 (and not through the SDF Process) are required to register their School Age Service only at this time, and must choose the School Aged Service Centre Based (Standalone) option.

What are the stages of the online application process?

When you open the portal and get to the Start Tab you will find a detailed user guide which will assist you through the application process. We have made every effort to focus on the user experience throughout the design.

Once you proceed through the School Age application you will be required to pay your fee, this is the only point where you will pay an application fee. Providers who operate an Early Years Service and School Age Service from the same premises will only be required to pay one fee for both services and this is embedded in the application process. You will need a credit card, debit card or similar alternative to make your payment. Bank transfer payments are not available through the portal.

At the end of the application you will be required to upload the required supporting documentation for your Service. You will also need to download and sign the required declaration form and then upload it to submit with the rest of the application.

You will receive a unique application ID number and receive confirmation that your application has been successfully submitted, this confirmation will appear on the screen and then via an automated email from the portal.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. Are Early Years and School Age registrations not the same registration?

- A No, even though they may be provided in the same premises they fall under separate regulations and require two separate registrations with some different requirements for each aspect of service.

Q2. My Early Years' service was registered by the SDF process in 2016, but I didn't open a School Age setting until after that time, what do I do?

- A Your service would fall under Section 1 of this document, and you must use the combined portal to register both your School Age Service and to re-register your Early Years' Service at this time.

Q3. Why do I have to re-register my Early Years' Service now? Can I not just register my School Age Service and wait until later in the year to re-register my Early Years Service?

- A There are currently over 4,500 Early Years Services in Ireland, the majority of which will need to be re-registered by the end of 2019. The re-registration project is taking place in two phases; phase one is for services who were registered under the SDF process in 2016, who currently also operate a School Age Service. Phase two will focus on the re-registration of Early Years' Services who do not provide a School Age setting. This phased approach will make the processing of so many applications more efficient. Even though your Early Years Service is being re-registered now, you will be registered in this phase until the end of December 2022.

Q4. Do I need to re-register?

- A Yes, under legislation registration is only permitted for a period of three years, after which you are required to renew or re-register your service. It is an offence to operate an unregistered Early Years or School Age Service without a renewal of your registration.

Q5. Can I just download an application form and post my application to you instead?

- A No, applications can only be made through the online portal.

Q6. What documents do I need to upload?

The required documents are set out on the start page of a new submission on the online portal. Please note that documents should be properly scanned for upload, photographs of documents may not upload and should be avoided. Photographed documents are difficult to read and take up considerable memory, scanning is advised.

Q7. I don't know if I have fire certification and planning permission for my Early Years' Service? Will my application be processed?

- A Yes, but it is essential that you follow the guidance as set out in the 'Fire and Planning Requirements' document (which has been emailed to you and is also available on the Tusla website) and it is your responsibility as the provider to ensure that these requirements are met. Tusla have worked closely with the Association of Chief Fire Officers to create the guidance to assist you. All premises used as an Early Year's setting must be safe and fit for purpose. If you do not have the documents required for fire and planning at the time of application, you will be given some time to address those requirements. This will allow you to continue operating subject to certain conditions if applicable.

Q8. Can I use the same documents for the Early Years and School Age sections of my service?

- A School Age Services are registered under a different set of regulations and have different requirements for registration. School Age Services cater for the care requirements of children under the age of 15 years enrolled in a school providing primary or post-primary education, whilst Early Years cater for children aged 0-6 years. The policy content for a School Age Service must reflect the needs of the older age group and as such policies for preschool children may not be appropriate for use with older children. Similarly, insurance documentation may need to reflect that there are two age groups of children being catered for in a service. It is possible to use the same policies for both as long as the requirements for each (Early Years and School Age) are detailed. There is a guide to policy content for School Age Services available to assist you on the Tusla Website. This guide sets out how School Age policies are assessed for suitability for registration.

Q9. What Garda and Police Vetting Documents are required?

- A It is imperative that the correct Garda Vetting and Police Vetting documents are provided with your application. Unlike fire and planning documentation these will not be accepted retrospectively. It is policy to only accept Garda Vetting documents that are up to date at the time of application. Only Garda clearance documentation dated within the last 3 years of the application will be accepted.

Q10. I can't get Garda Vetting for Board of Management (BOM) members, what should I do?

- A We accept that the current legislation does not include the vetting of those who are not engaged in relevant work or do not have contact or access to children. We would expect that Chairpersons are vetted in order to assure themselves that the services are operating to the highest of standards. Whilst Garda Vetting may not be obtainable, members of BOM's should have reference checks to confirm their suitability to be part of a children's service. The registration process requires supply of an affidavit to demonstrate the structures of the BOM and a declaration that the members do not have access to children. If you require additional information, please see the memo issued by the Inspectorate in June 2019.

Q11. Will there be workshops around the country to assist providers with the application process?

- A Tusla will not be hosting any workshops directly, however our colleagues in the County Childcare Committees will be happy to assist you if required. They have worked in partnership with us and will be trained in all aspects of the process so that they can assist services with the application process. Your local CCC will be providing supports after their training and guidance sessions in mid- August.

Q12. What happens once my application is made?

- A Your applications will be processed via the portal and you will receive feedback through the portal once your application is screened. We will address applications as they are received and incomplete applications will not be accepted under any circumstances. Please be advised that incomplete applications will not be held, they will be returned. It is the responsibility of the provider to ensure that the applications are completed in full and the supporting documentation is correct and complies with the appropriate guidance. You will be advised via email when your application is completed and you will receive your certificates of registration.

Q13. My registration for my Early Years Service is due for renewal at the end of 2019 and I would like to make changes to my service, what are my options?

- A This depends very much on what the extent of the change you are considering is, but in this instance providers have two options. The term “re-registration” is essentially registration renewal but they are really a new application for registration. This being the case applicants can apply to operate a service different from the one provided up to this point. Providers can apply to open a full day where they had previously operated a sessional and vice versa. This change can be proposed now or the other option is to continue to operate as is and make the change through the Change of Circumstances process later in the year. Please be advised that certain changes of service type or premises will still require a fit for purpose inspection as part of the application process. Please note that the change in circumstance must still be approved before implementing the change.

Q14. Where will I address any queries I have?

- A General queries regarding the overall application process can be made to: sac.registration@tusla.ie,
- A Queries specifically regarding school age applications must be made to: sac.registration@tusla.ie
- A Queries regarding early years content of applications must be made to: ey.registration@tusla.ie