



An Roinn Leanáí
agus Gnóthaí Óige
Department of
Children and Youth Affairs

Department of Children and Youth Affairs

RULES FOR DCYA CHILDCARE FUNDING PROGRAMMES

Valid for the 2018/19 Programme Year

Published on 9th August 2018

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

Community Childcare Subvention (CCS)

Community Childcare Subvention Plus (CCSP) (Including Universal Subsidy (CCSU))

Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement (CCSR)

Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement (Transitional) (CCSR(T))

Training and Employment Childcare (TEC)

Table of Contents

Introduction	10
Chapter 1 Rules Common to All Childcare Programmes	12
1.0 Compliance	13
1.1 Attendance Records.....	13
1.2 Force Majeure	14
1.2.1 Reporting of Force Majeure Incident.....	15
1.2.2 Force Majeure Claim Process Deadline	15
Chapter 2 Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)	16
2.0 Overview of ECCE	16
2.1 Eligibility for ECCE.....	16
2.2 ECCE Programme Rules	17
2.2.1 Age of eligible child	17
2.2.2 Exceptions to upper age limit	17
2.2.3 Required documents/information	17
2.2.4 Booking deposit	17
2.2.5 Tusla registration	17
2.2.6 Adult to child ratio	17
2.2.7 Notice when moving a child to another service	17
2.2.8 Notice when moving a child to an alternative ECCE timeslot.....	17
2.2.9 Provision of ECCE programme	17
2.2.10 ECCE Rate	17
2.2.11 Provision of ECCE Programme by more than one Service Provider	18
2.2.12 Minimum enrolment.....	18
2.2.13 Change of circumstances	18
2.2.14 Service closure	18
2.3 Child Registration and Attendance Record Keeping.....	18
2.3.1 When to register a child.....	18
2.3.2 Latest date for registration	18
2.3.3 Late registrations	19
2.3.4 Child non-attendance from start date	19
2.3.5 Reduction in attendance/PIP Updating	19
2.3.6 Absenteeism.....	19
2.3.7 Attendance records.....	19

2.3.8 Failure to maintain appropriate attendance records	19
2.3.9 Compliance Visits	19
2.4 Fees List and Service Calendar	20
2.4.1 Fees List and Service Calendar requirement.....	20
2.4.2 Minimum opening requirement	20
2.4.3 Document display requirement	20
2.4.4 Document filing requirement	20
2.4.5 Fee changes.....	20
2.4.6 ECCE Service Calendar.....	20
2.4.7 Requirement to provide ECCE free of charge	20
2.4.8 Optional Extras.....	20
2.4.9 Additional 30 minutes in sessional service	20
2.4.10 Additional time in full-time or part-time service	21
2.4.11 Displacing registered children.....	21
2.5 Staff Qualifications/Higher Capitation	21
2.5.1 Minimum qualifications for ECCE.....	21
2.5.2 Higher capitation.....	21
2.5.3 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Higher Capitation.....	21
2.5.4 Higher capitation eligibility	22
2.5.5 Higher capitation rate and fees	22
2.5.6 Higher Capitation Room Leader – three years’ work experience.....	22
2.5.7 Applying for Higher Capitation.....	22
2.5.8 Higher Capitation amendments.....	23
2.5.9 Qualifications and Higher Capitation	23
2.5.10 Higher Capitation Compliance	23
2.5.11 Staff Absenteeism	23
2.6 Financial Requirements.....	23
2.7 FAQs for ECCE Programme	24
Chapter 3 Community Childcare Subvention (CCS)	27
3.0 Overview of CCS	27
3.1 Eligibility for CCS.....	27
3.2 CCS Programme Rules.....	27
3.2.1 Types of Places under the CCS Programme	27
3.2.2 Required information.....	27

Table 2 CCS/CCSP Band Eligibility	28
3.2.3 Note on Table 2.....	29
3.2.4 Appeal of Band Rate.....	29
3.2.5 Tusla registration	29
3.2.6 Booking deposits.....	29
3.2.7 Tusla referral.....	30
3.2.8 PHN referral	30
3.2.9 Requirement for CCS Services to participate in ECCE and/or TEC Programme	30
3.2.10 Non-payment of childcare	30
3.2.11 Payment of 52 weeks for 50 weeks' attendance.....	30
3.2.12 Change of Circumstances.....	30
3.2.13 Service closure	30
3.3 Snapshot Window for Registration	30
3.3.1 Registrations and the snapshot window.....	30
3.3.2 CCS Child Registration on PIP.....	31
3.4 Child Registration and Attendance Record Keeping.....	31
3.4.1 Reduction in attendance/PIP Updating	31
3.4.2 Absenteeism.....	31
3.4.3 Attendance records.....	31
3.4.4 Failure to maintain appropriate attendance records	32
3.4.5 De-committal and Recovery Procedures	32
3.4.6 Compliance Visits	32
3.4.7 No CCS children.....	32
3.4.8 If a child leaves the CCS Programme to attend ECCE	32
3.4.9 If a child leaves the CCS Programme.....	32
3.4.10 Reporting leavers	32
3.4.11 Replacing leavers	33
3.4.12 Filling the vacant CCS place.....	33
3.4.13 Child leaves before snapshot period commences	33
3.4.14 Transfer from the CCS programme to the TEC programme	33
3.4.15 Transfer from the TEC programme to the CCS programme	33
3.5 Fees List and Service Calendar	34
3.5.1 Fees List and Service Calendar requirement.....	34
3.5.2 Document display requirement	34

3.5.3 Document filing requirement	34
3.5.4 Fee changes.....	34
3.5.5 CCS Service Calendar.....	34
3.5.6 Optional extras.....	34
3.6 Financial Requirements.....	34
3.7 FAQs for CCS Programme	35
Chapter 4 Community Childcare Subvention Plus (CCS Plus)	39
4.0 Overview of CCS Plus	39
4.1 Eligibility for CCS Plus.....	39
4.2 CCS Plus Programme Rules.....	39
4.2.1 Types of places under the CCS Plus Programme.....	39
4.2.2 Required information.....	39
Table 3 CCS/CCSP Band Eligibility	41
4.2.3 Note on Table 3.....	42
4.2.4 Appeal of Band Rate.....	42
4.2.5 Tusla registration	42
4.2.6 Child-minders Tusla registration.....	42
4.2.7 Booking Deposits.....	42
4.2.8 Tusla/ PHN referrals.....	43
4.2.9 Requirement for CCS Plus services to participate in ECCE and/or TEC Programme.....	43
4.2.10 Payment of 52 weeks for 50 weeks' attendance.....	43
4.2.11 Change of Circumstances.....	43
4.2.12 Service closure	43
4.3 Child Registration and Attendance Record Keeping.....	43
4.3.1 Entering a child on the CCS Plus Programme.....	43
4.3.2 CCS Plus child registration on PIP	43
4.3.3 Reduction in attendance/PIP Updating	44
4.3.4 Absenteeism.....	44
4.3.5 Attendance records.....	44
4.3.6 Failure to maintain appropriate attendance records	44
4.3.7 Compliance Visits	44
4.3.8 De-committal and Recovery Procedures	45
4.4 Fees List and Service Calendar	45
4.4.1 Fees List and Service Calendar requirement.....	45

4.4.2 Document display requirement	45
4.4.3 Document filing requirement	45
4.4.4 Fee changes.....	45
4.4.5 CCS Plus Service Calendar	45
4.4.6 Optional extras.....	45
4.5 FAQs for CCS Plus Programme	45
4.6 Universal Subsidy (CCSU)	46
4.6.1 Overview of Universal Subsidy.....	46
4.6.2 Eligibility for the Universal Subsidy.....	46
4.6.3 Required documents.....	46
4.6.4 Programme Rates.....	47
Table 4 Universal Subsidy (CCSU) rates	47
4.6.5 CCSU Programme Rules	47
4.7 Financial Requirements.....	47
Chapter 5 Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement (CCSR).....	49
5.0 Overview of CCSR	49
5.1 Eligibility for CCSR.....	49
5.2 CCSR Programme Rules	49
5.2.1 Duration of programme	49
5.2.3 Types of places under the CCSR Programme	49
5.2.4 Programme Rates.....	49
5.2.5 Required documents/information	49
5.2.6 Entering a Child on the CCSR Programme.....	49
5.2.7 Tusla Registration.....	49
5.2.8 Fees Policy and CCSR.....	49
5.2.9 Booking deposits	50
5.2.10 Change of circumstances	50
5.2.11 Service closure	50
5.3 Child Registration and Attendance Record Keeping.....	50
5.3.1 CCSR Child registration on PIP	50
5.3.2 Reduction in attendance/PIP Updating	50
5.3.3 Absenteeism.....	50
5.3.4 Attendance records.....	50
5.3.5 Failure to maintain appropriate attendance records	51

5.3.6 Change of attendance schedule.....	51
5.3.7 Child Registration Window	51
5.3.8 If a child leaves the CCSR Programme	51
5.3.9 De-committal and Recovery Procedures	51
5.3.10 Compliance Visits	51
5.3.11 Optional extras.....	52
5.3.12 Calendar Policy.....	52
5.4 Financial Requirements.....	52
5.5 FAQs for CCSR.....	53
Chapter 6 Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement (Transitional) (CCSR(T))	54
6.0 Overview of CCSR(T)	54
6.1 Eligibility for CCSR(T).....	54
6.2 CCSR(T) Programme Rules.....	54
6.2.1 Duration of programme	54
6.2.2 Types of places under CCSR(T) Programme	54
6.2.3 Programme rates	54
6.2.4 Required documents/information	54
6.2.5 Entering a Child on the CCSR(T) Programme	55
6.2.6 Tusla registration	55
6.2.7 Fees Policy.....	55
6.2.8 Booking deposit	55
6.2.9 Optional extras.....	55
6.2.10 Calendar Policy.....	55
6.2.11 Change of circumstances	55
6.2.12 Service closure	55
6.3 Child Registration and Attendance Record Keeping.....	55
6.3.1 CCSR(T) Child Registration on PIP	55
6.3.2 Reduction in attendance/PIP Updating	56
6.3.3 Absenteeism.....	56
6.3.4 Attendance records.....	56
6.3.5 Failure to maintain appropriate attendance records	56
6.3.6 Compliance Visits	56
6.3.7 De-committal and Recovery Procedures	57
6.3.8 Change of attendance schedule.....	57

6.3.9 If a child leaves the CCSR(T) Programme.....	57
6.3.10 Funding of CCSR(T) child leaving the service	57
6.3.11 Moving from one CCSR(T) provider to another	57
6.3.12 Transfer from the TEC programme to the CCSR (T) programme.....	57
6.4 FAQs for CCSR(T) Programme	57
6.5 CCSR(T) Financial requirements.....	58
Chapter 7 Training and Employment Childcare (TEC)	60
7.0 Overview of TEC	60
7.1 Eligibility for TEC (CETS, CEC and ASCC).....	60
7.1.1 Eligibility Criteria for CETS.....	60
7.1.2 Documents/information required for CETS	61
7.1.3 Eligibility Criteria for CEC	61
7.1.4 Documents/information required for CEC.....	61
7.1.5 Eligibility Criteria for ASCC	61
7.1.6 Documents/information required for ASCC	61
Table 5.....	62
7.2 TEC Programme Rules	63
7.2.1 Entering a child on the TEC Programme	63
7.2.2 TEC Child Registration on PIP.....	63
7.2.3 Types of Places under the TEC Programme	63
7.2.4 Booking deposits	63
7.2.5 Tusla registration	63
7.2.6 Transport service	63
7.2.7 Childcare extends into another programme year.....	63
7.2.8 Sign-in.....	63
7.2.9 Mid-term/summer periods	64
7.2.10 Change of Circumstances.....	64
7.2.11 Service closure	64
7.3 Child Registration and Attendance Record Keeping.....	64
7.3.1 Reduction in attendance/PIP Updating	64
7.3.2 Absenteeism.....	64
7.3.3 Attendance records.....	64
7.3.4 Failure to maintain appropriate attendance records	65
7.3.5 Compliance Visits	65

7.4 Fees List and Service Calendar	65
7.4.1 Fees List and Service Calendar requirement.....	65
7.4.2 Document display requirement	65
7.4.3 Document filing requirement	65
7.4.4 Fee changes.....	66
7.4.5 Optional extras.....	66
7.5 Financial Requirements.....	66
7.6 FAQs for TEC Programme	67
Appendix 1.....	68
Appendix 2.....	69

Introduction

“Our vision is for Ireland to be one of the best small countries in the world in which to grow up and raise a family, and where the rights of all children and young people are respected, protected and fulfilled; where their voices are heard and where they are supported to realise their maximum potential now and in the future.”

Katherine Zappone, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs

In the national policy framework for children and young people 2014-2020, *Better Outcomes Brighter Futures*, the Government committed to continue to increase investment in high-quality early years care and education for all children, prioritising families on low incomes. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs is in a period of significant policy development and change in the early years sector, working with our stakeholders to achieve our goal of high quality and accessible childcare for all.

As part of our commitment to raising the quality of early years care and education, we have expanded the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme to two full programme years from September 2018. Our targeted programmes provide for the most vulnerable children in Ireland and reinforce our strong social inclusion and equality agenda. Further to this agenda, the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) is a model of supports designed to ensure that children with disabilities can access the ECCE programme. AIM is a child-centred model, involving seven levels of progressive support, moving from the universal to the targeted, based on the needs of the child and the pre-school service. The model is designed to be responsive to the needs of each individual child in the context of their pre-school setting. It offers tailored, practical supports based on need and does not require a formal diagnosis of disability. For further information on the AIM programme see www.aim.gov.ie.

This document summarises each of the Childcare Funding Programmes, with separate chapters for each childcare programme. The first chapter emphasises the responsibility of the Department to ensure that all public monies are spent in a responsible and transparent way, reinforcing the message that it is the duty of those in receipt of public funding to strictly adhere to programme rules.

This document outlines the childcare schemes provided by the Department as follows:

- **Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE):** This programme is a free universal, education-focussed childcare programme;
- **Community Childcare Subvention (CCS):** This programme provides childcare funding support targeting low income families in community childcare services;
- **Community Childcare Subvention Plus (CCSP):** This programme provides childcare funding support targeting low income families in private childcare services and community childcare services;

- **Universal Subsidy (CCSU):** As part of its plan to make childcare more affordable, the DCYA introduced a universal subvention payment from September 2017, the payment of which is facilitated through the CCSP childcare programme for children aged between 6 months and 3 years;
- **Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement (CSSR):** This programme provides childcare support to Programme Refugees to support their resettlement and integration into Irish society;
- **Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement (Transitional) (CSSR(T)):** As part of the “Rebuilding Ireland – an Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness” the DCYA provides access to free childcare for children of families experiencing homelessness;
- **Training and Employment Childcare (TEC) Programmes:** These programmes provide childcare funding support for parents/guardians participating in eligible ETB/Solas vocational training courses, Community Employment (CE) programmes or returning to employment.

Note: Information in this Guide is subject to change. Please check the PIP Homepage regularly for updates.

Chapter 1 Rules Common to All Childcare Programmes

In 2017, €416.5m of exchequer funds was spent on early years to provide affordable childcare to over 150,000 children in Ireland. It is the duty of the DCYA to ensure that all public monies are spent in a responsible and transparent way. It is the corresponding duty of those in receipt of public funding to strictly adhere to programme rules. There is commonality in the operational process and rules that are fundamental throughout all of the DCYA Childcare Funding Programmes. Namely:

- The Registered Provider shall be a limited company, a designated activity company, a sole trader, a school board of management, a not for profit organisation, or a partnership;
- The Registered Provider shall take all reasonable measures to safeguard the Health, Safety and Welfare of the children attending the service and to comply with the [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) Regulations 2016](#) and the [Child Care Regulations \(The Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\)\(Amendments\) Regulations 2016](#);
- The Registered Provider shall maintain annual accounts for each financial year and provide copies of such accounts within four months of their adoption to Pobal as agents of the DCYA and, on request, to the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG);
- Service providers must keep an accurate record of each child's **actual attendance** to include daily arrival and departure times for each child. The services' registrations on PIP must match actual attendance (actual child attendance and not opening times of session/service) as recorded in the above attendance records, see appendix 2;
- All facilities/locations operated by a service must have an individual DCYA reference number and children must attend the facility/ location in which they are registered;
- It is an essential requirement that all public monies are appropriately accounted for and used for their intended purpose;
- All childcare programmes are processed online via the Programmes Implementation Platform (PIP). The PIP system is administered by Pobal, on behalf of the Department;
- The approved childcare funding is paid directly to the childcare service and must be deducted directly from the service's fee for the service provision;
- The service provider must display a PIP approved fees list that indicates the exact fees as well as the reduced fee of the service based on the relevant approved programme funding i.e. the full fee less the funding approved;
- The service provider must display a PIP approved Service Calendar for all relevant approved funding programmes to show parents/guardians the days and weeks they are closed during the programme year; and
- Parents/guardians must sign a PIP Parent Declaration Form and a PIP approved Service Fees Information Letter to indicate that they understand the terms of the programme and that all child registration details are accurate.

Any queries in relation to the DCYA Childcare Funding Programmes and the rules of the programmes should first be directed to the local City and County Childcare Committee (CCC). Please see the PIP Homepage on www.pobal.ie for CCC contact details. CCCs are funded by the DCYA and act as local agents in the administration of aspects of national early education and childcare programmes. The

CCCs are the first port of call for both parents/guardians and childcare providers when trying to access information and support on DCYA Childcare Funding Programmes.

Service Providers can also contact PIP Support at onlinesupport@pobal.ie or 01-5117222 for assistance in administering the rules of the Programmes as well as any technical issues with their PIP Portal. The 'How to Guide' for each childcare programme is available on the PIP portal through www.pobal.ie.

1.0 Compliance

It is the responsibility of the Service Provider to ensure compliance with their contractual requirements, which includes adherence to this rules document. Service providers should ensure that they understand and adhere to the contents of this document, as well as with the grant funding agreements and 'How To' guides available on PIP.

In order to make compliance visits as efficient as possible for both providers and visit officers, service providers should ensure that their compliance file is kept up to date and contains:

- attendance records;
- enrolment details (including minimum enrolment exemption where relevant);
- PIP parental declaration forms;
- Parent letters;
- Fee records;
- Staff qualifications;
- Higher capitation forms;
- (TEC only) parents sign in sheets or permission letters; and
- (CCS only) FTE calculators.

The compliance file should be kept on site and available for inspection at all times. Services should also ensure that:

- PIP registrations are correct,
- PIP Fees list and PIP calendar, for all approved funding programmes, are clearly displayed for parents and,
- There is a staff member on site at all times who has access to the compliance file and can facilitate the visit. Please note that if the records are readily available for review any interruption to the service will be minimal, other than seeking clarifications when required.

1.1 Attendance Records

Requirement to maintain attendance records

Childcare providers must keep daily attendance records for each child attending and records must include the child's full name, date of attendance, time of child's arrival and time of child's departure. Attendance records must be kept in an appropriate manner that is sufficient to establish actual duration of attendance of each named child in terms of hours. The child's name must be recorded in a consistent manner in order to facilitate identification of patterns of attendance (i.e. if the attendance records are weekly sheets, the child's name should be in the same place each week). Weekly or monthly attendance sheets are preferable as they facilitate establishing patterns of attendance. In addition the following points should be noted as a priority for compliance visits;

- Attendance records /roll books for each session/room.
- If a child moves to another room to avail of their ECCE session, then this should be identifiable through the attendance records
- State Child's full name (as per PIP records)
- Keep names of children in a consistent sequence throughout the cycle. Retain records of children who have left the service i.e. do not delete or overwrite.
- Ensure attendance records /roll books are filled out by staff member working in the room.
- Keep Parent's Sign in and out book separate to Attendance records /roll books (if necessary).
- Don't use individual daily sheets/diaries. Weekly/monthly records facilitate ascertaining patterns of attendance.
- Input time of arrival and departure for all children within the service including Afterschool and Breakfast clubs. Don't use ticks.
- Ensure Staff attendance is recorded daily on each room/session attendance records/roll book.
- Where electronic records are maintained, the service must be able to produce weekly/monthly reports for individual children which show their level of attendance for the cycle to date.

Attendance records will be reviewed as a priority during compliance visits. Please see the minimum requirements as set out in the 'good practice on attendance records' guide, attached as appendix 2 of this document.

Failure to maintain appropriate attendance records

Failure to maintain attendance records may result in an assumption of zero hour's attendance. The DCYA may withdraw future payments from the provider and/or require repayment of over-claimed monies already paid for the period concerned.

Failure to maintain sufficient attendance records (e.g. where attendance records are kept, but in a format which does not allow a compliance visit officer to determine the hours which a child has attended, such as through use of "ticks") may result in an assumption of minimal hour's attendance (i.e. sessional/half sessional service). The DCYA may withdraw future payments from the provider and/or require repayment of over-claimed monies already paid for the period concerned.

1.2 Force Majeure

The DCYA force majeure policy relates to contractual force majeure (not to be confused with employer force majeure) i.e. *where a service provider is hindered or prevented by circumstances not within its reasonable ability to control, including but not limited to, acts of God, inclement weather, flood, lightning, fire, trade disputes, strikes, lockouts, acts of terrorism, war, military operations, acts or omissions of third parties for whom the Affected Party is not responsible ("Force Majeure") from performing any of its obligations under this Agreement, the Affected Party shall be relieved of liability for failure to perform such obligations.*

Closures for exceptional circumstances outside of extreme weather events, fire, flooding or utility issues should be referred to the local City/County Childcare Committee as per usual practice.

1.2.1 Reporting of Force Majeure Incident

Service Providers should contact Pobal to inform them of their intention to claim force majeure at the onset of the incident in question, giving a brief outline of the issue and their estimated number of days' closure.

1.2.2 Force Majeure Claim Process Deadline

Service Providers should formally claim force majeure **on PIP** no later than three weeks after the incident, even if the incident is ongoing.

Chapter 2 Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

2.0 Overview of ECCE

The ECCE programme is a universal programme available to all children within the eligible age range. It provides children with their first formal experience of early learning prior to commencing primary school. The programme is provided for three hours per day, five days per week over 38 weeks¹ per year and the programme year runs from September to June. There is one point of entry in the programme year which is September.

Childcare services taking part in the ECCE scheme must provide an appropriate pre-school educational programme which adheres to the principles of Síolta and Aistear, the national frameworks for early years care and education. Local City/County Childcare Committees (CCCs) staff are on hand to support participating services with assistive visits and advice. ECCE is only available through participating early years services; a list of these services is available through the relevant local CCC.

2.1 Eligibility for ECCE

The programme is available to all children from the age of 2 years and 8 months. Table 1 below sets out relevant eligibility dates by year of birth:

Birth date between	Eligible Enrolment date(s)	ECCE end date
1 st January 2014 - 31 st March 2014	1 st April 2017, 1 st September 2017 + 1 st September 2018*	June 2019
1 st April 2014 - 31 st August 2014	1 st September 2017 + 1 st September 2018*	June 2019
1 st September 2014 - 31 st December 2014	1 st January 2018 + 1 st September 2018*	June 2019
1 st January 2015 - 31 st December 2015	1 st September 2018 + 1 st September 2019	June 2020
1 st January 2016 - 31 st December 2016	1 st September 2019 + 1 st September 2020	June 2021
1 st January 2017 - 31 st December 2017	1 st September 2020 + 1 st September 2021	June 2022
1 st January 2018 - 31 st December 2018	1 st September 2021 + 1 st September 2022	June 2023
1 st January 2019 - 31 st December 2019	1 st September 2022 + 1 st September 2023	June 2024

* Children born between 1st January and 31st December 2014 will continue to be eligible for free pre-school under the terms of the ECCE expansion as announced in Budget 2016. ECCE eligibility criteria as announced under Budget 2018 will come into effect with effect from 1st September 2018.

¹ A small number of services are permitted to run over 41 weeks as an exceptional matter. These existing arrangements will continue and are subject to all rules contained herein except that they can deliver the ECCE Programme for 4 days per week for 3.5 hours per day.

2.2 ECCE Programme Rules

2.2.1 Age of eligible child

A child must have turned 2 years and 8 months on or before 31st August 2018, and not be older than 5 years and 6 months by the end of June of the programme year to be eligible.

2.2.2 Exceptions to upper age limit

In exceptional circumstances, exemptions from the upper age limit may be granted where a child has special/additional needs. Applications for such exemptions must be submitted in writing to the DCYA and must include a letter of recommendation from a medical specialist (not a GP/Public Health Nurse) stating that it is in the best interest of the child to avail of a further year of preschool.

2.2.3 Required documents/information

Parent(s) must provide child's full name as per birth certificate or passport, child's date of birth and child's PPSN in order **to register** their child on the programme.

Documentation containing PPSN and any other personal information must be destroyed once no longer required.

2.2.4 Booking deposit

A childcare provider may charge a refundable booking deposit to hold a place in the ECCE provision for a child. The maximum deposit a provider may charge is equivalent to four weeks' ECCE payment. The totality of the ECCE deposit must be returned to the parent/guardian once the child's registration is approved on PIP.

2.2.5 Tusla registration

A childcare provider that provides childcare to children aged 0 – 6 must register with Tusla and is subject to the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

2.2.6 Adult to child ratio

The adult to child ratio for ECCE rooms is 1:11 during the ECCE session (all children in the room must be aged between 2.5 and 6 years). Please see www.dcy.gov.ie for further information.

2.2.7 Notice when moving a child to another service

If a parent/guardian wishes to move their child to another childcare provider, they must provide four ECCE weeks' written notice of this to the current childcare provider. Parents/guardians should note that, where a service is closed due to holidays, this time is not counted as part of the four weeks' notice.

2.2.8 Notice when moving a child to an alternative ECCE timeslot

If a service provider wishes to move a child to a different ECCE timeslot, e.g. from the morning to the afternoon, they may only do so with the parents' permission.

2.2.9 Provision of ECCE programme

A childcare provider is required to provide three hours per day, five days per week for 38 weeks per programme year.²

2.2.10 ECCE Rate

The standard weekly ECCE capitation is €69.00 for 2018/2019 programme year, an increase of 7% in the 2018 Budget. This 7% increase is intended to directly support the service provider to administer

² With the historical exception of so-called "41 week" services which are permitted to run for 41 weeks at 3.5 hours per day, 4 days per week

the ECCE programme, i.e. where a child is attending a part-time or full time service the childcare provider must reduce the fees paid by the parent/guardian by €64.50 (or €12.90 per day) which was the standard capitation rate in 2017 before the 7% increase was introduced in the 2018 budget to support quality in childcare.

2.2.11 Provision of ECCE Programme by more than one Service Provider

For continuity of the care, education and socialisation needs of the child, the DCYA strongly recommends that children attend only one service wherever possible. However, a child's ECCE place can be split between two services in the following exceptional cases:

- Where there is a joint custody arrangement and, because of this, it is not possible for the child to attend the same service every day.
- Where a child has special needs and it has been recommended by the specialist pre-school that the ECCE place be split between a specialist and mainstream pre-school on the grounds that this is in the interest of the child.
- Where the working arrangements of the parent/s necessitates a split placement.

ECCE exemption applications should be submitted in writing to the Early Years Operations Unit of the DCYA at eyqueries@dcya.gov.ie.

2.2.12 Minimum enrolment

(i) A childcare provider must have a minimum enrolment number of eight ECCE-eligible children per session

(ii) Exceptions to the minimum enrolment number may be granted in some circumstances. Applications must be submitted through County Childcare Committees

2.2.13 Change of circumstances

- i. In the case of a transfer of ownership of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new DCYA reference number.
- ii. In the case of a change of legal status of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new DCYA reference number.
- iii. In the case of a change of address of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new DCYA reference number.

2.2.14 Service closure

If a childcare provider closes its service, or ceases to provide a DCYA childcare programme, notice must be submitted in writing immediately to the local County Childcare Committee and to pipedocuments@pobal.ie. Service closure and change of circumstances require the service to end date registrations for all current registrations at closure date.

2.3 Child Registration and Attendance Record Keeping

2.3.1 When to register a child

Childcare providers can register a child up to seven calendar days in advance of the childcare funding start date.

2.3.2 Latest date for registration

The latest a childcare provider can register a child is eight weeks after the child's start date.

2.3.3 Late registrations

- (i) DCYA reserves the right to decline or not back-date funding on any “late registrations” (i.e. more than eight weeks after child’s start date)
- (ii) DCYA reserves the right to review the grant funding agreement of services who consistently submit “late registrations”

2.3.4 Child non-attendance from start date

If a child does not attend within four weeks of the start date then the registration must be cancelled immediately and any payment received for that child will be recovered.

2.3.5 Reduction in attendance/PIP Updating

Where attendance differs from registration in a consistent pattern over a four week period, registrations must be updated to reflect the actual pattern of attendance. An update on PIP must occur within four weeks of the reduced attendance pattern commencing. Failure to update registrations to reflect the actual attendance pattern will result in an over-claim due to the Department. Over-claims will be recouped in accordance with the terms of the grant funding agreement.

2.3.6 Absenteeism

The service provider must contact the parent/guardian to establish the cause of the child’s absence within the first week of the absence commencing. If a child leaves the service or has not attended for four consecutive weeks, the service must create a Leaver form via the PIP Portal stating the date the child last attended the service. In exceptional circumstances e.g. serious illness, the service may apply to their local CCC to retain the registration beyond four weeks up to a maximum of six weeks. Services cannot claim for any time period in excess of the four/six week period from the last date of the child’s attendance.

2.3.7 Attendance records

Childcare providers must keep daily attendance records (for each ECCE session/room) for each child attending and records must include the child’s full name, date of attendance, time of child’s arrival and time of child’s departure. Attendance records must be kept in an appropriate manner that is sufficient to establish actual duration of attendance of each named child in terms of hours. The child’s name must be recorded in a consistent manner in order to facilitate identification of patterns of attendance (i.e. if the attendance records are weekly sheets, the child’s name should be in the same place each week). Weekly/monthly attendance records are preferable as they facilitate establishing patterns of attendance. Attendance records will be reviewed as a priority during compliance visits. Please see the minimum requirements as set out in the ‘good practice on attendance records’ guide at Appendix 2.

2.3.8 Failure to maintain appropriate attendance records

Failure to maintain attendance records (as per 2.3.7) may result in an assumption of zero hour’s attendance. The Department may withdraw future payments from the provider and/or require repayment of over-claimed monies already paid for the period concerned.

2.3.9 Compliance Visits

- i. Services must facilitate compliance visits which will be made without notice, to include access to the premises, personnel and relevant records.
- ii. All documentation related to the financial affairs of the service, accounts, fees records, staff qualifications, PIP, fees lists, registers and attendance records must be on-site at all

- times These records must be kept for a minimum period of seven years from the expiry date of contract.
- iii. Compliance visit officers may inspect, and take copies of, any books, records or other documents (including books, records or documents stored in non-legible form) or extracts therefrom, that he or she finds in the course of his or her inspection.

2.4 Fees List and Service Calendar

2.4.1 Fees List and Service Calendar requirement

Service Providers must complete a fees list and service calendar at the beginning of each programme year. They must show details of all the fees charged to parents, as well as details of any additional charges, optional extras, discounts or donations applied by the service.

2.4.2 Minimum opening requirement

Service providers are required to open for a minimum number of weeks per ECCE term, details of which can be found in the ECCE 'How to Guide' available on the PIP Portal.

2.4.3 Document display requirement

A copy of the fees list, together with copies of any standard letters issued to parents, must be on prominent display in an area accessible to parents.

2.4.4 Document filing requirement

Services must have a signed letter on file in respect of each parent/guardian of a child on the ECCE programme, showing the fees that have been approved. These fees must match those shown on the Fees List.

2.4.5 Fee changes

Four weeks' notice of any change to the fees list must be given to parents. Where the fees list has been revised, amended fees list letters must then issue and be signed by the parents/guardians for the service's files.

2.4.6 ECCE Service Calendar

An ECCE service calendar must be distributed to all parents/guardians showing the days the service is due to be open/closed under the ECCE programme year.

2.4.7 Requirement to provide ECCE free of charge

ECCE must be provided free of charge to parents/guardians in return for the capitation.

2.4.8 Optional Extras

Childcare providers cannot charge for any activities/items which form part of the ECCE service. Childcare providers may charge for optional extras, but where a parent/guardian does not choose any of the optional extras, their child must be provided with the full ECCE service provision. Each optional extra must be identified individually on the fees list. **Services cannot prioritise ECCE places on the basis of uptake of optional extras.**

2.4.9 Additional 30 minutes in sessional service

A sessional service provider may offer an additional 30 minutes per day but this must be categorised as an optional extra.

2.4.10 Additional time in full-time or part-time service

A full or part-time provider may choose to prioritise a free pre-school place for a child who will be availing of a full- or part-time place over a child who wishes only to avail of the free pre-school element.

2.4.11 Displacing registered children

At the point of programme registration, a service provider may prioritise registrations for those availing of a five day week of ECCE over those registering for fewer days. A service provider may not displace a child availing of a shorter week in favour of a child applying for five days of ECCE after their ECCE registration is complete.

2.5 Staff Qualifications/Higher Capitation

A childcare provider must ensure all staff working with children hold, at a minimum, a qualification that meets the requirements of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

2.5.1 Minimum qualifications for ECCE

Room Leaders must, at a minimum, hold a qualification that meets the grant funding agreement requirements for ECCE Room Leader as set out on the published list of DCYA 'Early Years Recognised Qualifications' or, hold a Letter of Eligibility to Practice at this level issued by the DCYA (see more information relating to qualifications, including the published list on www.dcy.gov.ie).

2.5.2 Higher capitation

Higher Capitation is part of the ECCE programme, and is based on ECCE registrations. All rules for ECCE also apply to Higher Capitation and the Higher Capitation rules do not supersede the core ECCE rules. The ECCE higher capitation rate is equivalent to an additional €11.25 per child per week above the €69.00 standard rate. Higher Capitation may be paid in respect of any ECCE room that meets the qualifying criteria (see 2.5.4 for qualifying criteria). It is possible for services with multiple ECCE sessions to be granted higher capitation for qualifying sessions and standard capitation for other ECCE sessions.

2.5.3 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Higher Capitation

Higher Capitation is paid in respect of the number of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) children registered to the ECCE programme in the qualifying ECCE session. Children on CETS, CCS and CCSP (and fee paying children) who attend the higher capitation session cannot be included in the FTE calculation, but must be included in the adult to child ratios. The adult:child ratios for the ECCE programme must be strictly adhered to (see table below).

1 -11 Children per Session	At least 1 Higher Capitation eligible pre-school Leader in the Room at all times
12 -22 Children per Session	At least 1 Higher Capitation eligible pre-school Leader and 1 Higher Capitation eligible pre-school Room Assistant in the Room at all times
23 -33 Children per Session	At least 2 Higher Capitation eligible pre-school Leader and 1 Higher Capitation eligible pre-school Room Assistant in the Room at all times
34 -44 Children per Session	At least 2 Higher Capitation eligible pre-school Leader and 2 Higher Capitation eligible pre-school Room Assistant in the Room at all times and so on....

2.5.4 Higher capitation eligibility

A childcare provider that has an ECCE session that meets the following requirements is eligible to apply for ECCE Higher Capitation payments for that session:

- i. a Room Leader with a qualification recognised as meeting the minimum requirements for ECCE “Higher Cap” as set out on the published list of ‘DCYA Early Years Recognised Qualifications’ or otherwise be deemed eligible by the DCYA as evidenced by a Letter of Eligibility to Practice for ECCE Higher Capitation room leader;
- ii. the same Room Leader has a minimum of three years’ paid experience working in the childcare sector;
- iii. the regulatory adult to child ratio is met;
- iv. a Room Assistant (if required for adult to child ratios), who holds a full and relevant qualification that meets the minimum regulatory standard as set out on the published list of ‘DCYA Early Years Recognised Qualifications’ or otherwise be deemed eligible by the DCYA as evidenced by a Letter of Eligibility to Practice.

In relation to (iv), it should be noted that a Room Assistant who is working in the service through provision of a ‘grandfathering declaration’, is not eligible for Higher Capitation. Higher Capitation will not be paid where the room assistant is working on the basis of a ‘grandfathering declaration’, regardless of the qualification level of the room leader.

2.5.5 Higher capitation rate and fees

Where a child is attending a part-time or full-time service that is in receipt of the higher capitation rate, the childcare provider must reduce the fees paid by the parent/guardian by €64.50 (which was the standard capitation rate before the 7% increase in the standard capitation rate intended for the benefit of the service provider in the 2018 budget).

2.5.6 Higher Capitation Room Leader – three years’ work experience

As stated in 2.5.4 (ii), to be eligible for higher capitation, a room leader must have an appropriate qualification and three years’ paid experience working in the childcare sector. To clarify, this means:

- i. The year, in three years’ experience, refers to, at least, a full academic year or nine months of work within each calendar year (full or part-time).
- ii. The experience can be gained through a range of work activities but must involve work with pre-school or primary school aged children.
- iii. The three years’ experience is cumulative, and so can be gained at any time; it does not have to be gained after the higher capitation eligible award is achieved. The work experience can be achieved in a setting outside of Ireland.
- iv. Practice placements undertaken during education and training cannot be counted as part of the three years’ experience.

2.5.7 Applying for Higher Capitation

Higher capitation must be applied for by the service provider. Higher capitation does not roll over from one programme year to the next, and every service must apply for higher capitation for each programme year, within each programme year. Applications cannot be accepted after the programme year has ended (dates of which are set out in the ECCE grant funding agreement). Administration of ECCE Higher Capitation will be transferred to Pobal with effect from August 2018. For the 2018-2019 programme year, all service providers must apply to Pobal for ECCE Higher Capitation. Instructions on how to apply are available on PIP.

2.5.8 Higher Capitation amendments

Service providers must supply accurate information and keep their ECCE Higher Capitation status up to date during the programme year. The information submitted in the higher capitation application form must reflect the actual arrangement and running of the ECCE room, in terms of child to adult ratios, the Room Leader or Room Leader / Room Assistant team working in the room, and the total numbers of ECCE and non-ECCE children in each room. Pobal must be notified of any changes to staffing and numbers of ECCE children in a room. Details on how to maintain an up to date Higher Capitation status are available through the PIP portal.

2.5.9 Qualifications and Higher Capitation

As stated in 2.5.4 a staff member who is eligible for Room Leader at the higher capitation rate should have a qualification which is on the published list of 'DCYA Early Years Recognised Qualifications' or a letter of eligibility to practice from DCYA. This is evidenced by a copy of the graduating certificate or a copy of the letter of eligibility to practice.

The higher capitation application form should not be submitted unless the service is clear that a staff member is eligible. Any queries around staff qualifications should be addressed through the Qualifications Assessment process offered by DCYA by the holder of that qualification. DCYA will not accept an application for Qualifications Assessment from anyone other than the holder of the qualification. See the Qualifications page under Childcare on www.dcy.gov.ie for more information.

2.5.10 Higher Capitation Compliance

For compliance purposes, any documentation relevant to higher capitation for the programme year should be available for inspection. This includes staff qualifications, a copy of the service's higher capitation application form, any amendment forms submitted during the programme year, and any correspondence from Pobal confirming higher capitation and / or an adjustment to higher capitation. If the service provider has any unusual circumstances in the organisation of their setting which would impact their compliance with higher capitation, they should inform Pobal of this at the time of application.

2.5.11 Staff Absenteeism

If a service provider experiences irregular patterns of non-attendance or short-term absences by the higher capitation room staff, for reasonable causes (e.g. annual leave, sick leave, bereavement, force majeure), this will not necessarily lead to the service being found non-compliant with contractual conditions. The service provider must keep records of such absences and the reason for non-attendance, for compliance purposes. However, where a higher capitation room staff member will be absent for a period of more than four weeks, for whatever reason, the service provider must notify Pobal. The same conditions apply in cases of prolonged absence as apply in cases of a staff member leaving (see FAQ below).

2.6 Financial Requirements

The financial requirements of the registered provider are set out in the Grant Funding Agreement. The Grant Funding Agreement requires that:

"The Registered Provider shall maintain annual accounts for each financial year and provide copies of such accounts within four (4) months of their adoption to Pobal, as agents of the Department and, on request, to the Comptroller & Auditor General (C&AG);

The Registered Provider shall comply in full with the provisions of Circular 13/2014. In particular, the Registered Provider shall separately account for public funds received and ensure that appropriate financials records are maintained to ensure compliance with the requirements of Circular 13/2014.

The standard and form of the financial records maintained will be such that the records will enable Pobal, as an agent of the Department, to verify compliance with the financial requirements as set out in its Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines³ document published by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

The standard and form of the financial records maintained must enable the following to be clearly established:

- *The amount of all grants provided to the Registered Provider from any public funding source relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service including the grantor and purpose of the grant;*
- *That all grants have been appropriately spent (in the case of the childcare grant, that it has been used per section 3.1 of this agreement) and accounted for on an individuated basis in line with Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document;*
- *Details of other funding sources relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service*

The Provider shall respect and comply with the statutory role and regulatory and public accountability responsibilities of the Department, its agents and other relevant statutory bodies and at all times co-operate fully with the Department, its agents and all other statutory bodies in this regard”

2.7 FAQs for ECCE Programme

2.7.1 Can a child transfer from one service to another?

Yes. A parent/guardian must give the childcare provider four ECCE weeks’ written notice of their intention to transfer their child to another service or to leave the current service (Please note ECCE weeks do not include weeks a service is closed for holidays).

2.7.2 What is a pattern of attendance?

Service providers are required to ensure that PIP registrations match actual attendance patterns. A service provider must monitor attendance over a four week period to ascertain that the registration for each child is correct based on actual attendance. Where a child consistently, over a four week period, fails to attend for an identified level of service as agreed (for example – attending four days instead of five, attending for sessional services instead of part time, attending part time instead of full time etc.), then the service provider must update the PIP registration to reflect this.

2.7.3 Can a parent/guardian increase or decrease the number of days they wish their child to avail of?

Yes, if the childcare provider can cater for the request.

2.7.4 If a child has been absent without notice from the ECCE programme for four weeks, can a childcare provider claim a further four weeks’ payment period when submitting the leaver form?

No. The ECCE leaver form must be completed up to a maximum of four weeks from the last week the child has attended

³ The Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document will be published by the Grantor and will be a tool for providers to use to support compliance with the requirements for bodies in receipt of public funding. It will include templates that may be used by the grantee to support reporting to Pobal as agents of the Department

2.7.5 Can a child-minder apply to enter into the ECCE grant funding agreement?

Yes. A child-minder must have five ECCE eligible children in order to provide the ECCE programme and must be registered with Tusla.

2.7.6 How do I apply for Higher Capitation?

From August 2018, ECCE Higher Capitation applications will be facilitated by Pobal. All applications should be made through the PIP portal and all queries regarding ECCE Higher Capitation should be addressed to Pobal. An ECCE Higher Capitation 'How To' guide will be available on the Pobal website. Service providers should note that:

- If the service provider was not in receipt of higher capitation before, they should include copies of all staff qualifications with their application.
- If the service provider **was** in receipt of higher capitation for the 2017 / 2018 programme year, evidence of qualifications should be submitted for new staff members only.
- Pobal will require information only in respect of the ECCE rooms for which Higher Capitation is being applied. Service Providers do not have to provide information about standard capitation ECCE rooms or staff working in standard capitation ECCE rooms

2.7.7 What should a provider in receipt of higher capitation do if their Level 7 room leader resigns?

If a staff member resigns, the service provider must amend their ECCE Higher Capitation form on PIP. This must indicate the leaving date of the staff member and the commencement date of the replacement staff member. If the replacement staff member is not eligible for Higher Capitation, the service will revert to Standard Capitation after four weeks. Non-compliance will result from:

- Failure to notify Pobal of a change in Higher Capitation room staff
- Failure to record correct leaving / starting dates of staff when amending the Higher Capitation form

2.7.8 Do I have to submit evidence of the ECCE Higher Capitation Room Leader's work experience?

The three years' experience should be established by the service provider through their usual recruitment process (C.V., references, etc.). On the ECCE Higher Capitation application form, the service provider should indicate the total amount of work experience in years. In doing this, the service provider is undertaking that they have satisfied themselves as to the legitimacy of the work experience. Evidence of the Room Leader's work experience will not form part of the general compliance inspection but may be requested by DCYA if required.

2.7.9 I have a room leader who is eligible for higher capitation who does not work every day. Can I receive higher capitation for the days this staff member works?

No. Higher capitation payments cannot be broken up in this manner. Approved staff should be working in the higher capitation room every day under regular circumstances.

2.7.10 What should a provider in receipt of higher capitation do if their Level 7 room leader is out sick or on annual leave?

Irregular patterns of non-attendance or short-term absences by the Higher Capitation room staff are allowable for reasonable causes (such as annual leave, sick leave, bereavement, force majeure). The service provider should keep records of such absences and the reason for non-attendance, for compliance purposes.

2.7.11 Prolonged Staff Absenteeism

Where a higher capitation room staff member will be absent for a period of more than four weeks, for whatever reason, the service must notify Pobal through their PIP portal. The same conditions apply in cases of prolonged absence as apply in cases of a staff member leaving.

2.7.12 What happens to the higher capitation FTE figure if a child leaves a service?

Registering a child as a “leaver” on PIP does not automatically update the higher capitation FTE figure. The Higher Capitation form must also be changed. See the Pobal ECCE Higher Capitation ‘How To’ guide.

2.7.13 Can I have one Level 7 room leader for two inter-connecting ECCE rooms?

No. Higher capitation payments can be applied for on the basis of each ECCE room within your service. In this case, you would need to have a Level 7 room leader in each room to qualify for higher capitation.

2.7.14 What if I want to expand my service and open another room?

If the new room is located in the same facility you should ensure relevant notification/registration is sent to Tusla and details of the proposed expansion are sent to your local CCC.

If the new room is at another location this is considered a new facility and will require a separate grant funding agreement. Provision of a grant funding agreement is dependent on the new facility being appropriately registered with Tusla. You should contact your local CCC and apply for a new DCYA reference.

2.7.15 When are payments made?

Payment schedules, including non-payable weeks, for Childcare Funding Programmes can be downloaded from the PIP homepage at www.pobal.ie. Payments include Standard and Higher Capitation/AIM Level 1 where appropriate. Non Payable weeks are determined by the Service Calendar input by the Service at the start of the Programme Call

2.7.16 What is the Access and Inclusion Model?

The Better Start Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) is a model of supports designed to ensure that children with disabilities can access the ECCE programme. Further information on AIM can be found at www.aim.gov.ie

Chapter 3 Community Childcare Subvention (CCS)

3.0 Overview of CCS

The Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) Programme is a childcare programme targeted to support parents/guardians on a low income to avail of reduced childcare costs at participating community childcare services. The [DCYA](#) pays for a portion of the childcare costs for eligible children, a payment described in this document as a subvention payment, with the parent/guardian paying the remainder.

The CCS is only available through participating community not-for-profit childcare services; a list of these services is available through the relevant local CCC. The service provider submits an application for CCS on behalf of the parent/guardian to Pobal. CCS subvention is available for 52 weeks of the year. The CCS programme commences on 20th August 2018 and runs until 16th August 2019. This is referred to as the Programme year.

CCS services may cater for infant, pre-school and afterschool places. They may also incorporate a breakfast club. Some CCS services may be stand-alone services and cater for just one type of service e.g. afterschool.

3.1 Eligibility for CCS

A child must be under 15 years of age to be eligible for the 2018/19 CCS programme. A child will not be eligible if they are enrolled on any other DCYA childcare programme. The eligibility criteria are set out in Table 2 below.

3.2 CCS Programme Rules

3.2.1 Types of Places under the CCS Programme

CCS services must offer childcare places from one or more of the following placements. A different payment rate is attributed to each type of placement:

- Full day-care places (more than 5 hours per day)
- Part-time places (between 3 hours 31 minutes and 5 hours per day)
- Sessional places (between 2 hours 16 minutes and 3 hours 30 minutes per day)
- Half-session places (between 1 hour and 2 hours 15 minutes per day)

3.2.2 Required information

The eligibility of the applying parent/guardian is determined by their status with the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP). The level of the subvention is determined by the parent's DEASP status and also by the level of childcare required. The eligibility criteria and subsequent childcare and subvention options are set out in Table 2 of this document.

In order to confirm eligibility, both the parent/guardian and child's Personal Public Service Numbers (PPSNs) and date of birth are required when the CCS Child Registration Form is being completed. PPSNs are cross-referenced with the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and the HSE to determine eligibility and verify entitlement to subvention.

Documentation containing PPSN and any other personal information must be destroyed once no longer required.

Table 2 CCS/CCSP Band Eligibility

Level of service	Band A (with medical card)	Band AJ (with medical card)	Band B	Band D
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One Parent Family Payment ▪ Widow's/Widower's Pension ▪ Pre-retirement Allowance ▪ Farm Assist/Fish Assist ▪ State Pension (Contributory/non-contributory) ▪ Blind Pension ▪ Guardian's Payment (Contributory/non-contributory) ▪ Illness/Occupational Injury Benefit ▪ Disability Allowance ▪ Carer's Benefit/ Allowance ▪ Back to Work Enterprise/Education Allowance ▪ Community Employment / Rural Social Scheme ▪ Domiciliary Care Allowance ▪ Working Family Payment (Formerly known as FIS) ▪ Secondary School students ▪ Invalidity Pension ▪ Disablement Pension ▪ Official Tusla Referrals (no medical card required) ▪ HSE Public Health Nurse referrals (no medical card required) ▪ TÚS ▪ Part-time Job Incentive Scheme Gateway ▪ Gateway ▪ Partial Capacity benefit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Job Seekers Benefit/ Allowance* ▪ Supplementary Welfare Allowance** 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Medical Card ▪ Parents/guardians who are in receipt of Social Welfare payments listed under Band A/AJ but have no medical card 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GP Visit Card*** (6yrs+ only) ▪ Parents/guardians who no longer qualify for Band A/AJ this year but who were verified as being on Band A/AJ at the end of the previous school year
Full-day payment (5 hrs +)	€145	€80	€70	€50
Part-time payment (3:31 – 5:00)	€80	€80	€35	€25
Sessional payment (2:16 – 3:30)	€45	€45	€25	€17
Half-session payment (1:00 – 2:15)	€22.50	€22.50	€12.50	€8.50

3.2.3 Note on Table 2

*Jobseeker's allowance/benefit:

Parents/guardians who qualify for Band AJ (with medical card) qualify for subvented childcare to a maximum of €80 subvention for full day-care per week. (For the first and second day the subvention is based on the same daily rate as Band A). This cap applies where a child attends from 3 full days to 5 full days per week.

Parents/guardians in receipt of Jobseekers Benefit/Allowance (JB / JA) and do **not** have a medical card qualify for subvented childcare under Band B.

'JobsPath' is a DEASP initiative for JA and JB recipients.

** Supplementary Welfare Allowance Scheme

Parents/guardians receiving basic payments under the Supplementary Welfare Allowance Scheme and awaiting a decision on a claim may appeal the band AJ awarded if their claim is successful or they are moved to an alternative DEASP scheme more appropriate to their circumstances.

*** GP visit card is 6yrs+ only

The universal GP Visit card for children under 6 years of age is not CCS eligible.

Please note: No Band is automatically applied to those parents/guardians on **Maternity Benefit**, partaking in a **Springboard course**, a First Steps –Youth Developmental Internship or in receipt of the ETB/SOLAS Training Allowance during the CCS eligibility period. The appropriate band will be based on the allowance received immediately prior to the course/training/benefit. A verification form (available on the PIP homepage) must be completed by the service provider and the DEASP, attached to the registration and forwarded to Pobal for review. The appropriate entitlement band registration will be made manually.

3.2.4 Appeal of Band Rate

Parents/guardians have the right to appeal their band rate if they believe an error has occurred, or the information from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection is incorrect. This appeal is processed through the service provider.

3.2.5 Tusla registration

CCS providers must be registered with Tusla for the places being provided as defined under 3.2.1, e.g. services cannot be funded for part-time places when registered with Tusla as a sessional service. This does not apply to services which are limited to the care outside of normal school hours of school aged children.

3.2.6 Booking deposits

A childcare provider may charge new parents/guardians a refundable booking deposit to hold a place for a child. The maximum deposit a provider may charge is equivalent to two weeks' payment. The full amount of the DCYA subvention held on deposit must be refunded to the parent/guardian once the child's registration is approved. When and how the balance of the deposit is returned to the parent/guardian is a matter for the provider.

For example: Where a service's weekly fee is €200 and the subvention due is €145, the service may charge a two week deposit of €400. Once the registration has been approved the service will refund the amount of €290 to the parent.

3.2.7 Tusla referral

A Tusla referral should be on headed paper, contain the name of the child, date of birth and PPSN, state the childcare start and end dates, must be signed and dated by the Social Worker who has also signed the Service Declaration form and confirm that TUSLA will provide funding for that particular child to the childcare service.

3.2.8 PHN referral

A PHN referral should be on headed paper, include the child's name, date of birth and PPSN, state the childcare start and end dates, states, if relevant, the HSE is paying the balance of the childcare fee and must be signed and dated by the PHN who has signed the Service Declaration Form.

3.2.9 Requirement for CCS Services to participate in ECCE and/or TEC Programme

CCS services must have signed the grant funding agreement for the ECCE and/or TEC Programme. CCS providers may apply to the DCYA in writing for an exemption from participation in the ECCE programme, e.g. afterschool-only services.

3.2.10 Non-payment of childcare

If a parent/guardian of a child ceases to pay the childcare fee (as reduced by the DCYA) the service provider may cease to provide a childcare place to that child. The service provider undertakes to inform parents/guardians of this provision prior to children being enrolled in the childcare services.

3.2.11 Payment of 52 weeks for 50 weeks' attendance

If under registration, the start and end dates for a child's placement equals 50 weeks or more, the service will be paid for 52 weeks.

3.2.12 Change of Circumstances

- i. In the case of a transfer of ownership of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the City/County Childcare Committee with all relevant details in order to request a new DCYA reference.
- ii. In the case of a change of legal status of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the City/County Childcare Committee with all relevant details in order to request a new DCYA reference.
- iii. In the case of a change of address of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the City/County Childcare Committee with all relevant details in order to request a new DCYA reference.

3.2.13 Service closure

If a childcare provider closes its service, notice must be submitted in writing immediately to their local County Childcare Committee and to pipdocuments@pobal.ie. Service closure and change of circumstances require the service to end date registrations for all current registrations at closure date.

3.3 Snapshot Window for Registration

3.3.1 Registrations and the snapshot window

Registration for CCS is based on actual attendance (not on opening times of session/service) during a snapshot window. For the 2018/2019 programme year, this will be from 17th September to 12th October 2018.

The service manager must agree with parents/guardians the number of days and the pattern of attendance that the child will be availing of prior to registering the child for a CCS place. A record of this agreement must be maintained by the childcare provider.

At the end of the four week snapshot window, the service provider must examine the attendance pattern as per your attendance records of the child during the snapshot window. The snapshot period allows an accurate pattern of attendance to emerge. Where the child has attended for less hours than the parent/guardian has previously indicated, then the provider must register the child on PIP for the amount of hours which the child actually attended.

Failure to submit registrations that reflect the actual attendance pattern as per your attendance records will result in an over claim due to the Department. Over claims may be recouped in accordance with the CCS grant funding agreement.

An allocation is given to the service provider for the year based on the number of children in attendance as per your attendance records during this snapshot period. This allocation cannot increase after the snapshot period.

3.3.2 CCS Child Registration on PIP

CCS services must register the child under their CCS grant funding agreement on the PIP online system. Please refer to the PIP 'How to Guide for service providers on CCS registrations' via the PIP Homepage.

3.4 Child Registration and Attendance Record Keeping

3.4.1 Reduction in attendance/PIP Updating

Where a service is notified after the snapshot window that a child is reducing their number of days' attendance, the remaining subvention should, where possible, be used to fund other children. These children should be registered on PIP as "CCS not funded". Records of where the CCS funding has been reallocated must be retained⁴.

3.4.2 Absenteeism

The service provider must contact the parent/guardian to establish the cause of the child's absence within the first week of the absence commencing. If a child leaves the service or has not attended for four consecutive weeks, the service must create a Leaver form via the PIP Portal stating the date the child last attended the service. In exceptional circumstances e.g. serious illness, the service may apply to their local CCC to retain the registration beyond four weeks up to maximum of six weeks. Services cannot claim for any time period in excess of the four/six week period from the last date of the child's attendance

3.4.3 Attendance records

Childcare providers must keep daily attendance records for each child attending and records must include the child's full name, date of attendance, time of child's arrival and time of child's departure. Attendance records must be kept in an appropriate manner that is sufficient to establish actual duration of attendance of each named child in terms of hours. The child's name must be recorded in a consistent manner in order to facilitate identification of patterns of attendance (i.e. if the attendance records are weekly sheets, the child's name should be in the same place each week).

⁴ This exercise should be facilitated through the use of monthly FTE calculators

Weekly/monthly attendance records are preferable as they facilitate establishing a pattern of attendance.

Attendance records will be reviewed as a priority during compliance visits. Please see the minimum requirements as set out in the 'good practice on attendance records' guide (Appendix 2).

3.4.4 Failure to maintain appropriate attendance records

Failure to maintain attendance records (as per 3.4.3) may result in an assumption of zero hour's attendance. The Department may withdraw future payments from the provider and/or require repayment of over-claimed monies already paid for the period concerned.

Failure to maintain sufficient attendance records (e.g. where attendance records are kept, but in a format which does not allow a compliance visit officer to determine the hours which a child has attended, such as through use of "ticks") may result in an assumption of minimal hour's attendance (i.e. sessional/half sessional service). The Department may withdraw future payments from the provider and/or require repayment of over-claimed monies already paid for the period concerned.

3.4.5 De-committal and Recovery Procedures

Service providers may at times be overpaid over the course of the year for a variety of reasons. If at the end of the year, or on closure, a service has been overpaid, a revised CCS allocation notification will issue and any excess CCS funding must be returned to Pobal.

3.4.6 Compliance Visits

- i. Services must facilitate compliance visits which will be made without notice, to include access to the premises, personnel and relevant records.
- ii. All documentation related to the financial affairs of the service, accounts, fees records, staff qualifications, PIP, fees lists, registers and attendance records must be on-site at all times. These records must be kept for a minimum period of seven years from expiry date of contract.
- iii. Compliance visit officers may inspect, and take copies of, any books, records or other documents (including books, records or documents stored in non-legible form), or extracts therefrom, that he or she finds in the course of his or her inspection.

3.4.7 No CCS children

If a CCS service had no children participating in the programme at the time of the snapshot they must notify the DCYA at EYqueries@dcya.gov.ie and Pobal as any preliminary payments made must be refunded to Pobal.

3.4.8 If a child leaves the CCS Programme to attend ECCE

If the child is eligible to attend ECCE, and the parents/guardians choose a different provider, the service must release the funding.

3.4.9 If a child leaves the CCS Programme

When a child leaves the CCS service or has not attended the service for four consecutive weeks, Pobal must be notified (through PIP), stating the date the child last attended the service. Subject to paragraphs 3.4.10 to 3.4.12 below, this funding may be retained towards a replacement child.

3.4.10 Reporting leavers

All services must report leavers through PIP and reduce registration levels within four weeks. PIP must be updated within four weeks to reflect the actual position.

3.4.11 Replacing leavers

The DCYA reserves the right to withdraw funding where a replacement child is not in place within four weeks of the end date registered for the original child. Where, in the opinion of the DCYA, there are systemic and/or significant variations (>25%) between the child registrations and attendance, Pobal may initiate a review of the service.

3.4.12 Filling the vacant CCS place

A CCS-eligible child may replace a child funded under the CCS Programme who has left the service. The funding must still be utilised for the provision of childcare to eligible children in line with the Grant Funding Agreement. The details of the replacement child and proof of eligibility must be recorded on PIP for compliance purposes.

3.4.13 Child leaves before snapshot period commences

If a child leaves before the snapshot period commences they will be deemed not to be registered for the CCS Programme and no payment will be made on their behalf.

3.4.14 Transfer from the CCS programme to the TEC programme

- i. If a child is registered on PIP for the CCS Programme 2018/2019 and wishes to transfer to TEC in the same service, the service must apply to the CCC for the TEC place. CCS funding will cease for this child with effect from the CCS end date. For details on how to enter the TEC Programme, please consult the TEC section of this document or alternatively on: www.dcy.gov.ie
- ii. If a child leaves CCS to join the TEC programme in a different service, this must be recorded on PIP immediately with the child's leaving date. Please note that when a child leaves to join a different service under the TEC programme the original CCS service may fill the place with another child – see Section: 'Filling the Vacant CCS Place' at 3.4.12 above

3.4.15 Transfer from the TEC programme to the CCS programme

- i. A child entered on PIP for the TEC Programme 2018/2019 who wishes to register for the CCS Programme after the snapshot period in the same service, must not have a break between the two Programmes (i.e. child who finishes TEC on a Friday should start CCS on the following Monday). The Transfer must be recorded immediately on PIP so as to enable payment. The CCS place is still based on the eligibility criteria as per the snapshot period of 17 September to 12 October 2018
- ii. If a child is being funded under the TEC programme but ceases on this programme before the CCS snapshot period has ended (17 September to 12 October 2018) the child **must** be registered under the CCS Programme through PIP. The start date for the child under CCS must be recorded. The CCC must be notified by e-mail that the child has ceased being on the TEC programme.
- iii. If a child was on the CCS Programme prior to the TEC Programme but in a different service, they may only avail of CCS within the new service as a replacement child – see paragraph on 'Filling the Vacant CCS Place' at 3.4.12 above.

3.5 Fees List and Service Calendar

3.5.1 Fees List and Service Calendar requirement

Service providers must complete a Fees list and Service Calendar at the beginning of each programme year. This must show details of all fees charged to parents, to include details of any additional charges, discounts, or voluntary donations applied by the service.

3.5.2 Document display requirement

A copy of the Fees List, together with copies of any standard letters issued to parents, must be on prominent display in an area accessible to parents.

3.5.3 Document filing requirement

Service providers must have a signed letter on file in respect of each parent/guardian of a child on the CCS programme, showing the fees that have been approved (“The Service Fees Information Letter”). These fees must match those shown on the Fees List.

3.5.4 Fee changes

Any changes to Fees List or CCS Calendar must be approved by the CCC. Four weeks’ notice of any change to the Fees List must be given to parents. Where the Fees List has been revised, amended Fees List letters must then be issued and signed by the parents/guardians for the service’s files.

3.5.5 CCS Service Calendar

A CCS calendar must be distributed to all parents/guardians showing the days the service is due to be open under the CCS programme year.

3.5.6 Optional extras

Childcare providers may charge for optional extras, but a parent/guardian may choose not to avail of any of the optional extras. Optional extras must be identified on the fees list at the start of the programme year. Each option must be individually identified. Services cannot prioritise on the basis of uptake of optional extras. The Parent/Guardian must give four weeks written notice to the service provider if they wish to withdraw from any optional extras selected.

3.6 Financial Requirements

The financial requirements of the registered provider are set out in the Grant Funding Agreement. Fundamentally the Grant Funding Agreement requires that:

*“The Registered provider shall maintain appropriate records to enable verification by the Department or agents acting on its behalf (including Pobal) that the general terms of the grant are complied with. The specific requirements will be as described in a Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document published by the Grantor. In particular such records **will include an attendance register which** clearly shows the **dates, times and durations of attendance for each individually identified child for every day that the child is in attendance**. Records of income and expenditure should be kept up to date and available for verification purposes.*

The Provider shall maintain annual accounts for each financial year and provide copies of such accounts within four (4) months of their adoption to Pobal, as agents of the Department and, on request, to the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG);

The provider shall comply in full with the provisions of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2014 Management of and Accountability for Grants from Exchequer Funds. In particular, the provider shall separately account for public funds received and ensure that

appropriate financial records to ensure compliance with the requirements in respect of the Funding set out in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2014

The standard and form of the financial records maintained will be such that the records will enable Pobal, as an agent of the department to verify compliance with the financial requirements as set out in its Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines⁵ document published by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

The standard and form of the financial records maintained must enable the following to be clearly established:

- *The amount of all grants provided to the Registered Provider from any public funding source relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service including the grantor and purpose of the grant*
- *That all grants have been appropriately spent (in the case of the childcare grant, that it has been used per section 3.1 of this agreement) and accounted for on an individuated basis in line with Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document*
- *Details of other funding sources relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service*

The Provider shall respect and comply with the statutory role and regulatory and public accountability responsibilities of the Department, its agents and other relevant statutory bodies and at all times co-operate fully with the Department, its agents and all other statutory bodies in this regard”

3.7 FAQs for CCS Programme

3.7.1. Can a child attend CCS in more than one service?

Yes. This is allowed provided the child is attending both services during the snapshot period of 17 September to 12 October 2018 and the total days attended are not more than five full days.

3.7.2. When will bands be approved?

Approved bands will be published on PIP no later than December of the programme year.

3.7.3. Do I have to give a parent/guardian subvention prior to the band rate being approved by the DCYA?

No. Service providers are not obliged to give subvention until the DCYA verifies and approves bands. However, on approval, the parent/guardian must be refunded the full subvention amount they are eligible for under the rules of the programme.

3.7.4. Can I give the parent/guardian subvention prior to the subvention band rate being approved?

If a service wishes to oblige the parents/guardians by giving them subvention on their childcare costs prior to the bands being approved by the DCYA, they do so at their own risk and are encouraged to ask the parent/guardian for proof of CCS eligibility as reassurance that the band requested is likely to be approved.

3.7.5. How does a parent/guardian appeal their assigned band rate?

When the bands are published on PIP, parents/guardians may appeal their assigned rate, via the service provider.

⁵ The Financial Procedures, Reporting and Requirements and Guidelines document will be published by the Grantor and will primarily be a tool for providers to use to support compliance with the requirements for bodies in receipt of public funding. It will amongst other things, include templates that may be used by the Grantee to support reporting to Pobal as agents of the Department

3.7.6. I wish to appeal the band given, but child has since left?

A service cannot appeal a band without supporting evidence. It is important that if a service is to grant subvention to a parent/guardian from the start of the programme year in September, they request proof of CCS eligibility. Please note that CCS funding approved by the DCYA will be based only on parent/child's CCS eligibility during the CCS snapshot period.

3.7.7. CCS appeal, service has parent's medical card number but unable to get copy of card, will this suffice?

No. Proof of medical card must be attached as it states name, PPSN and valid end-date

3.7.8. Is Band approval based on status during CCS snapshot period or at time of verification with DEASP?

Band approval is strictly based on CCS eligibility during CCS eligibility period of 10 September to 12 October 2018 inclusive.

3.7.9. CCS parent/guardian approved Band B from snapshot period but their circumstances have now changed and they are eligible for Band A, can they apply for a review of their Band?

No. CCS eligibility is determined and fixed at the band level from the snapshot period of 17 September to 12 October 2018 inclusive. A parent's CCS funding will remain at Band B for the CCS programme year. However, a service may enter the child under the CCS Plus programme provided they release the CCS funding and input a leave date on the original registration.

3.7.10. Which parent/guardian should register for CCS to ensure appropriate band approval?

Parents/guardians should consider which of them has the greater CCS eligibility. Please note that the parent/guardian on the registration will be the parent/guardian verified by Pobal. The childcare manager may assist in determining the parent/guardian who will gain the highest subvention. Alternatively the service or parent/guardian may contact their local CCC with this query.

3.7.11. How is CCS band eligibility confirmed?

PPSNs are cross referenced with the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and the HSE to determine eligibility and verify entitlement to subvention. The lists of parental bands assigned to CCS Services will be made available approximately four weeks after the snapshot period has closed.

Documentation containing PPSN information must be destroyed once no longer required.

3.7.12. If a child leaves to attend a different service under CCS, does the first service have to release their CCS funding?

No. While a parent/guardian is free to remove their child from a service at any point, they will not be allowed to avail of further childcare funding (from any programme) while the approved funding is committed to the CCS Service. The release of this funding is contingent on the capacity of the CCS service to do so. Notwithstanding this, services are strongly urged to release this funding unless there is a very compelling reason to do otherwise. As a general principle, freedom to move between services benefits all concerned.

3.7.13. If a child leaves to attend a different service under ECCE, does the first service have to release their CCS funding?

Yes. When registering children, services should take appropriate account of the eligibility window for the child concerned. A child cannot be prevented from attending ECCE with the provider of parents' choice should their first point of eligibility fall on September 1st 2018. Please refer to table 1.

3.7.14. If a parent/guardian was availing of TEC funding during CCS snapshot period but was also eligible for CCS, can CCS funding be requested once the course/TEC funding ends?

Yes, this is called a TEC Exemption and can only be applied if the parent/guardian is on the TEC Programme in the same service.

3.7.15. If a parent/guardian was on Maternity benefit during the CCS eligibility period, can CCS funding be requested later in the year when childcare is needed?

Yes, the parent/guardian may be eligible for the CCS Programme if they are in receipt of Maternity Benefit during the CCS eligibility period, providing she was CCS eligible immediately prior to commencement of Maternity Benefit or if she held a medical card/GPVC during the snapshot period. Please see Table 2 on this document. This only applies to the child who maternity leave is granted in respect of, not any other children.

3.7.16. CCS Leaver completed on PIP and 'released' funding in error?

Once submitted on PIP, the CCS Leaver form will confirm for the parent/guardian if funding has been released or not. Where funding has been released, the parent/guardian can present this leaver form to another service to avail of their remaining CCS funding. The CCS leaver form verifies what leaving arrangement was agreed with parent.

The Service can contact Pobal at onlinesupport@pobal.ie and inform them of the error; however, any amendment to reinstate funding to a service is fully dependent on written agreement from the parent.

3.7.17. Where a CCS Leaver was completed on PIP and the funding was not released. Can a service, due to the needs of the family, retrospectively release funding?

The service must contact Pobal onlinesupport@pobal.ie and request assistance with this.

There is no cut-off point if the first service wishes to release funding retrospectively due to the needs of the family. Funding will be retrieved as an overpayment if the final CCS payment has already been paid.

3.7.18. Can a child attend two programmes at the same time?

Please see Appendix 1 programme attendance permissions.

3.7.19. Can a parent/guardian increase or decrease the number of days they wish their child to avail of in CCS?

CCS funding is based on a snapshot period and calculated according to attendance during that time. CCS funding will not be increased after the snapshot window. If level of attendance has decreased, the provider is expected to use the funding for a 'replacement child'. The provider must retain records where CCS funding has been re-allocated as this will be required for compliance.

3.7.20. Can a child-minder apply to enter a CCS grant funding agreement?

No.

3.7.21. When are payments made?

Payment schedules for Childcare Funding Programmes can be downloaded from the PIP homepage at www.pobal.ie. Payments are issued by Pobal on a fortnightly basis during the year. A preliminary payment is made to CCS services only at the start of the programme year. The first payment is a percentage of the CCS funding amount from the previous year.

Chapter 4 Community Childcare Subvention Plus (CCS Plus)

4.0 Overview of CCS Plus

The Community Childcare Subvention Plus (CCS Plus) Programme provides support for parents/guardians on a low income to avail of reduced childcare costs at participating privately owned childcare services and at community not-for-profit childcare services; a list of these services is available through the relevant local CCC. It also provides access to a universal payment available to eligible children. The [DCYA](#) pays a portion of the childcare costs for eligible children (a payment described in this document as a subvention payment) with the parent/guardian paying the remainder. The eligibility of the parent/guardian is determined by their status with the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and is set out on Table 2 in this document. Interested parents/guardians should contact their local participating childcare service in the first instance.

The CCS Plus programme commences on 20th August 2018 and runs until 16th August 2019. This is referred to as the Programme year.

CCS Plus services may cater for infant, pre-school and afterschool places. They may also incorporate a breakfast club. Some CCS Plus services may be stand-alone services and cater for just one type of service e.g. afterschool.

The universal subsidy (CCSU) has been introduced within the framework of the CCS under CCS Plus.

Note: CCS Resettlement/Transition are dealt with in individual chapters for clarity although they are provided under the CCS Plus grant agreement.

4.1 Eligibility for CCS Plus

A child must be under 15 years of age to be eligible for CCS Plus, that is, the child must be born on or after 1 September 2003 to be eligible. CCS Plus subvention is available for up to 52 weeks of the programme year. The Band Rates and Subvention table can be found on Table 3 in this document.

4.2 CCS Plus Programme Rules

4.2.1 Types of places under the CCS Plus Programme

CCS Plus services must offer childcare places from one or more of the following bands. A different payment rate is attributed to each type of placement.

- Full day-care places (more than 5 hours per day)
- Part-time places (between 3 hours 31 minutes and 5 hours per day)
- Sessional places (between 2 hours 16 minutes and 3 hours 30 minutes per day)
- Half-session places (between 1 hour and 2 hours 15 minutes per day)

4.2.2 Required information

The eligibility of the applying parent/guardian is determined by their status with the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP) within one month prior to and/or including the week of the child start date on the Programme. The level of the subvention is determined by the parent's DEASP status and also by the level of childcare required. The eligibility criteria and subsequent childcare and subvention options are set out in Table 3 of this document.

In order to confirm eligibility, both the parent/guardian and child's Personal Public Service Numbers (PPSNs) and date of birth are required when the CCS Child Registration Form is being completed. PPSNs are cross referenced with the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and the HSE to determine eligibility and verify entitlement to subvention.

Documentation containing PPSN and any other personal information must be destroyed once no longer required.

Table 3 CCS/CCSP Band Eligibility

Level of service	Band A (with medical card)	Band AJ (with medical card)	Band B	Band D
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One Parent Family Payment ▪ Widow's/Widower's Pension ▪ Pre-retirement Allowance ▪ Farm Assist/Fish Assist ▪ State Pension (Contributory/Non-contributory) ▪ Blind Pension ▪ Guardian's Payment (Contributory/Non-contributory) ▪ Illness/Injury Benefit ▪ Disability Allowance ▪ Carer's Benefit/ Allowance ▪ Back to Work Enterprise/Education Allowance ▪ Community Employment / Rural Social Scheme ▪ Domiciliary Care Allowance ▪ Working Family Payment (Formerly known as FIS) ▪ Secondary School students ▪ Invalidity Pension ▪ Disablement Pension ▪ Official Tusla Referrals (no medical card required) ▪ HSE Public Health Nurse referrals (no medical card required) ▪ TÚS ▪ Part-time Job Incentive Scheme Gateway ▪ Gateway ▪ Partial Capacity benefit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Job Seekers Benefit/ Allowance* ▪ Supplementary Welfare Allowance** 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Medical Card ▪ Parents/guardians who are in receipt of Social Welfare payments listed under Band A/AJ but have no medical card 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GP Visit Card*** (6yrs+ only) ▪ Parents/guardians who no longer qualify for Band A/AJ this year but who were verified as being on Band A/AJ at the end of the previous school year
Full-day payment (5 hrs +)	€145	€80	€70	€50
Part-time payment (3:31 – 5:00)	€80	€80	€35	€25
Sessional payment (2:16 – 3:30)	€45	€45	€25	€17
Half-session payment (1:00 – 2:15)	€22.50	€22.50	€12.50	€8.50

4.2.3 Note on Table 3

*Jobseeker's allowance/benefit:

Parents/guardians who qualify for Band AJ (with medical card) qualify for subvented childcare to a maximum of €80 subvention for full day-care per week. (For the first and second day the subvention is based on the same daily rate as Band A). This cap applies where a child attends from 3 full days to 5 full days per week.

Parents/guardians in receipt of Jobseekers Benefit/Allowance (JB / JA) and do **not** have a medical card qualify for subvented childcare under Band B.

'JobsPath' is a DEASP initiative for JA and JB recipients.

** Supplementary Welfare Allowance Scheme

Parent/guardian receiving basic payments under the Supplementary Welfare Allowance Scheme, and awaiting a decision on claim may appeal the band AJ awarded if the claim is successful.

*** GP visit card is 6yrs+ only

The universal GP Visit card for children under 6 years of age is not CCS Plus eligible.

Please note: No Band is automatically applied to those parents on **Maternity Benefit**, partaking in a **Springboard course** and/or a First Steps –Youth Developmental Internship or in receipt of the ETB/SOLAS Training Allowance. The appropriate band will be decided based on the allowance received immediately prior to the course/programme/training/benefit.

4.2.4 Appeal of Band Rate

Parents/guardians have the right to appeal their band rate if they believe an error has occurred, or the information from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection is incorrect. This appeal is processed through the service provider.

4.2.5 Tusla registration

CCS Plus providers must be registered with Tusla for the places being provided as defined under 4.2.1, e.g. services cannot be funded for part-time places when registered with Tusla as a sessional service. This does not apply to services which are limited to the care outside of normal school hours of school aged children.

4.2.6 Child-minders Tusla registration

A child-minder can access CCSP/U provided they meet all CCS Plus eligibility criteria, and are registered with Tusla.

4.2.7 Booking Deposits

A childcare provider may charge new parents/guardians a refundable booking deposit to hold a place for a child. The maximum deposit a provider may charge is equivalent to two weeks total payment. The full amount of the DCYA subvention held on deposit must be refunded to the parent/guardian once the child's registration is approved. When and how the balance of the deposit is returned to the parent/guardian is a matter for the provider.

For example: Where a service's weekly fee is €200 and the subvention due is €145 the service may charge a two week deposit of €400. Once the registration has been approved the service will refund the amount of €290 to the parent.

4.2.8 Tusla/ PHN referrals

The service provider must not ask for voluntary donations or apply a fee to parents/guardians who are Tusla or PHN referrals.

4.2.9 Requirement for CCS Plus services to participate in ECCE and/or TEC Programme

CCS Plus service providers must have signed the grant funding agreement for the ECCE Programme and/or the TEC programme to participate in CCS Plus. CCS Plus service providers must apply to the DCYA in writing for an exemption from the requirement to participate in the ECCE and/or TEC programme e.g. afterschool only services, childminders. There is a strict eligibility requirement for childminders: all childminders must be registered with Tusla to avail of exemptions. No exceptions will be made in this regard.

4.2.10 Payment of 52 weeks for 50 weeks' attendance

If under registration, the start and end dates for a child's placement equals 50 weeks or more, the service will be paid for 52 weeks.

4.2.11 Change of Circumstances

- i. In the case of a transfer of ownership of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new DCYA reference.
- ii. In the case of a change of legal status of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new DCYA reference.
- iii. In the case of a change of address of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new DCYA reference.

4.2.12 Service closure

If a childcare provider closes its service, notice must be submitted in writing immediately to their local County Childcare Committee and to pipdocuments@pobal.ie. Service closure and change of circumstances require the service to end date registrations for all current registrations at closure date.

4.3 Child Registration and Attendance Record Keeping

4.3.1 Entering a child on the CCS Plus Programme

The Service Manager must confirm and agree with parents/guardians the number of days and pattern of attendance that the child is being enrolled for prior to registering the child for a CCSP place. A record of this agreement must be maintained by the childcare provider. The registration must reflect this agreed actual attendance. Where there is a discrepancy between attendance and registration, the childcare provider must amend the registration on PIP. Failure to update registrations to reflect the actual attendance pattern will result in an over claim due to the Department. Over claims will be recouped in accordance with the CCS Plus grant funding agreement.

4.3.2 CCS Plus child registration on PIP

CCS Plus services register under their CCS Plus grant funding agreement on the PIP online system. Please refer to PIP 'How to Guide' via the PIP Homepage. Subvention will only be paid in respect of eligible children with effect from the child start date.

4.3.3 Reduction in attendance/PIP Updating

Where a service is notified that a child, entered on the CCS Plus, is reducing their level of attendance e.g. from four full days per week to two full days per week or from full-time to part-time, this must be updated on PIP immediately. The service will set a leave date on current registration and re-register child with new level of attendance. Where attendance differs from registration consistently over a four week period, registrations must be updated to reflect the actual number of days the child attends and this update must occur within four weeks of the reduced attendance pattern commencing.

4.3.4 Absenteeism

The service provider must contact the parent/guardian to establish the cause of the child's absence within the first week of the absence commencing. If a child leaves the service or has not attended for two consecutive weeks, the service must create a Leaver form via the PIP Portal stating the date the child last attended the service. In exceptional circumstances e.g. serious illness, the service may apply to their local CCC to retain the registration beyond two weeks up to a maximum of four weeks. Services cannot claim for any time period in excess of the two/four week period from the last date of the child's attendance.

4.3.5 Attendance records

Childcare providers must keep daily attendance records for each child attending and records must include the child's full name, date of attendance, time of child's arrival and time of child's departure. Attendance records must be kept in an appropriate manner that is sufficient to establish actual duration of attendance of each named child in terms of hours. The child's name must be in a consistent manner in order to facilitate identification of patterns of attendance (i.e. if the attendance records are weekly sheets, the child's name should be in the same place each week). Weekly/monthly attendance records are preferable as this facilitates establishing patterns of attendance.

Attendance records will be reviewed as a priority during compliance visits. Please see the minimum requirements as set out in the 'good practice on attendance records' guide (Appendix 2).

4.3.6 Failure to maintain appropriate attendance records

Failure to maintain attendance records (as per 4.3.5) may result in an assumption of zero hour's attendance. The Department may withdraw future payments from the provider and/or require repayment of over-claimed monies already paid for the period concerned.

Failure to maintain sufficient attendance records (e.g. where attendance records are kept, but in a format which does not allow a compliance visit officer to determine the hours which a child has attended, such as through use of "ticks") may result in an assumption of minimal hour's attendance (i.e. sessional/half sessional service). The Department may withdraw future payments from the provider and/or require repayment of over-claimed monies already paid for the period concerned.

4.3.7 Compliance Visits

- i. Services must facilitate compliance visits which will be made without notice, to include access to the premises, personnel and relevant records.
- ii. All documentation related to the financial affairs of the service, accounts, fees records, staff qualifications, PIP, fees lists, registers and attendance records must be on-site at all times. These records must be kept for a minimum period of seven years from expiry of contract.

- iii. Compliance visit officers may inspect and take copies of, any books, records or other documents (including books, records or documents stored in non-legible form), or extracts therefrom, that he or she finds in the course of his or her inspection.

4.3.8 De-committal and Recovery Procedures

Service providers may at times be overpaid during the course of the year due to transfers, closures etc. If, at the end of the year (or on closure of a service), a service has been overpaid, a revised CCS Plus allocation notification will issue and any excess CCS Plus funding must be returned to Pobal.

4.4 Fees List and Service Calendar

4.4.1 Fees List and Service Calendar requirement

Service providers must complete a Fees List and Service Calendar at the beginning of each programme year. They must show details of all the fees charged to parents, as well as details of any additional charges, discounts or donations applied by the service.

4.4.2 Document display requirement

A copy of the Fees List, together with copies of any standard letters issued to parents, must be on prominent display in an area accessible to parents.

4.4.3 Document filing requirement

Service providers must have a signed letter on file in respect of each parent/guardian of a child on the CCS Plus programme, showing the fees that have been approved. These fees must match those shown on the Fees List.

4.4.4 Fee changes

Any changes to Fees List or Service Calendar must be approved by the CCC. Four weeks' notice of any change to the Fees List must be given to parents. Where the Fees List has been revised, amended Fees List letters must then issue and be signed by the parents/guardians for the service's files.

4.4.5 CCS Plus Service Calendar

A CCS Plus calendar must be distributed to all parents/guardians showing the days the service is due to be open under the CCS Plus academic year.

4.4.6 Optional extras

Childcare providers may charge for optional extras, but a parent/guardian may choose not to avail of any of the optional extras. Optional extras must be identified on the fees list at the start of the programme year. Each option must be individually identified. Services cannot prioritise on the basis of uptake of optional extras.

4.5 FAQs for CCS Plus Programme

4.5.1. Can a child attend CCS Plus in more than one service?

Yes. This is allowed provided total days attended are not more than five full days.

4.5.2. When will bands be approved?

Processing of CCS Plus registrations takes approximately three to four weeks.

4.5.3. Do I have to give a parent/guardian subvention prior to the Band rate being approved by DCYA?

No. Service providers are not obliged to give subvention until the DCYA verifies and approves bands. However, on approval, the parent/guardian must be refunded the full subvention amount.

4.5.4. Can I give the parent/guardian subvention prior to the subvention band rate being approved?

If a service wishes to oblige the parents/guardians by giving them subvention on their childcare costs prior to the bands being approved by DCYA, they do so at their own risk and are encouraged to ask the parent/guardian for proof of CCS eligibility as reassurance that the band requested is likely to be approved.

4.5.5. Under which parent/guardian should the CCS Plus registration be made to ensure appropriate band approval?

Parents/guardians should consider the CCS Plus eligibility when deciding this. Please note that the parent/guardian on the registration will be the parent/guardian verified by the Pobal. The childcare manager may assist in determining the parent/guardian who will gain the highest subvention. Alternatively, the service or parent/guardian may contact their local CCC with this query.

4.5.6. CCS child moving from another service where CCS funding has not been released?

When a child transfers from a CCS service to a CCS Plus service and funding is not released the child will be unable to join the CCS Plus Programme. Please see Appendix 1 for programme transfer permissions.

4.5.7. Can a child-minder apply to enter into a CCS Plus grant funding agreement?

Yes. A child-minder can be in CCS Plus once they meet all CCS Plus eligibility criteria and are registered with Tusla.

4.5.8. When are payments made?

Payment schedules for Childcare Funding Programmes can be downloaded from the PIP homepage at www.pobal.ie.

4.5.9. Can a family access the universal payment for an ECCE-eligible child while awaiting an ECCE place?

No. The universal payment ceases once the child reaches the first available entry point for their eligible child. The payments ceases whether or not the child has taken up a place.

4.6 Universal Subsidy (CCSU)

4.6.1 Overview of Universal Subsidy

As part of the Government policy to make childcare more affordable, the DCYA has introduced a universal childcare subvention payment of up to €20 per week for families using eligible childcare providers for the care of children aged from 6 months to the first eligible point of entry to the ECCE scheme. This scheme is administered via an enhancement to the CCS Plus scheme.

4.6.2 Eligibility for the Universal Subsidy

The childcare subsidy is available to all children aged from 6 months to the first eligible point of entry to the ECCE programme.

4.6.3 Required documents

The parent/guardian must provide the child's PPS Number and date of birth as well as the parent's PPS Number.

Documentation containing PPSN information must be destroyed once no longer required.

4.6.4 Programme Rates

The maximum weekly universal childcare subsidy is €20. As CCS subsidies are currently paid according to session type, i.e. full-time, part-time, sessional, half-sessional, this maximum weekly universal subsidy rate of €20 will be paid on a pro-rata basis according to session type.

UCS Session Type	Weekly Subsidy	Daily Subsidy
Full-time (i.e. 5 hours plus per day)	€20	€4
Part-time (i.e. 3:31 to 5 hours per day)	€10	€2
Sessional (i.e. 2:16 to 3:30 per day)	€7	€1.40
Half-sessional (i.e. 1:00 to 2:15 per day)	€3.50	€0.70

4.6.5 CCSU Programme Rules

CCSU is administered under the CCS Plus scheme and is governed by the same rules.

4.7 Financial Requirements

The financial requirements of the registered provider are set out in the Grant Funding Agreement.

Fundamentally the Grant Funding Agreement requires that:

*“The Registered provider shall maintain appropriate records to enable verification by the Department or agents acting on its behalf (including Pobal) that the general terms of the grant are complied with. The specific requirements will be as described in a Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document published by the Grantor. In particular such records **will include an attendance register which** clearly shows the **dates, times and durations of attendance for each individually identified child for every day that the child is in attendance.** Records of income and expenditure should be kept up to date and available for verification purposes.*

The Provider shall maintain annual accounts for each financial year and provide copies of such accounts within four (4) months of their adoption to Pobal, as agents of the Department and, on request, to the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG);

The provider shall comply in full with the provisions of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2014 Management of and Accountability for Grants from Exchequer Funds. In particular, the provider shall separately account for public funds received and ensure that appropriate financial records to ensure compliance with the requirements in respect of the Funding set out in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2014

The standard and form of the financial records maintained will be such that the records will enable Pobal, as an agent of the department to verify compliance with the financial requirements as set out in its Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines⁶ document published by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

⁶ The Financial Procedures, Reporting and Requirements and Guidelines document will be published by the Grantor and will primarily be a tool for providers to use to support compliance with the requirements for bodies in receipt of public funding. It will amongst other things, include templates that may be used by the Grantee to support reporting to Pobal as agents of the Department

The standard and form of the financial records maintained must enable the following to be clearly established:

- The amount of all grants provided to the Registered Provider from any public funding source relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service including the grantor and purpose of the grant*
- That all grants have been appropriately spent (in the case of the childcare grant, that it has been used per section 3.1 of this agreement) and accounted for on an individuated basis in line with Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document*
- Details of other funding sources relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service*

The Provider shall respect and comply with the statutory role and regulatory and public accountability responsibilities of the Department, its agents and other relevant statutory bodies and at all times co-operate fully with the Department, its agents and all other statutory bodies in this regard”

Chapter 5 Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement (CCSR)

5.0 Overview of CCSR

As per government policy, the Government of Ireland increased Ireland's resettlement quota to cater for up to 4,000 Programme Refugees. To support the Programme Refugees (PRs) in their resettlement and integration into Irish society, the need to provide dedicated childcare funding was recognised. Childcare funding for this cohort was incorporated into the existing CCSP Programme to enable parents/guardians to be free to attend a language and orientation course within their reception centre for eight weeks and then for a full year following their move into the community (i.e. 60 weeks in total).

5.1 Eligibility for CCSR

Participating pre-school going children must be between 0 and 5 years old on their start date. School-aged children (between 6 and 12 years) can access childcare for the primary school holiday periods only. The eligibility of the applying parent/guardian is determined by a letter from the Department of Justice and Equality.

5.2 CCSR Programme Rules

5.2.1 Duration of programme

The total duration of the programme is 60 weeks.

5.2.3 Types of places under the CCSR Programme

Sessional (2hrs 16 mins to 3 hrs 30 mins) and part-time places (3hrs 31mins to 5 hrs) are provided under the CCSR programme.

5.2.4 Programme Rates

A flat rate of €145 per week is payable, for part-time childcare (up to 5 hours per day), over 4 days per week for each approved child for the eligible duration of their childcare place. A flat rate of €72.50 per week is payable for sessional childcare (2 hours 16 minutes to 3 hours 30 minutes) over 4 days per week.

5.2.5 Required documents/information

Parent/s must supply a completed eligibility letter submitted and signed by the Department of Justice and Equality.

5.2.6 Entering a Child on the CCSR Programme

Services must have signed up to the grant funding agreement for the CCSP programme in order to submit a CCSR registration. When children are being registered for a CCSR place, the Service Manager must confirm with the parents/guardians the number of days the child is being enrolled for. (Instructions on Child Registration are available on the PIP homepage).

5.2.7 Tusla Registration

Service providers must be registered with Tusla for the part-time session in order to be funded for same.

5.2.8 Fees Policy and CCSR

Parents/guardians **cannot** be asked to make any financial contribution towards their child's childcare cost.

5.2.9 Booking deposits

Childcare providers may **not** request booking deposits from parents/guardians to hold a place.

5.2.10 Change of circumstances

- i. In the case of a transfer of ownership of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new DCYA reference.
- ii. In the case of a change of legal status of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new DCYA reference.
- iii. In the case of a change of address of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new DCYA reference.

5.2.11 Service closure

If a childcare provider closes its service, notice must be submitted in writing immediately to their local County Childcare Committee and to pipdocuments@pobal.ie. Service closure and change of circumstances require the service to end date registrations for all current registrations at closure date.

5.3 Child Registration and Attendance Record Keeping

5.3.1 CCSR Child registration on PIP

CCS Plus services must register the child under CCSR on the PIP online system. Please refer to PIP 'How to Guide' via the PIP homepage. Subvention will only be paid in respect of eligible children with effect from the child start date.

5.3.2 Reduction in attendance/PIP Updating

Once the child is registered and approved for CCSR funding, the service will receive a minimum of four weeks' funding for the child from the start date of child's attendance. Where a service is notified that a child is reducing their level of attendance e.g. from four full days per week to two full days per week, this must be updated on PIP immediately. The service will set a leave date on current registration and re-register child with new level of attendance. Where attendance differs from registration consistently over a four week period, registrations must be updated to reflect the actual number of days the child attends and this registration must occur within four weeks of the reduced attendance pattern commencing.

5.3.3 Absenteeism

The service provider must contact the parent/guardian to establish the cause of the child's absence within the first week of the absence commencing. If a child leaves the service or has not attended for two consecutive weeks, the service must create a Leaver form via the PIP Portal stating the date the child last attended the service. In exceptional circumstances e.g. serious illness, the service may apply to their local CCC to retain the registration beyond two weeks up to maximum of four weeks. Services cannot claim for any time period in excess of the two/four week period from the last date of the child's attendance.

5.3.4 Attendance records

Childcare providers must keep daily attendance records for each child attending and records must include the child's full name, date of attendance, time of child's arrival and time of child's departure. Attendance records must be kept in an appropriate manner that is sufficient to establish actual

duration of attendance of each named child in terms of hours. The child's name must be recorded in a consistent manner in order to facilitate identification of patterns of attendance (i.e. if the attendance records are weekly sheets, the child's name should be in the same place each week). Weekly/monthly attendance records are preferable as this facilitates establishing patterns of attendance.

Attendance records will be reviewed as a priority during compliance visits. Please see the minimum requirements as set out in the 'good practice on attendance records' guide (Appendix 2).

5.3.5 Failure to maintain appropriate attendance records

Failure to maintain attendance records may result in an assumption of zero hour's attendance. The Department may withdraw future payments from the provider and/or require repayment of over-claimed monies already paid for the period concerned.

Failure to maintain sufficient attendance records (e.g. where attendance records are kept, but in a format which does not allow a compliance visit officer to determine the hours which a child has attended, such as through use of "ticks") may result in an assumption of minimal hour's attendance (i.e. sessional/half sessional service). The Department may withdraw future payments from the provider and/or require repayment of over-claimed monies already paid for the period concerned.

5.3.6 Change of attendance schedule

Where attendance differs from registration consistently over a four week period, e.g. from four days per week to three days per week, the change in registration must be notified to Pobal, via the PIP portal, to reflect the actual number of days the child attends, within two weeks of the change in attendance commencing. The service will receive a minimum of four weeks' funding, plus two weeks' notice in lieu, giving a total of six weeks' payment after which the service will be paid pro rata. The service will set a leave date on current registration and re-register child with new level of attendance.

5.3.7 Child Registration Window

Registration can occur anytime from the start of the programme year 20 August 2018 up to 16 August 2019. If a child is eligible for 60 weeks this carries into the following programme year (2019/2020). A child will only receive up to a maximum of 60 weeks in total over two programme years.

5.3.8 If a child leaves the CCSR Programme

When a child leaves the CCSR service, service providers must report leavers and the information must be entered on PIP, stating the date the child last attended the service.

5.3.9 De-committal and Recovery Procedures

Service providers may at times be overpaid during the course of the year due to transfers, closures etc. If at the end of the year, (or on closure of a service), a CCSR service has been overpaid, a revised CCSR allocation notification will issue and any excess CCSR funding must be returned to Pobal.

5.3.10 Compliance Visits

- i. Services must facilitate compliance visits which will be made without notice, to include access to the premises, personnel and relevant records.
- ii. All documentation related to the financial affairs of the service, accounts, fees records, staff qualifications, PIP, fees lists, registers and attendance records must be on-site at all times

These records must be kept for a minimum period of seven years after the expiry of the contract.

- iii. Compliance visit officers may inspect and take copies of, any books, records or other documents (including books, records or documents stored in non-legible form), or extracts therefrom, that he or she finds in the course of his or her inspection.

5.3.11 Optional extras

Childcare providers may **not** request financial contributions from parents.

5.3.12 Calendar Policy

The service must provide a calendar to the parents/guardians to show them the dates they are open throughout the programme year.

5.4 Financial Requirements

The financial requirements of the registered provider are set out in the Grant Funding Agreement.

The Grant Funding Agreement requires that:

*“The Registered provider shall maintain appropriate records to enable verification by the Department or agents acting on its behalf (including Pobal) that the general terms of the grant are complied with. The specific requirements will be as described in a Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document published by the Grantor. In particular such records **will include an attendance register which** clearly shows the **dates, times and durations of attendance for each individually identified child for every day that the child is in attendance**. Records of income and expenditure should be kept up to date and available for verification purposes.”*

The Provider shall maintain annual accounts for each financial year and provide copies of such accounts within four (4) months of their adoption to Pobal, as agents of the Department and, on request, to the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG);

The provider shall comply in full with the provisions of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2014 Management of and Accountability for Grants from Exchequer Funds. In particular, the provider shall separately account for public funds received and ensure that appropriate financial records to ensure compliance with the requirements in respect of the Funding set out in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2014

The standard and form of the financial records maintained will be such that the records will enable Pobal, as an agent of the department to verify compliance with the financial requirements as set out in its Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines⁷ document published by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

The standard and form of the financial records maintained must enable the following to be clearly established:

- *The amount of all grants provided to the Registered Provider from any public funding source relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service including the grantor and purpose of the grant*
- *That all grants have been appropriately spent (in the case of the childcare grant, that it has been used per section 3.1 of this agreement) and accounted for on an individuated basis in line with Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document*

⁷ The Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document will be published by the Grantor and will primarily be a tool for providers to use to support compliance with the requirements for bodies in receipt of public funding. It will amongst other things, include templates that may be used by the Grantee to support reporting to Pobal as agents of the Department

- *Details of other funding sources relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service*

The Provider shall respect and comply with the statutory role and regulatory and public accountability responsibilities of the Department, its agents and other relevant statutory bodies and at all times co-operate fully with the Department, its agents and all other statutory bodies in this regard”

5.5 FAQs for CCSR

5.5.1. I have been given the correct eligibility letter but the child has already been funded for CCSR in another service?

Children eligible for CCSR may move between services in order to facilitate their movement between Reception Centres and their new communities. Please consult the ‘CCS Resettlement, Relocation and Transition-Registrations How to guide ‘, available on the PIP Homepage, for more details of how to manage the child’s registration.

Chapter 6 Community Childcare Subvention Resettlement (Transitional) (CCSR(T))

6.0 Overview of CCSR(T)

As part of the “Rebuilding Ireland – an Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness”, DCYA launched a special provision under the current Community Childcare Subvention Programme, entitled CCSR (Transitional), which provides access to free childcare for children of families experiencing homelessness. The provision provides subvention for all pre-school children aged 0 to 5 inclusive and 6 to 12 year olds during the school holidays only. The scheme is also designed to help those transitioning from homelessness to permanent accommodation.

CCSR(T) is available through all services participating in the CCSP programme.

6.1 Eligibility for CCSR(T)

Participating pre-school going children must be between 0 – 5yrs on their start date and school-aged children between 6 and 12 years are eligible during school holiday periods only. The eligibility of the applying parent/guardian is determined by Focus Ireland or the Local Authority if outside of Dublin.

6.2 CCSR(T) Programme Rules

6.2.1 Duration of programme

The programme year for 2018/2019 is 20th August 2018 to 16th August 2019.

6.2.2 Types of places under CCSR(T) Programme

CCSR(T) services will only offer childcare places for the following session types:

- Part-time places (between 3 hours 31 minutes and 5 hours per day)
- Sessional places (between 2 hours 16 minutes and 3 hours 30 minutes per day)

6.2.3 Programme rates

A different payment rate is attributed to each type of placement.

- i. For part-time childcare over 5 days per week, a flat rate of €160 per week, will be paid in relation to each child attending under CCSR(T), for the eligible duration of their childcare place. A daily meal must be provided for each child, the cost of which is included in the subvention rate.
- ii. For sessional childcare over 5 days per week, a rate of €87.50 will be paid in relation to each child attending for the eligible duration of their childcare place. A daily meal is also to be provided for each child, the cost of which is included in the subvention rate.

6.2.4 Required documents/information

- i. A verification letter from Focus Ireland (if in the Dublin area) or from their local authority (for all counties outside Dublin) is required.
- ii. A CCSR(T) Parental Declaration Form will be made available to the relevant service providers who must complete this form manually and retain for compliance.
- iii. In order to confirm eligibility, both the Parent’s and Child’s Personal Public Service Number (PPSN) are required, as well as the child’s date of birth, when the CCSR(T) Child Registration Form is being completed.

Documentation containing PPSN and any other personal information must be destroyed once no longer required.

6.2.5 Entering a Child on the CCSR(T) Programme

The CCSR(T) covers the academic year, starting on 20 August 2018 and finishing on 16 August 2019. When children are being registered for a CCSR(T) place, the Service Manager must confirm with the parents/guardians the number of days the child is being enrolled for, and the type of childcare place required. Further instructions on Child Registration are available on the PIP homepage.

6.2.6 Tusla registration

CCSR (T) providers must be registered with Tusla for the places being provided as defined under 5.2.3, e.g. services cannot be funded for part-time places when registered with Tusla as a sessional service. This does not apply to services which are limited to the care outside of normal school hours of school aged children.

6.2.7 Fees Policy

Parents/guardians **cannot** be asked to make any financial contribution towards their child's childcare cost.

6.2.8 Booking deposit

Childcare providers may **not** request booking deposits from parents/guardians to hold a place.

6.2.9 Optional extras

Childcare providers may **not** request financial contributions from parents.

6.2.10 Calendar Policy

The service is to provide a calendar to the parents/guardians to show them the dates they are open throughout the programme year.

6.2.11 Change of circumstances

- i. In the case of a transfer of ownership of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new DCYA reference.
- ii. In the case of a change of legal status of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new DCYA reference.
- iii. In the case of a change of address of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new DCYA reference.

6.2.12 Service closure

If a childcare provider closes its service, notice must be submitted in writing immediately to their local County Childcare Committee and to pipdocuments@pobal.ie. Service closure and change of circumstances require the service to end date registrations for all current registrations at closure date.

6.3 Child Registration and Attendance Record Keeping

6.3.1 CCSR(T) Child Registration on PIP

CCSR(T) services must register the child under their CCSR(T) grant funding agreement on the PIP online system. Please refer to the 'CCS Resettlement and Transition-Registrations how to guide' via the PIP homepage. Subvention will only be paid in respect of eligible children with effect from the child's start date.

6.3.2 Reduction in attendance/PIP Updating

Once the child is registered and approved for CCSR(T) funding, the service will receive a minimum of four weeks' funding for the child from the start date of the child's attendance. Where a service is notified that a child is reducing their level of attendance e.g. from four full days per week to two full days per week, this must be updated on PIP immediately. The service will set a leave date on current registration and re-register child with new level of attendance. Where attendance differs from registration consistently over a four week period, registrations must be updated to reflect the actual number of days the child attends and this update must occur within four weeks of the reduced attendance pattern commencing.

6.3.3 Absenteeism

The service provider must contact the parent/guardian to establish the cause of the child's absence within the first week of the absence commencing. If there is non-attendance for two weeks or more, the relevant service must end-date the child on the PIP registration system. The childcare service will receive two weeks' funding in lieu of notice. If the child leaves on or after the third week of attendance, the service shall receive the minimum one month's funding plus two weeks' notice in lieu, giving a total of six weeks payment. All services must report leavers through PIP. Services cannot claim for any time period in excess of the four/six week period from the last date of the child's attendance

6.3.4 Attendance records

Childcare providers must keep daily attendance records for each child attending and records must include the child's full name, date of attendance, time of child's arrival and time of child's departure. Attendance records must be kept in an appropriate manner that is sufficient to establish actual duration of attendance of each named child in terms of hours. The child's name must be recorded in a consistent manner in order to facilitate identification of patterns of attendance (i.e. if the attendance records are weekly sheets, the child's name should be in the same place each week). Weekly/monthly attendance records are preferable as this facilitates establishing patterns of attendance.

Attendance records will be reviewed as a priority during compliance visits. Please see the minimum requirements as set out in the 'good practice on attendance records' guide (Appendix 2).

6.3.5 Failure to maintain appropriate attendance records

Failure to maintain attendance records (as per 6.3.4) may result in an assumption of zero hour's attendance. The Department may withdraw future payments from the provider and/or require repayment of over-claimed monies already paid for the period concerned.

Failure to maintain sufficient attendance records (e.g. where attendance records are kept, but in a format which does not allow a compliance visit officer to determine the hours which a child has attended, such as through use of "ticks") may result in an assumption of minimal hour's attendance (i.e. sessional/half sessional service). The Department may withdraw future payments from the provider and/or require repayment of over-claimed monies already paid for the period concerned.

6.3.6 Compliance Visits

- i. Services must facilitate compliance visits which will be made without notice, to include access to the premises, personnel and relevant records.

- ii. All documentation related to the financial affairs of the service, accounts, fees records, staff qualifications, PIP, fees lists, registers and attendance records must be on-site at all times. These records must be kept for a minimum period of seven years from expiry date of contract.
- iii. Compliance visit officers may inspect, and take copies of, any books, records or other documents (including books, records or documents stored in non-legible form), or extracts therefrom, that he or she finds in the course of his or her inspection.

6.3.7 De-committal and Recovery Procedures

CCSR(T) providers may at times be overpaid during the course of the year due to transfers, closures etc. If at the end of the year, (or on closure of a service), a CCSR(T) service has been overpaid, a revised CCSR(T) allocation notification will issue and any excess CCSR(T) funding must be returned to Pobal.

6.3.8 Change of attendance schedule

Where attendance differs from registration consistently over a four week period, e.g. from four days per week to three days per week, the change in registration must be notified to Pobal, via the PIP portal, to reflect the actual number of days the child attends, within two weeks thereafter. The Service will set a leave date on current registration and re-register child with new level of attendance.

6.3.9 If a child leaves the CCSR(T) Programme

When a child leaves the CCSR(T), all service providers must report leavers and the information must be entered on PIP, stating the date the child last attended the service.

6.3.10 Funding of CCSR(T) child leaving the service

If the child's place is no longer needed or the child has not attended for two weeks or more, the funding will cease. The childcare provider will receive two weeks' funding in lieu of notice.

6.3.11 Moving from one CCSR(T) provider to another

Non-attendance may occur due to the family being moved to alternative accommodation and the need for the family to register in another childcare service. In this instance, it may be necessary to afford the necessity of a cross over in funding in both services for the two weeks' transition from one service to another.

Note: the parent/guardian must submit the same DCYA eligibility letter to both the first and second service providers.

6.3.12 Transfer from the TEC programme to the CCSR (T) programme

The service provider must insert an end date on the child's registration on PIP and re-register the child on PIP under CCSR(T).

6.4 FAQs for CCSR(T) Programme

6.4.1 Can any service register a child under this programme?

Service providers must already have a grant funding agreement with the DCYA under the CCS Plus programmes to be eligible.

6.4.2 What do parents/guardians need to provide?

Parents/guardians should provide a verification letter which is available for parents/guardians from Focus Ireland in the Dublin region and from local authorities outside of Dublin. The prescribed letter

must be attached to the registration under the Parent Eligibility Info section. This letter is available on www.pobal.ie

6.4.3 A child in my service may be eligible for CCSR(T) but is already in CCS/CCSP/ECCE, can they join CCSR(T)?

Yes, if a child is already in a DCYA childcare programme, the service will end-date the child's registration on PIP and re-register the child on PIP under CCSR(T).

Please note for CCS registered children who wish to join CCSR(T) in the same service, the childcare service must release the funding.

6.5 CCSR(T) Financial requirements

The financial requirements of the registered provider are set out in the Grant Funding Agreement. The Grant Funding Agreement requires that:

*"The Registered provider shall maintain appropriate records to enable verification by the Department or agents acting on its behalf (including Pobal) that the general terms of the grant are complied with. The specific requirements will be as described in a Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document published by the Grantor. In particular such records **will include an attendance register which clearly shows the dates, times and durations of attendance for each individually identified child for every day that the child is in attendance.** Records of income and expenditure should be kept up to date and available for verification purposes.*

The Provider shall maintain annual accounts for each financial year and provide copies of such accounts within four (4) months of their adoption to Pobal, as agents of the Department and, on request, to the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG);

The provider shall comply in full with the provisions of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2014 Management of and Accountability for Grants from Exchequer Funds. In particular, the provider shall separately account for public funds received and ensure that appropriate financial records to ensure compliance with the requirements in respect of the Funding set out in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2014

The standard and form of the financial records maintained will be such that the records will enable Pobal, as an agent of the department to verify compliance with the financial requirements as set out in its Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines⁸ document published by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

The standard and form of the financial records maintained must enable the following to be clearly established:

- *The amount of all grants provided to the Registered Provider from any public funding source relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service including the grantor and purpose of the grant*
- *That all grants have been appropriately spent (in the case of the childcare grant, that it has been used per section 3.1 of this agreement) and accounted for on an individuated basis in line with Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document*
- *Details of other funding sources relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service*

⁸ The Financial Procedures, Reporting and Requirements and Guidelines document will be published by the Grantor and will primarily be a tool for providers to use to support compliance with the requirements for bodies in receipt of public funding. It will amongst other things, include templates that may be used by the Grantee to support reporting to Pobal as agents of the Department

The Provider shall respect and comply with the statutory role and regulatory and public accountability responsibilities of the Department, its agents and other relevant statutory bodies and at all times co-operate fully with the Department, its agents and all other statutory bodies in this regard”

Chapter 7 Training and Employment Childcare (TEC)

7.0 Overview of TEC

The TEC Programme is an overarching childcare programme funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and is specifically designed to support parents/guardians on eligible Education and Training Board training courses, as well as certain categories of parents/guardians returning to work, by providing subsidised childcare places. The TEC Programme provides childcare support for parents/guardians on certain education and training courses (CETS), parents/guardians working on Community Employment programmes (CEC), and also for families on Family Income Support (ASCC):

Childcare Education and Training Support programme (CETS)

The CETS Programme is administered and funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. It provides childcare to certain training course participants on courses provided by the Education and Training Boards (ETB, formerly FAS and VEC), specifically, courses run in training centres (formally FÁS training centres), ETB VTOS courses, and Secondary Schools students. The duration of CETS corresponds with the start and end dates stated on the eligibility letter up to a maximum of 50 weeks per year.

Community Employment Childcare programme (CEC)

The CEC scheme is administered and funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and provides childcare for children of parents/guardians who are participating on Community Employment schemes. The duration of CEC corresponds with the start and end dates stated on the Community Employment eligibility letter provided by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection up to a maximum of 50 weeks per year.

After-School Child Care programme (ASCC)

The ASCC scheme is administered and funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. It provides afterschool care for primary school children for certain categories of working parents/guardians and parents/guardians on employment programmes (not including Community Employment) based on eligibility criteria provided by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection. ASCC is available for a once off maximum of 52 weeks and this allowance does not have to be used consecutively.

Extra funding is provided to compensate for school holidays. This is referred to as a 'top-up'. TEC is only available through participating early years services; a list of these services is available through the relevant local CCC.

7.1 Eligibility for TEC (CETS, CEC and ASCC)

All TEC participants' eligibility is determined by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP) and is outlined below for each programme.

7.1.1 Eligibility Criteria for CETS

Participants on the following Further Education Programmes are eligible to apply for CETS funding:

- CETS approved Education and Training Board (ETB) courses (formerly FÁS Training Centres)
- CETS approved Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS only)
- CETS approved Youthreach
- Back to Education Initiative (BTEI)
- Secondary school students completing Junior or Leaving Certificate cycle

There is no minimum age requirement, but a child must be under 15 years of age on the childcare start date for CETS.

7.1.2 Documents/information required for CETS

Parent/guardian must provide a letter from their training provider to include hours of course and start and finish dates. Both the parent/guardian and child's Personal Public Service Numbers (PPSNs) are also required.

7.1.3 Eligibility Criteria for CEC

Under the **CEC** programme (pre-school and after-school), a Community Employment (CE) participant who requires childcare in order to begin or continue on a CE scheme is eligible for a childcare place. A child must be under 5 years of age on the childcare start date for CEC (Pre-School). A child must be under 13 years of age on the childcare start date for CEC (After-school).

7.1.4 Documents/information required for CEC

Parent/guardian must provide a letter from their CE Sponsor to include hours of work and start and finish dates.

7.1.5 Eligibility Criteria for ASCC

You are eligible for **ASCC** if you have one or more children aged between 4 and 13 who are in primary school and:

- you are in receipt of Family Income Supplement (FIS) (regardless of duration); **or**
- you are currently claiming (**and have been for the last three months**), either Jobseeker's Benefit (JB), Jobseeker's Allowance (JA), Jobseeker's Transitional payment (JST) or One-Parent Family Payment (OFP) or you are on a DEASP employment programme; **and**
- you either:
 - start a new job; or
 - increase your employment; or
 - start a DEASP employment programme (except CE*).

Note: *CE is excluded from eligibility for ASCC as the CE Childcare (CEC) Programme provides subsidised childcare for all CE participants with children from 0 to 13 years of age.

A child must be in primary school and less than 13 years of age on the childcare start date for ASCC (including summer prior to starting primary school).

7.1.6 Documents/information required for ASCC

Parents/guardians may provide either a letter from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection confirming their status, or a printed statement from their automated statement facility on their website. NOTE: Availing of ASCC does not preclude subsequent application for FIS, where other FIS eligibility criteria are met.

Table 5

Targeted Programmes: Funding Amounts	Childcare Education and Training Support (CETS) (pro-rata up to 5 days per week)	After-School Childcare (ASCC) (pro-rata up to 5 days per week)	Community Employment Childcare Pre-school (CEC PS) Flat Rate* - 5 days per week)	Community Employment Childcare After-School Childcare (CEC AS) Flat Rate - 5 days per week)	
Full-Day Weekly Payment (5 to 10 hours per day)	€145pw	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Part-time Weekly Payment (3:31-5:00 hours per day)	€80pw + 14wk top-up at €65 extra per week	N/A	€80pw * pro-rata when full-time childcare used a couple of days and child is in ECCE also	N/A	
Sessional Weekly Payment (2:16-3:30 hours per day)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Half Session Weekly Payment(1:00-2:15 hours per day)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
After-School (up to 3:30 hours per day)	€45pw + 14wk top-up at €100 extra per week	€45pw + 10 wk top-up at €100 extra per week	N/A	€45pw + 10wk top-up to part-time at €35 extra per week	
After-School + Transport	€80pw + 14wk top-up at €65 extra per week	€80pw + 10 wk top-up at €65 extra per week	N/A	N/A	
Maximum Parental Contribution (pro-rata applicable) <small>*Subvention plus parental contribution combined cannot exceed the cost of the place as per service fees list</small>	Full-Day Part-time After-School After-School with Transport	€25pw €15pw €5pw €15pw	€15pw	€15pw	€15pw

7.2 TEC Programme Rules

7.2.1 Entering a child on the TEC Programme

The Service Manager must confirm the number of days the child is being enrolled for and the category of TEC childcare required when registering the child for a TEC place. Further instructions on Child Registration are available on the PIP homepage. Documentation containing PPSN information must be destroyed once no longer required.

7.2.2 TEC Child Registration on PIP

TEC services must register the child under their TEC grant funding agreement on the PIP online system. Please refer to PIP 'How to Guide' via the PIP Homepage.

7.2.3 Types of Places under the TEC Programme

- Full day-care places (more than 5 hours per day, CETS only)
- Part-time places (between 3 hours 31 minutes and 5 hours, CETS, CEC (CEC AS under top-up arrangements)
- After School (up to 3 hours 30 minutes, CETS, CEC AS and ASCC)
- After School + Transport (CETS and ASCC)

7.2.4 Booking deposits

A childcare provider may charge new parents/guardians a refundable booking deposit to hold a place for a child. The maximum deposit a provider may charge is equivalent to two weeks total payment. The full amount of the DCYA subvention held on deposit must be refunded to the parent/guardian once the child's registration is approved. When and how the balance of the deposit is returned to the parent/guardian is a matter for the provider

For example: Where a service's weekly fee is €200 and the subvention due is €145 the service may charge a two week deposit of €400. Once the registration has been approved the service will refund the amount of €290 to the parent.

7.2.5 Tusla registration

TEC providers must be registered with Tusla for the places being provided as defined under 7.2.3, e.g. services cannot be funded for part-time places when registered with Tusla as a sessional service.

7.2.6 Transport service

- i. "With transport" means that the child will be transported to school (drop-off) and from school (pick up) by the service.
- ii. CETS part-time childcare does not include transport. Parents/guardians must choose between having the extra hours of childcare through a part-time place, i.e. more than 3.5 hours, and paying for transport as an optional extra or choosing the after-school with transport session and paying for the extra care (time) needed beyond 3.5 hours

7.2.7 Childcare extends into another programme year

When TEC childcare dates run over into another programme year the child must be re-registered once the new programme year commences (please see How to Guide for details)

7.2.8 Sign-in

- i. The TEC parent/guardian must sign-in on a weekly basis with the childcare provider to declare to the service that they are still in attendance at their relevant course/work placement; sign-in sheets cannot be pre-signed. Failure to sign in will result in the service submitting a leaver form for that child.

- ii. The childcare provider must contact their local CCC where a parent/guardian hasn't signed in, due to exceptional circumstances, for authorisation to keep the TEC place open.
- iii. An additional adult may sign-in on behalf of a parent/guardian who is not in a position to drop off/collect their child. A signed letter of permission must be provided by the parent/guardian to the childcare provider to this effect.

7.2.9 Mid-term/summer periods

A parent/guardian may seek childcare to cover mid-term and summer periods under CETS, CEC and ASCC. This holiday time is referred to as a 'top-up' and is up to 14 weeks for CETS, and 10 weeks for CEC and ASCC.

7.2.10 Change of Circumstances

- i. In the case of a transfer of ownership of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new online Grant Agreement.
- ii. In the case of a change of legal status of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new online Grant Funding Agreement.
- iii. In the case of a change of address of a service (childcare provider), the service must contact the DCYA (via the County Childcare Committee) with all relevant details in order to request a new online Grant Funding Agreement.

7.2.11 Service closure

If a childcare provider closes its service, notice must be submitted in writing to their local County Childcare Committee and to pipdocuments@pobal.ie. Service closure and change of circumstances require the service to end date registrations for all current registrations at closure date.

7.3 Child Registration and Attendance Record Keeping

7.3.1 Reduction in attendance/PIP Updating

Where a service is notified that a child is reducing their level of attendance e.g. from four days per week to two days per week or from full-time to part-time, this must be updated on PIP immediately. Service will set a leave date on current registration and re-register child with new level of attendance. Where attendance differs from registration consistently over a four week period, registrations must be updated to reflect the actual number of days the child attends and this update must occur within four weeks of the reduced attendance pattern commencing.

7.3.2 Absenteeism

The service provider must contact the parent/guardian to establish the cause of the child's absence within the first week of the absence commencing. If a child leaves the service or has not attended for two consecutive weeks, the service must create a Leaver form via the PIP Portal stating the date the child last attended the service. In exceptional circumstances e.g. serious illness, the service may apply to their local CCC to retain the registration beyond two weeks up to a maximum of four weeks. Services cannot claim for any time period in excess of the two/four week period from the last date of the child's attendance. Services cannot claim for any time period in excess of the two/four week period from the last date of the child's attendance.

7.3.3 Attendance records

Childcare providers must keep daily attendance records for each child attending and records must include the child's full name, date of attendance, time of child's arrival and time of child's departure.

Attendance records must be kept in an appropriate manner that is sufficient to establish actual duration of attendance of each named child in terms of hours. The child's name must be recorded in a consistent manner in order to facilitate identification of patterns of attendance (i.e. if the attendance records are weekly sheets, the child's name should be in the same place each week).

Weekly/monthly attendance records are preferable as this facilitates establishing patterns of attendance.

Attendance records will be reviewed as a priority during compliance visits. Please see the minimum requirements as set out in the 'good practice on attendance records' guide (Appendix 2).

7.3.4 Failure to maintain appropriate attendance records

Failure to maintain attendance records (as per 7.3.3) may result in an assumption of zero hour's attendance. The Department may withdraw future payments from the provider and/or require repayment of over-claimed monies already paid for the period concerned.

Failure to maintain sufficient attendance records (e.g. where attendance records are kept, but in a format which does not allow a compliance visit officer to determine the hours which a child has attended, such as through use of "ticks") may result in an assumption of minimal hour's attendance (i.e. sessional service). The Department may withdraw future payments from the provider and/or require repayment of over-claimed monies already paid for the period concerned.

7.3.5 Compliance Visits

- i. Services must facilitate compliance visits which will be made without notice, to include access to the premises, personnel and relevant records.
- ii. All documentation related to the financial affairs of the service, accounts, fees records, staff qualifications, PIP, fees lists, registers and attendance records must be on-site at all times. These records must be kept for a minimum period of seven years from the expiry of contract.
- iii. Compliance visit officers may inspect and take copies of, any books, records or other documents (including books, records or documents stored in non-legible form), or extracts therefrom, that he or she finds in the course of his or her inspection.

7.4 Fees List and Service Calendar

7.4.1 Fees List and Service Calendar requirement

Service providers must complete a Fees list and Service Calendar at the beginning of each programme year. This must show details of all fees charged to parents, to include details of any additional charges, discounts, or donations applied by the service.

7.4.2 Document display requirement

A copy of the Fees List, together with copies of any standard letters issued to parents, must be on prominent display in an area accessible to parents.

7.4.3 Document filing requirement

Service providers must have a signed letter on file in respect of each parent/guardian of a child on the TEC programme, showing the fees that have been approved ("The Service Fees Information Letter"). These fees must match those shown on the Fees List. A TEC calendar must be distributed to all parents/guardians showing the days the service is due to be open under the programme year.

7.4.4 Fee changes

Any changes to Fees List or Calendar must be approved by the CCC. Four weeks' notice of any change to the Fees List must be given to parents. Where the Fees List has been revised, amended Fees List letters must then be issued and signed by the parents/guardians for the service's files.

7.4.5 Optional extras

Childcare providers may charge for optional extras, but a parent/guardian may choose not to avail of any of the optional extras. Optional extras must be identified on the fees list at the start of the programme year. Each option must be individually identified.

7.5 Financial Requirements

The financial requirements of the registered provider are set out in the Grant Funding Agreement.

The Grant Funding Agreement requires that:

"The Grantee agrees to maintain up to date child registration information on the Programmes Implementation Platform in compliance with the 'Rules for the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) Childcare Funding Programmes' the 'ECCE How to Guide for Service Providers', Policy on the Operation of the Access and Inclusion Model and related information and any additional requirements of the Programmes Implementation Platform.

*The Grantee shall maintain appropriate records to enable verification by the Department or agents acting on its behalf (including Pobal) that the general terms of the grant are complied with. The specific requirements will be as described in a Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document published by the Grantor. In particular such records **will include an attendance register which clearly shows the dates, times and durations of attendance for each individually identified child for every day that the child is in attendance.** Records of income and expenditure should be kept up to date and available for verification purposes.*

The Grantee shall maintain annual accounts for each financial year and provide copies of such accounts within four (4) months of their adoption to Pobal, as agents of the Department and, on request, to the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG);

The Grantee shall comply in full with the provisions of Circular 13/2014. In particular, the Grantee shall separately account for public funds received and ensure that appropriate financial records are maintained to ensure compliance with the requirements of Circular 13/2014.

The standard and form of the financial records maintained will be such that the records will enable Pobal, as an agent of the Department to verify compliance with the financial requirements as set out in its Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines⁹ document published by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

The standard and form of the financial records maintained must enable the following to be clearly established:

- The amount of all grants provided to the Registered Provider from any public funding source relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service including the grantor and purpose of the grant*
- That all grants have been appropriately spent (in the case of the childcare grant, that it has been used per section 3.1 of this agreement) and accounted for on an individuated basis in line with Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document*
- Details of other funding sources relating directly or indirectly to the operation of the Pre-School Service*

⁹ The Financial Procedures, Reporting Requirements and Guidelines document will be published by the Grantor and will primarily be a tool for providers to use to support compliance with the requirements for bodies in receipt of public funding. It will, amongst other things, include templates that may be used by the grantee to support reporting to Pobal as agents of the Department

The Grantee shall respect and comply with the statutory role and regulatory and public accountability responsibilities of the Department, its agents and other relevant statutory bodies and at all times co-operate fully with the Department, its agents and all other statutory bodies in this regard”

7.6 FAQs for TEC Programme

7.6.1 What if a parent’s eligibility is extended within the programme year?

The existing registration should be allowed to expire on PIP and a new registration covering the extended eligibility dates should be submitted.

7.6.2 When does an ASCC letter of eligibility expire?

ASCC eligibility letters must be first registered for approval within 26 weeks of the date of the letter. As soon as they are used once there is no expiry date. A maximum of 52 weeks is allowed (which can include ten of those weeks topped up to full-time childcare) but they do not need to be used over consecutive weeks.

7.6.3 Can a child still attend the service if the parent/guardian is not attending course/work placement due to sickness?

This will be considered on a case by case basis and a childcare provider must contact their local CCC for authorisation to keep the childcare place open. Documentary evidence of this must be retained for compliance purposes

7.6.4 Is it possible to have changeable care arrangements (no fixed pattern)?

This is subject to the agreement of the childcare provider. The parent/guardian may need to seek an alternative childcare provider if their provider cannot accommodate changeable arrangements.

7.6.5 Is it possible to have week-on/week-off childcare?

Yes. Instructions for the provider on how to do this can be found in the ‘How to Guide’

7.6.6 If a CETS child does not attend for childcare for one week does the parent/guardian have to pay the parent contribution?

As part of the CETS registration, the service provider must request the parent’s course calendar to note the weeks the parent/guardian is not on the course. The parent/guardian does not have to pay the parent/guardian contribution for the weeks the course is not running.

7.6.7 What should a childcare provider do if a child attends two days in one week and three days the next as an on-going pattern?

A childcare provider should submit registration on PIP for the two days per week with a request for PIP support to allocate an extra day every second week.

Appendix 1

Rules on attending more than one programme

Programme	ECCE	CCS	CCS Plus	CCSRT	TEC
ECCE	No [^]	No	No	No	Yes*
CCS	No	Yes***	Yes	No	No
CCS Plus	No	Yes	Yes**	No	No
CCSRT	No	No	No	No	No
TEC	Yes*	No	No	No	No

[^]ECCE place can be split between two services in exceptional circumstances, 1) parental separation and joint custody arrangement which geographically makes it impossible for child to attend same service every day, 2) a child with disability attending a specialist pre-school and mainstream pre-school on the recommendation of an early intervention team or 3) the working arrangements/circumstances of the parent/s necessitates a split placement (See 1.2.28)

*Allowed if TEC eligibility is outside ECCE hours, e.g. course is on in the afternoon and ECCE is on in the morning

** CCS Plus Places can be split between services where the total does not exceed FTE i.e. five days

*** CCS Places can be split between services where the total does not exceed FTE i.e. five days

Appendix 2 Good Practice Guide - Attendance Records

The maintenance of good attendance records is a requirement for both compliance with the [DCYA Funded Programme Rules](#) and the [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) Regulations 2016](#). Attendance records can be maintained in a variety of formats e.g roll books, weekly sheet formats or electronic formats. Pobal/the DCYA don't direct any specific format be used however from a good practice perspective we have collated some tips on how attendance can be consistently recorded to meet the DCYA Funded Programme requirements. For more support please contact your local City/County Childcare Committee.

From the Start

- Ensure there are attendance records /roll books for each session/room including Breakfast clubs.
- State Child's full name (as per PIP records) - Don't use nicknames.
- Keep names of children in a consistent sequence throughout the cycle (facilitates attendance tracking). If a new child starts with the service, add their name to the bottom of the list.
- Use a ball point pen not pencil.
- Ensure attendance records/ roll books are accessible from beginning of cycle (including where a child's registration period has expired).
- Ensure attendance records /roll books are filled out by staff member working in the room.
- Keep Parent's Sign in and out book separate to Attendance records /roll books (if necessary).
- Don't use individual daily sheets/diaries.
- Date the week of attendance.

Each Day

- Input time of arrival and departure for all children within the service including Afterschool. (Where a service collects children from a school for an afterschool service, please record attendance from the time the children are under the services responsibility.) Don't use ticks.
- Ensure Staff attendance is recorded daily on each room/session attendance records/roll book.

Absences/ Leavers/ Movers

- Be consistent in documenting non-attendance e.g. always use an X for absent.
- If a child leaves the service, leave name on roll book and put a line through the remaining days of programme cycle to show as a leaver.
- If a child moves session/room within the service during the cycle – enter a note to reflect this on attendance records/ roll books.
- If child shares their day/week on an ongoing basis between different sessions/rooms – enter a note to reflect this on attendance records/ roll books.
- A Child should be recorded in record of attendance for each room they attend if moving rooms during day/week.
- Don't use Tippex on the attendance sheet/roll book - keep the information visible if a child has left.

Weekly Sheets

- If using weekly sheets, keep in date order and secure in a folder.

Electronic Records

- Make sure they are consistent and show attendance of child for full cycle.
- Where electronic records are maintained, the service **must** be able to produce weekly/monthly reports for individual children which show their level of attendance for the cycle to date. It is recommended that these reports are regularly produced and made available for compliance purposes.
- Make sure that the password is to hand and that a staff member understands how to retrieve the information from the system.

Archiving

- Attendance records/ roll books must be kept for the time periods outlined in each programmes Grant Agreement e.g 2018/2019 ECCE requirement states 7 years after the cycle ends.

Good Practice Guide - Attendance Records

Room:		SAMPLE STAFF ATTENDANCE RECORD									
Week Ending: _/_/____	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		
Staff Name:	Start Time:	Finish Time:	Start Time:	Finish Time:	Start Time:	Finish Time:	Start Time:	Finish Time:	Start Time:	Finish Time:	