



## Free Pre-School Year in Early Childhood Care & Education (ECCE) Scheme – Criteria for Childminders

This scheme will be introduced in January 2010 by the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and full details are on [www.omcya.ie](http://www.omcya.ie)

The service must operate 3 hours per day, five days a week for 38 weeks per year. This amounts to a weekly capitation grant of €64.50 per child.

### Or

The service must operate 2 hours 15 minutes per day, five days a week for 50 weeks per year. This amounts to a weekly capitation grant of €48.50 per child.

The scheme applies to children between the ages of 3 years 3 months and 4 years 6 months at 1<sup>st</sup> September each year. In January 2010 it will be open to children who at that point are aged between 3 years 7 months and 4 years 10 months.

Childminders, who meet the following general requirements, can apply to provide the ECCE Pre-school session and applications will be considered on a case by case basis.

Childminders wishing to apply :

- **Must** be notified to the HSE, inspected and compliant under the Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations 2006 and meet **all other** statutory requirements
- Have an enrolment of at least 5 children in the **specified age group (see above)** In other words, they may not provide care for children other than those in the specified age group while the ECCE programme is being run. Two sessions could be run separately for different groups of qualifying children during the day, or the Childminder could keep some or all of the children on for the full day outside the hours of the ECCE session. In the latter case the Childminder may charge her usual weekly rate less the amount of the capitation grant
- Hold a childcare qualification of the core childcare modules at level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications (or equivalent or higher), during the first two years of the scheme. See [www.omcya.ie](http://www.omcya.ie) for the full guidelines to the ECCE scheme.
- Operate an appropriate learning programme and properly equipped pre-school service which is **compliant** with the pre-school regulations
- Adhere to the principles of Siolta
- May not charge parents any supplementary fees for this session unless additional specific tuition is involved (eg. music, speech & drama, etc. agreed with the parents.)

Information packs will be issued to all HSE notified services in June 2009 – if you do not receive a pack by the end of June, contact the OMCYA helpline on 1890 303039 or email [childcare\\_mail@health.gov.ie](mailto:childcare_mail@health.gov.ie)

Services **must** return their completed application forms to their local City or County Childcare Committee during June or early July 2009

Fees will be payable to the Childminder per term in advance. Participating services will be asked to make an electronic return of their enrolments to the OMCYA, initially in January 2010, which will determine the capitation fees payable for that term. The second payment will be in April and the process will recommence in September.