



Foreword from Irene Cafferky, Manager Roscommon County Childcare Committee



It is hard to believe we are already into April and thankfully we have all survived election 2011. Roscommon County Childcare Committee (RCCC) welcome the announcement of a full cabinet ministerial post of Minister for Children and congratulate Deputy Frances Fitzgerald as the new minister leading the new Department for Children. RCCC look forward to continuing our excellent working relationship with the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and hope the new minister will find time in her schedule to visit County Roscommon to see at first hand the amazing work that childcare services are doing across our county, on a daily basis to support early childhood education and development.

The staff of RCCC are currently busy processing all of the applications received from childcare services for inclusion in the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE), Community Childcare Subvention Scheme (CCS) and the Childcare Employment and Training Support Scheme (CETS) for 2011.

I want to acknowledge the cooperation and dedication of all childcare services involved in working closely with us here in the offices of RCCC to ensure that the applications process is on schedule. The staff of RCCC will be in direct contact with childcare services in the coming weeks in relation to the approval of fees policies.

The introduction of the new Childcare Employment and Training Support Scheme (CETS) by the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs will support the childcare needs of participants in training and educational courses operated by FAS and the VEC and this year RCCC will be processing this scheme locally and is another very positive development for childcare services.

At times we can all get caught up in the dreaded paperwork involved in the administration of any national scheme but we should not lose sight of the fact that 94% of eligible children are now participating in the free preschool year which was introduced nationally in January 2010 and the educational advantages this scheme are delivering will benefit generations to come.

How we deliver early childhood services has changed dramatically over the last 10 years. For the first time we now have a universal free preschool year for all children which they are entitled to avail of in the year before they begin formal primary school education. This, together with the rollout of Siolta, The National Quality Framework for ECCE which is the first nationally agreed set of standards for early childhood education in Ireland is welcomed and is a guide for quality in service delivery and professional pedagogical practice.

Roscommon County Childcare Committee's Pilot Siolta Quality Engagement Initiative in collaboration with the National Children's Nursery Association is progressing with childcare services participating in the informal and formal rollout. In order to evaluate this initiative locally and enhance the Siolta implementation process in 2011, Roscommon County Childcare Committee commissioned an independent review which included facilitated discussions with participating services to identify the positive and challenging aspects of the approaches used in presenting the Siolta standards and related workshops to date. The evaluation report will document the outcomes and make recommendations for changes to the process and approaches going forward. It is our intention that the feedback from this review will be shared with all of the participating services, the Early Years Education Policy Unit (EYEP), the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (OMCYA) and will be available on our website.

In our own ongoing professional development, I, Irene Cafferky, and Carmel Dunne, staff members of RCCC are both continuing our Masters studies in Early Childhood Care and Education in Queen's University Belfast and are enjoying our new learning experiences. Helena Mc Ardle, Development Officer with RCCC has successfully completed her FETAC Train the Trainers Programme and welcome to Ciara Mc Guire who has joined our staff team for thirteen weeks while on placement from Sligo IT where she is studying a BA in Early Childhood Care and Education.

The manager and the development team of RCCC are undertaking 'Training for Trainers' in delivering workshops on fundamental play. These workshops will raise the awareness on the importance of play and its fundamental value in the lives of young children. They will highlight specific play activities that promote children's learning and development through a play-based pedagogical approach. Play-based workshops will be delivered by RCCC staff to all childcare services who request them.

Finally, I hope you find our newsletter interesting and if you have anything you would like to submit for our next edition please let us know. We have updated our website with lots of valuable information and resources for anyone interested in the childcare sector.

Irene Cafferky, Manager, Roscommon County Childcare Committee
www.roscommonchildcare.ie

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Newsletter

Spring 2011

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Roscommon County Childcare Committee Strategic Plan 2011-2013 Update from Irene Cafferky, Manager, RCCC

We would like to update you on the progress of the development of our new strategic plan for Roscommon County Childcare Committee for the next 3 years. Below are the key components of our new 3 year strategic plan out of which we will develop a yearly local childcare implementation plan to meet the local needs in County Roscommon of the early childhood care & education sector.

Building on our last strategic plan RCCC's strategic objectives for 2011-2013 are:

1. To develop comprehensive ECCE supports, infrastructure and services where the holistic well-being needs and rights of children and families are fundamental
2. To enhance quality early childhood education and care and school-age provision
3. To consolidate investment in the sector in order to support the continuing development of a stable, integrated and sustainable infrastructure
4. Through ongoing professional development, built on the capacity of the ECCE sector to enhance and develop quality ECCE services for children and their families
5. To ensure effective and transparent collaboration, communication and consultation by all stakeholders involved in childhood care and education; optimising resources to support the implementation of the early childhood care and education strategy.

Through these objectives RCCC will:

- > Effectively and efficiently implement OMCYA funded schemes/grants in County Roscommon.
- > Facilitate and co-ordinate the local development of quality childcare services, promoting their sustainability and extending the capacity of the sector in County Roscommon.
- > Support the enhancement of quality in early childhood care and education and school-age provision in County Roscommon and support on going professional development of the local workforce.
- > Implementation Framework for local early childhood care and education services.
- > Participate with other CCCs and stakeholders in developing and delivering national or collaborative initiatives that support the ECCE sector
- > Participate in relevant structures towards ensuring effective collaboration, communication and consultation by stakeholders on early childhood education and care and school-age agenda.

RCCC is committed to ensuring that it adopts a child-centred pedagogical approach in implementing its strategic plan that contributes to the development of high quality accessible, affordable childcare in county Roscommon. RCCC aim:

- > Roscommon County Childcare Committee (RCCC) through the implementation of its strategic plan 2011 2013 plays an essential role locally in identifying local childcare needs & supporting applicants to maximise funding opportunities afforded by the NCIP through the various schemes. Building upon the previous strategy, (2007-2010) RCCC will continue to be a leading source of excellence in the field of childcare and will carry out its work in a collaborative co ordinated manner. As a sub-committee of the Roscommon County Development Board (RCDB), the RCCC is directly linked to the development and implementation of CDB strategies for the County.
- > To be the lead local agency in County Roscommon to deliver Early Childhood Care & Education Programmes on behalf of Office Of The Minister For Children (OMCYA) as outlined in the strategic plan 2011-2013
- > To support all Childcare Services including community, private, childminding & parent & toddler groups locally in all aspects of the delivery of their services i.e quality & practice, governance & HR, training, funding schemes, one to one support visits, Siolta & Aistear, Capacity building, sustainability, networking and county training strategy linked to workforce development plan
- > To support Parents & Families
- > Continue to be a one stop shop for Early Childhood Care & Education (ECCE) in County Roscommon

Priorities for 2011

Roscommon County Childcare Committee will continue to support the key stakeholders under the NCIP that is Community and Private Childcare Services, Childminders, Parents, Children and their Families.

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The main focus of our 2011 Local Childcare Implementation Plan will be the support work associated with the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE), the Childcare Subvention Scheme (CSS) and the Childcare Employment and Training Scheme (CETS). RCCC will also administer the Parent and Toddler Grants (PTG). Resources will also be used to support and deliver the roll out of Siolta and Aistear through our Quality Engagement Initiative Programme (QEIP) and to support Childcare Providers through the implementation of the Workforce Development Plan (WDP) where we have a detailed subsidised training plan available on our website www.roscommonchildcare.ie. in response to the needs of the sector locally.

RCCC view one to one support visits as a priority to achieve our objectives during 2011 which we will continue to link to the Siolta standards. This initiative will link services ongoing quality work practices with the visit templates devised by RCCC. It was found that this was a very effective way to engage with childcare services and to encourage further development of quality early childhood care & education. During the 'support & advisory visits' services will be encouraged to seek further information from our web site.

Also back up support will be delivered by holding Management Support and Development meetings, information sessions and training workshops for childcare services. Finally, services will be supported through phone calls, e mails and letters. Roscommon CCC view that we will invest more staff time in these activities to develop our stated priorities for 2011.

Priorities will also include supporting childcare services to be sustainable through our one to one to one support & advisory visits which tie in work on ECCE/CSS/ CETS scheme coupled with informal engagement in Siolta. Financial, Compliance and Employment supports including HR and governance supports have also been the core work of RCCC staff. During 2010 RCCC found that this was a very effective way to engage with childcare services and to encourage further development of quality early childhood care & education. RCCC will continue to provide one to one financial planning development meetings to support services compile a fees policy which will support their sustainability. Supports will also be given on a one to one basis to parents queries and/or concerns regarding any aspect of the ECCE scheme. All support & advisory visits will be backed up by information being readily available to services/parents through information packs and for download at our website www.roscommonchildcare.ie.

RCCC also plan to have a detailed information campaign in place for our Providers and parents re Calendar of events informing them of news in relation to the childcare schemes and training courses and seminars. Information will be disseminated through our website, newsletters and through our large email database.

Supports will be also directed to a providers and parents networks. These networks not only form a support mechanism within the County but are used by RCCC to inform the Board of important Childcare issues facing parents and providers.

Some initiatives planned for 2011 are:

- > Beep Beep Day
- > National Play Week incorporating County Family Play Day
- > Annual Childcare Awards Ceremony - To celebrate and recognise continuing professional development (CPD) in the sector
- > National Childminding Week - 9th- 15th April. Theme of the week is Learning is fun in a childminding setting
- > Play-based workshops for childcare services & childminders
- > Community Providers Network Meetings
- > Private Providers Network Meetings
- > Tutors Network Meetings
- > Business Management Development & Mentoring Programme - 28th March, 4th & 18th April & 9th May
- > RCCC Siolta Quality Engagement Initiative
- > Aistear The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework Training
- > National Parents Week
- > Parent & Toddler Grant Scheme
- > Establish Childcare Relief Panel
- > Accredited & Non Accredited Training Courses Workshops supporting continued professional development (CDP) in the sector i.e First Aid, Manual Handling, Support & Supervision, Business Management, Child Protection, FETAC Equality & Diversity & School Age Childcare..... (Please see our training schedule)

RCCC Training Schedule

Please check our website for an up-to-date version of our 2011 Training Schedule
<http://www.roscommonchildcare.ie/training.html>

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Note from Chairperson



With so much strategic planning by the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, the 33 City & County Childcare Committees and National Childcare Voluntary Organisations it is heartening to see the new National Childcare Strategic Plan 2011-2013 launched recently which culminates all of the wonderful work being carried out in the childcare sector by so many people on both a local and national level. We still have many challenges ahead and as I take over the mantle of Chairperson of Roscommon County Childcare Committee (RCCC) I know that I have a wonderful base from which to work with.

I want to thank the outgoing Chairperson Mr. Tom Costello for his dedication to the work of RCCC and hope that I can continue to build on the wonderful achievements of our organisation to date.

As we approach our 10th anniversary as an organisation I look forward to working with all of my fellow members on the board of RCCC, the staff of RCCC and all the childcare services in County Roscommon to continue to meet our objectives in providing quality early childhood care and education services for our young children. I hope you enjoy this edition of our newsletter where we endeavour to keep you abreast of what is happening in the sector.

*Bernadette Morris,
Chairperson, Roscommon County Childcare Committee*

Elected Representatives

The board and staff members of RCCC wish to offer congratulations to Roscommon and South Leitrim's newly elected representatives to Dáil Éireann – Denis Naughten FG, Frank Feighan FG, Luke 'Ming' Flanagan, Independent Candidate, on their recent success. We look forward to working collaboratively with them to support the childcare sector in County Roscommon.

Representatives on RCCC Board

Parent's Representative – Sinéad Devine
Community Provider's Representative – Des Curley & Mary Dwyer
Private Provider's Representative – Helen Cosgrove & Áine Hanly Wynne

If you wish to contact your representative, please do so through Roscommon County Childcare Committee at 094-9622540

Happy Retirement Paddy Gannon!!!

The board and staff of Roscommon County Childcare Committee would like to take this opportunity to wish Mr. Paddy Gannon, Childcare Manager, Health Service Executive Roscommon well in his retirement.

Paddy was instrumental in the setting up of Roscommon County Childcare Committee way back in 2001 and has been a loyal board member during the last ten years in which the early childhood sector in County Roscommon has grown into a professional sector supporting early childhood education and care throughout the county. We wish Paddy, Betty and their family many more years of health and happiness.



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National Childminding Week April 9th-15th 2011

Theme 'Learning is Fun in a childminding setting'

National Childminder's day on Friday 15th April 2011 provides children with the opportunity to get involved by making cards, baking a cake or telling a story to their childminder

Childminding Week Events 2011

Date	Time	Event	Venue
Monday 11th April	11.00 am	TullyBoy Farm Farm visit for childminders and children in their service	Boyle
Tuesday 12th April	10.30 am -12.30pm Interactive workshop with children and adults	Arts and Crafts Athlone	Monksland
Thursday 14th April	11.00 am Farm visit for childminders and children in their service	Glendeer Farm	Athlone
Friday 15th April	11.00am Cinema visit in conjunction with Leitrim CCC	Cinema	Carrick on Shannon

Booking essential, please complete booking form and return to
Roscommon County Childcare Committee

Knock Road, Castlerea Co. Roscommon

If you have any further queries please contact cmao@roscommonchildcare.ie or office on 094 9622540

Childminding Network Coffee Mornings

Date	Venue	Time
17th February 2011	Upsie Daisies Roscommon	10.00am
16th March 2011	Upsie Daisies Roscommon	10.00am
21st April 2011	Upsie Daisies Roscommon	10.00am
19th May 2011	Upsie Daisies Roscommon	10.00am

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RCCC Development Team



Irene Cafferky, Manager

Irene Cafferky has worked with and supported community and private services for the past 20 years, and in the childcare sector for the past 10 years. She has a diploma from NUI, Galway in Community Development, a BA in Training & Education from NUIG and is currently studying for her Masters in Early Childhood Care & Education in Queens University, Belfast. Irene believes that Play is the means by which young children learn best and has a keen interest both professionally and academically in early childhood service delivery and professional pedagogical practice.

Irene has also qualified in Human Resource Management and completed Accredited Mediation Training where she successfully passed the accredited examinations and is now qualified to practice as a professional

Mediator. Irene has studied and qualified in the area of Conflict and Dispute Resolution and can provide a service for effective conflict management and dispute resolution processes which may assist in the resolution of disputes that are amenable to Mediation on a confidential basis.

What is Mediation?

In a mediation procedure the Mediator is a neutral independent person who acts as a facilitator who helps the parties to reach a mutually satisfactory settlement of their dispute. Mediation is an efficient and cost-effective way of achieving a fair outcome while preserving, and at times even enhancing, the relationship, business and personal, of the parties. Prescribed as a nominating body by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Michael McDowell T.D. under regulations pursuant to the Civil Liability and Courts Act 2004 (Section 15) Order 2005, which the Minister signed into operation as of the 31st March 2005, Mediation Forum Ireland (MFI) can nominate persons who successfully pass the examination on completion of training to act as chairpersons of a mediation conference where the parties themselves do not agree on a chairperson. All MFI Mediators are bound to comply with the EU Code of Conduct for Mediators and to conduct the process in the spirit of the objectives of the EU Directive on ADR and related matters.



Carmel Dunne – ECCE Development Officer with responsibility for childminding

Carmel has worked in the Childcare sector for a number of years. She has a wide range of experiences including working with children with additional needs in residential care and also managing a pre-school for ethnic minority groups. Carmel has a Diploma in Social Studies (IFAE), FETAC level 5 and 6 in Childcare, BSc in Rural and Community Development (NUI), Train the Trainer in childcare and is currently engaging in the Masters in Early Childhood Studies in Queens, Belfast.



Helena McArdle – ECCE Development Officer

Helena has experience of working with another county childcare committee prior to moving to Roscommon County Childcare Committee. Helena has recently graduated with a BA in Early Childhood Education from the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT), and is up to date on the most recent developments in Early Childhood Education and Development. She has gained invaluable experience of working in full day care centres, sessional services (both private and community) and has also been involved with Barnardos. Helena has recently completed Train the Trainers FETAC Level 6 in childcare and also holds a FETAC Level 5 Award in Working with Children with Additional Needs.



Jean Kelly – ECCE Development Officer

Jean has been involved in the childcare sector both professionally and academically since 1991. Early in her career she graduated with a Diploma in Montessori Education. Since then, Jean has received a BA (Hons) in Early Childhood Studies from University College Cork (UCC) and a Masters in Child, Family and Community Studies from the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT). Jean has gained national and international experience working in a wide range of childcare settings: Montessori, High / Scope, and bi-lingual services in Ireland, the United States of America and Spain.

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Road Safety Awareness & Beep Beep Day

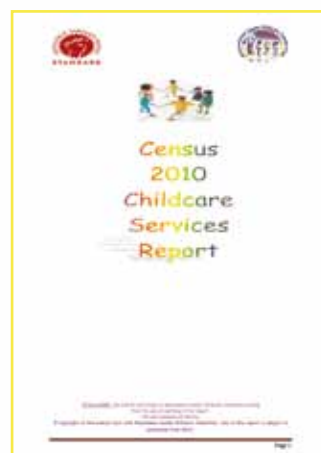


In association with the Road Safety Authority, Roscommon County Childcare Committee introduced a Road Safety pack entitled 'Simon & Friends' to childcare services in November 2010. Helena McArdle, ECCE Development Officer provided training to childcare services in how to use these packs. 16 childcare services attended the training and received these Road Safety Packs. The 'Simon & Friends' series centres on four characters who promote age appropriate road safety messages to children. The packs are now being used in these services, and they include a number of songs, games and activities to encourage Road Safety in children aged 5 and under in a childcare setting. A limited number of Simon & Friends packs are available to childcare services in RCCC Offices. RCCC also have a number of resources for parents regarding Road Safety. Contact RCCC offices for further details.

'Beep Beep Day' will take place on Friday April 1st 2011 in Roscommon childcare services. This is a day when all services will carry out fun games and activities to promote Road Safety, using the Simon & Friends pack. Services may also host their own Beep Beep Day on a date that suits them. If services would like to receive further information on Beep Beep Day, contact Helena McArdle, ECCE Development Officer.

RCCC Childcare Census & Annual Report 2010:

We would like to express our gratitude to all Childcare Services and HSE & Voluntary Notified Childminders for taking part in RCCC's Childcare Census 2010. We received great feedback from all services. This was a very comprehensive Census form and allowed RCCC to prioritise training for our schedule for 2011, plan network meetings for both community & private providers, and to focus on areas of support indicated by childcare providers, to name but a few. Both Census reports, as well as our Annual Report for 2010 are currently available for your viewing on our website <http://www.roscommonchildcare.ie>



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Childminding Development Grants Discontinued

"As you will be aware, budgetary constraints across all sectors has resulted in Government Departments reviewing financial commitments within their remit. In that context, and in order to supplement the Childcare Directorate's (OMCYA) existing capital commitments, Pobal has been directed by the Childcare Directorate to recoup any unspent Childminder Development Grants monies currently with City/County Childcare Committees. As of today's date (22nd February 2011) you are requested to cease any further processing (call for projects, approvals etc.) of CMDG".

However Childminders can still avail of advice and support, training opportunities, network/coffee mornings, childminding week events and voluntary notification which includes the childminder's tax exemption, through Roscommon County Childcare Committee.

You can also access up to date information from our website www.roscommonchildcare.ie

If you require assistance with any of the above please contact the office on 094 9622540 or e-mail cmao@roscommonchildcare.ie

Childminders, The Universal Social Charge [USC] and PRSI -Budget 2010

The Universal Social Charge [USC] came into effect on the 1st January 2011 and applies to all individuals if their gross income exceeds the threshold of €4,004 per annum (€77 per week). Once you exceed this limit then you pay on the full amount. However, the USC does not apply to Childminders who are eligible to claim the Childminder's Tax Relief of €15,000 per annum as they derive their income from a source that is classified as exempt income. The rates of USC are: 2% on the first €10,036, 4% on the next €5,980 and 7% on the balance. Self-employed individuals will make a payment of USC along with their preliminary tax payment, and any balance will be collected when the final assessment issues. USC is payable on gross income after relief for certain capital allowances, but before relief for pension contributions. Gross income is determined after deduction of legitimate expenses directly associated with the performance of the trade. This is in accordance with the normal principles of commercial accounting. For more information on the Universal Social Charge (USC) please follow the link provided on the Revenue website. <http://www.revenue.ie/en/press/budget/2011/index.html>

PRSI

While the USC does not apply to those availing of the Childminder's Tax Relief, PRSI applies as before. Please note that the general rate for the self-employed was increased from 3% to 4% in the Budget. Therefore a Childminder will have to pay a Social Insurance Contribution of 4% of all income, or €253, whichever is greater. For further information in relation to PRSI please see www.welfare.ie

Art and Photography Competition

Childminding Ireland National Art and Photography Competition Open to all Children in Ireland who have a Childminder!

Childminding Week 2011 - 'Learning is fun in a Childminding Setting!'

'As part of Childminding Week 2011 Childminding Ireland are delighted to announce a New, National, Art and Photography Competition. There are three age categories: 3 -5 years, 6 -10 years and 11 -14 years. Entries should be sent to Childminding Ireland, 9 Bulford Business Campus, Kilcoole, Co Wicklow or siobhan@childminding.ie. The closing date for entries is Childminders Day, Friday the 22nd of April, 2011. Artwork and photographs submitted cannot be returned and will be ligible to be used on the CMI website and newsletter.



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Suggested Activity for Children – Make and Play Skittles!

Aim of the Activity: To enhance the child's holistic development: physical, social, emotional, creative, language, and cognitive development.

Age of Children: Preschool children

You will need: Empty plastic bottles, paint, sand, and a ball

What to do:

- Prepare the area for painting and designing the bottles as Skittles.
- Children will paint and design the bottles as Skittles.
- When paint is dry, put a small amount of sand in each Skittle.
- When the skittles are finished the adult and children play a game of skittles using a ball (This is an indoor and / or outdoor activity)

Developmental benefits of this activity: Children develop their fine motor skills when designing the bottle and participating in the activity. They also improve hand-eye coordination when trying to hit the skittles. When they are throwing the ball it improves their gross motor skills. This also helps their physical wellbeing by moving around and playing this activity. This game will reinforce the concept of turn taking, as well as encouraging children to play together as a team. Another benefit of this activity is that it supports children's literacy and numeracy skills e.g. counting how many teaspoons of sand have been put into the bottle, and how many turns it takes to knock over all the skittles. Literacy is enhanced by placing the child's name on the skittle.

Compiled by Roscommon County Childcare Committee development team



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Health Promotion in the Early Years

A number of activities have been organised in the County recently to promote healthy eating and physical activity among the Early Years.

On January 18th, Lisa Corbett Senior Primary Care Nutritionist, & Annmarie Lyndon, Senior Primary Care Dietitian, Community Nutrition & Dietetic Service, HSE West, Galway along with Mary Kelly and Eileen Gildea, Home Management Advisors, Home Management Service, HSE West Roscommon hosted an evening of food & nutrition training for both parents and childcare practitioners.

This session was based on the Food & Nutrition Guidelines for Pre-School Services, and the HSE 3 week menu planner for Pre-Schools. The Food & Nutrition Guidelines for Pre-School Services can be downloaded from www.dohc.ie (website of the Department of Health & Children). Mary and Eileen cooked up a storm on the evening with a cookery demonstration of a number of meals from the 3 week menu planner, including minestrone soup, coconut jumbles, vegetable croquettes, cheesy chicken and apple & plum crumble.



Lisa & Anne Marie also discussed advertising on food labels, how to read nutritional labels as well as examples of physical activities and games to play with children. Information packs were also disseminated to attendees on the night from the HSE with useful information on everything from breastfeeding to promoting active play with children. A Healthy Meal Planner is also available on www.littlesteps.eu, as well as ideas on getting active.

Thanks to Cuan Bhríde Childcare Centre for the use of their kitchen and hosting this training session. This workshop will be repeated on Thursday, September 22nd 2011. Contact RCCC to reserve your place.



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Adrian Carberry, FAI County Development Officer with Roscommon County Council in association with RCCC has been carrying out physical activity sessions, including fun games and soccer games with a number of childcare services throughout the County.

These sessions have been a great success so far with both pre-school and after-school sessions, with all children involved receiving a pack from the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) including a football and a backpack which are funded by RCCC.



Adrian Carberry, FAI Development Officer, discusses healthy eating with the children of Réiltíní Roxboro, Derrane



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Síolta – The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education

Síolta Manuals can be purchased ...

Full and Part-time Daycare and Sessional Services User Manuals can be purchased (€5.00 each) from the Government Publications Sale Office, Sun Alliance House, Molesworth Street, Dublin 2 (tel. 01 6476834 or 1890 213434). The Childminding User Manual is currently being updated.

Formal Engagement with Síolta

In 2011, RCCC and the NCNA will continue to support nine childcare services in Co. Roscommon to engage in Síolta at the formal engagement level. RCCC will fund and support 8 Cluster / Peer Group Meetings at this level. The Síolta Co-ordinator will continue to work closely with these groups to support the implementation of the Síolta QAP. Together, RCCC and the NCNA will continue to pro-actively listen to the needs of childcare providers and consult with them regarding Síolta. This year a number of changes have already been made to the 2011 Síolta Formal engagement rollout. Such changes were made in response to childcare providers feedback and in consultation with the providers.

Informal engagement with Síolta

In 2011, RCCC will continue to fund and support childcare services to engage in Síolta at the informal engagement level. Three Síolta Awareness Raising Workshops, facilitated by a Síolta Co-ordinator and supported by RCCC will be held in 2011. The purpose of such workshops is to introduce the Síolta Standards and Components of Quality and their significance to practice in childcare settings. RCCC's Childcare Development Officers can also support childcare providers by providing on-site visits.

The Síolta workshops will take place on 30th March, May 25th and October 4th between 7pm and 9pm. Venue: Greenfields Montessori and Childcare, Lisnamult, Roscommon Town.

Síolta Review 2010

RCCC would like to thank all childcare practitioners and services who participated in the Síolta Review 2010. The main objective of the Síolta Review was to facilitate a group evaluation with childcare practitioners and services, RCCC staff and the NCNA Síolta Co-ordinator on the Síolta process and approaches used to date with the view to making improvements to enhance the experience and outcomes for all of the stakeholders. Once this report has been finalized, it will be placed on RCCC's website.

A Note from the Early Years Education Policy Unit on engagement at the Informal Level

"It is welcome that so many support agencies have used the Síolta workshop materials as the foundation for a range of quality improvement activities. Such activity has, we hope, begun to help practitioners use Síolta in their everyday work to the benefit of children and their families... Services who are investing in the quality of their practice by engaging in professional development activities will be demonstrating their continuing commitment to delivering a quality service to children and families". (EYEP, 2010: 2)

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Aistear – The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework

Aistear Manuals can be purchased ...

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) is pleased to announce that print copies of Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework. English and Irish copies will be available through Government Publications from mid-January 2011 at a cost of €5.00 per copy. Telephone: 01 647 6834/37 or 1890 213434

Email: pubsales@opw.ie

This second print run of Aistear has been organised by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) and the Early Years Education Policy Unit (OMCYA and DES).

Aistear leaflets and tip sheets on RCCC's website

- Aistear Information Tip sheets on play for babies, toddlers and young children as well as Aistear Information Leaflets for parents, childcare providers, childminders and primary school teachers are available on our website (<http://www.roscommonchildcare.ie/aistear.html>)
- Tip sheets on Play for babies, toddlers and young children.

Child Protection Training

Children First Keeping Safe Training took place recently in Roscommon town with 20 attendees. Congratulations to those who participated in the training!! Further information for parents on National Child Protection Guidelines is available from RCCC. Please see page 15 of this newsletter.



Kindermusik in Co. Roscommon

Castlerea-based business 'The Creativity Mill' is delighted to announce they are now providing the international music and movement programme for 0 to 7 year olds, Kindermusik. For more information, call Rachel on 086 866 4619 or 094 9621805. You can also find them on Facebook as 'Kindermusik at the Creativity Mill' or www.kindermusik.co.uk.



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Childcare Providers

Support Visit Request Form

Roscommon County Childcare Committee invite all childcare providers and childminders who wish to request a support visit to complete our Support Visit Request form and send it in to the Development Workers. You can download this form on our website <http://www.roscommonchildcare.ie/publications.html>. It is found in the section Resources and Publications.

Garda Vetting Declaration Forms

As Garda Vetting can take up to 16 weeks to process, the HSE have provided RCCC with declaration templates. These declaration templates can be signed by childcare staff for their employers to have on file in the interim period while their Garda Vetting application is being processed.

Sample Data Protection Policy

How do you, as a data controller, ensure compliance with the law? This is something that childcare services are not fully aware of. When developing a policy and procedure in relation to Data Protection, we often neglect to look closely at the type(s) of data we are gathering. It is essential that you are aware of the implications of storing data correctly, especially now that services need to deal with Parent Declaration Forms for the various funding schemes. RCCC have developed a sample Data Protection Policy which is available to childcare services upon request. Contact RCCC on 094-9622540 or e-mail info@roscommonchildcare.ie

A note to childcare providers regarding ECCE, CCS & CETS

The contracts currently in place for ECCE and CCS services will not expire until August 2012. However, it is important to note that the OMCYA and the services concerned have the option to terminate the arrangement from the end of August 2011 subject to provision of at least 3 months notice. The general terms and conditions for these schemes are unchanged.

A new Guidance Note on the rules and procedures of the ECCE scheme will be available shortly.

Some changes may be made to the terms and conditions governing the CETS scheme in which case they will be available prior to childcare services going to contract stage.

Fees policies

Fees Policy forms for ECCE only and the combined Fees Policy for both ECCE and CCS services (incl. CCS only services) will be issued to childcare services soon from Roscommon County Childcare Committee. Fees Policy forms must be completed and submitted to Roscommon County Childcare Committee by Friday, 27th May 2011.

Financial exercise: To support childcare services work out their cost per place, and hence, set their fees policy for 2011, RCCC staff will contact all childcare services with a set date to complete this exercise, before childcare services submit their fees policy form for approval. **RCCC will not be in a position to approve any fees policy unless the childcare service shows how it has calculated its cost per place.**

Business Management Development and Mentoring Programme

Roscommon County Childcare Committee are delighted to, once again, host a Business Management Development & Mentoring Programme for Committee Members and Managers of both Community and Private Childcare Providers to develop comprehensive business structures that will support the viability and sustainability of your childcare service.

The aim of the programme is to provide advice and assistance to childcare facilities located in County Roscommon. The support will focus on the business management of childcare facilities, specifically operations and Human Resource Management. At the end of the programme, participants will be able to support the management team in working with staff and parents and also support management committees/board of directors in working effectively, providing good governance practices.

To book a place, or for further information, contact RCCC on 094-9622540 or e-mail info@roscommonchildcare.ie

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Parents

Parents, did you know that Early Childhood is a key stage in your child's life? During this period, between the ages of birth and six years, children develop many skills that will be essential throughout their lives. Attendance at an early childhood care and education service can support your child's social, emotional, intellectual, physical, language and creative development. There are 3 childcare schemes available for which your child may be eligible

1. The Free Preschool Year in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme.
2. Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) scheme
3. The Childcare Employment and Training Support (CETS) scheme

CETS scheme

The Childcare Employment Training Support scheme (CETS), will continue to be rolled out from September 2011. The CETS scheme supports the childcare needs of participants in training and educational courses operated by FÁS and Vocational Education Committees (VECs). To access the scheme, parents simply inform the organization they are doing their training with, that they have childcare requirements and in turn contact Roscommon County Childcare Committee on 094-9622540 or info@roscommonchildcare.ie

Parents information leaflet available from RCCC website (www.roscommonchildcare.ie)

ECCE scheme

In September 2011, children born between 2/2/2007 and 30/6/2008 both dates inclusive, are eligible to participate in this scheme. The ECCE scheme is set out so that all children can access a free pre-school year in the year before they begin primary school. This will provide children with an opportunity for their first formal experience of early learning. Your child can avail of this scheme in a sessional or full-day care service. The value of the free pre-school year is estimated at €2,500 per child, and this money is paid directly to the childcare service.

An up-to-date list of childcare services on the ECCE scheme, and further information is available on our website: <http://www.roscommonchildcare.ie/ecce.html>

CCS scheme

This is a childcare support scheme for parents who are in receipt of a social welfare benefit or hold a Medical or GP card. Community childcare services receive a grant to enable them to charge reduced childcare fees to parents.

Parents will be required to complete a parent declaration form to avail of this scheme, which will be available from community childcare services from September 2011. Parents may be required to provide proof of social welfare payment to the childcare service.

Parent Declaration forms for CCS and ECCE

Parents, in order to avail of the ECCE and CCS schemes, you must complete a parent declaration form, in early September. Clare County Childcare Committee have published an information leaflet 'Information and Prompts for Parental Declaration Forms for the Early Childhood Care & Education (ECCE) Scheme and Community Childcare Subvention Scheme (CCS)' in 14 different languages. This is available on RCCC's website <http://www.roscommonchildcare.ie/parents.html>

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Parents, is your Childminder Notified?

Childminders who care for more than three preschool children in their own home, have a responsibility to notify their service to the Health Service Executive (HSE) under the 1996 & 2006 Child Care Pre School Services Regulations. Childminders who care for three children or less can voluntarily notify to their local county childcare committee. Childminders may notify voluntarily through the Childminders' Advisory Service of Roscommon County Childcare Committee, which runs this Voluntary Notification and support scheme on behalf of the HSE. Childminders who are not required to notify the Health Services Executive can voluntarily notify to Roscommon County Childcare Committee including:

- Those who care for school-age children
- Those who care for pre-school children of the same family and no other children from any other family (other than the minders own children).
- Those who care for relatives.
- Those who care for no more than 3 pre-school children of different families (other than the minders own children)

The benefits of voluntary notification are:

- Access to training including first aid, child protection and a Quality Awareness Programme
- Access to information & Childminding networks
- It qualifies the Childminder to claim the Childminder's' Tax Exemption. (€15,000 tax-free)
- It puts the Childminder's' service on a list for interested parents, if s/he so wishes.
- Parents are assured the childminder has insurance
- Parents are assured the childminder has completed childcare training Parents, if you require any further information on notification, please contact Carmel @ 094 9622540 or e-mail cmad@roscommonchildcare.ie

Parents can contact Roscommon County Childcare Committee for information on childminders, childcare schemes, Parent & Toddler Groups, childcare fees, parent publications, and choosing a quality childcare service among other things. We are available to answer any queries that you may have on 094-9622540 or you can e-mail info@roscommonchildcare.ie.

RCCC will host outreach information clinics for parents on the following dates in May:

- Thursday 19th May - Roscommon & Ballaghaderreen
- Wednesday 25th May - Boyle & Castlerea
- Tuesday 31st May - Athlone & Strokestown

Further details will be made available on <http://www.roscommonchildcare.ie/parents.html>



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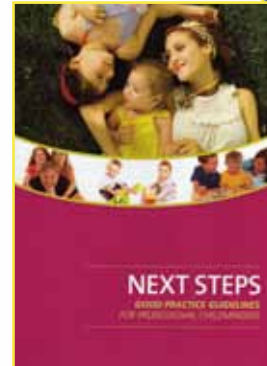
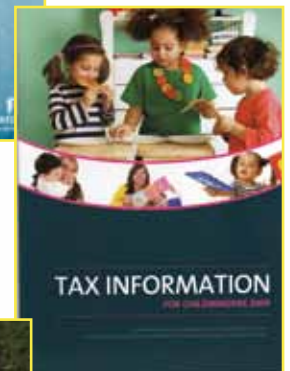
Roscommon County Childcare Committee's Publications

RCCC Publications

- Childcare Employment and Training Support (CETS) scheme: Information for Parents
- First Steps: A Guide to Childminding
- Next Steps: Good Practice for Professional Childminders
- Tax Information for Childminders 2009
- List of Parent & Toddler Groups in Co. Roscommon
- Free Pre-school Year - Early Childhood Care & Education (ECCE) Scheme Information for Parents
- Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) Scheme - Information for Parents on subsidised childcare
- A Parents Guide to Choosing Quality Childcare
- Choosing a Childminder

Publications from other sources

- A Parent's Guide to the Child Care (Pre-school Services) Regulations 2006 (Barnardos)
- Our Children First A Parent's Guide to the National Child protection Guide (Barnardos)
- A Parent's Guide to Cyber Bullying (Barnardos)
- Learning Together: A Parent's Guide to Early Childhood Learning (Barnardos)
- Partners in Learning: A Parent's Guide to Partnership in Childcare (Barnardos)
- The Barnardos series of Parenting positively which include:
 - Coping with Death
 - Coping with domestic violence
 - Coping with separation
 - Parenting skills
 - Coping with bullying
- Benefits of Pre-School for Your Child and Making the Move to Primary School (Clare CCC) available in 16 different languages.
- Information and Prompts for Parental Declaration Forms for the Early Childhood Care & Education (ECCE) Scheme and Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) Scheme (Clare CCC) available in different languages.
- Guide for Parents to the Free Preschool Year in Early Childhood Care & Education (ECCE) (Cork CCC) (Available in a number of languages)
- What Happens at Pre-School? Guide for Parents (various CCCS)
- Promoting Active Play for Children and Parents (HSE West)
- Aistear Leaflet for parents (NCCA)
- A Parents guide to homework (Seven Seas, HALIBORANGE)



The above publications are available from our website, or by contacting RCCC on 094-9622540

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Childcare Providers Successful Achievements

Roscommon County Childcare Committee would like to acknowledge and congratulate a number of childcare providers in Co. Roscommon on their great achievements:



Strokestown Community Playschool, who, since 2010 have been in the process of building a new childcare service, to be opened in September 2011.

Frenchpark Districts & Childcare, who have recently been awarded the Green Flag for the centre and are the first crèche in the county to obtain this award.



NCNA Centre of Excellence Award: Congratulations to Frenchpark Districts & Childcare, the most recent recipients of the NCNA Centre of Excellence Award. They now join the following Co. Roscommon childcare services who have also received this award: Nurtures Best Creche (2008), Early Learners (Ballaghaderreen) Childcare Service (2008) and Grovelands Childcare Centre (2009). This award is valid for three years.



Country Kids Creche, (formerly Little Rubies) has recently moved to a new purpose built facility in Killinerty, Oran, Co. Roscommon. Congratulations to Mary Cuddy, proprietor, pictured below with the staff and children of Country Kids Creche.



The children of Country Kids Creche get ready for St. Patrick's Day, and on the right, having fun outside.



President Mary Mc Aleese opening Loughlynn Community and Childcare Centre

If you have a success story that you would like to share, please let us know, so that we can share the good news!!

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Upcoming Events

- Donegal County Childcare Committee Early Childhood Conference 'I Belong... Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow' Friday 6th May. See <http://www.donegalchildcare.com> for further details
- Study group trip to the Play Resource Centre Belfast, Saturday 16th April. Contact Kelly in the NCNA on 01-4601138 ext 3.
- NCNA/IPPA International Conference 'What now for Children?' Friday & Saturday 8th/9th April See IPPA Website www.ippa.ie or NCNA Website www.ncna.ie for further details
- Early Years Education (EYE) show, Friday & Saturday 8th/9th April. See www.educationshow.ie for further details
- 'Children - their lives their learning' Conference Wednesday 4th May. By National Council for Curriculum & Assessment (www.ncca.ie) & Coláiste Mhuire Marino Institute of Education (www.mie.ie)

Parent & Toddler Group Grants Initiative 2011

Applications for 2011 are now being invited from new and existing Parent & Toddler Groups. If you have received a grant in 2010, you may also qualify for grant funding in 2011. Closing date for receipt of applications by RCCC is Friday, 8th April 2011 at 5.00 p.m. Contact Carmel for further information or e-mail cmao@roscommonchildcare.ie.

Student Placement



My name is Ciara McGuire and I come from Kilmore, in Co. Roscommon.

In January 2011 I began a thirteen week placement with Roscommon County Childcare Committee (RCCC). I am currently in my 3rd year studying for a BA Honours Degree in Early Childhood Care and Education at Sligo Institute of Technology. I decided to do this placement as I wanted to learn about the work that is carried out by RCCC and to experience the type of services RCCC provides to the childcare providers and people working in childcare. I observed how busy they are here at RCCC and I was not aware of all the work they did here until now in supporting childcare services and childminders in different areas of their development. I would like to thank everyone here at Roscommon County Childcare Committee for welcoming me into their place of work and for everything they have taught me. I will go back to my studies with a deeper understanding of the role of RCCC in the local delivery of childcare initiatives.

Register to receive RCCC's newsletter and publications

If you are a parent, childcare worker, childminder, manager of a childcare service, Committee member, parent and toddler group, or any other individual / group interested in receiving RCCC's newsletter and other publications electronically, please register to receive such by contacting RCCC on 094-9622540 or e-mail info@roscommonchildcare.ie

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Roscommon County Childcare Committee's Mission Statement

Roscommon County Childcare Committee promotes the consolidation, development and delivery of high quality childcare services and facilities which are affordable and accessible to local parents and their children, and supports childcare providers, parents and other key stakeholders in line with the objectives of the National Childcare Investment Programme.



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