



Roscommon County Childcare Committee CLG

Roscommon CCC Offices will close on Tuesday 21st December @5pm and will reopen on Tuesday 4th January @9.30am. The National Covid-19 Support Line for ELC/SAC services will be in operation from 10am-1pm and 1.30-4pm January 2nd & 3rd, this helpline can be reached on- 01 94 03 41.

If you have been notified of a confirmed case within your staff team, please contact 01 5119777 for further information. Please check childcare guidance on the HPSC website for further updates.

On behalf of the Board, Management and Staff team, Roscommon CCC wish you and your children/families a peaceful and safe Christmas and look forward to supporting you again in 2022.



Christmas Bulletin Friday 17th December 2021



In this Christmas issue 2021

Christmas message from Roscommon CCC Manger/ Co-Ordinator

Message of thanks link- Minister O Gorman

For your Information

Covid Helpline numbers

Helpful numbers & websites

Important Pobal updates- Payment dates / opening hours/ contact numbers/ parents support information

HIVE- reminders!!!

Highlights of 2021

Fun activities for the family including link to Roscommon Co. Library interactive story- Peter the polar bear



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**Christmas Message from our local County
Childcare Coordinator Irene Cafferky on behalf
of Roscommon County Childcare Committee**



As we look forward to Christmas and the New Year and look back over the past year, we acknowledge it has been another busy year for us as the local county childcare committee and for all those working in the Early Learning and Care (ELC) and School Age Childcare (SAC) sector.

2021 has been another incredibly challenging year for everyone due to Covid-19. Childcare providers in County Roscommon have really demonstrated their commitment to providing quality Early Learning and Care (ELC) and School Age Childcare (SAC) services to children and families. We also acknowledge the ongoing commitment of our registered childminders and parent and toddler groups. You have all continued to provide opportunities for inclusive play and early learning opportunities throughout our County.

ELC/SAC services were faced with lots of challenges however you all did trojan work in having procedures in place that allowed you remain open safely in line with public health guidelines.

We look forward to the implementation of the new funding model and workforce plan reports recently launched by Minister Roderic O Gorman, Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) which will herald a new era for our sector and further support the delivery of accessible, affordable, quality early learning care and school age childcare services into the future. Roscommon CCC acknowledge the support of our funders the Department of Children Equality Disability Integration & Youth & Pobal.

We also want to thank our member organisations locally in County Roscommon who collaborated with us in supporting the ELC/SAC sector at local county level, DCEDIY and Pobal.

We would like to acknowledge that 2021, was even more difficult for people and services who may have lost a loved one. It is always difficult when a loved one passes and the restrictions due to Covid-19 made it even more sorrowful, as many families and friends were unable to be with loved ones in person.

To all the early years' educators/teachers/practitioners throughout County Roscommon and beyond, our team here in Roscommon CCC want to wish you all a peaceful and safe Christmas and new year.

On behalf of our Chairperson, Board, Management and Staff team I would like to wish you all a safe and Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Roscommon CCC look forward to working with and supporting you all again in 2022.

Happy Christmas and we hope that children, staff, parents, and families everywhere have a wonderful break. Nollaig faoi shéan is athbhlian faoi shonas.

Irene Cafferky Coordinator & staff Team -Carmel, Martina, Áine & Sinéad on behalf of Roscommon County Childcare Committee

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Link to Minister O’Gorman’s message to providers and staff in early learning and care and school age childcare settings to thank them for all of their work this year.

Link to video message: <https://youtu.be/13UUMFvqMko>

FOR YOUR INFORMATION



COVID HELPLINE OPENING HOURS & NUMBERS



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Lámháirtíochta agus Oige
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth

National Covid-19 Support Helpline for ELC and SAC providers

If you are a childcare provider and/or a childminder and need out of hours support in relation to a suspected or confirmed case of Covid-19 in your childcare service please contact
1800 940341

This support line is available only
**Saturdays/Sundays and Bank holidays
from 10am - 1pm and 1.30pm - 4pm**



Coronavirus
COVID-19
Public Health
Advice

The National Covid-19 Support Helpline for ELC & SAC providers will be operating on the weekends up until the 20th of December 2021. The Covid-19 helpline will not be open on Christmas Day, Stephen’s Day or New Year’s Day but will open again for the 2nd and 3rd of January 2022 to support ELC/SAC services in reopening after the Christmas break. ELC/SAC providers can contact the HSE dedicated line: **01 511 9777 for support with Covid-19 positive cases in services between Christmas and New Year.**



Some Helpful numbers & websites for use over the Christmas period:

- **National Covid-19 Support Helpline for ELC/SAC providers (Weekend/Bank Holiday): 1800 94 03 41**
- **HSE Childcare Providers Helpline (confirmed adult cases): 01 511 9777**
- **Tusla -report a concern: 091 546235 (Roscommon Area)**
- **Early Years Provider Centre: 01 511 7222**
- **National Childcare Scheme (NCS) Parent Support Centre: 01 906 8530**
- **Emergency Services: 999/112**

Don't Forget to check your Hive/ PIP Portal for updates over the Christmas Period. Keep updated with the HPSC Covid-19 guidance for childcare services also.

Useful Websites:

- Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth Affairs
- HPSC Covid-19 guidance for Childcare Settings
- First 5
- Tusla
- PIP/Hive Portal
- Roscommon County Childcare Committee CLG

www.roscommonchildcare.ie

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***** IMPORTANT DATE *****

Grant Programme for Improved Ventilation 2021-

Applications will be open from the 16th of December to the 7th of January 2022

Applications cannot be submitted outside this application window. All applications must be submitted on the HIVE.

The amount of grant which is paid to each Early Learning and Care and School Age Childcare Service is based on the number of individual children registered in a service on one or more DCEDIY programmes on the 24th of November 2021. The number of individual children registered will be taken from Early Years Portal and PIP systems hosted by Pobal.

To be eligible for funding, you must have had at least one registered child on one of the following schemes on the 24th of November 2021:

- National Childcare Scheme (NCS)
- Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)
- Community Childcare Subvention Programme Plus (CCSP)

Payment of the grant:

Payments to approved applicants will commence from the **24th of December** and will occur weekly thereafter. Applicants will be paid 100% of their grant allocation and will receive their payment within 10 working days of submitting their application.

The amount of funding each service is allocated under Grant Programme for Improved Ventilation 2021 is as follows:

Number of children registered on DECDIY Programmes	Grant Allocation
1-49	€1,500
50-9	€3,000
100+	€4,500

Further information

For further information on the programme rules and how to apply for this grant, applicant guidelines will be published on HIVE: <https://earlyyearshive.ncs.gov.ie/useful-links/>

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EYPC – Early Years Provider Centre opening hours



**Early Years Provider Centre (EYPC)
Christmas 2021 & New Year's Opening Hours**

Monday 20 December - Wednesday 22 December	9.00am-5.00pm
Thursday 23 December	9.00am-4.00pm
Friday 24 December	Closed
Saturday 25 December - Sunday 26 December	Closed (Saturday/Sunday)
Monday 27 December - Tuesday 28 December	Closed
Wednesday 29 December - Friday 31 December	10.00am-3.00pm
Saturday 1 January - Sunday 2 January	Closed (Saturday/Sunday)
Monday 3 January	Closed
Tuesday 4 January - Friday 7 January	9.00am-5.00pm

 Early Years Hive - Submit a Request  01 511 7222  eypc@pobal.ie



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Christmas and New Year Payment Dates

Please see the below payment dates for early year's programmes over the Christmas and New Year's weeks:

Payment Date	Programme
17/12/2021	NCS, CCSP, AIM L7
24/12/2021	NCS, AIM L7
31/12/2021	NCS, AIM L7
07/01/2022	ECCE, NCS, CCSP, AIM L7



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Parent Support Centre Information



**NCS Parent Support Centre
Christmas 2021 & New Year's Opening Hours**

Monday 20 December - Thursday 23 December	9.00am-5.00pm
Friday 24 December	9.00am-1.00pm
Saturday 25 December - Sunday 26 December	Closed (Saturday/Sunday)
Monday 27 December - Tuesday 28 December	Closed
Wednesday 29 December - Friday 31 December	9.00am-5.00pm
Saturday 1 January - Sunday 2 January	Closed (Saturday/Sunday)
Monday 3 January	Closed
Tuesday 4 January - Friday 7 January	9.00am-5.00pm

NCS Website - Submit a Query | 01 906 8530 | www.ncs.gov.ie



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



National
CHILD CARE
scheme
Early Learning & Care



Early Years
hive



NCS Service Calendar (adding closures)

If your service is closed over the Christmas and New Year's period, you must mark the closures on your NCS service calendar on the Hive accordingly - this must be done in advance of the Christmas period, NCS calendars cannot be adjusted retrospectively. You must also note whether it is a subsidised (paid) closure or not. Services are entitled to up to 10 subsidised closures per programme year.

NCS Non-Term Hours

Non-Term hours can be used to cover the Christmas period for childcare needs when schools/ECCE are closed. When Non-Term hours are added to an NCS claim, the parent receives a notification on their portal and needs to be confirmed by them for them to come into effect. For guidance on adding Non-Term hours to NCS claims, please see the 'How to add Non-Term hours to an NCS claim' heading of the [NCS Child Registration Guide](#) on the Hive.

Remember: if you are using the attendance tracker available on the Hive [HERE](#), for Non-term weeks you will need to update the 'NCS hours claimed' column with the child's Non-Term hours. This will

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ensure that the tracker will generate alerts correctly against their attendance. You will need to revert to their term hours when term resumes.

Important: Changes cannot be made to service calendar opening hours or claimed hours once a return for that week has been submitted on the Early Years Hive.

NCS Weekly Returns

As per the [NCS Funding Agreement 2021-22](#), NCS returns must be submitted on the Early Years Hive each week. Returns become available from the last day (Sunday) of the reporting week and must be completed by the following Tuesday and are based on the previous week's attendance.

If a return is not submitted within the required timeframe, all subsidy payments will be suspended until it is submitted. All service providers should ensure any outstanding returns are submitted before the end of the year. For guidance on returns, please see the [NCS Attendance Returns Guide](#) on the Hive.

If your service is closing over Christmas, returns for these weeks still must be submitted. If you are unable to submit returns during a closure period, please see the below section on Bridging Payments.

NCS Bridging payments

A 'Bridging Payment' is available to service providers during periods of subsidised closure, if they are unavailable to submit their weekly NCS return i.e., Christmas holidays, mid-term breaks, etc.

When submitting the NCS return that is two weeks before the subsidised closure period, the Hive recognises the closure coming up and asks the following: *"You have an upcoming closure, do you want to request a Bridging Payment for the dates from "X" to "Z"? (Yes/No)"*

If Yes is selected, the payment is made during the week the service is closed i.e. when they are unable to submit their returns. The service must then submit "Fast returns" for this period when they return after the closure.

For guidance on returns, please see the [NCS Attendance Returns Guide](#) on the Hive.



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ROSCOMMON COUNTY CHILDCARE COMMITTEE CLG (LOCAL AGENT OF DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN EQUALITY, DISABILITY, INTEGRATION YOUTH (DCEDIY)) 2021 AT A GLANCE

Early Learning and Care (ELC) & School Aged Childcare (SAC) services in County Roscommon received support in the following areas:

Services in County Roscommon were supported regarding:

Regulatory compliance: Tusla & Governance compliance: Always Children First, Safeguarding Statements, Compliance with Pre-school regulations, governance supports, Tusla Re-registration, Pre & Post Tusla inspection.

Programme compliance: National Childcare Scheme programme rules, Registrations and Programme readiness, Capital funding applications, Recruitment, Covid compliance & guidance, .

Signposted ELC/SAC Services to First 5, My CCC, Portal Announcements, Transitions project initiative, Local & National agencies.

Pre development supports: 2 new ELC and 1 SAC Services opened. continuous pre-development supports to ELC & SAC service to increase capacity in the county.

Supporting refugee children & families access ELC/SAC: Supported/ chaired the local inter-agency management committee & supported the further development of an ELC service onsite Emergency Reception & Orientation Centre (EROC).

100% ELC/SAC services were supported to complete their Tusla re-registration process.

Roscommon CCC supported services with Always Children First training & queries and signposted to Tusla compliance and Safeguarding statements

100% of ELC & SAC services received ongoing one to one Covid-19 support & supported the delivery of the National Covid-19 Support Helpline for ELC & SAC providers.

Roscommon CCC supported services with Covid related payment supports and information as well as the extension of the Employment wage subsidy scheme.

100% ELC & SAC services were supported with National Childcare Scheme (NCS) & Programme implementation platform (PIP) information & training

100% ELC/SAC services received one to one support in relation to financial planning/sustainability and developing fee payment policies and supported with programme registrations.

Childcare Capital Programme : Early Years Childcare Services in County Roscommon received Capital funding to support Fire Safety, outdoor works & ventilation. All services were supported by Roscommon CCC throughout the application process.

Learner Fund applications were approved in line with National Guidelines

Applications were received and processed for the First Aid Responder (FAR) Funding in 2021. A total of **€1515.00** was distributed to eligible services during 2021. Overall, during the three year programme, a total of **€10,418.74** was distributed in the County.

ELC & SAC Services were signposted information regarding regulatory and programme compliance and updates, Governance information, Aistear & Siolta, Better Start, Linc, First 5, My CCC, Local & National initiatives, through **social media & Roscommon CCC weekly bulletin.**

100% of ELC services were informed of Access & Inclusion model (AIM).

Supporting the National Workforce development Plan:

Signposted the national workforce development plan to ELC/SAC Services.

Roscommon CCC facilitated 1 DCU student work placement



ELC/SAC services were supported with recruitment during **Roscommon CCC recruitment week.** Local & National Colleges & Galway/Roscommon Education Training Board (GRETb) collaborated with Roscommon CCC to promote career's in the Early Learning and Care Sector.

Training/ information supports to ELC/SAC services included: Tusla Always Children First - Deputy & Designated Liaison persons & mandated training. Covid-19 compliance, Capital, Pobal Compliance, Governance compliance, Tusla re-registration, Fees lists and Service Calendar, National Childcare Scheme, ECCE & Legacy Scheme programme readiness and Transitions project initiative,

National Childminding Action Plan for childminding :

Roscommon CCC welcome the launch of the National Action Plan for Childminding. There is **1** Tusla registered Childminder & **5** Voluntary notified childminders in County Roscommon

Childminders received imaginative play resource packs as part of the imaginative play initiative hosted by Roscommon CCC. Pediatric First Aid Training was also hosted by Roscommon CCC for Childminders.

Parent & Toddler Group Grants :

There are 15 Parent and Toddler Groups in County Roscommon. 4 Parent and Toddler Groups received funding under Parent & Toddler Grant initiative. 1 new group set was supported by Roscommon CCC. Funding Allocated to Parent & Toddler Group Grants 2021: **€3200.00**

Roscommon CCC Support to Parents:

100% of Parents who contacted Roscommon CCC were supported with the National Childcare Scheme (NCS), Early Childhood Care & Education (ECCE) programme , AIM, and Legacy Schemes through phone, email, information workshops and social media support.



2000 participants attended Roscommon County Playday 2021 which was held virtually. **400** playpacks were distributed to local Family Resource Centres & Emergency reception and orientation centre.



ROSCOMMON CCC LOCAL COLLABORATIVES 2021

Dept. Children Equality, Disability, Intergration & Youth Pobal, Tusla, Galway Roscommon Education & Training Board, Roscommon Public Participation Network, Roscommon County Council, Brothers of Charity, Roscommon Integrated Development Company, HSE, Childcare Committees Ireland, Dept Education & Skills, Local Family Resource Centres, Roscommon Leader Partnership, County Roscommon Childcare Providers



www.roscommonchildcare.ie

094 96 22540

info@roscommonchildcare.ie



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We really appreciate your feedback & would like for you all to let us know whether you find the weekly bulletins beneficial?

What would you like to see in them?

Would a providers/ agency Q&A be something of interest for 2022 to be included?

Please send your thoughts to info@roscommonchildcare.ie

CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES

Christmas recipes for kids

Cooking with the kids at Christmas is a really fun family activity. Bake up a storm with snowmen cupcakes Enjoy yourselves or share with friends as gifts.



Preparation time - **30 mins to 1 hour**

Cooking time- **10 to 30 mins**

Serves- **Makes 12**

Ingredients

For the cupcakes

- 200g/7oz [caster sugar](#)
- 175g/6oz [plain flour](#)
- 50g/1¾oz [cocoa powder](#)

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- 1½ tsp [baking powder](#)
- ½ tsp [bicarbonate of soda](#)
- pinch salt
- 100ml/3½fl oz [sunflower oil](#)
- 2 large free-range [eggs](#)
- 2 tbsp [soured cream](#)
- 125ml/4fl oz boiling water

For the buttercream

- 200g/7oz unsalted [butter](#), softened
- 400g/14oz [icing sugar](#)
- 1–2 tbsp [milk](#)

To decorate

- 100g/3½oz white ready-to-roll [fondant icing](#)
- orange [food colouring](#) paste
- red [food colouring](#) paste
- 12 white [marshmallows](#)
- black writing [icing](#) tube
- 2 tsp [desiccated coconut](#)
- 12 pretzel sticks, broken in half

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 170C/160C Fan/Gas 3½ and line a 12-hole muffin tin with paper cupcake cases.
2. Sift the sugar, flour, cocoa, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and salt into a large mixing bowl. Stir in the sunflower oil, eggs, and soured cream until smooth. Add the boiling water and beat again until silky smooth.
3. Scoop the batter into a jug and pour evenly between the paper cupcake cases. Bake for 20–22 minutes until well risen and a wooden skewer inserted into the middle of the cakes comes out clean. Leave to cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.
4. To make the buttercream, beat the butter until pale and light, then gradually stir in the icing sugar and milk until smooth.
5. Make the snowman noses with 25g/1oz of the fondant icing. Add tiny dots of orange food colouring paste using a wooden skewer and knead until completely orange. Roll into 12 small carrot shapes about 1cm/½ in long. Leave to dry for 30 minutes.

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6. Tint the remaining icing red using the food colouring paste. Dust a work surface with icing sugar and roll into a neat 12cm/4½ in x 6cm/2½ in rectangle. Slice into 12 strips about ½ cm wide, to make the snowman scarves.
7. Use the black writing icing to draw eyes and a mouth onto each marshmallow and stick an icing carrot just below the eyes.
8. Spread the buttercream on top of each cake and press a marshmallow into the icing. Scatter over the desiccated coconut and push two prezel halves into each side of the cupcake for arms. Pipe black icing buttons onto the buttercream and wrap a red scarf around each marshmallow.

Fun Game for all the family

Snowman Bingo- using yummy marshmallows as markers:



<https://crazylittleprojects.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/SnowmanBingo.pdf>

Snow Shovel Race

Best for: Ages 7 and up

You'll need some bowls and cotton balls to challenge kids to a snow shovel race but not the kind you're thinking of. To "shovel the snow" they will need to balance cotton balls on a spoon and transfer them into the bowls before their friends beat them (it's harder than you think!)

Story Time with Roscommon Co. Library

❄️🧑🏻‍🦺 Have you ever imagined meeting some of your favourite Christmas characters? Join Peter the Polar Bear as he does just that!

A magical winter walk full of treats for all the senses.

<https://fb.watch/9U726ifTKx/>





 **Roscommon County
Childcare
Committee CLG**

The Board of Roscommon CCC, staff team and manager Irene would like to wish all services in County Roscommon, parents, children and local and national agencies a very happy Christmas and we look forward to working with you again in the year ahead.



May you
never be too
grown up to
search the
skies on
Christmas
Eve.



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