



NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2009

**GALWAY CITY & COUNTY
CHILDCARE COMMITTEE,**

9B, LIOSBAN RETAIL CENTRE,
TUAM ROAD, GALWAY.

TEL: 091-752039

FAX: 091- 735701

E-MAIL: MAIL@GALWAYCHILDCARE.COM

Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme [ECCE]

As part of the April 2009 Budget, the Government announced a new scheme to provide for a free Pre-School Year in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).

The Galway City & County Childcare Committee (GCCCC) is holding Information Evenings at the network meetings in June (see page 2 for dates & times) to explain the detail of the ECCE scheme to local providers. Information packs were also sent out from the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (OMCYA) at the end of May.

Services may participate in the scheme on the basis of a number of options, ranging from children in a sessional service receiving 3 free hours a day to children in full-time care receiving 2 hours 15 minutes per day for free. Services participating in the scheme may charge parents for optional additions but, in all cases, participating services must operate the relevant pre-school provision free to parents.

While some of the details of the Scheme may be amended over the coming weeks, the following are some of the terms and conditions which will apply to pre-school services wishing to participate in the free Pre-School Year in ECCE scheme:

- o Services must be notified to the HSE as a pre-school service and have a satisfactory level of compliance with the Child Care (Pre-School Services) (No. 2) Regulations 2006.
- o Services will generally be required to have a minimum enrolment of 8 children in their pre-school year, with some exceptions. Notified childminders in this case must have an enrolment of at least 5 pre-school children.
- o Services must be trading as either a sole trader, a partnership or a limited liability company and must provide an up to date Tax Clearance Certificate.
- o Services must agree to provide an appropriate educational programme for children in their pre-school year, which adheres to the principles of Síolta, the national framework for early years care and education. Services will be supported in meeting this requirement through the assistance of Síolta Co-ordinators, funded for this purpose, and by the GCCCC. This programme will be delivered through Irish in the Gaeltacht communities.
- o The pre-school year Leader should have a qualification in early childhood care and education of at least level 5 in the National Framework of Qualifications.



The GCCCC are expecting applications from interested services by Friday 10th July. The OMCYA will be in contact with applicants regarding contractual arrangements and it is hoped to finalise all applications by end September 2009. The GCCCC expect to have details of participating services by early October 2009 and will provide a contact point for parents wishing to obtain information on enrolments. Parents can then contact services in their area to secure an enrolment.

'Bus Spraoi' - New Mobile Playbus Launched in Connemara for 'Children's Day in the West'

April saw the official launch of Connemara's new Mobile Playbus, or 'Bus Spraoi Mór Dearg' at 'Children's Day in the West'. The sun shone over a large turnout of parents and children who enjoyed an Easter egg hunt, face painting, balloons, free gifts, meeting the Easter Bunny as well as chatting with TG4's Máire Treasa Ní Dhubhghaill, who cut the ribbon to officially launch the Playbus.



The Mobile Playbus is a service provided by the Galway City & County Childcare Committee in conjunction with HSE West whereby children and their parents can avail of a programme of Early Childhood Education and Care. There are two buses, catering for a range of communities and families in Galway City and County who do not already have access to childcare services.



The Play Bus services are participative, involving the children and parents in planning and delivering the services. Parents are given the opportunity to meet, network or attend training on the Play Bus while their children attend the childcare service.

JUNE NETWORK MEETINGS: PROVIDERS FORUM ELECTION

The Providers Forum Election will take place at the June network meetings. The Forum, a representative body for childcare providers, has 6 members. Three of these are selected as Board members of Galway City & County Childcare Committee. The Forum works as a platform to provide an exchange of ideas and issues between Childcare Providers and the GCCCC Board. Be sure to attend your local network meeting if you want to have a say in the elections.

Information on the free Preschool Year/Early Childhood Care & Education Scheme (ECCE) will also be discussed at this month's meeting and all attendees will be updated on training.



AREA	VENUE	DATE	TIME
City	Menlo Park Hotel	Wednesday, 3rd June	8pm
East	Loughrea Hotel & Spa	Wednesday, 10th June	8pm
West	Station House Hotel Clifden	Thursday, 11th June	7.30pm
East	Árd Ri House Hotel, Tuam	Wednesday, 17th June	8pm

Website & Database - e-mail addresses wanted!

The GCCCC is currently updating its website to include a searchable database of childcare providers. If you haven't already done so, we need childcare providers to provide us with an e-mail address and a mobile phone number.

The GCCCC is also offering childcare providers a special rate to set up your own website, which can be linked into the GCCCC website database so that parents seeking childcare can just click on your website to browse for further information.

Please contact Colette/Fionnuala for further information.



NEW SERVICES

Mountbellew Community Childcare Service

The new service in Mountbellew was officially launched by Minister Barry Andrews.

Spiddal

Ionad Churaim Leanaí Bogha Ceatha was officially launched on 14th March 2009 by Deputy Frank Fahy, TD. €1.72million was provided in funding.



Mervue

The Little Acorn - Mervue Community Creche - is the first community crèche providing full daycare in Galway City. It was officially opened by Minister Eamon O Cuiv on 28th March 2009. Over €1million was provided in funding through the National Childcare Investment Programme.



TRAINING UPDATES

HEALTHY START FOR PRE-SCHOOLERS

The Community Nutrition & Dietetic Service, HSE West, in partnership with Home Management Service HSE West, Pre-School Services HSE West and Galway City and County Childcare Committee ran a 'Nutrition in Childcare Evening' in May. Galway Childcare Providers packed GMIT's cookery theatre on a wet Thursday evening for a free introduction to food and nutrition in Childcare. The purpose of the training session was to introduce the HSE's "3 Week Menu Plan - A Resource for Pre-schools". This resource was developed in response to the needs expressed by pre-school providers to assist them in implementing the Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Pre-school Services published in April 2004.

There was a very strong attendance on the night with over 70 invited participants representing 50 Childcare providers in Galway city and county. Training was given on the 3 week menu plan as well as on reading food labels and nutritional contents of foods by HSE West Community Dieticians.

A Home Management Advisor gave a cookery demonstration of some of the recipes in the 3 week menu plan and all attendees were invited to taste a variety of cooked recipes from the resource. Evaluation forms from the training session indicated that the training was extremely useful to the Childcare providers with many asking for similar sessions in the future and all rating the session as excellent.

Keep an eye on www.galwaychildcare.com for future dates on Nutrition Training



KEEPING SAFE

The Keeping Safe "Children First" Child Protection Training has been a very important addition to the GCCCC training calendar. All Childcare Services must have a named Designated Person for Child Protection. The Designated Person must attend an accredited Keeping Safe Training Course. If your Designated Person has not attended Keeping Safe Training please contact Galway City & County Childcare Committee as soon as possible for further information.

A total of 60 childcare staff have completed Keeping Safe training so far in 2009. A further 60 are signed up for training between now and the end of June. Another course has been scheduled for September 11th and 13th in Galway City.

A Child Protection Seminar providing follow-up training for Designated Persons who have completed Keeping Safe training is being planned for 6th November 2009. The seminar will include training on Management, Child Protection Policies & Procedures, Behaviour Management and vetting of staff, as well as an input from Social Workers.



TRAINING ON EMPLOYMENT ESSENTIALS FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES

Training has taken place across the city and county during Spring on various employment essentials.

Topics included:

- How to establish and run an effective staff liaison group
- Staff Support and Supervision by Committee Members- including sample questions you can ask at a session
- Personnel Files - what you need to keep for inspections.

Meanwhile, GCCCC has produced 'Some Essentials in Employment' [with an emphasis on community services] to help services meet their requirements as employers. The document contains samples, templates and practical advice in key areas such as contracts, support and supervision and induction. We have also produced an employee Staff handbook available to all childcare services from our offices.

PEEP

Peers Early Education Partnership (PEEP), set up in 1995 in the UK, is an early learning intervention that aims to contribute towards improving the life chances of children, particularly in disadvantaged areas. The GCCCC organised PEEP training in Galway in May which was attended by 16 participants from various backgrounds and organisations in childcare. This training will enable attendees to implement the PEEP programme in Galway.



AUTUMN TRAINING

There has been great demand for our training sessions and the autumn calendar promises to be packed full of useful and important seminars and workshops. Keep an eye on www.galwaychildcare.com for updates, which will include sessions on Fire Safety; First Aid; Diversity; Disability; Designated Person; Behaviour Management, Child Protection and an introduction course on 'Using Irish with young children' for non-Irish-speaking areas.

COMPLIANCE VISITS TO SERVICES IN RECEIPT OF SUBVENTION (CCSS)

Pobal plans to carry out Compliance Visits during 2009 to all services participating in the Community Childcare Subvention Scheme (CCSS). They will be checking that the following are being implemented as agreed with OMCYA:

1. Fee Payment Policies
2. Full range of services provided as per information submitted to the OMCYA in its Service Returns
3. Publicity requirements adhered to
4. A copy of the Service Returns provided
5. That the correct subvention is applied to parents

When you receive notification of your Compliance Visit, be sure to contact your GCCCC Development Officer for assistance:



Fionnuala Foley, City Development Officer



Memie Uí Chualáin, West Galway Development Officer



Lucy Crawford, East Galway Development Officer



Padraig Kelly, East Galway Development Officer

DIARY DATES

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 28TH NOVEMBER 2009

Make sure you keep Saturday, 28th November free to attend the GCCCC's seventh annual conference and Gala dinner at the Salthill Hotel. This year will focus on informing parents and providers on the new ECCE scheme. In addition, we will hear from Dr. John Sharry, who writes a popular column for the Evening Herald and is a Child and Family Psychotherapist at the Mater Hospital. He is also the co-developer of the award winning video-based parenting courses Parents Plus Programmes.

CHILDMINDERS' SEMINAR 13TH JUNE 2009


Workshops and an address from Mary Daly of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment Framework for Early Learning will take place for Childminders at the Clayton Hotel, Ballybrit on June 13th, 2009 from 9:15 AM to 3:00 PM.



Keeping Children Safe
Helping parents and carers choose safe services and activities for children

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE

A new leaflet, 'Keeping Children Safe', has been made available by Galway City & County Childcare Committee in conjunction with the HSE West. The leaflet, produced in both English and Irish versions, contains guidelines and information for parents and carers on how to choose safe services and activities for children.



in the picture

"IN THE PICTURE"- inclusive children's books project

Positive images of disabled people-and of those from other excluded groups-feature in a collection of 45 hand-picked children's picture books as part of a county-wide, collaborative project. Launched in January, a superbly-illustrated 12-page free booklet - *In the picture* - is available from the GCCCC offices. The books selected will appeal to both older and younger children, and their families.

Transforming Ireland

Funded by the Irish Government under the National Development Plan 2007-2013

