



12 October 2023

Dear Provider,

Last Tuesday, a total of €1.109 billion in funding for early learning and childcare was announced under Budget 2024.

This represents an 8% increase on last year's funding or an additional €83m, that includes €20m in capital funding for the Building Blocks Capacity Grant in 2024 to help address undersupply in areas of proven need.

The funding in 2024 for the early learning and childcare sector provides for:

- The introduction of enhancements to the National Childcare Scheme with more than 150,000 unique children to benefit from changes to the minimum subsidy rate and the sponsorship rate, including children in childminding settings;
- Additional funding for an increasing cohort of children with a disability availing of targeted AIM supports – approximately 7,000 - as well as additional funding to extend these supports beyond time spent in the ECCE programme, in term and out of term.
- Enhancements to Core Funding in year 3 to support improved affordability and accessibility for families, improved pay and conditions for the workforce and improved sustainability for providers, supported by a 15% increase in the allocation for the scheme;
- The introduction of the Equal Participation Model (EPM), whereby services will be provided with a proportionate mix of universal and targeted supports to support children and families accessing their services who are experiencing disadvantage;
- The continuation of the ECCE programme that will benefit more than 103,000 children in 2024; and
- The delivery of a range of regulatory and quality supports for the implementation of the National Action Plan for Childminding; Nurturing Skills, the Workforce Plan, and the ongoing development of the registration and inspection system as well as policy development commitments set out in First 5 and the Programme for Government.

The 2024 allocation, I believe, is a clear demonstration of the value Government continues to place on early learning and childcare, given the benefits it confers to children and their families, society and the economy.



It also provides substantial funding to bring forward enhancements to the various strands of our funding model, allowing us to build on what was achieved in 2023 and to make further progress on our shared objectives of affordability, accessibility and quality.

Accompanying this letter, please find a post Budget Frequently Asked Questions document, for your information.

Roderic O'Gorman, TD

Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.