Dear Colleagues,

These are the information, deadlines, and announcements for the week of 17th – 21st March 2025.

**DEADLINESS / IMPORTANT DATES:**

**28th March 2025:** Deadline for Parent & Toddler Group Grant applications

**31st March 2025 @12pm:** Final date for survey submission on Experiences of ELCs Supporting Ukrainian Families

**4th April 2025:** Deadline for Childminding Development Grant 2025

**1st May 2025:** Nurturing Skills Learner Fund application process closes

**FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

**Parent and Toddler Group Grant**

Applications are currently being accepted for the Parent & Toddler Group Grant 2025. The grant is available to existing not-for-profit groups who provide informal support to all families and involve the participation of parents/guardians in the community. The grant is also open to new Parent & Toddler Groups as well as Buggy Walking Groups. The closing date for applications is 28th March 2025. For further information or to request an application form, contact [info@corkchildcare.ie](mailto:info@corkchildcare.ie) or 022 23880

**Survey: Experiences of ELC services in supporting Ukrainian Families Displaced by Conflict**

Early Learning and Care (ELC) services across Ireland are invited to take part in a short survey exploring experiences in supporting Ukrainian families displaced by conflict. Your insights will help identify what has worked well, the challenges faced, and how we can better prepare for similar situations in the future.

 The survey should take no more than 15 minutes to complete, and all responses will be handled with care. The final date for responses is 31st March at 12.00pm. Your input will help shape practical improvements that make a real difference for families and ELC services alike. Your time and thoughts will be really appreciated. You can access the survey here: [**ELC Survey**](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fscanner.topsec.com%2f%3fd%3d296%26r%3dshow%26u%3dhttp%253A%252F%252Fwww.research.net%252Fr%252FELC25%26t%3d68086be1ae7b284a7a8540916b6a2af505a427fd&c=E,1,O3uhwapI_tiYjj_dt7C3PfEqptOB5IyRgl-wjIKe15pyxTSdUYroQQUwmv-wkWOoDYsOwCs54L-1EyeypGLuvboKRktldIr1UfCMpl2GlB1wOeRBvehG59DtEg,,&typo=1)

**Childminding Development Grant 2025**

The Childminding Development Grant 2025 is currently open for applications. All current childminders and childminders planning to open in 2025 are eligible to apply. The grant aims to enhance quality and safety in childminding services and allows for the purchasing of IT equipment to assist with training and Tusla registration processes later in the year. For further information or to receive an application form, contact [info@corkchildcare.ie](mailto:info@corkchildcare.ie) or 022 23880.

**Nurturing Skills Learner Fund 2025 2026**

The Nurturing Skills Learner Fund (NSLF) is now open to applicants for the academic year 2025/2026. NSLF is continuing, as a pilot phase, and will support Early Years Educators working in a Partner Service to undertake approved ELC Level 7/ 8 courses while they continue to work within the sector. NSLF will cover 90% of the course fees for successful applicants. Information on the Nurturing Skills Learner Fund can be found [here.](https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/a9351-nurturing-skills-learner-fund/) Applicants should contact [NSLF@pobal.ie](mailto:NSLF@pobal.ie)to request a link to register on the NSLF Student Portal, upload their employment details and complete the new application process. The application process closes on 1st May 2025.

**Repeat of Updated Aistear Framework Webinar**

For those who missed it, the NCCA are providing another opportunity to attend a repeat webinar on the updated Aistear Framework on Thursday March 27th at 7pm. This session will explore the updated Framework by examining its Vision, Principles and Themes. It will also present the *Guidance for Good Practice* and highlight additional supports available. Early years educators will gain valuable insights to enhance their understanding of these updates before official implementation of the updated *Aistear* in September 2025. Speakers will include:

* Donna Carolan, Acting Director, Curriculum and Assessment, NCCA
* Dr Sharon Skehill, Education Officer, NCCA
* Dr Mary Daly, Education Officer, NCCA
* Lorraine Farrell, National *Aistear*Development Officer, NCCA

To register for the event, please click on this [link](https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/bd5314bc-8fe1-4eab-b5ee-84122e28b3bd@351a14f3-f094-4745-861a-a035d4cdb2e5)

**EC STEM project – request for support**

OUTSTE(A)M is an exciting STEM project which aims to provide high quality STEM education in Early Childhood Education & /care settings and primary schools using a play-based hands-on learning approach in the outdoors. OUTSTE(A)M are seeking educator opinions about their draft materials before they are released to the public. If you are interested in reviewing the materials then click on this [link](https://dcusurveys.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_e377lujIJS70kSy) to complete the anonymous online questionnaire.

**Upcoming Training Courses**

Cork County Childcare are delighted to offer you the following courses. Please click on the links below to book your places:

**Supporting neurodiverse children in your setting**

Online: Tuesday 1st April 2025 @7pm to 9pm - <https://forms.office.com/e/tEACnXe1ZY>

**Approaching Parents about concerns**

Online: Tuesday 8th April 2025 @7pm to 9pm - <https://forms.office.com/e/K5B2hX4fvg>

**Understanding & Supporting behaviours of neurodiverse children & Introducing visuals in early years**

In Person: Clonakilty Park Hotel; Saturday 3rd May; 10am – 4pm

In Person: Vienna Woods Hotel; Saturday 17th May; 10am – 4pm

<https://forms.office.com/e/CHsJ3xaUvR>

**Always Children First: Child Safeguarding Awareness for Organisations**

There are places available on the following Always Children First: *Child Safeguarding Awareness*Training for Organisations (Foundation Level) courses:

**Location:** Vienna Woods Hotel, Glanmire    **Date:** Saturday 29th March; 9:30am – 4:30pm

**Location:** Clonakilty Park Hotel, Clonakilty   **Date:** Tuesday 1st & Tuesday 8th April; 1:30pm – 4:30pm

**Location:** Firgrove Hotel, Mitchelstown        **Date:** Saturday 26th April; 9:30am-4:30pm

For further information and to book a place please contact the office on 022-23880 or email [cptraining@corkchildcare.ie](mailto:cptraining@corkchildcare.ie)

**Diversity Equality & Inclusion Training**

Cork County Childcare Committee will be delivering training on the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter and Guidelines at the Vienna Woods Hotel, Glanmire on:

**Saturday 7th June @ 9:30am – 5:30pm**

**Tuesday 10th June, Thursday 12th June & Tuesday 17th June @ 5:30pm – 9pm**

This training course will support ELC & SAC Educators and Childminders to engage with the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Guidelines. It aims to foster awareness about Diversity, Equality and Inclusion and to encourage and support those working in the sector to actively advocate for inclusion for all children and their families within their settings. It will explore key issues in Diversity, Equality and Inclusion, and promote good practice. It will also support educators in developing an inclusion policy for their setting. It may also help providers to meet the requirements of their Core Funding Quality Action Plan (QAP).

*Services who participate on the 15hour training programme will receive a complimentary Diversity, Equality & Inclusion resource pack to the value of €200.*

There is no cost for the training and lunch will be provided on the first day. To book a place on the training please click on the following link <https://forms.office.com/e/DnsTxQDJxw>

**Free Membership of Barnardos Online Library**

Barnardos are delighted to invite early years providers, school age childcare providers and childminders to register for free membership to their online library. Funded by Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Barnardos Library has a unique collection of online resources to support you in your work, whether you are developing and reviewing policies, researching best practice or engaging in continuing professional development. Benefits include access to:

* EBSCO Discovery Service
* Education Source Database
* Sociology Source Database
* A growing eBook collection
* Table of contents alerts from the Journal of Infant Mental Health
* A monthly members update of content that has been added to the online library collection

Contact Barnardos Library ([resources@barnardos.ie](mailto:resources@barnardos.ie)) for more information, or register for free membership [HERE](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fforms.gle%2fyiCeAviXXJmXkTJM9&c=E,1,RkYC4xPfZB2kkJbDMgiu59eIh1jEeSRVvECH-msmtGPQ2hA5O95_SA76vxcLgKmSfxCNxu4vLZtkQA4CR3NjL_lhRmDji1Mb9xBg9RmdV2QwTUCYUPsDZiWs_g,,&typo=1)

**Cork County Childcare Committee Facebook Page**

We invite you to visit our website [HERE](https://www.corkchildcare.ie/) and like and follow our Facebook page Cork County Childcare Committee Ltd for updates and relevant content [HERE](https://www.facebook.com/people/Cork-County-Childcare-Committee-Ltd/100079059495356/) or scan the QR code below

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**Covid Case Advice**

Please see below links to relevant information: [Preventing the spread of covid 19 in school or childcare - HSE](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/covid19/preventing-the-spread/child-returning-to-school-or-childcare/) & [Pre\_School\_ManagementInfectiousDisease.pdf](https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Pre_School_ManagementInfectiousDisease.pdf)

General Covid-19 queries: Contact HSE on 1800 700 700 between 8 am and 8 pm Monday to Friday and 9 am - 5 pm Saturday and Sunday / [HSE Covid-19](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/covid19/)

Kind Regards

Cork County Childcare Committee