

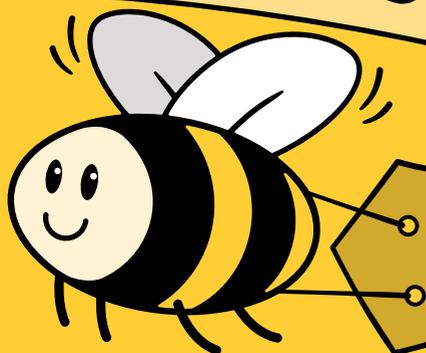


Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



National  
CHILD CARE  
Scheme  
Early Learning & Care

# THE NATIONAL CHILD CARE SCHEME



DELIVERING QUALITY, ACCESSIBLE,  
AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE



[ncs.gov.ie](http://ncs.gov.ie)

# WHAT IS THE NATIONAL CHILDCARE SCHEME?

**The National Childcare Scheme is our pathway to truly accessible, affordable, quality childcare.**

The Scheme will replace all previous targeted childcare programmes with a single, streamlined and user-friendly Scheme to help parents meet the cost of quality childcare.

## **What will happen to the existing childcare programmes?**

For now, the existing childcare programmes will continue to operate\* until the launch of the National Childcare Scheme. Applications for the current programmes can be made up until the National Childcare Scheme launches. No new applications for these programmes will be available after the Scheme opens.

To make the transition as smooth as possible, families can choose to make the switch to the new Scheme when it opens or remain on their current programme for another programme year.

The free preschool programme (also known as ECCE- the Early Childhood Care and Education programme) will not be affected.

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\*The Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) and the Community Childcare Subvention Plus (CCSP) schemes will merge for their final programme year. For more information visit [www.gov.ie/dcy](http://www.gov.ie/dcy)

## How does the National Childcare Scheme work?

The National Childcare Scheme will support families with children aged between 24 weeks and 15 years who are attending any participating Tusla registered childcare service, including any Tusla registered childminder and Tusla registered school age childcare services. A full list of contracted providers will be available on [www.ncs.gov.ie](http://www.ncs.gov.ie).

There are two types of supports available under the Scheme: a Universal subsidy and an Income Assessed subsidy.

### Universal Subsidy

The Universal subsidy is available to all families with children under 3 years. It is also available to families with children over 3 years who have not yet qualified for the free preschool programme. The Universal subsidy provides 50c per hour towards the cost of a registered childcare place for up to a maximum of 40 hours per week. It is not means tested and can typically be calculated within minutes of applying via the Scheme's online system.

#### What you will need to apply online:

- 🟡 A verified MyGovID account
- 🟡 The date of birth and Personal Public Service Number (PPSN) for each of the children you are applying for

### Income Assessed Subsidy

An Income Assessed subsidy is available to families with children aged between 24 weeks and 15 years. This subsidy is means tested and will be calculated based on your individual circumstances. The subsidy rate will vary depending on **your level of family income, your child's age and their educational stage.**



Your verified MyGovID gives you safe, secure online access to a range of Irish Government services. For more information on getting and using your verified MyGovID visit [www.ncs.gov.ie/howtoapply](http://www.ncs.gov.ie/howtoapply)

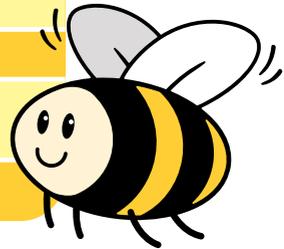
If you (**and** your partner, if you have one) are working studying or training, the maximum number of hours available per week are 40. If you (**or** your partner, if you have one) are not working, studying or training the maximum number of hours available per week are 15.

In both cases the available hours include the hours spent in school or preschool. See [www.ncs.gov.ie/faqs](http://www.ncs.gov.ie/faqs) for more information.

The maximum subsidy rates by age are set out below. Maximum rates are payable where **reckonable\*** family income is under €26,000 per year. Rates reduce on a sliding scale as income rises but subsidies are payable in all cases where **reckonable** family income is less than €60,000 per year.

**\*Reckonable income** is calculated by taking your **net family income** and deducting any allowable items under the Scheme, such as the Multiple Child Discount. In other words it is your family income, including social protection payments, **after** tax, PRSI, USC, and any allowable items under the Scheme have been deducted. A full list of income deductions and exclusions is available on [www.ncs.gov.ie/faqs](http://www.ncs.gov.ie/faqs)

Child's age	Maximum subsidy per hour (Rates valid as at October 2019)
Less than 12 months old	€5.10
12 to 35 months old	€4.35
3 years old or older and not yet in school	€3.95
At school	€3.75



### What you will need to apply online:

- 🟡 A verified MyGovID account
- 🟡 Your children's information such as date of birth and PPSN
- 🟡 Your employment and income related details
- 🟡 Your partner's PPSN\*\*
- 🟡 Your partner's employment and income related details\*\*

\*\*if you are a member of a couple (see [www.ncs.gov.ie/faqs](http://www.ncs.gov.ie/faqs) for more detail)

## Which Subsidy am I eligible for?

The type of subsidy you are eligible for depends on your individual family circumstances, such as your family income and your child's age. Useful resources to guide you are available on [www.ncs.gov.ie](http://www.ncs.gov.ie). A Subsidy Calculator will also be available when the Scheme launches. The Subsidy Calculator is a useful tool, which can help you in understanding which subsidy may benefit you most. Some sample families are described below (all qualify for 40 hours of subsidised childcare per week)

### STOBHAN AND JACK

Siobhan and Jack have two children; a 2 year old who needs 40 hours of childcare and a 5 year old who needs 17 hours of afterschool care per week. Siobhan is working full time and Jack is studying. They have a gross income of €64,000 per year. Under the Scheme, their reckonable family income is €43,200 and they qualify for a total subsidy €7308 per year.

### JENNY

Jenny has one child who is 2 years old and needs 40 hours of childcare per week. She is a lone parent, working full-time with a gross income of €26,500 per year. Under the Scheme, her reckonable family income is €26,000 and she qualifies for a subsidy of €175 per week or €9,100 per year.

### CHARLIE AND SAM

Charlie and Sam have three children; a one year old and 2 year old twins who all need 40 hours of childcare per week. Charlie works full time, while Sam works part time. They have a gross income of €90,000 per year. Under the Scheme, their reckonable family income is €51,400 and they qualify for a total subsidy of €176 per week or €9,152 per year.



## **How will I receive my Subsidy?**

The National Childcare Scheme recognises the importance of choice for families. As such, you can avail of your subsidy by registering with any childcare provider participating in the Scheme.

Your subsidy will be paid directly to your chosen childcare provider once you have made arrangements with them. After your application has been approved you will receive a unique code, called a CHICK (**Childcare Identifier Code Key**). The CHICK, along with your child's name and date of birth, are all your provider needs to register your child on the National Childcare Scheme. After you have confirmed your hours of childcare, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs will pay the subsidy to them on your behalf. Your provider will then subtract your subsidy from your childcare bill.

## **How will the Subsidies work?**

The National Childcare Scheme is designed to be flexible, recognising that childcare needs are different for each family. The system has been designed to respond to these needs by providing subsidies which can be applied to the amount of care agreed between parents and providers. Parents and providers will continue to work together as they currently do, agreeing the amount of care based on a combination of what a parent needs and what a provider can reasonably offer. Services will continue to set their own fees, sessions and decide their own admissions policies. The subsidy can then be applied to the amount of care agreed, up to the maximum amount available under Scheme limits. Providers will simply subtract the subsidy from their published fee, giving parents access to lower childcare costs.

## **How to Apply**

Online applications for the National Childcare Scheme can be made at [www.ncs.gov.ie](http://www.ncs.gov.ie) using your verified MyGovID. A paper based, postal application can be submitted by post.

For more information on getting and using your verified MyGovID visit [www.ncs.gov.ie/howtoapply](http://www.ncs.gov.ie/howtoapply)



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## FIND OUT MORE:

A range of resources can be found at [www.ncs.gov.ie](http://www.ncs.gov.ie).

The National Childcare Scheme Parent Support Centre is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm

Please call 01 906 8530

If you need help finding a place, or have questions about services in your area please contact your local City or County Childcare Committee for assistance at [myccc.ie](http://myccc.ie)



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