

ECCE: Early Childhood Care and Education

What is the ECCE scheme?

The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme is a universal childcare programme designed to give children access to 2 years free pre-school education before they start primary school. The programme is delivered to children of pre-school age (2 years 8 months to 5 years 6 months) prior to commencing primary school.

All children are entitled to 2 full academic years (76 weeks) on the ECCE scheme. The ECCE scheme operates for 38 weeks of the year, 5 days a week, 3 hours a day. Children must be 2 years 8 months by 31 August to start on the ECCE scheme.

Eligible Age Range

The eligibility ages are outlined below:

To avail of the ECCE Programme with effect from:	Children must have been born between the following dates (both date inclusive):
September 2021 - June 2022	1 January 2017 - 31 December 2018
September 2022 - June 2023	1 January 2018 - 31 December 2019
September 2023 - June 2024	1 January 2019 - 31 December 2020
September 2024 - June 2025	1 January 2020 - 31 December 2021

Access and Inclusion Model (AIM)

The Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) is a child-centred model, involving seven levels of progressive support, moving from universal to the targeted, based on the needs of the child and the pre-school provider.

AIM is designed to enable children with disabilities to access and fully participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme.

Further information is available at Access Inclusion Model website <http://aim.gov.ie/>

ECCE Guide for Parents



Click here to see the
Early Childhood Ireland
childcare search



Children born in 2017

Birth Month and year	Entry Point year 1	Number of weeks 2020-2021	Entry point year 2	Number of weeks 2021-2022	School start year	Start school age
Jan 2017	Sep 2020	38	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	5.8 years
Feb 2017	Sep 2020	38	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	5.7 years
Mar 2017	Sep 2020	38	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	5.6 years
Apr 2017	Sep 2020	38	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	5.5 years
May 2017	Sep 2020	38	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	5.4 years
Jun 2017	Sep 2020	38	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	5.3 years
Jul 2017	Sep 2020	38	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	5.2 years
Aug 2017	Sep 2020	38	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	5.1 years
Sep 2017	Sep 2020	38	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	5 years
Oct 2017	Sep 2020	38	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	4.11 years
Nov 2017	Sep 2020	38	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	4.10 years
Dec 2017	Sep 2020	38	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	4.9 years

Children born in 2018

Birth Month and year	Entry Point year 1	Number of weeks 2021-2022	Entry point year 2	Number of weeks 2022-2023	School start year	Start school age
Jan 2018	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	5.8 years
Feb 2018	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	5.7 years
Mar 2018	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	5.6 years
Apr 2018	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	5.5 years
May 2018	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	5.4 years
Jun 2018	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	5.3 years
Jul 2018	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	5.2 years
Aug 2018	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	5.1 years
Sep 2018	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	5 years
Oct 2018	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	4.11 years
Nov 2018	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	4.10 years
Dec 2018	Sep 2021	38	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	4.9 years

Children born in 2019

Birth Month and year	Entry Point year 1	Number of weeks 2022-2023	Entry point year 2	Number of weeks 2023-2024	School start year	Start school age
Jan 2019	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	5.8 years
Feb 2019	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	5.7 years
Mar 2019	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	5.6 years
Apr 2019	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	5.5 years
May 2019	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	5.4 years
Jun 2019	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	5.3 years
Jul 2019	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	5.2 years
Aug 2019	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	5.1 years
Sep 2019	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	5 years
Oct 2019	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	4.11 years
Nov 2019	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	4.10 years
Dec 2019	Sep 2022	38	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	4.9 years

Children born in 2020

Birth Month and year	Entry Point year 1	Number of weeks 2023-2024	Entry point year 2	Number of weeks 2024-2025	School start year	Start school age
Jan 2020	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	38	Sep 2025	5.8 years
Feb 2020	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	38	Sep 2025	5.7 years
Mar 2020	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	38	Sep 2025	5.6 years
Apr 2020	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	38	Sep 2025	5.5 years
May 2020	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	38	Sep 2025	5.4 years
Jun 2020	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	38	Sep 2025	5.3 years
Jul 2020	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	38	Sep 2025	5.2 years
Aug 2020	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	38	Sep 2025	5.1 years
Sep 2020	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	38	Sep 2025	5 years
Oct 2020	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	38	Sep 2025	4.11 years
Nov 2020	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	38	Sep 2025	4.10 years
Dec 2020	Sep 2023	38	Sep 2024	38	Sep 2025	4.9 years



Early Childhood Ireland website:

www.earlychildhoodireland.ie