## ECCE: Early Childhood Care and Education

**Early Childhood Ireland**

### 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 preschool education before they start primary school. The programme is delivered to children of preschool 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:

| Children born between the following dates (both dates inclusive) | ECCE eligibility years | End of ECCE eligibility |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Jan 2019 – 31 Dec 2019 | Sep 2022 – June 2023 + Sep 2023 – June 2024 | June 2024 |
| 1 Jan 2020– 31 Dec 2020 | Sep 2023 – June 2024 + Sep 2024 – June 2025 | June 2025 |
| 1 Jan 2021 – 31 Dec 2021 | Sep 2024 – June 2025 + Sep 2025 – June 2026 | June 2026 |
| 1 Jan 2022 – 31 Dec 2022 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 + Sep 2026 – June 2027 | June 2027 |
| 1 Jan 2023 – 31 Dec 2023 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 + Sep 2027 – June 2028 | June 2028 |

### 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 preschool 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 the Access and Inclusion Model website: http://aim.gov.ie/

Click here to see the Early Childhood Ireland childcare search

## Children born in 2020

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

## Children born in 2021

| Birth Month and year | Year 1 of ECCE | Number of weeks 2024-2025 | Year 2 of ECCE | Number of weeks 2025-2026 | School start year | Start school age |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jan 2021 | Sep 2024 – June 2025 | 38 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 | 5.8 years |
| Feb 2021 | Sep 2024 – June 2025 | 38 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 | 5.7 years |
| Mar 2021 | Sep 2024 – June 2025 | 38 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 | 5.6 years |
| Apr 2021 | Sep 2024 – June 2025 | 38 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 | 5.5 years |
| May 2021 | Sep 2024 – June 2025 | 38 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 | 5.4 years |
| Jun 2021 | Sep 2024 – June 2025 | 38 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 | 5.3 years |
| Jul 2021 | Sep 2024 – June 2025 | 38 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 | 5.2 years |
| Aug 2021 | Sep 2024 – June 2025 | 38 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 | 5.1 years |
| Sep 2021 | Sep 2024 – June 2025 | 38 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 | 5 years |
| Oct 2021 | Sep 2024 – June 2025 | 38 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 | 4.11 years |
| Nov 2021 | Sep 2024 – June 2025 | 38 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 | 4.10 years |
| Dec 2021 | Sep 2024 – June 2025 | 38 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 | 4.9 years |

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## Children born in 2022

| Birth Month and year | Year 1 of ECCE | Number of weeks 2025-2026 | Year 2 of ECCE | Number of weeks 2026-2027 | School start year | Start school age |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jan 2022 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 | 5.8 years |
| Feb 2022 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 | 5.7 years |
| Mar 2022 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 | 5.6 years |
| Apr 2022 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 | 5.5 years |
| May 2022 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 | 5.4 years |
| Jun 2022 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 | 5.3 years |
| Jul 2022 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 | 5.2 years |
| Aug 2022 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 | 5.1 years |
| Sep 2022 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 | 5 years |
| Oct 2022 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 | 4.11 years |
| Nov 2022 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 | 4.10 years |
| Dec 2022 | Sep 2025 – June 2026 | 38 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 | 4.9 years |

## Children born in 2023

| Birth Month and year | Year 1 of ECCE | Number of weeks 2026-2027 | Year 2 of ECCE | Number of weeks 2027-2028 | School start year | Start school age |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jan 2023 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 – June 2028 | 38 | Sep 2028 | 5.8 years |
| Feb 2023 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 – June 2028 | 38 | Sep 2028 | 5.7 years |
| Mar 2023 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 – June 2028 | 38 | Sep 2028 | 5.6 years |
| Apr 2023 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 – June 2028 | 38 | Sep 2028 | 5.5 years |
| May 2023 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 – June 2028 | 38 | Sep 2028 | 5.4 years |
| Jun 2023 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 – June 2028 | 38 | Sep 2028 | 5.3 years |
| Jul 2023 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 – June 2028 | 38 | Sep 2028 | 5.2 years |
| Aug 2023 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 – June 2028 | 38 | Sep 2028 | 5.1 years |
| Sep 2023 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 – June 2028 | 38 | Sep 2028 | 5 years |
| Oct 2023 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 – June 2028 | 38 | Sep 2028 | 4.11 years |
| Nov 2023 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 – June 2028 | 38 | Sep 2028 | 4.10 years |
| Dec 2023 | Sep 2026 – June 2027 | 38 | Sep 2027 – June 2028 | 38 | Sep 2028 | 4.9 years |

Early Childhood Ireland website:

www.earlychildhoodireland.ie