

Joint statement from the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and Minister for DPER/Finance on measures for Childcare Sector during Covid-19

Following a meeting this morning between An Taoiseach, the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, and the Minister for DPER/Finance, a pathway to introduce measures already outlined for the Childcare Sector has been agreed.

Given the economic necessity to ensure that the Sector remains sustainable following the current crisis so that parents can return to work or training, agreement was reached on how this could be best achieved within the context of other measures introduced by the Government.

Retaining childcare workers in the sector is key to future sustainability and the Government acknowledges this.

Unfortunately, plans to issue contracts to Childcare Providers today have had to be deferred until next week in order to ensure that there is compatibility with schemes in other sectors. Funding under the scheme will however be backdated to 6 April to account for the delay. Services are encouraged to register for the Revenue Wage Subsidy Scheme in the interim if they have not already done so.

Speaking following the meeting Minister Zappone said “Given the current challenges, we have been working intensively to introduce measures to ensure, as far as possible, that ECCE (free pre-school) and childcare will be available to children when we emerge from this crisis. While I regret the time it has taken to implement these measures, I am satisfied, following my meeting with An Taoiseach and the Minister for PER this morning, that we will be able to implement the robust measures which will allow us the best shot at a functioning Early Education and Childcare sector when this current crisis ends.”

Minister Donohoe commented “As Minister for PER I support the necessity to ensure that parents can return to work and training as seamlessly as possible including with childcare support. Our Early Learning and Care services, including the ECCE programme, are an extension of our education system. I am pleased that we are finalising measures to effect the necessary supports needed to ensure that our entire economy is ready to return to work in the best possible shape in the period ahead”.

ENDS