



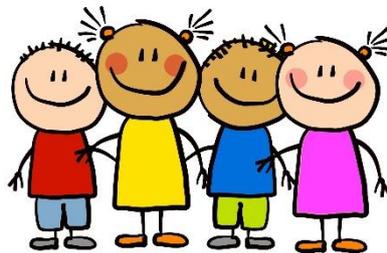
An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,  
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige  
Department of Children, Equality,  
Disability, Integration and Youth



# Early Learning and Care Capital Programme 2021

## Application Guidelines

January 2021



**Closing date for applications is the 19<sup>th</sup> of February 2021.**

**Eligible cost dates: All spending must be completed between the 1st of January and the 30th of November 2021. Any items or works purchased or completed outside of these dates are not eligible under this grant.**

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## Introduction

The funding available for the 2021 Capital Programme is €8.3million and the priority for funding is to support compliance of fire-safety regulations and standards. Capital grants of between €1,000 and €10,000 will be available to contribute to the costs of remedial works required to receive a Fire Safety Certificate. This certificate is an essential part of the statutory regulation process undertaken by Tusla, the independent regulator of the sector.

The underpinning principle for this year's capital programme is to support Early Years services in being compliant with building fire safety regulations and standards -and to assist services in meeting Tusla re-registration requirements relating to fire-safety. Therefore, eligible applicants must submit an independent fire risk assessment report from a competent person to support the need for the fire safety capital works outlined in their application.

As part of the application process, the **applicant must confirm they will comply with a series of [terms and conditions](#)**. These will include the fact that they must retain records and documentation for inspection or submission, they may be required to report on this Scheme later and the onus is on them to be truthful and honest in the information provided. The terms and conditions will give DCEDIY and their agents' rights in terms of inspection, reporting and repayment if necessary.

In addition, applicants must confirm the invoices that will be subsequently used to support the grant have not and will not be used in support of another claim for reimbursement from another funder or grant from DCEDIY.

**All applicants must be Tax Compliant** and using the applicants TRN and TCAN Pobal will conduct a compliance check with Revenue prior to any payments in relation to this grant.

**Universal Design.** All works funded by the programme will be expected to be comply with Universal Design guidelines.

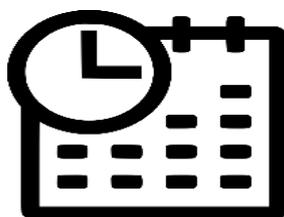
## Contact Details

If you require any further clarifications or information please contact the Early Years Provider Centre (EYPC).

Open Hours: 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday

Telephone: 01 511 7222

Key Dates



ACTIVITY	IMPORTANT DATES
<b>Open</b> for online applications	Friday, 29 <sup>th</sup> of January, 2021 @ 10am*
<b>Closing date</b> for online applications	Friday, 19 <sup>th</sup> of February, 2021 @ 5pm*
<b>Eligible Expenditure Dates</b>	Between 1 <sup>st</sup> of January 2021 and 30 <sup>th</sup> of November 2021
<b>Expenditure Report</b>	No later than 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2021, if requested to submit by Pobal
*Times and dates are subject to change	
<b>PLEASE NOTE:</b> If you contact Pobal with an ICT issue <b>within 48 hours of the closing date and time</b> Pobal cannot guarantee that your ICT issue will be resolved in time for you to submit your application.	

## Who is eligible to apply?

- Community and privately owned Early Learning and Care (ELC) and School Age Childcare (SAC) services in the Republic of Ireland that were open and operating before the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2021.
- Services which offer both Early Learning and Care and School Age Childcare within their facility.



Applicants wishing to set-up a **new** childcare or school-age facility **are not eligible** to apply.

All applicants must:

- **Be registered with Tusla.**
- **Have a DCYA Reference Number** for the premises, which is the subject of the application.  
**Please note:** Applicants cannot access the online application form without a DCYA reference number.

**Complete and submit an online application form** on Early Years Portal - HIVE by the 19th February, 2021 at 5pm.

**NOTE:** The application form is only available on the Early Years Portal (HIVE). **The application form is not available via the PIP system. Here is a guideline for registering on the new Early Years Portal.** [Link](#)

## Multiple Service Owners

**I own more than one Early Learning and Care and or School Age Childcare facility. How many services am I eligible to apply for?**

You are eligible to apply for all facilities you own, but must produce a report from a competent person for each separate facility. The address attached to the report will be matched against the records held on the HIVE for each facility.





To be eligible for funding, works must be identified as being required in your fire safety assessment report, which has been completed since June 2019 by a competent person who is a registered architect, building surveyor or engineer.

**The fire safety assessment must be provided with the application for funding.**

The funding under this grant is designed to support services that were unable to get a Fire Safety Certificate. If your service doesn't have a Fire Safety Certificate and you intend to apply for a grant under the 2021 Capital Programme, please ensure that you have a fire safety assessment to completed by a competent person to support your application, by early February.

The fire safety assessment may be dated at any time after 1 June 2019 - although, if material works have been carried out in your service since the fire safety assessment was obtained, you will have to provide an updated assessment.

#### Fire Safety Assessment Report

The Fire Safety Assessment report **must** include:

- The Name of your Service
- The Address of your Service
- The Name and qualifications of the competent person that completed the inspection and prepared the report.
- A description of your Childcare service.
- A ranked list of priority works and/or equipment needed in your service in order to ensure its compliance with Fire Safety Regulations and standards.

[Sample Fire Safety Assessment Link](#)

## Eligible Costs



Please refer to the list of indicative eligible items and services (Below) outlined in this guidance document before making your application. Equipment or works to ensure that facilities are meeting the minimum fire safety regulatory and quality standards in relation to:

- Fire safety fit out costs e.g. installing fire alarm systems and fire protection measures such as escape routes; lighting, fire doors, fire proofing specific walls and floors; escape stairways; windows as secondary escape option.
- Fire safety equipment e.g. smoke alarms, CO2 alarms, fire extinguishers, fire blankets.
- Fire safety maintenance and replacement of key “fire risk appliances” e.g. electrical wiring; gas boilers

Applicants will be required to select from a defined list as part of the application process. All items purchased must have a minimum projected lifespan of 12 months to be eligible.

Early Learning and Care and School Age Childcare Services in applying for the grant must:

- Obtain three quotes for each item or service to be purchased and retain copies all quotations for future inspection;
- Purchase items or services in accordance with the eligible costs;
- Complete the online application form on the EYP/HIVE system by the closing date, confirming the items purchased or to be purchased and the amount spent/cost and confirm agreement to the terms and conditions of the grant;
- Retain all quotations, invoices and receipts for 3 years from date of payment of the grant and for inspection by Pobal/DCEDIY or as requested as part of a financial return, should they be selected to make a financial return in respect of this grant.

**\*\*Please note no purchases made with CASH can be claimed under this grant.\*\***

## FAQ's

### **Are any costs ineligible?**

The following costs are not eligible for funding. The applicant must clearly demonstrate that the capital items or equipment purchased are necessary for re-opening in line with public health guidelines and guidelines for re-opening ELC and SACs.

#### **Ineligible costs**

*This is not an exhaustive list*

- Cleaning supplies and consumables e.g. sanitiser, disinfectant etc.
- Soft toys (indoor and outdoor).
- Personal Protection Equipment.
- Televisions.
- ICT equipment including tablets, PCs, Software, printers.
- General maintenance and repairs where there are no modifications.
- General painting and decorating where there are no modifications

**\*It is important to note that professional fees are not eligible to be claimed under this grant, this means any fees incurred by applicants in obtaining the Fire Risk Assessment report cannot form part of the application.**

### **What is the maximum and minimum amount I can apply for?**

The maximum grant you can apply for is €10,000 and the minimum is €1,000. Please note that all costs applied for need to be related to the issues identified in your Fire Risk Assessment Report.

### **I do not have a verified username and password for Early Years Portal (HIVE). Can I still apply?**

**Yes** if you are an open and operating Childcare service you can apply for this grant. You must have been open and operating on the January 1st. If you do not have a HIVE log in however, you must commence or complete the on-boarding (registration) of your service on the Early Years Portal-HIVE. Select "Start On-Boarding Process" on the top left hand side of the Welcome page.

**Please use this link:** [HIVE](#). When you have completed the on-boarding process, you will have a user name and password, which will allow you to access your application form for this grant.

### **Can the grant be used as a part payment or contribution towards an eligible cost?**

Part-funding is acceptable under this grant programme. If a service chooses to spend some of the grant on a more expensive piece of equipment or refurbishment and fund the balance through their own resources, this is allowed.

### **I am renting my childcare premises from a landlord can I still make an application?**

Yes, you can make an application. However, you should get written permission for any Capital works and changes to the premises from the owner of the building and keep this letter on file.

### **Do I need to have planning permission to make a grant application?**

If any of the capital works you are applying for require alterations to your premises this may have planning permission implications. For example, any changes to the front elevation of the building may require planning permission, in these cases we would advise applicants to check with their city or county council about any new planning requirements. The capital grant cannot be used to carry out works or alterations that do not have planning permission. You are required to obtain the correct planning permission documentation from your local city or county council and keep these on file.

### **Can I change my mind on an item after I have submitted my application form?**

You cannot change or amend any information on your application form once you submit it. You should only choose the items and works you intend to use the grant for. Any changes to the purchased items you indicated in your application may result in a de-committal of the grant a requirement to return the funding to Pobal.

### **What happens if I do not spend all of the grant?**

Any unspent grant after the 30<sup>th</sup> of November, 2021 must be returned to Pobal by the applicant. Please contact Pobal to make arrangements for any refunds. Applicants may also be requested to

refund any grant deemed ineligible as result of a compliance, audit or verification visit or as a result of a review of a financial return to Pobal.

### **What happens if the Early Years Capital Grant is oversubscribed?**

In the event the grant is oversubscribed, applicants are not guaranteed 100% of the grant amount you applied for. You will be informed of your total grant allocation once the appraisal process is completed.

### **What is the approval process for my grant application?**

You will be approved for a payment once you have submitted your application form online and our checks indicate that you are tax compliant and that there are no significant issues with your current contracts with DCEDIY and or Pobal. The application form is also the grant agreement (contract) for this grant. You are not required to complete any further documentation.

### **When will I receive my payment and how much will I receive?**

This year you will receive your full grant allocation in one payment, this is different from previous Capital grants where you received your grant in 2 or more tranches. The grant will be automatically paid into the bank account that you have setup on HIVE/Early Years Platform.

### **Do I Need to be registered with Tusla to make an application?**

- Existing Early Learning and Care Services (ELCs) and School Age Childcare Services (SACs) are required to be registered with Tusla in order to receive a grant agreement or grant payment on behalf of DCEDIY from Pobal.
- ELC and SAC services should seek advice and support from their City/County Childcare Committee in relation to the registration with Tusla and on the Pobal Early Years Platform.
- **ELC and SAC services must be registered with Tusla before they receive their Capital 2021 Grant payment.**

### **Do I have to take Public Procurement regulations into account?**

- All applicants must comply with public procurement guidelines.

- Information on public procurement is available from the Office of Government Procurement [www.etenders.gov.ie](http://www.etenders.gov.ie)
- Evidence of compliance with public procurement guidelines may be requested or inspected at a later date. This documentation must be retained for a minimum of 3 years, as per the terms and conditions of this grant.

### Do I need to submit quotations with my application?



**No.** Applicants are not required to attach quotations with their application.

Applicants must **retain quotations from an independent supplier for each item** that they intend to purchase with their grant

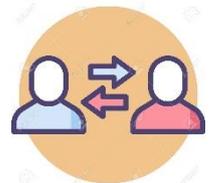
Small items of equipment which can be purchased from the one supplier, for example, small pieces of equipment, can be included on the one quotation.

Please ensure that you obtain and retain separate quotations for each cost.

### How do I ensure there is no Conflict of Interest when utilising this grant?

You must ensure that there are no “conflicts of interest” in relation to the procurement of goods and services paid for by this grant.

A conflict of interest is any form of personal interest, which may impact (or be perceived by others as impacting) upon your impartiality when selecting a supplier/contractor for goods and services. **Personal interest includes cases where a relative or another person connected to your organisation tenders or quotes to provide goods or services to your organisation.**



In addition, the Irish Charities Regulator has useful information in relation to [Managing Conflicts of Interest](#).

### How long do I have to keep documents that relate this grant?

Applicants must keep the following documents for a **minimum of 3 years**. These must be made available to for inspections and or to support an expenditure return for the grant.

- **Written evidence of your procurement process** e.g. e-mails to suppliers and quotations received in return. Make sure you have the requisite number of quotations as per public procurement guidelines and written evidence of contacting suppliers.
- All **invoices** and **receipts** from your suppliers for both goods and services must be kept.

- **Bank Statements** providing evidence of receipt of the grant and payment for goods and services.
- **Accounting records** showing your income and expenditure in relation to the Capital 2021 Grant.

**Is there any General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) I need to be aware of when applying for this grant?**



Early Learning and Care Services and School Age Childcare Services must ensure that they are fully aware and comply with their obligations and responsibilities in relation to processing personal data within their service(s).

Please refer to the Data Protection Commission for additional information in relation obligations in relation to GDPR. Here is a link to their website: [Data](#)

[Protection Commission Guidance](#)

DCEDIY is the Data Controller for personal data processed for the Early Years Capital Grant 2021 for ELC and SAC Services. The DCEDIY privacy notice can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/help/privacy-policy/>

Pobal, as a **Data Processor**, will process applications under the instructions of the DCEDIY.

We will process your information in the following ways:

- Contact details, primary authorised user and bank account information from the Pobal Early Years' Platform will be used to create the application forms and for the payment process for this grant.
- The information contained in your application form may be used for research purposes by the DCEDIY or Pobal in relation to the impact of this funding on the early years' sector.
- As part of the administration and management of this grant DCEDIY or Pobal may share the information in this application form with other Departments, Statutory Bodies or their agents.

## Terms and Condition of the Capital 2021 Grant

**Please read these in advance of commencing the application process to ensure you fully understand them and are confident that you or your board of management are in a position to accept and abide by these terms and conditions.**

**Note:** Once an application form is submitted and approved for funding, the application form **represents the contract** between DCEDIY and the applicant for this grant.

### **Terms and Conditions of Funding**

- Professional fees including the costs associated with the fire risk assessment report are not eligible for funding.
- The Childcare Service is Tusla-registered and operating as an early learning and care and or school age service prior to the 1st of January 2021.
- The capital and/or equipment costs included in this application are necessary to ensure compliance with the **Fire Risk Assessment report** included as part of this application.
- Public procurement guidelines will be adhered to when purchasing the goods and services in respect of this grant.
- All items purchased in respect of this grant will have a projected lifespan of 12 months or more. Consumables are not eligible for funding.
- The invoices and receipts used to support this grant will be for eligible costs only, in line with the grant application guidelines.
- The invoices and receipts in relation to this grant have not and will not be used in support of another claim for reimbursement from another funder or grant from DCEDIY.
- All receipts, invoices and evidence of compliance with procurement will be retained for up to 3 years following payment of the grant.
- The Childcare Service will continue to provide Early Learning and Care and or School Age Services for 3 years post receipt of this grant.
- If approved, the grant payment will be made to the bank account setup for the Early Learning and Care service on the Early Years Platform (EYP) system.
- If, for any reason, the grant, or part of the grant, is unspent it will be refunded to Pobal.
- The Childcare Service shall permit representatives and agents of the DCEDIY to attend the premises of the Childcare Service and shall permit access to the Childcare Service premises and personnel for the purposes of verification of compliance with the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

- Should expenditure be deemed ineligible, as part of a financial return, verification visit, audit or compliance check by Pobal, DCEDIY or other agent of DCEDIY, all or part of the grant will be refunded.
- Any failure of technology or disruption to internet services affecting submission of the application will be at the applicant's risk and Pobal or DCEDIY accepts no liability whatsoever if the application fails to be submitted or is rejected as a late submission.
- Where applicable, planning permission has been approved for any capital works completed with the **Fire Safety Capital Grant 2021**.
- Where applicable a lease or licence agreement for the use of the building as a Childcare Service is in place for 3 years from the date of submission of the application.
- Where applicable, the owners of the building have provided the necessary permission to carry out the capital works outlined in the application for the **Fire Safety Capital Grant 2021**.
- Applying and/or approval of the Fire Safety Capital Grant 2021 does not mitigate the need for the Childcare Service to be compliant with existing statutory building regulations including fire safety regulations.

## Useful Definitions

### **Early Learning and Care Services.**

**Note:** Early Learning and Care services, Early Years Services and Pre-Schools are used interchangeably in various regulations, guidelines and policies. The definitions for services are taken from the Child and Family Act 2013. Under this Act, **an Early Years' Service** is a service providing a pre-school service, or a school age service. A pre-school service is any pre-school, play group, day nursery, crèche, day-care or other similar service which caters for pre-schoolchildren. The Act defines a pre-school child as a child who is under six years, and who is not yet going to a recognised school.

**“Full day care service”** means an early learning and care service or pre-school offering a structured day care service for pre-school children for **more than 5 hours per day** and which may include a sessional pre-school service for pre-school children not attending the full day care service;

**“Sessional Pre-School Service”** is an Early Learning and Care Service/Pre-School offering a planned programme to children for **not more than 3.5 hours per session**. A Sessional Service can cater for children aged 0-6 years.

**“Premises”**, in relation to a pre-school service, includes a building or part of a building, and any out-offices, yard, garden or land appurtenant thereto or usually enjoyed therewith in which the service is being or is proposed to be carried on;

**“Pre-school service in a drop-in centre”** means a pre-school service offering day care to pre-school children which is used exclusively on an intermittent basis;

A **‘school age service’** means any early years’ service, play group, day nursery, crèche, day-care or other similar service which ;

- Caters for children **under the age of 15 years** enrolled in a school providing primary or post primary education.

- Provides a range of activities that are developmental, educational and recreational in manner, which take place outside of school hours, the primary purpose of which is to care for children where their parents are unavailable.
- The basis for access to which is made publicly known to the parents and guardians of the children.

### Sample Fire Safety Assessment

Below are samples/suggestions of how information might be structured in a Fire safety Assessment

#### Sample 1: Introduction

## **0.0 Introduction**

### **Description of the Building**

The Pre- School forms part of the [REDACTED] building and is located to the front elevation to the left hand side of the building. This preschool shares a common entrance with the existing main school building. The Pre-School consists of a single room only within the existing school building. This room is accessed directly off the common entrance lobby/corridors which allow access to the remainder of the existing school building and classrooms. The Pre-School room discharges directly into this entrance lobby/corridor where alternative means of escape are provided either by way of the main entrance located directly adjacent to the room or by way of existing means of escape located directly off the common corridor of the main circulation route. All final exits lead directly to the external of the building. The sanitary facilities within the main building are classed as common and are used by pupils of the main school building and also by children in the Pre-school room.

We are not aware if there are any fire safety certificate applications relevant to the building/site and therefore compliance will be determined with the publication 'Fire Safety in Pre-Schools'.

### **Personnel/Children Details**

No. of Children	- 19
No. Staff	- 2

This report relates to the Pre-School only but a walk of the escape route through the existing school was undertaken to assess the facilities provided, as Pre-School occupants will use the sanitary facilities located within the existing school building and will also escape via the main entrance of the existing school building. Where parts of the structure were inaccessible or unexposed, no opinion can

## Sample 2: Prioritization of Works

### Prioritization of Works

The recommended improvement works in this audit are categorized as 1, 2 & 3 according to their degree of contribution to improvement in the level of fire safety achieved with Category 1 works having the highest priority

If planning a phased programme of works, it is recommended that the following priority ratings be followed, as far as is practicable, in the scheduling of the works

Priority Rating	Description	Time Frame
1	Urgent works necessary to remedy main fire safety issues	0-8 Weeks
2	Necessary works to comply with current standards and/or good practice	0-16 Weeks
3	Other works required to improve safety	0-24 Weeks

### The Inspection:

#### Areas inspected:

- Pre-School Classroom and the escape route through the existing school building as far as and including the existing large sanitary facilities block and also fire detection and alarm coverage in classrooms adjacent to this circulation/escape route (i.e. Classrooms 17-20).

### Inspected By:

## Sample 3: Observations & Recommendations

	Issue	Observations and recommendations
<b>1.0 Fire Detection and Alarm System</b>		
<b>3</b>	IS 3218 2013 + A1 2019	From the publication 'Fire Safety in Pre-Schools - A Guide to Fire Safety in Premises used for Pre-Schools Services' a minimum L2/L3 category fire detection and alarm system is to be installed in the Pre-School building to comply with IS 3218. The system in the Pre-School is interlinked with the main school so in the event of activation in any part of the building all personnel will be aware through the building.

2.0 Emergency Escape Lighting & Exit Signage		
	Issue	Observations and recommendations
1	IS 3217 2013 + A1 2017	This is a Pre-School and its opening hours are 9.00am to 12.30pm. From Section 3.6.2 of 'Fire Safety in Pre-Schools - A Guide to Fire Safety in Premises used for Pre-Schools Services' it states that where pre-school services are provided during the hours of darkness suitable emergency

9.0 Conclusions		
	Conclusions	<p>The report above sets out the issues identified on site in terms of fire safety from our visual inspection of the Holy Child Pre-School section within the building and escape routes from this area.</p> <p>The main issues identified are outlined as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire Detection and Alarm System</li> <li>• Emergency Lighting System</li> <li>• Fire Rated Walls/Floors &amp; Fire Doors</li> <li>• Means of Escape</li> <li>• Fire Extinguishers</li> </ul>

### Contact Details

If you require any further clarifications or information please contact the Early Years Provider Centre (EYPC).

Please Submit queries via a **HIVE Service Request** functionality and enter the text "ELC Capital Grant query" in the summary field.

Alternatively, you can contact EYPC via telephone on: 01 511 7222

Open Hours: 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday

