

Childminding Newsletter

Winter 2022

The National Action Plan for Childminding (NAPC)

A message from the Minister



Welcome to a special Christmas edition of our Childminding Newsletter, bringing you up to date on the implementation of the National Action Plan for Childminding.

Childminders are unique and diverse settings offering flexible and adaptable early learning and childcare in a home from home setting. I know that you make a huge, positive difference in the lives of many young children in Ireland. The families who choose you, childminders, to care for their children, do so because they value what you do.

As we work on developing plans for new supports and regulations for childminders, I am delighted that childminders themselves have been actively involved on all our working groups, alongside other agencies and organisations that work with and support childminders. I am keen to bring childminders into the National Childcare Scheme and other public supports as soon as possible, but only when we have developed regulations and supports that are right for childminders and that recognise the unique features of the work that you do.

May I thank you for the important work you do every day, providing early learning and childcare for thousands of children across Ireland. And may I take this opportunity to wish you, your families and the children and families you work with a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

The National Action Plan for Childminding is led by a Steering Group supported by four Advisory Groups. There are childminders on each of the groups, along with representatives of Tusla, Childminding Ireland, other relevant agencies, and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

The four Advisory Groups are tasked with supporting:

Consultation & Communication

We are talking with childminders and parents about future changes.



Regulation & Inspection

We are advising on new regulations for all paid childminders.



Funding & Finance

We are developing national funding & financial supports for childminders.



Training & Supports

We are creating new free training just for childminders.



Welcome to the Christmas newsletter! This edition will focus on the progress of the NAPC to date.

As you are aware, the Action Plan sets out a pathway towards regulation, support and subsidies, for all paid, non-relative childminders, who care for small mixed age groups of children in the childminders' own homes. The plan will run from 2021 to 2028.

The aim of the Action Plan is to support childminders in their work providing high quality childcare by:

- Listening to the opinions and views of childminders & parents,
- Designing childminding specific regulations suited to the home,
- Developing financial supports for childminders.
- Creating training tailored for childminding,

The Action Plan will also benefit parents with children in a childminding home, by giving them access to the National Childcare Scheme in the future. This will make childminding more affordable and accessible.



**National Action Plan
for Childminding**
2021-2028

Updates from Advisory Groups

Stakeholder Engagement, Consultation & Communication:

- A tender for the stakeholder engagement, consultation & communication strategy has been prepared.

Regulation & Inspection:

- This group is advising on the content of childminding specific regulations, ensuring these are appropriate and proportionate to the home environment.

Funding & Financial Supports:

- The Childminding Development Grant (CMDG) has been reviewed and updated. The revised CMDG will be available early in 2023.

Training & Supports:

- A new free training programme will be available in 2023 in different formats including blended and on-line.

Childminder Consultations

Consultation with childminders and stakeholders is a very important part of the National Action Plan for Childminding (NAPC). In October 2022, there were 131 childminders who responded to our call to get involved by completing the

Expression of Interest Survey. You were asked to choose the type of consultation you were most interested in: responding to surveys was the most popular choice by far, but many of you are also interested in workshops, pilots and focus groups.

We consulted with eight childminders about the new **training programme** on the 5th November in the Ashling Hotel, Dublin. An overview of the proposed content was presented for discussion and feedback. In late November, a further stakeholder consultation took place in the DCEDIY with 13 in attendance from 11 organisations. Your insights provided a very valuable contribution to the development of the programme.

We also held three consultations with childminders and stakeholders in relation to **Funding & Financial Supports**. In the first two, we consulted with 38 childminders and stakeholders about the Childminder Development Grant (CMDG) which has led to a reform of the grant for 2023. In the third consultation, we consulted with 12 of you around the costs associated with setting up and running a childminding business.

We are looking forward to meeting you all again and hearing more of what you have to say in 2023.

Thank you!
Wishing you and yours a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year!
Nollaig Shona Daoibh go léir!

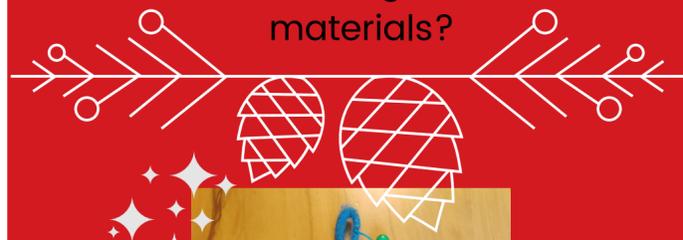


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Christmas craft ideas using natural materials

Why not bring the children on a nature walk to gather some materials?



Draftwood Christmas tree using pebbles, mini pinecones and beads



Pinecone reindeer using pipecleaners for antlers and a big fluffy pom-pom for its nose!



A rag Christmas tree using thin strips of fabric tied to a piece of driftwood



National Action Plan for Childminding 2021-2028