

Access and Inclusion Profile

Guidance Notes

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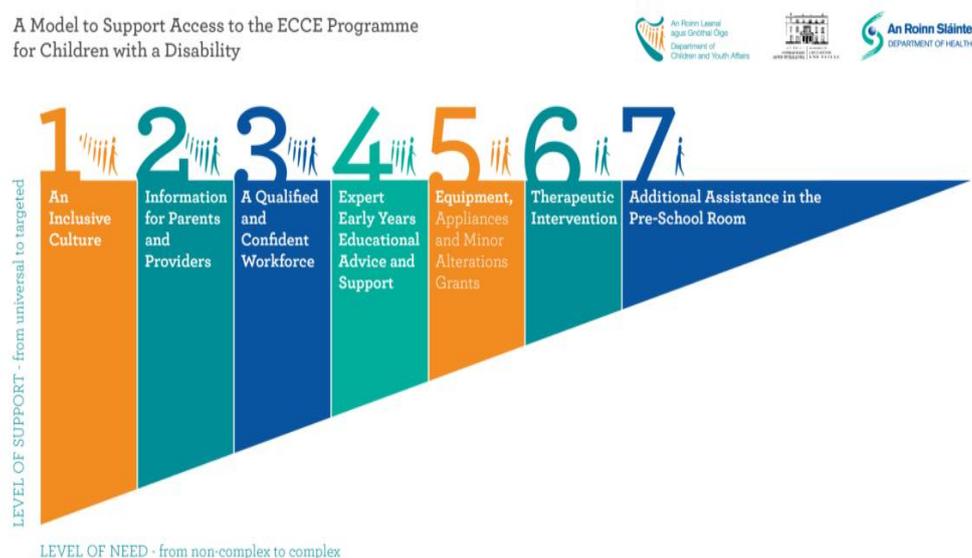
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Introduction

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist pre-school managers to complete the Better Start Access and Inclusion Profile in conjunction with the child's parents/ carers/ guardians.

Better Start was established in 2014 to bring an integrated national approach to developing quality in Early Years Education and Care for children aged from birth to six years in Ireland. It provides specialist on-site mentoring service.

Better Start (Access and Inclusion) supports children with a disability to access and participate in pre-schools. It involves 7 levels of support as follows:



1. **An inclusive culture** in pre-schools
2. **Information for parents and providers** through the DCYA website
3. **A qualified and confident pre-school workforce**
4. **Expert Early Years Educational Advice and Support** through the Early Years Specialists
5. **Equipment, Appliances and Minor Alterations grant**
6. **Therapeutic Intervention** such as psychology, occupational therapy
7. **Additional Assistance in the Pre-school Room** through accessing additional capitation

The Access and Inclusion Profile must be completed by the pre-school manager or key worker in conjunction with the parents/ carers/ guardians of the child with a disability so that the pre-school can apply for support under Levels 4 to 7. The Access and Inclusion Profile takes a strengths-based approach and focuses on the child's abilities as well as needs. All of the information provided will support the identification of the appropriate level of support required. Other sources of information may include a visit to the pre-school by a Better Start Early Years Specialist and a meeting of Better Start Early Years Specialist, Pre-school manager and parents/ carers/ guardians

What is the purpose of this Guidance document?

This document provides guidelines on how the Access and Inclusion Profile should be completed under the following headings:

1. Before completing the Access and Inclusion Profile
2. How to complete the Access and Inclusion Profile
3. Terminology included within the Access and Inclusion Profile
4. Submission of Access and Inclusion Profile
5. Queries

Who is the intended audience?

The information contained in this document is intended for pre-schools and parents/ carers/ guardians applying for support under Better Start (Access and Inclusion). Pobal staff providing online and telephone support, Better Start (Access and Inclusion) Coordinators and Early Years Specialists should be aware of the contents of the document. The responsibility rests with them to ensure that the information in the guidelines is clearly communicated so that the guidelines are followed.

Before completing the Access and Inclusion Profile

To begin the process of completing the form, the pre-school manager should contact the parents/ carers/ guardians of the child and explain the following:

1. In order for the pre-school to access support from Better Start, an on-line form will need to be completed by the pre-school and the parents/ carers/ guardians together.
2. Parental consent to share information about their child will is required. A consent form is included in the Access and Inclusion Profile. It is sufficient for one parent/ carer/ guardian to sign consent.
3. The parents/ carers/ guardians will need to complete the form online with you.
4. It should take approximately 50-60 minutes to complete the form.
5. Better Start support is not led by diagnosis. However, if the child has had an assessment or a diagnosis, parents/ carers/ guardians may provide the information so that it can be included in the Access and Inclusion Profile. If the child has had an Assessment of Need, the parents/ carers/ guardians may bring a copy of the Assessment of Need Summary Report which will be scanned with the form.
6. Parents/ carers/ guardians can also bring the contact details of any health professionals involved with the child i.e. GP/family doctor, Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist, Physiotherapist, Psychologist, Paediatrician. It would also be helpful to bring any Health Assessment Reports to support the application.

Agree a date and time when the parents/ carers/ guardians will visit the pre-school to complete the form with the pre-school manager.

Completing the Access and Inclusion Profile

When completing the Access and inclusion Profile, the parents/ carers/ guardians will need to have the necessary documentation and information (see 5. and 6. above).

Go to the Pobal website link and open the Access and Inclusion form.

Please ensure to read the overview section of the Access and Inclusion Profile with the parents/ carers/ guardians. This section provides background information on Better Start, the purpose of the Access and Inclusion Profile and information relating to data protection.

Terminology included in the Access and Inclusion Profile

This section explains the terminology used within the Access and Inclusion Profile.

Access refers to the child's ability to attend pre-school. Supporting access includes removing barriers and catering for the individual needs of the child.

Inclusion refers to the child's ability to participate as fully and actively as possible in the pre-school programmes. Where necessary, appropriate supports will be provided to ensure full and active participation.

Creating inclusive environments will enable **all** children including those with disabilities to participate and learn within the pre-school setting.

The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme is the free pre-school year provided to all eligible children, currently in the age range 3 years and 2 months to 4 years and 7 months and from September 2016, 3 years to 5 years and 6 months, before they commence primary school. The upper age limit may be extended for children with disability.

Pre-school settings strengths and challenges – Better Start takes a strengths-based approach by supporting the child’s existing abilities and the pre-school staff’s existing skills while supporting other areas for development.

Expert educational advice and support will be provided to schools by Better Start (Access and Inclusion) Early Years Specialists.

Additional support needed to enable the child to fully participate could take the form of advice, therapeutic intervention or additional assistance in the pre-school room.

Pre-school manager is the person in charge of the pre-school who completes the Access and Inclusion form with the parents/ carers/ guardians.

Key worker has special responsibility for a particular child. The keyworker works with the child and his/her parents/ carers/ guardians to ensure the child’s care and educational needs are met.

Early Intervention team is for children, aged 0-6 years, and their families who have complex developmental needs. The team comprises of an Occupational Therapist, Clinical Psychologist, Physiotherapist, Social Worker and Speech and Language Therapist. A referral to the Early Intervention Team can be made by your GP, physiotherapist, speech therapist, public health nurse, occupational therapist, social worker, psychologist or any other health care professional.

G.P. is the child’s family doctor.

Pediatrician is a medical doctor who specialises in children and their illnesses.

Social work is where the family is being supported by work in four main areas; Child Protection, Child Placement, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Family Support. **Social workers** may work with families and individuals who are experiencing a variety of problems, including emotional, social, psychiatric and behavioural.

Individual Access and Inclusion plan is a written document prepared for a child with specific social participation, inclusion and/or special educational need. The plan uses information gathered through the Access and Inclusion Profile to identify short-term and medium-term goals for the child. These goals are agreed by parents/ carers/ guardians, pre-school and other professionals. The plan outlines the learning activities, resources and supports necessary to achieve those goals.

Early Intervention programmes Early Intervention can have life-long positive effects on outcomes for children and can be less expensive and more effective than later intervention, preventing hardship and suffering. Supporting practice in pre-schools and developing expertise contributes to this early intervention and to positive outcomes for the child.

The **child’s strengths** refers to the child’s abilities and skills.

The **child’s interests** refers to activities or areas that the child enjoys.

Aistear is the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework in Ireland. Aistear is the Irish word for journey.

Freedom of Information Act 2014 obliges government departments, the Health Service Executive (HSE), local authorities and a range of other public bodies to publish information on their activities and to make the information they hold, including personal information, available to citizens.

The Freedom of Information Act 2014 provides the following statutory rights:

- A legal right for each person to access information held by a body to which FOI legislation applies
- A legal right for each person to have official information relating to himself/herself amended where it is incomplete, incorrect or misleading
- A legal right to obtain reasons for decisions affecting himself/herself.

Data Protection Acts When you give your personal details to an organization or individual, they have a duty to keep these details private and safe. This process is known as data protection. Your rights are protected under Data Protection Acts 1998 and 2003

Under this act you have a right to access the records held by many public bodies including Government Departments, the HSE and Local Authorities, obtain and process personal data fairly;

- keep it only for one or more specified and explicit lawful purposes;
- process it only in ways compatible with the purposes for which it was given initially;
- keep personal data safe and secure;
- keep data accurate, complete and up-to-date;
- ensure that it is adequate, relevant and not excessive;
- retain it no longer than is necessary for the specified purpose or purposes; and,
- provide a copy of his/her personal data to any individual, on request.

Data refers to any information or facts that are usually stored on a computer or on paper

Grantee refers to the person or organisation (pre-school) who is given a grant.

Secure manner means that hard copies are held in locked cabinets. On line files are encrypted and password protected and only accessed by authorised personnel. They are held for two years from the end of contact with the service. Data related to unsuccessful applications will be held for X period of time.

Informed Consent

Consent is the giving of permission or agreement for an intervention, receipt or use of a service or participation in research following a process of communication about the proposed intervention (National Consent Policy, 2014).

It is a basic rule at common law that consent must be obtained for medical examination, treatment, service or investigation. This is well established in Irish case law and ethical standards. The

requirement for consent is also recognised in international and European human rights law and under the Irish Constitution.

Informed consent is when the child's parents/ carers/ guardians has been fully informed about the action which they are giving consent.

Consent must be obtained from the parents/ carers/ guardians before completing this profile. Personal information, contact details, reports on the child, details of observations and details of relevant health professionals are gathered to support the profile and may be shared with relevant professionals involved in the profile and potential provision of services for the child. This consent is voluntary and can be withdrawn by the parents/ carers/ guardians at any time.

The consent form requires the name and signatures of *at least one* parents/ carers/ guardians and the date it was signed. The consent form will need to be printed, signed and submitted with the profile through PIP.

Completing the Access and Inclusion Profile

This profile is used to describe the child's abilities through 6 areas. They reflect the key areas of learning and development required for the participation and engagement of the child in the pre-school setting.

The profile begins by asking for details relating to the child and the application. It is important that all sections of the profile are fully completed in order to gather sufficient information about the child.

The Access and Inclusion Profile aims to capture information about the child's functional abilities in the following areas:

1. Physical

Describes the child's physical abilities under Gross Motor/Spatial Awareness, Fine Motor, Self Help Skills and Sensory Experiences.

2. Communication

Describes the child's communication abilities under Receptive Communication, Expressive Communication and information on any alternative communication systems used.

3. Social Skills

Describes the child's general social skills

4. Behaviour

Describes the child's behavior during a three hour pre-school session.

5. Health

Describes the child's health and additional care needs under Medical Healthcare Needs, Visual and Hearing Needs, and information on health services recommended and/or provided where the child has had an assessment carried out by a health professional.

Children with additional health care needs are defined as those who "have or are at increased risk of having a chronic physical, developmental, behavioural, or emotional condition and who

also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally” (Mc Pherson M, et al, Paediatrics, 1998).

For each section you will be able to record only one response under Never, Occasionally, Regularly and Frequently. *If you are unsure of any of the answers please try and answer with what you think most closely describes the child’s abilities and needs.*

We would encourage you to provide any additional information in the text box provided. In completing this section, please insert any information which would impact on or support the staff including your child in the pre-school. Think about arrivals/departures, the outdoors, transitions from one activity to another, mobility, feeding and whether or not the child is receiving funding or support from another agency.

6. Information about the pre-school setting

This section aims to gather information about the pre-school setting, specifically in relation to the strengths and needs of the pre-school setting and the key issues on which they would welcome support from the early years specialists at level 4.

Completion of the Access and Inclusion Profile will require joint input from the p parents/ carers/ guardians and the pre-school in order to ensure all sections are completed as accurately as possible.

Submission of Access and Inclusion Profile

When the Access and Inclusion Profile is completed it should be submitted by pressing the Submit button. If you are unable to complete the Profile in one sitting, a draft can be saved by clicking on the Save button. Pre-school managers and parents/ carers/ guardians have a duty of care to ensure that accurate detailed and relevant information is provided. This will also avoid unnecessary delay in processing the Access and Inclusion Profile.

Timeline: Following a review of the information provided a member of the Better Start Access and Inclusion team will contact the pre-school within 4-6 weeks of submission.

What to do if you have any queries

If you or the parents/ carers/ guardians have queries in relation to completing the Access and Inclusion Profile document, please contact onlinesupport@pobal.ie or 01 5117222 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday.