

Budget 2018 changes in relation to the ECCE programme

The following is a summary of changes to the ECCE programme with effect from September 2018:

- All eligible children will receive two full programme years
- Age of eligibility reduced from 3 years to 2 years and 8 months
- Upper age limit remains 5 years and 6 months
- Number of enrolment points changed from three to one in September
- Standard capitation increased to €69
- Higher capitation increased to €80.25

The new measures will fully benefit those born from 2015 onwards whilst those born previous to that will continue to benefit from the expanded programme announced in Budget 2016.

The following table sets out relevant eligibility dates by year of birth:

Table 1: Eligibility for ECCE by month of birth and of enrolment in pre-school		
Birth date between	Eligible Enrolment date(s)	ECCE end date
1 st January 2014 – 31 st March 2014	1 st April 2017, 1 st September 2017 + 1 st September 2018*	June 2019
1 st April 2014 - 31 st August 2014	1 st September 2017 + 1 st September 2018*	June 2019
1 st September 2014 – 31 st December 2014	1 st January 2018 + 1 st September 2018*	June 2019
1 st January 2015 - 31 st March 2015	1 st April 2018, 1 st September 2018 + 1 st September 2019	June 2020
1 st April 2015 – 31 st December 2015	1 st September 2018 + 1 st September 2019	June 2020
1 st January 2016 – 31 st December 2016	1 st September 2019 + 1 st September 2020	June 2021
1 st January 2017 – 31 st December 2017	1 st September 2020 + 1 st September 2021	June 2022
1 st January 2018 – 31 st December 2018	1 st September 2021 + 1 st September 2022	June 2023
1 st January 2019 – 31 st December 2019	1 st September 2022 + 1 st September 2023	June 2024

* Children born between 1st January and 31st December 2014 will continue to be eligible for free pre-school under the terms of the ECCE expansion as announced in Budget 2016. ECCE eligibility criteria as announced under Budget 2018 will come into effect with effect from 1st September 2018.