



Purpose	National Action Plan for Childminding – Steering Group – Meeting 1
Date	14 <sup>th</sup> September 2021
Venue	Webex
	<b>Minutes</b>
Attendance	<b>In attendance:</b> Marc Bailie (Department of Health, Northern Ireland), Sharon Boles (DCEDIY), Saoirse Brady (Children’s Rights Alliance), Anne-Marie Brooks (Chair, DCEDIY), Clare Downey (National Parents Council Primary), Michelle Grant (Childminding Development Officer, Westmeath County Childcare Committee), Graeme McAlister (Scottish Childminding Association), Fiona McDonnell (Tusla EY Inspectorate), Martina McGovern (Better Start), Sinéad Moran (Childminder), Bernadette Orbinski Burke (Childminding Ireland), Treasa Quigley (Childcare Committees Ireland), Becky Sullivan Lynch (Childminder), Toby Wolfe (DCEDIY).  <b>Secretariat:</b> Amy O’Riordan (DCEDIY)  <b>Also attending:</b> Myles O’Reilly (Communications Unit, DCEDIY)

### **Welcome and introductions**

The Chair welcomed all members of the Steering Group and each member introduced themselves and shared what they hope to contribute to the Group.

### **Adoption of Steering Group Terms of Reference**

The draft Terms of Reference were discussed. It was agreed that meetings will be held on a quarterly basis, but in the event of a requirement to make a decision between meetings, this can be made via email agreement provided to the secretariat without the requirement for a meeting to take place.

Members agreed that their names can be included in the Terms of Reference.

**Actions:** Narrative to be added to the Terms of Reference to explain out-of-meeting decision process, including that all Steering Group members will be circulated documentation in such cases.

The Terms of Reference is to be updated to include members’ names.



### **Overview of the NAPC and related policy developments**

A presentation was delivered by DCEDIY providing an introductory overview of the National Action Plan for Childminding (NAPC), and the work carried out which informed its development.

The NAPC sets out a phased approach towards regulation, support and subsidies for all paid, non-relative childminders, including a preparatory phase of 2-3 years, transition phase of 3-5 years and full implementation to commence by 2028. It was confirmed that a review of regulations will take place by 2028, in advance of completion of the NAPC.

An overview was also given of related policy developments underway, including the development of a new funding model for early learning and care and school-age childcare, the Workforce Development Plan, and the Review of the Operating Model.

**Actions:** The presentations made at the meeting will be circulated to Steering Group members.

An update on related policy developments will be a standard agenda item to review how they may interlink with the work on the NAPC.

### **Establishment of initial Advisory Groups (training; communications), and Terms of Reference for Advisory Groups**

Over the course of Phase 1 of the NAPC, four Advisory Groups will be established to support the work of the Steering Group in relation to:

- Regulation and inspection
- Training and support
- Funding and financial support
- Stakeholder engagement, consultation and communication

It was proposed that two of the advisory group (on stakeholder engagement, consultation and communication and on training and support) be established shortly, with the others to be established in the coming months. A number of initial suggestions were made for potential participants in the Advisory Groups, and Steering Group members were invited to email DCEDIY with further suggestions. It was noted that Steering Group members themselves could participate.

The importance of ensuring meetings are at times and formats that facilitate childminders' attendance was noted.

**Actions:** It was agreed that the Advisory Groups for training and support, and consultation and communication will be established quickly, and those for regulation and inspection, and funding and financial support, will be initiated in the coming months.



Narrative to be added to all Terms of Reference for Advisory Groups to make clear that the stakeholder engagement, consultation and communication strategy to be developed will inform stakeholder engagement, consultation and communication across all areas of NAPC implementation, including the work of the other Advisory Groups. Revised Terms of Reference for both Advisory Groups will be circulated by email.

### **Initial communications actions – update on NAPC launch and proposal for next action**

A presentation was delivered by DCEDIY Communications Unit on the progress to date of the NAPC launch activities and a proposed initial awareness-raising action.

Views on the commencement of an initial awareness raising campaign in October/November or Q1 of 2022 were shared. It was decided that due to a number of factors such as the timing of the upcoming budget, ongoing COVID 19 challenges, and the benefit of focusing communications on a new development or call to action, the proposed initial campaign should not go ahead during 2021. It was suggested that smaller steps might be taken in the interim, but that it was important for clear messaging. It was agreed that further communications actions will be considered by the Advisory Group.

It was agreed that separate but linked campaigns are needed for childminders and parents, with different ways to target these groups.

**Action:** The Advisory Group, to be convened in the next few weeks, will consider this.

### **Schedule of future meetings**

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> December at 4-6pm.

**Action:** It was agreed the Steering Group will meet quarterly, and a meeting schedule for the year 2022 will be developed ahead of the next meeting.

### **AOB**

It was asked whether alternates can attend meetings if a member is unavailable. It was noted that this will be at the discretion of the Chair.