



Purpose	National Action Plan for Childminding – Steering Group – Meeting 4
Date	9 th March 2022
Venue	WebEx
	Minutes
Attendance	In attendance: Sharon Boles (DCEDIY), Saoirse Brady (Children’s Rights Alliance), Anne-Marie Brooks (Chair, DCEDIY), Michelle Grant (Childminding Development Officer), Graeme McAlister (Scottish Childminding Association), Fiona McDonnell (Tusla EY Inspectorate), Martina McGovern (Better Start), Sinéad Moran (Childminder), Bernadette Orbinski Burke (Childminding Ireland), Karen O’Sullivan (CCI), Becky Sullivan Lynch (Childminder), Toby Wolfe (DCEDIY). Invited speaker: Treasa Quigley (CCC Childminding Lead), Rachael Ryan (Childminding Development Officer) Secretariat: Amy O’Riordan (DCEDIY) Apologies: Marc Bailie (Department of Health, Northern Ireland), Clare Downey (National Parents Council Primary)

1. Minutes/Matters Arising

The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

It was noted that TQ, as CCC Childminding Lead, will attend meetings to provide an update on the work undertaken in relation to the NAPC as a standing agenda item.

SB and TQ are meeting with the CCCs regarding national consistency of presentation of voluntarily notified childminders on CCC websites.

2. Training & Supports Advisory Group recommendations post feedback from Steering Group

RR presented the Training and Supports Advisory Group’s recommendations for amendments to the Role Profile and Features of Foundation Training documents, in light of the Steering Group’s feedback. The revised documents from the Advisory Group had been circulated to the Steering Group in advance of the meeting. It was noted that there had been extensive discussion in the Training and Supports Advisory Group. It was also noted that the documents are not intended for publication, but are intended to inform the further development of the childminder-specific training programme.



The Steering Group welcomed the amendments that had been made, and provisionally agreed the documents, subject to a small number of final edits.

Action: Following final edits, the updated documents will be re-circulated to the Training and Supports Advisory Group by email for review. Following review by the Advisory Group, finalised versions of the documents will then be circulated to the Steering Group for final approval by email.

3. NAPC updates

○ National Childminding Coordinator

SB presented a draft progress template to monitor the status of the actions to be carried out in relation to the NAPC. An update on Phase 1 actions was also presented, using the draft template. The Steering Group agreed to use of the monitoring template, and agreed that updates using the template would be circulated to the Steering Group on a quarterly basis.

It was proposed that draft Terms of Reference for the two further Advisory Groups would be circulated by email for review in advance of the next Steering Group meeting. The Steering Group agreed to the proposal. It was suggested that both Tusla-registered and non-registered childminders should be included on the two Advisory Groups.

Actions: The progress report will be provided on a quarterly basis.

The draft Terms of Reference for the Funding and Financial Supports Advisory Group and the Regulation and Inspection Advisory Group will be circulated to the Steering Group for review by email.

○ CCC Lead, CMDO updates

TQ presented an update on the work of CMDOs. She noted that a flexible work plan has been developed which will allow CMDOs to respond to actions arising from the work of the Advisory Groups.

The CMDOs have developed resources to engage with childminders who have not previously engaged before, including flyers and social media resources. These have proved beneficial, generating queries from both childminders and parents. Work is also underway to issue newsletters through different forums. It was noted that the provision of analytics would be useful to monitor data.

There has been engagement by CMDOs with Healthy Ireland and Childminding Little Libraries, which recently launched. Flyers will be distributed on a national level through Childminding Ireland and CCCs.

Action: An update from the CCC Lead will be a standing agenda item going forward.



4. Update on related policy developments

An overview of related policy developments was given by DCEDIY, noting that:

- Nurturing Skills, the Workforce Plan for ELC and SAC, was published in December 2021, and a monitoring committee will be established shortly.
- the new Learner Fund replacement is currently being developed, in line with commitments in Nurturing Skills.
- the new Core Funding stream will be introduced by September.
- the Review of the Operating Model is nearing finalisation and will be brought to Government for consideration.

5. Childminding Scotland presentation

GMCA delivered a presentation regarding the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Audit and a workforce update.

It was noted that childminders are regulated in Scotland, and an ELC national policy for childminders has been developed by the Scottish Government.

Data published on 8th March 2022 indicates that 24% of childminders are over the age of 55, and some childminders in this cohort may be reluctant to invest in qualifications if they will only be in a position to practise for another few years.

The advertising campaign used to recruit staff into local authority-run services had an unintended consequence and destabilising effect on the sector by drawing some experienced staff away from childminding and private centre-based services. Research, including a survey, was carried out over summer of 2021 which will be used to inform a future recruitment campaign.

It was noted that the number of registered childminders has declined significantly over the last 5 years. Childminders report administrative requirements as a major challenge, as well as challenges created by facing multiple inspections (with two national inspectorates and local inspections also).

Action: The presentation delivered at the meeting will be circulated to Steering Group members.

6. AOB

The next Steering Group meeting will be held on 8th June.