



Donegal County Childcare Committee Ltd. (DCCC) is a local government-supported agency that works for the development, sustainability and advancement of high quality early childhood care and education in County Donegal.

DCCC mission statements

Proactively working in partnership and effecting positive change with our partners, providers and key stakeholders and implementing the National Childcare Investment Programme on behalf of the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs at local level in County Donegal.

Working in partnership to create positive outcomes for children and families in County Donegal

DCCC has successfully secured €320,000 for an innovative 3-year professional development project under the National Early Years Access Initiative. DCCC is the lead partner in a consortium project made up of representatives from a variety of local agencies with an interest in early childhood care and education to develop a new initiative called the Professional Pedagogy Project. The Professional Pedagogy Project is one of only 11 demonstration projects nationally to be funded under a newly developed programme specifically devised for the advancement of early childhood care and education from 2011-2014.

The National Early Years Access Initiative

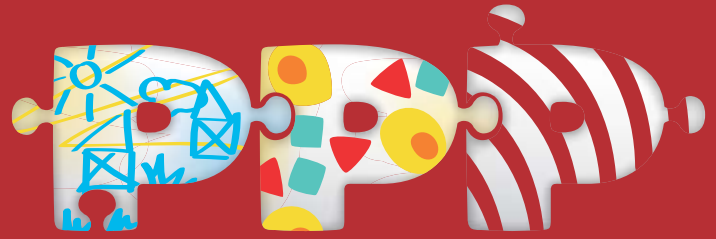
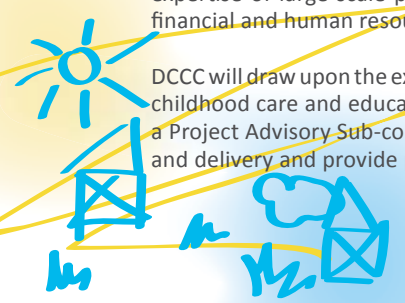
The National Early Years Access Initiative (NEYAI) is a collaborative partnership between The Atlantic Philanthropies, The Mount Street Club Trustees, The Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, the Early Years Education Policy Unit, Dept of Education and Skills and Pobal. This tailored initiative will fund 11 projects nationally that collectively have the capacity to demonstrate innovative inter-agency responses to the provision of early childhood care, education and development; inform a community-based model to underpin the local delivery of joined up services to children and families; influence early years' mainstream practice and provision and contribute to the ongoing development of early years' policy.

Who are the Donegal Consortium Partners?

As the key agency for early childhood care and education in County Donegal, the overall management of the PPP will draw upon DCCC's existing management structures and expertise of large scale project management. DCCC's role will include the strategic, financial and human resource management of the PPP.

DCCC will draw upon the expertise of local and regional agencies with an interest in early childhood care and education as Consortium Partners. Through their participation on a Project Advisory Sub-committee, partners will guide and inform the project content and delivery and provide progress updates to their respective agencies.

PPP Partners include:
Donegal County Childcare Committee Ltd
Donegal VEC
HSE West
Inishowen Development Partnership
Donegal County Council
FAS Training Services
Childrens Services Committee Donegal



At a time of budget cuts and an uncertain future for funded programmes, this is a wonderful testament to the work and capacity of DCCC as a lead organisation. This presents the Donegal early childhood sector as a whole with a wonderful opportunity to develop and implement an innovative project that has the potential to influence policy and be mainstreamed on a National basis.

The success of this project will be demonstrated by the prolonged improvements to the standard and quality of pedagogical practice in participating early childhood services and through the improvement of parents' skills and support. Overall success will be realised through to enabling better outcomes for children.

The increased funding from the NEYAI will enable DCCC to provide a complete package of supports tailored to suit local need and delivered by a specialist team dedicated to this purpose. The two full-time and one part-time posts created to deliver the PPP will enable a strategic, consistent approach to accomplishing a valid enrichment of early childhood care and education practice.

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Chairperson of DCCC

Ann Mc Ateer,
Coordinator of Childrens Services
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D.C.C.C.

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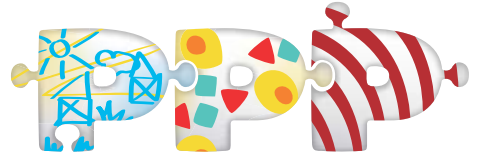


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Donegal County Childcare Committee Ltd.
Coiste Cúram Páistí Chontae Dhún na nGall Teo



professional
pedagogy
project

design: www.bluesplat.co.uk

What is the Professional Pedagogy Project?

The **Professional Pedagogy Project (PPP)** is a framework of professional development and practical supports encompassing a training programme and a variety of follow-on supports aimed at enabling early childhood service providers to make steady, quantifiable changes and improvements to their practice. The PPP will provide an in-depth focus on the areas of **Early Childhood Play and Curriculum, Planning and Reflective Practice, Assessment for Learning and Transitions**.

The PPP aims to enhance learning outcomes for young children through the implementation of a range of practical initiatives with the objective of enhancing the quality of early childhood service provision through the professional development and up-skilling of the early childhood workforce and by providing information and practical supports to parents. The PPP aspires to enable early childhood service providers and their staff to recognise, value and engage with legislative and practice frameworks in their day to day work enabling them to take a strategic, consistent approach to the enhancement of quality early childhood and education provision.

Who are the PPP target groups?

The PPP will target a cross-representation of early childhood service staff and children in County Donegal as a primary target group. The project will be delivered to early childhood services in 4 accessible locations across the county over the 3-year period (approximately 128 early childhood educators). The secondary target group is parents of children attending the participating early childhood services (approximately 448 parents). The rationale behind a cross-representation of services/families is due to the fact that the county as a whole is highly disadvantaged and it is not necessary to prioritise any one location over another.

What is involved in the PPP?

The PPP consists of training and a variety of follow-on support as follows:

- 1. Training:** Each area of the Professional Pedagogy training programme (*i.e. Play and Curriculum, Planning and Reflective Practice, Assessment, Transitions*) will be delivered in a three week block consisting of a three hour session once per week for 12 weeks.
- 2. Mentoring and Support:** Once the early childhood service has completed week three of the programme, on-site mentoring and implementation support visits will commence. On-site visits will take place on a monthly basis as a minimum.
- 3. Cluster Sessions:** Following the delivery of the programme, participants will be requested to put forward topics for follow up bi-monthly cluster sessions to help move practice forward.
- 4. Information Sessions for Parents:** Information sessions will be held following the delivery of each 12 week programme. Parents of children in each participating early childhood service will be invited to participate.
- 5. Discussion Forum:** A discussion forum will be established on the DCCC website to enable PPP educators/parents to share ideas, generate queries and generally have access to peer support.



What makes the PPP innovative and different?

The PPP is innovative both in its content and delivery style.

- The PPP aims to support the development of the 'whole child' with early interventions targeted at the early childhood service, educators and parents.
- The PPP will be grounded in Ireland's practice and legislative frameworks *Siolta: the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education*, *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework and the Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations 2006*. The respective frameworks will inform the underpinning philosophy, delivery and practical application of the programme.
- All training and follow-on support will be provided on a flexible basis to meet the needs and circumstances of the participating early childhood services as far as possible. For example, training will be offered inside and outside service hours, on a full day or evening session basis.
- The PPP does not solely depend on the success of an isolated training programme. The PPP offers continuous follow-on support and information to participants long after the initial training has taken place.
- The PPP will be targeted at whole staff teams as opposed to individual educators within a team. This will enable consistency of practice and approach across the early childhood service promoting best outcomes for children.
- The active participation of parents will build on parents' skills to assist their child's learning and will be crucial to training components such as play and transitions. The parent links will build an appreciation of the type of learning that takes place in the early childhood service, the curriculum on offer and the importance of learning through play.
- The allocation of a dedicated Early Childhood Specialist team to the PPP will allow the project to remain a focussed priority for the Consortium Partners ensuring that other work is not allowed to dilute the implementation of the PPP.



What is the timeline for the PPP?

June to September 2011	Project Planning, Recruitment and Development
September 2011	Programme promotion, Early Childhood Service/ Parent sign-up
October to December 2011	PPP Rollout 1 and 2 and follow-on support
January to April 2012	PPP Rollout 3 and 4 and follow-on support
September to December 2012	PPP Rollout 5 and 6 and follow-on support
January to April 2013	PPP Rollout 7 and 8 and follow-on support
April 2013 to March 2014	Continuation of follow-on support and impact monitoring
April 2014 to June 2014	Programme round-up, in-house evaluation and celebration of achievement

How will the success of the PPP be measured?

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation is central to the success of the PPP. A tailor made electronic Impact Recording Tool will be designed and utilised to act as a centrally accessible information tool to provide evidence of the impact of the project that will be monitored both on an individual participating service basis and on an overall project basis.

How will the PPP leave a learning legacy for ECCE?

At the end of the 3-year timeframe, there will be a body of evidence that will inform the future implementation of *Siolta* and *Aistear*. Evidence of the resources, timeframe, personnel and intensity of support required in terms of up skilling the early childhood workforce to meaningfully engage with *Siolta* and *Aistear* and to achieve *Siolta* accreditation will be provided.

In addition, when the PPP has been fully evaluated, the programme will be put forward for FETAC accreditation. It is proposed that the PPP will be included as part of the Donegal VEC Childcare Programme at level 5. It is envisaged that evidence and learning from the PPP will provide tested programme content for new FETAC accredited modules on specific aspects of professional pedagogy within accredited childcare training programmes. This will support the standardisation of accredited childcare training to make it more effective for the needs of modern-day early childhood services, educators and children.

Where can I get more information?

Further information on the PPP can be obtained from the DCCC Office. Regular updates and information will be available on the DCCC website

www.donegalchildcare.com