

## **Families encouraged to access the National Childcare Scheme as minimum universal subsidy increases from 2 January 2023**

The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) is encouraging parents to avail of supports available to them under the National Childcare Scheme (NCS), particularly as the minimum rate for subsidies will increase in January 2023.

**From 2 January 2023, families accessing Tusla registered early learning and childcare will receive a minimum hourly NCS subsidy of €1.40. This is an increase of €0.90 from the current minimum hourly rate.**

The increase, which was announced by Minister Roderic O’Gorman as part of Budget 2023 measures, will mean that any family who is not already on the highest level of subsidy will see an increase to their NCS award. This includes families on both the Universal and Income Assessed applications.

The new rate will automatically be updated for families with existing awards, where applicable, and they will be notified when this happens. These families do not need to take any steps to avail of the new rate.

Families who do not have an existing award from the NCS are encouraged to submit an application to begin receiving financial support with their early learning and childcare costs.

### **How to Apply:**

There are two types of NCS subsidies available for children aged between 24 weeks and 15 years of age:

- A **Universal Subsidy**, which is not means tested and currently provides €0.50 cent per hour towards the cost of a registered early learning and childcare place for a maximum of 45 hours per week. From 2 January 2023, this rate will increase to €1.40.
- An **Income Assessed Subsidy**, which is means tested and will be calculated based on the applicant’s individual circumstances.

Parents may apply online for the NCS using their MyGovID at [ncs.gov.ie](https://ncs.gov.ie). Alternatively, parents may contact the NCS Parent Support Centre on 01 906 8530 to make a paper application.

Once an application has been approved, parents will receive a unique code called a ‘CHICK’. This is all parents need to bring to their chosen Tusla registered early learning and childcare provider to unlock their subsidy.

The provider will upload the CHICK to the system along with information about how many hours the parents need. Parents will then receive an email or letter, depending on how they applied, to confirm the details their provider has registered. Once confirmed, the subsidy will be paid directly to the provider. The provider will subtract the awarded subsidy from their published fee so that parents can enjoy lower early learning and childcare costs.

At present only Tusla-registered childminders are able to offer the NCS. Currently, the legislation prevents most childminders from registering with Tusla. Work is underway through

the National Action Plan for Childminding, to extend regulation to all paid non relative childminders, which will open the NCS to a much wider cohort of childminders.

For more information on eligibility and subsidies available, parents can visit [ncs.gov.ie](https://ncs.gov.ie).

Queries related to the Scheme may be directed as follows:

- **Early learning and childcare providers** should be directed to the Early Years Provider Centre by contacting [eypc@pobal.ie](mailto:eypc@pobal.ie), or calling 01 511 7222, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm (10am to 5pm on Wednesday).
- **Parents** should be advised to contact the Parent Support Centre on 01 906 8530, Monday to Friday 9am-5pm.

Please find attached a table demonstrating the new rates which will be applicable from 2 January 2023. Please note that this table is a guide and does not cover all exact income levels.

**Changes to the National Childcare Scheme rates with effect from 2 January 2023**

|                   | Rates up until 1st January 2023 |            |        |            | Rates from 2 January 2023 |            |        |            |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|------------|--------|------------|---------------------------|------------|--------|------------|
| Reckonable Income | 24-52 weeks                     | 1 to 2 yrs | 3yrs + | School Age | 24-52 weeks               | 1 to 2 yrs | 3yrs + | School Age |
| Under €26,000     | €5.10                           | €4.35      | €3.95  | €3.75      | €5.10                     | €4.35      | €3.95  | €3.75      |
| €26,000.00        | €5.10                           | €4.35      | €3.95  | €3.75      | €5.10                     | €4.35      | €3.95  | €3.75      |
| €27,000.00        | €4.96                           | €4.24      | €3.85  | €3.65      | €4.99                     | €4.26      | €3.88  | €3.68      |
| €28,000.00        | €4.83                           | €4.12      | €3.75  | €3.56      | €4.88                     | €4.18      | €3.80  | €3.61      |
| €29,000.00        | €4.69                           | €4.01      | €3.65  | €3.46      | €4.77                     | €4.09      | €3.73  | €3.54      |
| €30,000.00        | €4.56                           | €3.90      | €3.54  | €3.37      | €4.66                     | €4.00      | €3.65  | €3.47      |
| €31,000.00        | €4.42                           | €3.78      | €3.44  | €3.27      | €4.56                     | €3.92      | €3.58  | €3.40      |
| €32,000.00        | €4.29                           | €3.67      | €3.34  | €3.18      | €4.45                     | €3.83      | €3.50  | €3.34      |
| €33,000.00        | €4.15                           | €3.56      | €3.24  | €3.08      | €4.34                     | €3.74      | €3.43  | €3.27      |
| €34,000.00        | €4.02                           | €3.44      | €3.14  | €2.99      | €4.23                     | €3.66      | €3.35  | €3.20      |
| €35,000.00        | €3.88                           | €3.33      | €3.04  | €2.89      | €4.12                     | €3.57      | €3.28  | €3.13      |
| €36,000.00        | €3.75                           | €3.22      | €2.94  | €2.79      | €4.01                     | €3.48      | €3.20  | €3.06      |
| €37,000.00        | €3.61                           | €3.10      | €2.83  | €2.70      | €3.90                     | €3.40      | €3.13  | €2.99      |
| €38,000.00        | €3.48                           | €2.99      | €2.73  | €2.60      | €3.79                     | €3.31      | €3.05  | €2.92      |
| €39,000.00        | €3.34                           | €2.88      | €2.63  | €2.51      | €3.69                     | €3.22      | €2.98  | €2.85      |
| €40,000.00        | €3.21                           | €2.76      | €2.53  | €2.41      | €3.58                     | €3.14      | €2.90  | €2.78      |
| €41,000.00        | €3.07                           | €2.65      | €2.43  | €2.32      | €3.47                     | €3.05      | €2.83  | €2.71      |
| €42,000.00        | €2.94                           | €2.54      | €2.33  | €2.22      | €3.36                     | €2.96      | €2.75  | €2.64      |
| €43,000.00        | €2.80                           | €2.43      | €2.23  | €2.13      | €3.25                     | €2.88      | €2.68  | €2.58      |
| €44,000.00        | €2.66                           | €2.31      | €2.12  | €2.03      | €3.14                     | €2.79      | €2.60  | €2.51      |
| €45,000.00        | €2.53                           | €2.20      | €2.02  | €1.93      | €3.03                     | €2.70      | €2.53  | €2.44      |
| €46,000.00        | €2.39                           | €2.09      | €1.92  | €1.84      | €2.92                     | €2.61      | €2.45  | €2.37      |
| €47,000.00        | €2.26                           | €1.97      | €1.82  | €1.74      | €2.81                     | €2.53      | €2.38  | €2.30      |
| €48,000.00        | €2.12                           | €1.86      | €1.72  | €1.65      | €2.71                     | €2.44      | €2.30  | €2.23      |
| €49,000.00        | €1.99                           | €1.75      | €1.62  | €1.55      | €2.60                     | €2.35      | €2.23  | €2.16      |
| €50,000.00        | €1.85                           | €1.63      | €1.51  | €1.46      | €2.49                     | €2.27      | €2.15  | €2.09      |
| €51,000.00        | €1.72                           | €1.52      | €1.41  | €1.36      | €2.38                     | €2.18      | €2.08  | €2.02      |
| €52,000.00        | €1.58                           | €1.41      | €1.31  | €1.26      | €2.27                     | €2.09      | €2.00  | €1.95      |
| €53,000.00        | €1.45                           | €1.29      | €1.21  | €1.17      | €2.16                     | €2.01      | €1.93  | €1.88      |
| €54,000.00        | €1.31                           | €1.18      | €1.11  | €1.07      | €2.05                     | €1.92      | €1.85  | €1.81      |
| €55,000.00        | €1.18                           | €1.07      | €1.01  | €0.98      | €1.94                     | €1.83      | €1.78  | €1.75      |
| €56,000.00        | €1.04                           | €0.95      | €0.91  | €0.88      | €1.84                     | €1.75      | €1.70  | €1.68      |
| €57,000.00        | €0.91                           | €0.84      | €0.80  | €0.79      | €1.73                     | €1.66      | €1.63  | €1.61      |
| €58,000.00        | €0.77                           | €0.73      | €0.70  | €0.69      | €1.62                     | €1.57      | €1.55  | €1.54      |
| €59,000.00        | €0.64                           | €0.61      | €0.60  | €0.60      | €1.51                     | €1.49      | €1.48  | €1.47      |
| €60,000.00        | €0.50                           | €0.50      | €0.50  | €0.50      | €1.40                     | €1.40      | €1.40  | €1.40      |
| Above €60,000     | €0.50                           | €0.50      | €0.50  | €0.50      | €1.40                     | €1.40      | €1.40  | €1.40      |