



An Roinn Leanai, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth



Forbairt Cailíocht
Luathbhlianta Náisiúnta
National Early Years
Quality Development

Access and Inclusion Profile

Guidance Notes

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Introduction

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist pre-school managers to complete the Better Start Access and Inclusion Profile in conjunction with the child's parents/ carers/ guardians.

Better Start Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) supports children with a disability to access and participate in the state funding ECCE programme. It involves 7 levels of support as follows:



1. **An inclusive culture** in pre-schools
2. **Information for parents and providers** through the DCEDIY website
3. **A qualified and confident pre-school workforce**
4. **Expert Early Years Educational Advice and Support** through the Early Years Specialists
5. **Equipment, Appliances and Minor Alterations grant**
6. **Therapeutic Intervention** such as psychology, occupational therapy
7. **Additional Assistance in the Pre-school Room** through accessing additional capitation

The Access and Inclusion Profile must be completed by the pre-school manager, INCO or key person in conjunction with the parents/ carers/ guardians of the child with a disability so that the pre-school can apply for support under Levels 4 to 7. The Access and Inclusion Profile takes a strengths-based approach and focuses on the child's abilities as well as needs. All of the information provided will support the identification of the appropriate level of support required. Other sources of information may include a visit to the pre-school by a Better Start Early Years Specialist and a meeting of Better Start Early Years Specialist, Pre-school manager, INCO, key person and parents/ carers/ guardians.

What is the purpose of this Guidance document?

This document provides guidance on how to complete the Access and Inclusion Profile under the following headings:

1. Before completing the Access and Inclusion Profile
2. Terminology used within the Access and Inclusion Profile
3. How to complete the Access and Inclusion Profile
4. Submission of the Access and Inclusion Profile
5. Queries

Who is the intended audience?

The information contained in this document is intended for pre-schools and parents/ carers/ guardians applying for support under AIM. Pobal staff providing online and telephone support, Better Start (Access and Inclusion) Team Leaders and Early Years Specialists should be aware of the contents of the document. The responsibility rests with them to ensure that the information in the guidelines is clearly communicated so that the Access and Inclusion Profile is completed fully and accurately.

Before completing the Access and Inclusion Profile

To begin the process of completing the form, the pre-school manager should contact the parents/ carers/ guardians of the child and explain the following:

1. In order for the pre-school to access support through AIM, an on-line form will need to be completed by the pre-school and the parents/ carers/ guardians together.
2. Parental consent to share information about their child is required. A consent form is included in the Access and Inclusion Profile. It is sufficient for one parent/ carer/ guardian to sign consent. The AIM informed consent can be upload or completed on-line.
3. The parents/ carers/ guardians will need to complete the Access and Inclusion form on-line with you.
4. It should take approximately 50-60 minutes to complete the form.
5. Applying for AIM support is not diagnosis led. However, if the child has had an assessment or a diagnosis, parents/ carers/ guardians may provide any relevant information (e.g. assessments, AoN Summary Report) so that it can be included in the Access and Inclusion Profile. Copies of reports can be scanned and uploaded with the profile.
6. The form also asks for contact details of any health professionals involved with the child i.e. Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist, Physiotherapist, Psychologist, Paediatrician. This is so that the Early Years Specialist can be informed of services the child is receiving and any recommendations for the child's access and participation in pre-school.

Agree a date and time when the parents/ carers/ guardians will visit the pre-school to complete the form with the pre-school manager.

When completing the Access and inclusion Profile, the parents/ carers/ guardians should be asked to bring any documentation and information (see 5. and 6. above).

Terminology included in the Access and Inclusion Profile

This section explains the terminology used within the Access and Inclusion Profile.

Access refers to the child's ability to attend pre-school. Supporting access includes removing barriers and catering for the individual needs of the child.

Inclusion refers to the child's ability to participate as fully and actively as possible in the pre-school programmes. Where necessary, appropriate supports will be provided to ensure full and active participation.

Creating inclusive environments will enable **all** children including those with disabilities to participate and learn within the pre-school setting.

The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme is the free 2 year pre-school programme provided to all eligible children, from 2 years and 8 months to 5 years and 6 months by the end of the pre-school year before they commence primary school i.e. the child must be no more than 5 years and 6 months in June.

Pre-school settings strengths and challenges – Better Start AIM takes a strengths-based approach by identifying the child's existing abilities and the pre-school staff's skills and capacity while supporting other areas for development.

Expert educational advice and support will be provided to pre-schools by Better Start (Access and Inclusion) Early Years Specialists.

Additional support needed to enable the child to fully participate could take the form of advice, therapeutic intervention or additional assistance in the pre-school room.

Pre-school manager is the person in charge of the pre-school who completes the Access and Inclusion form with the parents/ carers/ guardians.

Key Person has special responsibility for a particular child. The key person works with the child and his/her parents/ carers/ guardians to ensure the child's care and educational needs are met.

HSE Early Intervention team works with children, aged birth-6 years, and their families who have complex developmental needs. The team comprises of an Occupational Therapist, Clinical Psychologist, Physiotherapist, Social Worker and Speech and Language Therapist. A referral to the Early Intervention Team can be made by your GP, physiotherapist, speech therapist, public health nurse, occupational therapist, social worker, psychologist or any other health care professional.

G.P. is the child's family doctor.

Pediatrician is a medical doctor who specialises in children and their illnesses.

Social workers support individuals and their families through difficult times and ensure that vulnerable people, including children and adults, are safeguarded from harm. They may work closely with other professionals in health and social care.

Individual Access and Inclusion plan The Access and Inclusion Plan has been developed by AIM as a support to pre-school services. It is completed by the pre-school manager, key person or Inclusion Co-ordinator, in partnership with the child's parent or guardian or carer and in consultation with the Early Years Specialist and other relevant professionals working with the child.

Early Intervention programmes Early Intervention can have life-long positive effects on outcomes for children and can be less expensive and more effective than later intervention, preventing hardship and suffering. Supporting practice in pre-schools and developing expertise contributes to early intervention and to positive outcomes for the child.

The **child's strengths** refers to the child's abilities and skills.

The **child's interests** refers to activities or areas that the child enjoys.

Aistear is the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework in Ireland. Aistear is the Irish word for journey.

Freedom of Information Act 2014 obliges government departments, the Health Service Executive (HSE), local authorities and a range of other public bodies to publish information on their activities and to make the information they hold, including personal information, available to citizens.

The Freedom of Information Act 2014 provides the following statutory rights:

- A legal right for each person to access information held by a body to which FOI legislation applies
- A legal right for each person to have official information relating to himself/herself amended where it is incomplete, incorrect or misleading
- A legal right to obtain reasons for decisions affecting himself/herself.

Data Protection Act When you give your personal details to an organisation or individual, they have a duty to keep these details private and safe. This process is known as data protection. Your rights are protected under Data Protection Act 2018

Under this act you have a right to access the records held by many public bodies including Government Departments, the HSE and Local Authorities, obtain and process personal data fairly;

- keep it only for one or more specified and explicit lawful purposes;
- Process it only in ways compatible with the purposes for which it was given initially;
- keep personal data safe and secure;
- keep data accurate, complete and up-to-date;
- ensure that it is adequate, relevant and not excessive;
- retain it no longer than is necessary for the specified purpose or purposes; and,
- provide a copy of his/her personal data to any individual, on request.

Data refers to any information or facts that are usually stored on a computer or on paper.

Grantee refers to the person or organisation (pre-school) who is given a grant.

Secure manner means that hard copies are held in locked cabinets. On line files are encrypted and password protected and only accessed by authorised personnel.

Storage **limitation** means personal data may only be held for as long as necessary. We will hold personal information on our systems for as long as is necessary for the relevant activity, and as required by the DCEDIY, subject to legislation and regulatory rules we must follow.

Informed Consent

Consent is the giving of permission or agreement for an intervention, receipt or use of a service or participation in research following a process of communication about the proposed intervention (National Consent Policy, 2014).

It is a basic rule at common law that consent must be obtained for medical examination, treatment, service or investigation. This is well established in Irish case law and ethical standards. The requirement for consent is also recognised in international and European human rights law and under the Irish Constitution.

Informed consent is when a person e.g. the child's parents/ carers/ guardians has been fully informed about the action for which they are giving consent.

Consent must be obtained from the parents/ carers/ guardians before completing this profile. Personal information, contact details, reports on the child, details of observations and details of relevant health professionals are gathered to support the profile and may be shared with relevant professionals involved in the profile and potential provision of services for the child. This consent is voluntary and can be withdrawn by the parents/ carers/ guardians at any time.

The consent form requires the name and signatures of **at least one** parents/ carers/ guardians and the date it was signed. The consent form will need to be printed, signed and submitted with the profile through Hive.

Completing the Access and Inclusion Profile

This profile is used to describe the child's abilities through the following areas, Physical, Communication, Social Skills, Behaviour and Health. They reflect the key areas of learning and development required for the participation and engagement of the child in the pre-school setting.

The profile begins with information about the general purpose of the Access and Inclusion Profile. It provides links to the Access and Inclusion Guidelines and links to AIM Informed consent. Under Parent and Child information it begins by asking for details relating to the child and the application. It is important that all sections of the profile are fully completed in order to gather sufficient information about the child. Direct contact details of the parents/ carers/ guardians must be included i.e. the pre-school contact details cannot be used for this purpose.

The Access and Inclusion Profile aims to capture information about the child's functional abilities in the following areas:

1. Physical

Describes the child's physical abilities under Gross Motor/Spatial Awareness, Fine Motor, Self Help Skills and Sensory Experiences.

2. Communication

Describes the child's communication abilities under Receptive Communication, Expressive Communication and information on any alternative communication systems used.

3. Social Skills and Behaviour

Describes the child's general social skills and Behaviour describes the child's behaviour during a three hour pre-school session.

4. Health

Describes the child's health and additional care needs under Medical Healthcare Needs, Visual and Hearing Needs, and information on health services recommended and/or provided where the child has had an assessment carried out by a health professional.

Children with additional health care needs are defined as those who "have or are at increased risk of having a chronic physical, developmental, behavioural, or emotional condition and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally" (Mc Pherson M, et al, Paediatrics, 1998).

For each section you will be able to record only one response under Never, Occasionally, Regularly and Frequently. *If you are unsure of any of the answers please try and answer with what you think most closely describes the child's abilities and needs.*

5. Additional Information

We would encourage you to provide any additional information in the text box provided. In completing this section, please insert any information which would impact on or support the staff including your child in the pre-school. Think about arrivals/departures, the outdoors, transitions

from one activity to another, mobility, feeding, toileting and whether or not the child is receiving funding or support from another agency.

This section also gathers information about the pre-school setting, specifically in relation to the strengths and capacity of the pre-school setting and the key issues on which they would welcome support from the early years specialists at level 4.

Completion of the Access and Inclusion Profile will require joint input from the parents/ carers/ guardians and the pre-school in order to ensure all sections are completed as accurately as possible.

Submission of the Access and Inclusion Profile

When the Access and Inclusion Profile is completed it should be submitted by pressing the **Submit** button. If you are unable to complete the Profile in one sitting, a draft can be saved by clicking on the **Save** button and then **Close**. Pre-school managers and parents/ carers/ guardians have a duty of care to ensure that accurate detailed and relevant information is provided. This will avoid unnecessary delay in processing the Access and Inclusion Profile.

Timeline: Following a review of the information provided a member of the Better Start Access and Inclusion team will contact the pre-school within 4-6 weeks of submission.

What to do if you have any queries

If you or the parents/ carers/ guardians have queries in relation to completing the Access and Inclusion Profile document, please contact eypc@pobal.ie or 01/5117222 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday.