

Longford County Childcare Committee



JOB TITLE:	Support & Development Officer
EMPLOYER:	Longford County Childcare Committee Ltd
SALARY:	Equivalent to Local Authority Pay Scale Grade 5 Pt 1
REPORTS TO:	Coordinator of Longford Childcare Committee
HOURS OF WORK:	Part Time (24 HOURS PER WEEK)
DURATION OF POST:	Specific purpose contract to cover staff maternity leave

DESCRIPTION OF ROLE:

Longford County Childcare Committee (LCCC) supports a regional infrastructure of high quality, affordable and accessible pre-school and school aged childcare within Longford. LCCC currently supports approximately 34 pre-school services, 10 Voluntary Notified Childminders, 13 Parent and Toddler Groups and a number of School Aged Childcare providers.

We are now seeking applications for a Support & Development Officer based in LCCC Office, Community & Enterprise Centre, Business & Technology Park, Templemichael, Longford.

As a Support & Development Officer (SDO) you will support the implementation of the Longford Childcare Committee Local Implementation Plan under key objectives: to develop comprehensive supports, enhance quality, consolidate investment, collaboration, communication and consultation with the sector.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The successful candidate must have:

- At least a Level 8 qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or equivalent

- At least 3 years practical experience of working in the early childhood care and education sector
- Experience working in a quality support role with Early Years and School Age services
- An in-depth knowledge and understanding of early childhood care and education policy, programmes and best practice
- A knowledge and understanding of national early childhood care and education quality and curriculum frameworks
- Excellent interpersonal, organisational, presentation and facilitation skills
- The ability to work in a developmental capacity with groups & individuals in areas of developing committee skills, funding applications, policies & procedures, legal structure, needs assessment, project planning, etc.
- A knowledge of the geography of Longford County
- Proficiency in IT and administrative abilities including experience in report writing
- A full and clean driver's license and access to a car
- The ability to work on own initiative and as part of a team
- Training, facilitation and presentation experience and some experience of working with adult learners
- The successful candidate must also be prepared to work flexible hours i.e. evenings and occasional week end time

JOB DESCRIPTION

1. The Support & Development Officer (SDO) will provide Early Years Providers and Parents with an effective and responsive Advisory & Support Service, addressing:
 - a) Business planning and financial sustainability
 - b) Implementation and support for the PIP system and the various government programmes (ECCE, CCS & TEC etc.)
 - c) Development of current/existing services
 - d) Support and training for Early Years Practitioners with particular reference to planning and implementation of Aistear: Early Childhood Curriculum Framework.
 - e) Access to funding relevant to the Early Years sector
 - f) Quality provision

This range of support includes conducting visits, meetings with staff and committees providing Early Years and School Age services, offering advice on compliance with the law (including employment legislation, preschool regulations etc). This support will require being available to attend relevant meetings and training courses relating to the provision of Early Years and School Age services, **often outside normal working hours.**

2. **WEBISTE & COMMUNICATIONS:** The SDO will have responsibility for maintenance and updating of the LCCC website and external communication as approved by the Board and Management of LCCC. This will include revision and upload of content and updating of online publications.

3. TRAINING SERVICES: To assist with the development and delivery of sustainability support and programmes which enhance the quality of Early Years and School Age services. This will involve working closely with the relevant training providers/organisations both locally and nationally, on training-related activities. This role will include encouraging and promoting ongoing training and development for all those engaged in the provision of Early Years and School Age services. A main objective is to ensure (where possible) that accredited training in line with national standards is provided in local areas/communities. This role will also include supporting training bodies, Early Years and School Age services and Early Years and School Age workers through accessing and applying for the Leaner Fund along with post application support.
4. ASSISTANCE WITH FUNDING APPLICATIONS: To assist, support and advise Childcare Providers and other relevant parties in the development, preparation and submission of funding applications as appropriate. (capital funding, Parent and Toddler grants and Childminding Development Grant)
5. LINKS WITH NATIONAL & LOCAL CHILDCARE AGENCIES: SDOs will commit to working collaboratively and linking effectively to all other agencies with a remit in the area of Early Years and School Age for the purposes of promoting effective policies, quality services and maximum impact. This will at times involve providing services to external agencies seeking to develop quality approaches in Early Years and School Age policy and provision.
6. NETWORKING: To link and liaise with existing Parents, Early Years and School Age Providers, Early Years and School Age Advisors, National Schools, and all Social Partners.
7. COMMUNICATION: SDOs will facilitate meetings and workshops to identify training needs of Early Years and School Age Providers, and will assist with the follow-up required to meet those needs. SDOs will ensure that relevant, up to date and timely communications relating to early childhood care and education is made available to all Early Years and School Age stakeholders through a variety of information sharing strategies including emails, social media, LCCC website and letters.
8. IDENTIFYING GAPS IN EARLY YEARS AND SCHOOL AGE PROVISION: SDOs will (a) assist in the development of a range of new services within their specified geographical area, (b) identify possible gaps in provision (e.g. school-age childcare, breakfast clubs, parent and toddler groups), and (c) identify who might fill those gaps.
9. ASSIST PROVIDERS IN ACHIEVING QUALITY IN THEIR SERVICE: SDOs will assist Early Years and School Age Providers to monitor and evaluate their services and will, as appropriate, provide verbal and written feedback to both Early Years and School Age Providers and Parents. This will assist Early Years and School Age Providers in gaining accreditation for quality provision and practice.
10. ADDRESS SOCIAL INCLUSION: SDOs, through the promotion and implementation of social inclusion policies, will address issues of social exclusion and attempt to

integrate all children into all services. This will require the development of innovative and appropriate responsive initiatives.

11. CONTRIBUTE TO EARLY YEARS AND SCHOOL AGE POLICY DEVELOPMENT: SDOs are expected to input into policy development for the County Childcare Committee.
12. ADMINISTRATION:
 - a) Each SDO has responsibility for keeping a comprehensive file on each Early Years and School Age Provider within their brief.
 - b) SDOs are required to adhere to the LCCC record keeping protocols and internal communications mechanisms.
13. RESEARCH: SDOs will actively pursue the objective that all aspects of Early Years and School Age work is informed by quality research, which explores opportunities and pursues the development of knowledge in the Early Years and School Age sector, and which involves research into the needs of children, their parents, the types and quality of service on offer etc.
14. SPECIAL PROJECTS: SDOs will have the responsibility at times throughout the year for the organisation, co-ordination, delivery and taking part in special projects or events relating to the provision of Early Years and School Age services.
15. IN-HOUSE MEETINGS: In consultation with the Coordinator, all SDOs will meet at regular intervals to *plan* work and targets, to *review, evaluate* and *report* on work in progress (using performance indicators) and give end results. There is a requirement for SDOs to attend “Development Team Meetings” and “Staff Meetings”.
16. Attending to OTHER REASONABLE ADDITIONAL DUTIES, relevant to the post, as and when required.