



19 November 2020

Dear Provider,

As many of you know, the Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme (EWSS), introduced in August of this year, included a particular provision for registered early learning and care (ELC) and school-age childcare (SAC) services to be exempt from the EWSS turnover test. I can confirm today that this exemption for ELC and SAC services will remain in place for the duration of the scheme. Government has committed to the EWSS until 31 March, and to review it then.

Standard EWSS rates provide approximately 60% of payroll costs for participating ELC and SAC services, which equates to approximately 38% of the usual operating costs of these services. The enhanced EWSS rates, which were introduced in response to Level 5 restrictions, will be in place until end January 2021. The enhanced rates provide approximately 80% of payroll costs for participating ELC and SAC services, which equates to approximately 50% of the usual operating costs of these services.

It was my intention when I sought the exemption for the sector that the Government would recognise the important role played by ELC and SAC services in providing learning and care for children, as well as supporting families to balance work success with family responsibilities.

The safe and sustainable operation of the ELC and SAC sector remains a policy priority for me. The EWSS investment should allow ELC and SAC services to operate sustainably in a context of lower occupancy and higher delivery costs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. All registered ELC and SAC services with employees are eligible for this support.

The EWSS is an economy-wide scheme, underpinned by legislation and will run until 31 March 2021. My officials will be engaging with the Department of Finance and Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on planning for post-March 2021.

Wishing you and your staff the very best with the continued safe operation of your service to children and families.

With kind regards,

Roderic O'Gorman T.D.
Minister for Children, Disability, Equality, Integration and Youth.