Programme Readiness, Fee Table and Parent Statement Q&A generated from Webinars.

Fee Table and Parent Statement

1.	What is the difference between Approved Provider and Partner Service?	An Approved Provider has no active Core Funding (CF) application or has a CF application, that is at Draft/Declined/New/System Cancelled or Withdrawn and has an active contract under another scheme i.e. NCS/ECCE/CCSP within the date range of 1st May 24 – 31st August 2025 then they are considered an approved provider. A Partner Service has an application for Core Funding, that is at submitted/approved/contracted/under appraisal or referred-back status within the date range of 1stMay 2024 – 31st August 2025 then they are considered a partner service.
2.	On the Fee Table, there is currently a selection between Approved Provider and Partner Service, what does this mean?	If you are not/do not intend to be a service with an active Core Funding Partner Service Funding Agreement for the programme year to which this Fee Table applies you are considered an approved provider. You are considered a Partner Service if you are a service who has/intends to have an active Core Funding Partner Service Funding Agreement with the Minister and agrees to operate fee management and quality improvements for the programme year to which this Fee Table applies. The option to toggle between service status's will only be visible on your Fee Table up until the 31st of August 2024. This date reflects the end of the 2023/2024 Core Funding Programme Year.
3.	What happens after the 31st of August 2024 and how do I create my Fee Table?	After the 31st of August if you intend on contracting into Core Funding and becoming a Partner Service for the 24/25 programme year you must first begin your Core Funding Application and take it to one of the following Statuses: submitted/approved/contracted/under appraisal or referred-back.

		You will then be able to create a Fee Table and Parent Statement for Partner Services. This will need to be done prior to being able to sign your Core Funding Partner Service Funding Agreement. You do not need to take any action if you are not intending to contract into Core Funding for 2024/2025, you will be able to create your Fee Table and Parent Statement for Approved Providers.
4.	I selected Partner service on my Fee Table during the summer months, however I have decided to not contract into Core Funding for the upcoming Programme year, what do I need to do?	After the 31st of August 2024, you will be considered an Approved Provider, or Non-Partner service, i.e. not contracted into Core Funding therefore you must create an Approved Provider Fee Table and Parent Statement. For an Approved Provider it is important to note that if you are signing up to Core Funding after 31st August you will need to redo and re-issue your Fee Table and Parent Statement so that an updated Partner Service Parent Statement is generated. If you are switching from Approved Provider or Partner Service (or vice versa), Parents Statements must be physically resigned by each Parent/Guardian.
5.	Can I copy my Fee Table if I am using the toggle function on the Fee Table to move from approved to Partner service (or vice versa)?	If you are changing your service status from Approved Provider to Partner Service (or vice versa), you will not be able to Copy your Fee Table accurately. To resolve this please use the Create button to begin a new Fee Table – please select the correct Service Status before creating any Fee Options.
6.	What is an ECCE only service?	An ECCE only service is defined as a service which is only in contract for the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme and no other registration-based programmes such as the National Childcare Scheme (NCS), and Community Childcare Subvention Plus Saver Programme (CCSP).
7.	Is there only one Fee Table that I need to complete?	Yes, last year was the first introduction of the Fee Table which is a universal Fee Table that captures all fees for services. Only one Fee Table needs to be completed per service. During Programme Readiness, you will need to complete the Fee Table before contracting into any of the programmes your service caters for e.g. NCS, ECCE or CCSP. Once you begin contracting into the programmes your service offers, you will only need to certify that the Fee Table is correct.

8.	What does the new "Errors Found" column mean and why does it have a 'Yes' or 'No' in the column?	Errors will stem from what was input last year on the Fee Table. Last year there was no auto calculation on the hours per day when inputting Session Start Time and Session Finish Times - therefore if the hours were calculated incorrectly last year, this will trigger on the copied Fee Table as an Error and produce a 'Yes' in that column. This is why service providers must review it before submission to ensure hours are correct for the upcoming programme year. You will not be able to submit a Fee Table if there are any "Yes's" found in the Error Found columns. You will need to remove these before proceeding.
9.	What is an Incorporated Service?	Incorporated services are any service offered that is included in the service fee, for example if you have an afterschool Fee Option that provided meals and transport but also had an afterschool Fee Option that provided transport and no meals, these would need to be detailed as two different Fee Options to show the parent the difference in the option. Anything that had been included as part of the 30 September 2021 fee cannot now be charged for individually unless there is a proportionate reduction in the original fee, and the new individual charge is entirely optional to parents/guardians. For example, if meals were included in the original total fee and the service now wishes to charge for them individually, the service must reduce their original fee by 10% and make the new offering of meals entirely optional to parents/guardians. Where a Partner Service stop offering transport that was previously included in the fee charged to parents/guardians, that fee must be reduced by the equivalent cost of the element that has been removed. For example, if a fee policy included an overall fee of €200 per week including transport that cost €20 per week, and that Partner Service stopped offering transport, the overall fee must be reduced from €200 per week to €180 per week.
10.	Do I need to have separate Fee Extras for deposits, discounts and optional extras?	If services don't offer deposits or discounts, they just don't have to mention them. If they don't offer optional extras, they must use the option for 'no optional extras' available.
11.	If there is a change to a Fee Option for example Full Day Care with no meals to Full Day Care	To include meals on a Fee Option, please ensure your Fee Table is in Draft, using the Save As function next to the Fee Option you wish to amend. There is an option to

	with meals provided, how do I reflect this on a Fee Table?	include an incorporated service on a Fee Option, which includes Meal, Nappies/Wipes, Transport and Other.
12.	If I offer different discounts based on different age groups/ days per week, do I have to list all discount amounts applicable?	Any discounts applied by the Service Provider must be accounted for in the fee table.
13.	How many optional extras are we allowed to input on the Fee Table?	Please refer to 2024-25 ECCE programme rules - Appendix 1 Optional Extras Document. All allowable extras are listed there.
14.	Can we add an Optional Extra that is not listed on the ECCE programme rules document e.g. collection from school in service transport?	No. Only optional extras from the allowable optional extras listed on the 2024-25 ECCE programme rules can be used in that section on the Fees Table. However, "Transport" could be included as part of an incorporated service on a Fee Option.
15.	What is a split session? If I have 2 ECCE sessions in the morning and 2 ECCE sessions in the afternoon, is that classed as a split session?	No this would not be classed as a split session; these would need to be captured as separate fee options on your Fee Table. A split session for example could be used for a school going child availing of a breakfast club starting at 7.30am and finishing at 8.30am and then returning to the service after school for an afternoon homework club starting at 2pm and finishing at 5pm. This functionality can be used to group one service fee for parents using both the breakfast club and afterschool homework club.
16.	How can I display the following on my Fee Table, can I use the split session? ➢ Breakfast club from 7.30am - 8.45am ➢ Collection from school at 1.45pm for homework club until 6pm ➢ Collection from school at 2.45pm for homework club until 6pm.	This can be split into two different Fee Options. Fee Option #1 would include Breakfast club with a start time of 7.30am and end time of 8.45am, second session start time would be 1.45pm and second session finish time would be 6pm. Fee Option #2 would include Breakfast club with a start time of 7.30am and end time of 8.45am, second session start time would be 2.45pm and second session finish time would be 6pm.
17.	Can you explain what 'Camp Care' is on a Fee Table?	'Camp Care' can be used if your service as a Fee Extra to show camps are run in your service for example during Christmas, Easter etc.

18.	Am I able to include a session that is over 9 hours on a Fee Table?	To ensure accuracy on a Fee Table, if you are inputting a Session that is 9 hours or over, a pop-up screen to confirm this is correct will appear on your screen. In order to continue, please confirm the 9+ hours are correct and continue to proceed creating your Fee Option.
19.	If I am currently going through a Change of Circumstances, can I copy my current Fee Table and Parent Statement?	In this circumstance, a new Fee Table and Parent Statement will need to be created if you receive a new service reference number due to a change of circumstances.
20.	Can the Parent Statement be returned to the service provider via email with an e-signature from the Parent?	All Parent Statements must be physically signed by the parent and returned to the Service Provider to be kept on file. Once the provider can prove that the full Parent Statement has been issued to the parent (e.g., by email proof retained), the Parent only needs to return a signed copy of the last page with the full declaration.
21.	Can you list some examples of when a Parent Statement needs to be resigned or not?	- If there is a new child starting in your service, a current, up to date parent statement must be issued, physically signed and returned within 20 working days of a child's registration start date. - If a child who already has a signed parent statement on file, starts/continues in the service for the new programme year, a new parent statement is not required. - If your service moves from a Partner Service to Approved Provider (or vice versa) a Parent Statement will need to be circulated and physically resigned by each parent/guardian. - If there is a change to a fee type-fee option where is effects parents financially, a Parent Statement will need to be recirculated and resigned, this could include removing a service type e.g. meals from a fee option that previously had them included.
22.	Our ECCE children are returning in August, do I need a new parent statement for year 2024-25?	You must update your parent statement for this programme year and circulate it to all the families in your service. Parents/guardians do not need to sign it again, unless your service is switching from a Partner Service to an Approved Provider (or vice versa), or if

		there are significant fee changes which impact the parents financially e.g. an increase in fees or a change in fee type e.g. including meals where they were not included before.
23.	Do I only have to complete one Parent Statement per family?	Yes, all children in the same family can be listed on the same Parent Statement on the last page. While the entire Parent Statement must be issued to each parent/guardian, only the last page must be printed and physically signed and returned to the service to be retained on file.
24.	Who do Fee Bands/Caps apply to?	From September 2024 this will apply to First Time Partner Services i.e. those who have never joined Core Funding before. It will apply to all Partner Services from September 2025 and will be assessed annually as part of the Programme Readiness cycle going forward.
25.	I have been through a Tusla/Pobal COC do fee caps apply to me?	No fee caps do not apply to existing Partner Services who have been through or is going through the COC process. Fee Bands will only be applied to First Time Partner Services those who have never joined Core Funding before. It will apply to all Partner Services from September 2025.
26.	I am a large organisation with multiple services how will fee bands affect me?	Fee caps will be applied at **service level** on the above basis: From September 2024 this will apply to First Time Partner Services those who have never joined Core Funding before. It will apply to all Partner Services from September 2025.
27.	I am a new partner service joining CF for the first time in the 24/25 programme year should my fee table on Hive reflect the fee caps?	Yes, new partner services joining CF for the first time in the 24/25 programme year should complete their fee table on Hive in line with the fee caps in place.

Programme Readiness and ECCE Calendar

1.	Is there a change in the ECCE calendar this year?	There are no changes within the ECCE Rules regarding to the ECCE Calendar. The system will only enforce the rules not allowing retrospectively changes. Further guidance is here.
2.	Why have "Minimum Week Amounts" been added to ECCE calendars for each of the 3x Terms?	The ECCE programme runs over 45/47 weeks. Having a minimum/maximum weeks per term help providers to spread out the 38/41 weeks over the duration of the programme call.
3.	Can a service change their ECCE program from a 38 to 41 weeks?	A small number of services are permitted to run over 41 weeks in exceptional circumstances. These existing arrangements will continue for these registered services only and are subject to all rules contained herein except that they can deliver the ECCE Programme for 4 days per week for 3.5 hours per day. No other service can avail of the 41-week option. Once a service relinquishes their 41-week option/does not register children for 41 weeks in a programme year they may not revert to it in the future.
4.	The NCS subsidies are increasing in September, does this mean we have to duplicate any Parent Declarations or Parent Statements?	Service providers do not have to create any new NCS documents after the uplift. You need to re-calculate co-payment and charge parents accordingly. Parental agreements are not compulsory for NCS anymore. Services only have to create a parent statement which

		is available on the Early Years Hive and it doesn't have to be changed after the uplift.
5.	How can I edit the weeks operating per year or is this prepopulated?	According to Rule: 4.1.3 of the Rules for ECCE Programme valid for the 2024/25 programme year, Service Providers are required to open for a minimum number of weeks per ECCE Term. The system will allow a calendar to be submitted as long as the minimum and maximum number of weeks per term are followed. Please refer to table on the Early Years Hive about ECCE terms available here
6.	The ECCE calendar is not aligned the same as the primary school that we are located on. How can we reflect this?	Providers whose service is located within school grounds or would like to follow their local school calendar have the option of being closed some of the days or weeks when school is open, thus being able to create 2024 ECCE calendar which will meet the 38 payable weeks & minimum 182 open days requirements. However, please note in meeting the ECCE calendar rules Providers may not be able to mirror the exact school calendar. Please note that the minimum payable weeks have now been amended/reduced in term 1 and term 2 to allow providers more flexibility when submitting ECCE calendars. Please also refer to our ECCE Service calendar quick guide available on Hive in: Resources -> Help & Support -> ECCE Guides -> ECCE service calendar tab or via link.