

HEALTH WEALTH CAREER

# REMUNERATION TERMS FOR EARLY YEARS PROFESSIONALS

A study commissioned by the National Childhood Network & Crann Support Group

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MAKE TOMORROW, TODAY



# 1. OVERVIEW

- Mercer has been appointed to make recommendations on the appropriate remuneration for Early Years Professionals.
- We were provided with background material from the National Childhood Network and the Crann Support Group network who commissioned the work and as part of our research we also consulted with a number of other stakeholders in the sector.
- In order to establish appropriate pay scales we benchmarked the various roles of the Early Years Professionals within centre based services– Assistants, Supervisors/ Room Leaders, Assistant Managers, and Managers - using Mercer’s International Position (Role) Evaluation System. The results of the evaluation were then compared with other comparable roles in the public sector and appropriate pay scales developed.
- In conjunction with the pay scales, comparable public sector pension arrangements and holiday, sick leave, and study leave should be provided.
- The new scales will require a substantial increase in Government investment in the sector. It is recognised, therefore, by stakeholders that it is not possible to move immediately to the proposed scales and an agreed transitional arrangement will be required. The initial priority, therefore, is to develop an agreed minimum starting point for the roles.
- Implementation, starting with the agreed minimum starting point, should be by way of a Sectoral Employment Agreement.

## 2. MERCER

- We (Mercer) are part of the MMC group of companies which employs over 400 staff in Ireland, mainly in retirement and investment businesses.
- We are leaders both globally and in Ireland in providing advice to listed companies, private companies, public sector and voluntary organisations on all aspects of organisational design and remuneration.
- The advice typically includes benchmarking of annual pay and all other aspects of remuneration, bonuses, company pension contributions, holiday entitlement etc.
- When benchmarking we use the Mercer International Position Evaluation (IPE) System which evaluates (scores) jobs across a range of factors – see slide 4.

### 3. BACKGROUND (1)

- Early Years Professionals deliver a range of early years (pre-school) services that are offered on a sessional, part-time or full time basis. Services are owned /managed either by independent private operators or by voluntary management committees. A small number of services are owned and managed as part of a chain.
- Providers /staff in all services must comply with a broad range of legislative and regulatory requirements and engage in delivering services to promote the health, well -being, learning and development of children up to age 6. It is accepted that that these years are critical for the future development of children and a valuable support to families.
- The delivery of services is fragmented with over 3,800 separate units registered with Tusla, employing approximately 25,000 staff and looking after more than 120,000 children. Funding provided for service delivery derives from a mix of state, voluntary organisations, and parental fees.
- Service providers can access Government funding to subsidise the cost of services to parents through various Government funding schemes which include Community Childcare Subvention (CCS), Community Childcare Subvention Plus (CCSP), Training and Employment Childcare (TEC) and the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme which provides a free Pre-school place to children aged 3-5 years for three hours per day for 38 weeks of the year.
- The ECCE scheme provides capitation of €64.50 per child to the service provider. Services who employ staff with a level 7 or 8 Degree and who have three years post-graduation work experience receive a higher capitation of €75.00 per child. There is no obligation on the provider to pay the more highly qualified staff member a higher rate of pay
- To support the future development of the sector, Mercer have been asked to make recommendations on appropriate remuneration terms for the sector which give recognition to the various roles and responsibilities staff carry within services, as well as to their qualifications and experience.

### 3. BACKGROUND (2)

- We have been provided with background material by the National Childhood Network and the Crann Support Group which we have reviewed. We have also carried out our own online research including reviewing the policies and practices in other countries.
- We have also held consultation sessions with different stakeholders within the sector, subsequent to which we received a remuneration proposal recently developed by the Early Years Forum Professionalisation Group.

Pay Scales  
Subject to  
Government  
Funding

## 4. THE PURPOSE OF BENCHMARKING

- Benchmarking has different purposes depending on the context.
- In this case the purpose is to develop remuneration terms to support the development of the sector and the delivery of quality early years services.
- There are two elements to the benchmarking process:
  - 1. Role Evaluation** (sometimes referred to as Job Sizing)

This is based on a number of factors:

    - i. The size of the organisation – not really relevant for junior level roles.
    - ii. The role within the organisation being benchmarked.
    - iii. The ability to make an impact.
    - iv. The communication ability required.
    - v. The extent of communication – with whom?
    - vi. Innovation – low in more junior roles.
    - vii. Complexity.
    - viii. Knowledge required.
    - ix. Way knowledge is applied
    - x. Exposure to mental or physical injury from work conditions and the environment.
  - 2. Remuneration Benchmarking**
    - The Position Class resulting from the Role Evaluation is used to establish the appropriate remuneration – annual pay and other benefits.

## 5. DEFINITION OF ROLES

- For the purposes of putting forward our recommendations we have adopted the following definitions:

***Early Years Assistant:***

Typically works with between 3 - 11 children ranging in age from infants to 6 year olds. Minimum qualification is NQF Level 5.

***Early Years Leader (Supervisor or Room Leader):***

Typically works with a group of children and is also responsible for supervising a small number of Early Years Assistants. For leaders in settings delivering the ECCE scheme, a minimum qualification of NQF Level 6 is required by the DCYA for funding purposes. In smaller settings the leader may also undertake the role of Manager

***Early Years Assistant Manager:***

Found in the larger facilities only and typically has a number of specific delegated responsibilities.

***Early Years Manager:***

Responsible for the overall operation of the facility, this may include the provision for babies, toddlers, pre-school and school age children. The Manager may be the owner of the facility also. Managers in committee managed community services are answerable to a voluntary board of management.

- Based on our discussions we are proposing that there should be a common scale for each role regardless of the ages of the children involved.

## 6. PROPOSED ANNUAL PAY SCALES

Role	IPE Position Class Score	Annual Pay Scale (Based on IPE Position Class Score)		
		Entry Point (€)	Mid Point (€)	Top of Scale (€)
Early Years Assistant	42 - 43	27,000	35,500	44,000
Early Years Supervisor (Room Leader)	45	32,000	46,000	60,000
Early Years Assistant Manager	46	34,000	48,000	62,000
Early Years Manager	48	40,000	54,000	68,000

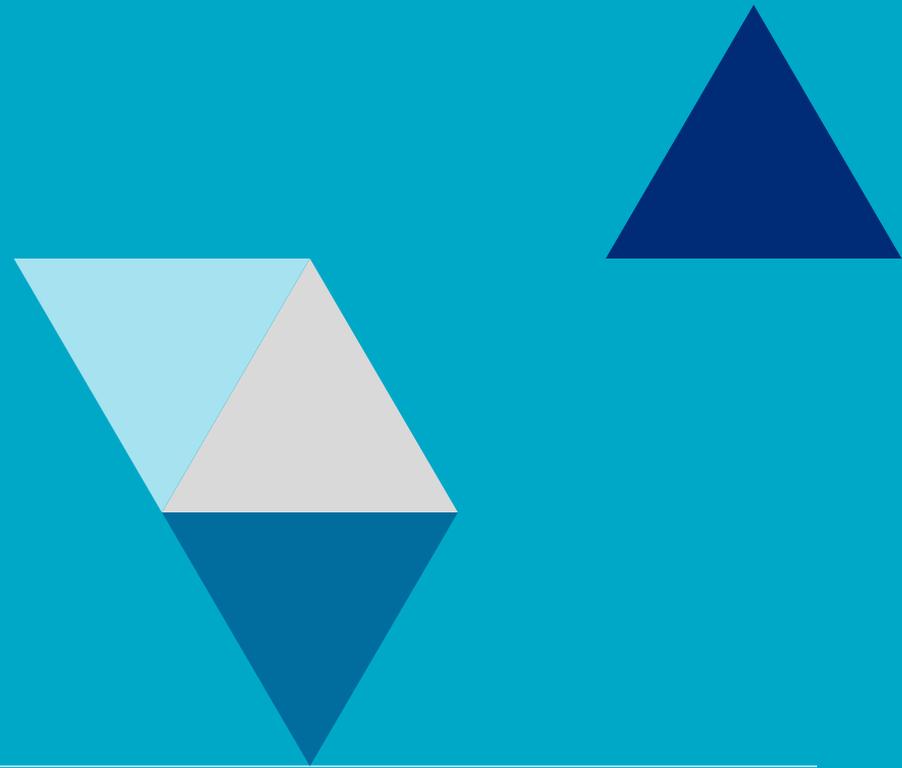
- The scales are based on a 39 hour working week, payment should be pro-rata where fewer hours are worked.
- A comparison with a range of other public sector roles is set out in the Appendix.
- It is proposed, other than by promotion, that staff move through the pays scales through a combination of experience, participation in professional development training, possibly including obtaining additional qualifications, and satisfactory performance.

Pay Scales  
Subject to  
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## 7. PROPOSED ANNUAL PAY SCALES - IMPLEMENTATION

- The Association of Childhood Professionals has proposed that there should be increased investment in the sector so that the average wage moves to a living wage – defined as approximately €12 per hour – in the short term and to a professional wage in the next five years.
- Based on our discussions we believe there is broad support for the above approach while recognising that financing will be an issue.
- Our recommended scales to provide a professional wage are set out in Slide 6. These are based on our benchmarking of the roles against roles in the public sector using the benchmarking methodology in Slide 4.
- It is reasonable to require that persons working in the sector working in a Leader / supervisory role have an appropriate professional degree as is required for primary teachers.
  - Require a minimum requirement of a professional degree for new appointments to the role of Early Years Room Leader and higher roles within a period of, say, 5 years. In the interim, require a minimum of a QQI Level 7 qualification. Those currently in this level should be excluded from the requirement for a degree.
  - For current Assistants only accept, for a period of 10 years, a minimum of 5 years' service in the sector with an QQI Level 6 qualification as an alternative to a degree.
  - Reconsider a requirement of a professional degree for Assistants at a future date.
- It will be necessary to develop and implement a transition path from the current pay arrangements.
- In conjunction with the proposed pay scales introduce appropriate pension contribution terms and holiday, sick pay and training terms in line with comparable roles in the public sector.
- The pay arrangements should be implemented by means of, at least initially, a statutory Sectorial Employment Order.

# APPENDIX



## APPENDIX – PUBLIC SECTOR COMPARATORS (POST 2011 ENTRANTS WHERE RELEVANT)

Role	IPE Position Class	Annual Pay		
		Entry Point (€)	Mid Point (€)	Top of Scale (€)
Care Manager (Hospital)	51	54,463	59,326	62,321
Early Years Manager	48	40,000	54,000	68,000
Social Care Leader	48	45,063	49,631	52,650
Early Years Assistant Manager	46	34,000	48,000	62,000
Teacher	45	35,602	54,354	66,869
Early Years Supervisor (Room Leader)	45	32,000	46,000	60,000
Social Care Worker (With Qualification)	45	31,293	38,663	45,306
Nurse	44	28,483	36,402	43,469
Early Years Assistant	42 - 43	27,000	35,500	44,000
Nursing Assistant	42	26,276	29,660	30,374
Special Needs Assistant	42	23,122	30,211	38,723

- Some of the scales have significantly more points than others and, hence, a higher “top of scale”.

# APPENDIX – CONTRIBUTORS TO THE STUDY

Association of Childhood Professionals

Crann Support Group

Early Childhood Ireland

National Childhood Network ( staff and private operator)

PLÉ

National Forum for Community Childcare Services



# MERCER

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