

QUALITY CHILD MINDING FOR ALL

Best Practice
Seminar 2011



Bewleys Hotel Leopardstown

Central Park
Leopardstown
Dublin 18

Saturday, November 5th, 2011
9.15am – 5.00pm

QUALITY CHILDMINDING FOR ALL

Childminding Seminar 2011

SEMINAR SUMMARY AND EVALUATION REPORT

Collaborative Partners

Seminar Organizing Committee would like to acknowledge support of the following Seminar partners in providing financial, organizational support, and resources for the Seminar event:

- Pobal/DCYA
- HSE, Health Promotions Department
- Childminding Ireland
- Barnardos
- Early Childhood Ireland
- Fingal County Childcare committee
- Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Childcare Committee
- South County Dublin Childcare Committee
- Wicklow County Childcare committee
- Dublin City Childcare Committee

'This was very worthwhile seminar. It gave a great insight into Aistear'.

'... a great way to see we are professionals!'

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Seminar Background

Building on the success of day conferences for Childminders over the last four years, it was decided to offer a day of intensive professional development introducing *Aistear* to Childminders. The goal of the Seminar was to raise awareness to Childminders of their own professional practice in line with Component 2.2 of the National Strategic Plan 2011-2013 for Early Childhood Care and Education Programmes. This component encourages embedding of the National Practice Frameworks in the ECCE sector, and the key outcomes include the strategic and collaborative use of resources in *supporting early childhood services to engage with....Aistear*. Thus a collaborative seminar for Childminders was initiated between five City and County Childcare Committees, including Dublin City, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County, Fingal County, South Dublin County, and Wicklow County Childcare Committees.

The Seminar Organizing Committee involved staff from all five City/County Childcare Committees and two students from Portobello Institute of Education. Eight planning meetings took place before the start of the Seminar.



Organising Committee, front row from left:
Emma Earlwood, student; Geraldine Ganon, DCCC;
Teresa Quigley, DCCC SE LCRS;

Back row from left:
Audra Hubbard, DCCC; Pat Dunne, DCCC NW LCRS;
Miriam O'Regan, WCCC; Niamh Casey, student;
Sheila Sheridan, DCCC NW LCRS;
Not pictured: Tracy Nelson, DLRCCC;

Seminar Topic 'Quality Childminding for All'

The goal of the Best Practice Seminar was to promote Quality Childminding for All in the light of Aistear. We aimed to make the Seminar accessible to all childminders by organizing 12 workshops around the four themes of Aistear. All workshops were designed to be relevant to the everyday work with children in a childminding setting. Each Seminar participant received an Aistear manual and Seminar folder which contained an Aistear leaflet and Aistear Tip Sheets for Parents. In addition, childminders were introduced to Aistear's resources and online toolkit. As this day focused on the Childminder as opposed to more general childcare training, it specifically addressed Component 2.5 of the National Strategic Plan: Childminding services are supported to ensure high quality standards, and in particular the key outcome: People providing a childminding service will have access to appropriate training.

Also, Seminar participants took away information on Voluntary Notification procedures and each participant received a USB memory stick with downloaded Voluntary Notification forms.



Crll. John Bailey with Seminar Childminders

QUALITY CHILDMINDING FOR ALL SEMINAR

The 'Quality Childminding for All' Seminar was held in Bewleys Hotel Leopardstown. The venue was accessible to childminders coming from Dublin North and the city centre as well as Wicklow, Dublin South and Dun Laoghaire Rathdown counties. Easy access by green LUAS line and/or a car was taken in consideration when choosing this venue. Delegates enjoyed spacious main Seminar suite and close proximity to break-out session rooms. All Seminar rooms were located on one floor which made Seminar registration and participation easy to navigate. Guests also enjoyed a selection of morning refreshments. The Organizing Committee team with the assistance from Dublin Childcare Committee staff and hotel staff made sure that the day was comfortable and hospitable for all involved, delegates, guests, and exhibitors.

Almost ninety delegates came to enjoy the event and learn about Aistear. The key focus was to introduce childminders to practical applications of Aistear in their everyday practices.

Childminders had a chance to network and share their own childminding experiences and browse through informational and educational stands. Seminar attendees were offered informational materials from HSE Health Promotion Department, informational leaflets from five City/County Childcare Committees, Voluntary notification information and Childminding Ireland information. Also, delegates visited with toy and educational material exhibitors. The exhibitors brought a variety of their newest products, ranging from books and toys to art and craft materials, educational games and children's play wear.

Delegates had an opportunity to hear from Dr. Mary Daly, from the National Council for Curriculum Assessment who introduced Aistear to childminders.

Patricia Murray, CEO and founder of Childminding Ireland, gave a closing address to the Seminar. Patricia discussed the challenges for childminders implementing Síolta and Aistear.

There were 12 workshops offered throughout the day and delegates could choose to participate in 4 workshops related to four different themes of Aistear.

76 % of Seminar attendees thought that speakers were excellent and gave a good insight into Aistear. 100 % of delegates enjoyed the workshop selection.

Who attended the event?

89 childminders/childcare practitioners from Dublin City, Fingal, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown, South County Dublin, and Wicklow counties attended the Seminar. 76% of delegates are currently providing childminding services and two of the delegates indicated their intention to start childminding within the year. 15% of Seminar attendees were childcare providers from sessional and full-time childcare services in Dublin City. We also had 5 students from various colleges in attendance.

Delegate fees were kept to a minimum. An early booking fee was offered at €15 per person. After the early booking deadline the fee was increased to €20 per delegate. Seminar fees covered a delegate information pack, including the Aistear manual and a USB memory stick with uploaded Voluntary Notification information.

Evaluation forms revealed that 82% of Seminar attendees thought that the Seminar was excellent value for money and 16% thought it was good value for money.

What did delegates have to say about the workshop selection and content?

I have loads of new ideas for the children that I mind.

I enjoyed the combination of practical and theory.

I enjoyed the atmosphere and group participation and relevance to Aistear.

The materials and examples were fantastic.

All workshops were relevant to my work.

The Seminar Programme

The Seminar programme offered a day packed with speakers and workshop choices. Following morning refreshments on arrival, delegates were initially welcomed to the 'Quality Childminding for All' Seminar by Joe Rynn, Manager of Dublin City Childcare Committee and the opening address was given by An Cathaoirleach Cllr. John Bailey from Dun Laoghaire Rathdown. Dr. Mary Daly introduced Aistear to the audience of childminders.

The Seminar was closed by Patricia Murray of Childminding Ireland. Patricia reflected on the journey of introducing Síolta to childminders so far and connecting Síolta and Aistear as framework for early years' education in Ireland.

The final part of the Seminar included a raffle. Each exhibitor donated a prize of an educational toy or any other educational material worth €50 towards the raffle.

74 % of Seminar participants returned evaluation forms and all Seminar attendees received a Certificate of participation.

Seminar moments and highlights were captured on film by Peter McGeough and his assistant, Karen.

'I did enjoy the practical nature of the workshops.'

'All the workshops were brilliant – they provided valuable learning experiences.'

'Time flew!'



*Enjoying Irish with young Children' presented by
Áine Ó Súilleabháin*

*Aistear theme: **Communicating***

GUEST SPEAKERS

Dr. Mary Daly, NCCA

'Introducing Aistear to Childminders'

Dr. Daly gave an overview of Aistear and spoke of Aistear's relevance to childminders. She introduced the 12 principles of Aistear and demonstrated a few practical visual examples of how Síolta and Aistear can be applied in a childminding setting. She also gave information on assessing and using online toolkit of Aistear.



Dr. Mary Daly, NCCA

Patricia Murray, Childminding Ireland

'Linking Síolta and Aistear'

Patricia reflected on her journey as Síolta coordinator for childminders. She pointed out that more supports were needed and she was pleased to introduce a full-time quality officer who would directly work towards the implementation of Síolta and Aistear.

Patricia talked about the complimentary qualities of Síolta and Aistear. She pointed out that the four themes of Aistear directly relate to the Síolta Standards and gave practical examples to help to see the linkages between the two frameworks.

WORKSHOP SESSIONS

Childminders were invited to enjoy a day of 12 workshops on the four themes of Aistear. Each participant attended two workshops in the morning and two in the afternoon. The day was designed in a way that each delegate was able to attend one workshop for each theme of Aistear.

The day was divided into two sessions. Session 1 offered a choice of 6 workshops on the themes of **Well-being and Identity & Belonging**. On the theme of **Identity & Belonging** childminders could choose from the following workshops: 'The Runaway Tractor' presented by Kate Brown; 'Secondary Attachment' presented by Kate Byrne; and 'Exploring and Learning about the Five Senses' presented by Helen Maher. The theme of **Well-being** was addressed in the following workshops: 'Promoting Young Children's Language and Communication Development' presented by Sarah McGlinn; 'Connecting Children to the Outdoors' presented by Steve Goode; and 'Supporting Children's Well-being at Times of Transition', presented by Mary O'Kane.

The afternoon session offered 6 more workshops on the themes of **Communicating** and **Exploring & Thinking**. The theme of **Communicating** was introduced at the following workshops: 'Starting with Story', presented by Doireann Sheridan; 'Bring a puppet to Life', presented by Helen Maher; and 'Enjoying Irish with Young Children', presented by Áine Ó Súilleabháin. To better understand the theme of **Exploring & Thinking** childminders were offered the following workshops: 'Imagined Worlds', presented by Deirdre O'Dwyer; 'Making Science Fun for Young Children', presented by Christine Campbell; and 'Exploring and Thinking through Play', presented by Carol Duffy.

The majority of the workshops demonstrated a hands-on and interactive approach to learning.

Workshops



'Enjoying Irish with young Children' by Áine Ó Súilleabháin

*Aistear theme: **Communicating***



'The Runaway Tractor' presented by Kate Brown
Aistear theme: **Identity & Belonging**



'All the workshops were brilliant – valuable learning experience'.

'The materials and examples were fantastic'.

'I welcome the examples and ideas, practical doing is learning'.

*Helen Maher's workshop 'Exploring and Learning about the Five Senses'
Aistear theme: **Identity & Belonging***



'Thanks to you guys for such a brilliant day at the Childminding conference. Another excellent day and the workshops were so helpful. Thoroughly enjoyed it'.

EXHIBITS AND INFORMATION STANDS

Delegates were given the opportunity to browse through a variety of exhibits and information stands on display during the morning registration time and during their lunch break. Exhibitors came from all over Ireland to showcase a variety of their newest educational materials and equipment, books and services.



Jago and Usborne Books

EXHIBITORS



An Mála Mór



Sensational Kids

51% of delegates found the exhibits and information stands excellent and 38% found them good.

Some overall comments from delegates regarding the Seminar

This was a very worthwhile seminar. It gave a great insight into Aistear.

An absolutely brilliant day. Well organized. Looking forward to the next one.

Do another seminar, at least quarterly.

Wish I could have a longer time in each workshop.

Lots of fun ideas – delighted!

Very friendly atmosphere throughout, excellent organization.

Excellent location, excellent ideas, tutors and a great way to see we are ‘professionals’.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Seminar Organising Committee would like to acknowledge the following individuals for their help and assistance in making the Seminar 'Quality Childminding for All' a great success:

- The Managers/Coordinators of involved City/County Childcare Committees (Joe Rynn, DCCC; Michele Relihan, DLRCCC; Gráinne McKenna, FCCC; Jean Courtney, SCDCC; Jeremy Kynaston, WCCC).
- Peter McGeough and Karen for photography and web footage of the event.
- Helen Ryan and her team at Bewleys Leopardstown Hotel.
- And lastly, a huge thanks to the DCCC Staff Team (Geraldine, Jeanette, Ciara and Eimear) for lending a hand and providing tremendous support throughout the planning period and on the day of the Seminar.

QUALITY CHILD MINDING FOR ALL

Best Practice Seminar 2011



Dublin City
CHILD CARE COMMITTEE LTD
COMITÉ CÚRAIM LEANAÍ CHONTAE BHAILE ÁRDA



south dublin county
CHILD CARE
COMITÉ



Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown
County Childcare Committee



WICKLOW COUNTY CHILD CARE COMMITTEE LTD.



FINGAL COUNTY
CHILD CARE COMMITTEE
COISTE CÚRAIM LEANAÍ CHONTAE FHINE GALL



Féidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive



An Foinn Lárnál
agus Gníótha Oige
Department of
Children and Youth Affairs



pobal
government supporting communities