

## ***AIM Programme 2020/2021***

### ***Temporary changes for new applications given current Covid-19 restrictions***

#### **Completing the application form/access and inclusion profile**

Childcare providers in partnership with the child's parent/carer/legal guardian should complete the AIM application form/access and inclusion profile.

Where it is not possible for the parent/carer/legal guardian to attend the service due to Covid-19 restrictions, the application should be completed jointly over the phone or via video call.

#### **AIM Informed Consent**

Confirmation of parental consent is essential in order to process an AIM application. In normal circumstances, signed consent must be submitted with the application on submission. If, due to Covid-19 restrictions, a parent is unable to provide a signed consent form to the ECCE service in person, a scanned or photographed copy, attached to an email from the parent/s to the ECCE service is acceptable.

In exceptional cases, if a parent is unable to print, complete and sign the AIM Informed consent form, an email to the ECCE provider to confirm that the parent/s have read and understood the AIM informed consent document and give their consent for the application to be made and processed by Pobal will be accepted. In such cases, the provider will need to submit to Better Start the AIM Informed consent form signed by the parent/s once the child has started in the service.

#### **Level 7 Observations process**

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, an additional step in determining Level 7 support in the preschool will need to take place due to service closures and in the absence of completing observation visits for programme call 2020/21.

This will involve an AIM Early Years Specialist conducting an additional phone review with the parent/carer/legal guardian using a parent's questionnaire based on the Access and Inclusion Profile to seek additional information. This is to support the current application process in the absence of an observation visit due to Covid-19 restrictions. The AIM Early Years Specialist will discuss this with the provider during the phone review. Observation visits will take place once the service is re-opened and we have been advised it is appropriate to do so.

#### **Level 5 Equipment**

Due to current restrictions, the timeframe for procuring and supplying approved AIM Level 5 equipment may be longer than anticipated. We will be keeping timeframes under constant review and will communicate directly with applicants should a delay occur.