National Childcare Scheme (NCS)
Compliance Inspections 2025/2026
Compliance Checklist for ELC and SAC Approved Providers

NOTE TO APPROVED PROVIDERS: It is the responsibility of the approved provider to ensure compliance with their regulatory and contractual requirements. This checklist is intended for information purposes only and is not exhaustive.

It is essential that approved providers are familiar with the scheme information including the NCS Approved Provider Funding Agreement (including all appendices), NCS Policy Guidelines, and relevant guidance documents and resources available on the Hive.

For further information please refer to the NCS Compliance Guide for Approved Providers available on the Hive.

In order to minimise disruption to the approved provider's operation, Pobal recommend that approved providers collate information for review on these inspections in a Compliance File which is readily available and on-site at all times. This File should not contain any information which is not relevant to the Compliance checks as outlined below (e.g. staff files, etc.). Attendance Records and Fee Records should also be easily accessible.

The following is a guide as to the types of information that Visit Officers will seek to review during a Compliance Inspection.

Please tick ☐

Compliance File		
1	Is the Compliance File readily available and is information up to date?	Yes☐

It is recommended that the following be kept in the Compliance File:

Tusla Registration		
2	Is the most up to date Tusla Registration Certificate available for review? Is the approved provider operating in line with their current Tusla registration levels?	Yes☐ Yes☐
Parent Statements		
3	Is there a signed and dated parent statement on file per family of all currently registered children? Note: Parent statements should be signed by the parent/guardian	Yes☐
Education Stage Check		
4	If School Age childcare is offered, are the school calendars on file for any schools where NCS children attend, including school's opening hours?	Yes☐

The following must also be kept on site and available for review:

Fee Records/Fees Charged (Co-Payment)		
5	Are there adequate fee records on-site for each child for the period under review, which will enable confirmation of the co-payments charged to parent/guardians? Fee Records maintained should clearly demonstrate the co-payment received each week/month. If direct debit is applicable, access to records must be available on-site (this can be online access).	Yes ☐
6	Is the co-payment (fee) charged to parents in line with the Hive registered fees minus the subsidy received?	Yes ☐
7	Are parents/guardians of sponsor referral children benefiting from subsidised childcare without having to pay any co-payment, including charges for optional extras?	Yes ☐ N/A ☐
Attendance Records		
8	Are there adequate attendance records on-site for each session and/or room for the period under review? Attendance records are to be maintained by staff in each room, recording the children's times in and out as they arrive and depart the care of staff as well as any non-attendance (e.g. absences). If the information recorded in these records is transcribed to an office record or master sheet, or is exported from an electronic system, the original record must be maintained and available for inspection. **Note:** Approved providers are to ensure all attendance records for a minimum of the previous 12 months, are available on-site at all times.	Yes ☐
9	Are the attendance records (e.g. Roll Books, Weekly Attendance Sheets) maintained and structured adequately to allow for easy and efficient monitoring of child attendance in each session and/or room? Do the attendance records enable the easy and efficient completion of weekly Hive returns and the identification of any claim amendment requirements in line with the NCS guidelines? The same applies if attendance records are maintained in an electronic format/software package. The package should have the functionality to generate weekly or monthly attendance reports by programme, child, and/or room. Where NCS registered children avail of Breakfast Clubs and occasional camps (e.g. during Halloween, Easter, Summer holidays) attendance records must also be maintained and available for review at compliance inspections.	Yes ☐

The following should be up to date and maintained accurately:

Hive Claims		
10	Are all NCS Claims on the Hive accurate and reflective of actual levels of attendance? Example: correct start/end dates, correct number of weekly hours claimed (i.e. reflect the hours actually attended), correct hours based on education stage. Attendance records should be monitored to ensure claims are accurate.	Yes ☐
11	Did all NCS children registered on the Hive take up their place in the registered facility?	Yes ☐
12	Are all NCS registered children registered to the correct facility on the Hive i.e. the facility they are attending?	Yes ☐
13	Are all NCS children who are registered on the Hive and attending the facility, recorded in the attendance records?	Yes ☐
14	Are all weekly Hive reporting returns completed and up to date?	Yes ☐
15	Have weekly Hive returns been submitted accurately by the approved provider, reporting on all leavers, absenteeism of 4 or more consecutive weeks, and/or under attendance of 8 or more consecutive weeks as per the attendance records maintained?	Yes ☐ N/A ☐
16	Has approval for special circumstances been sought in relation to extended absences and/or under-attendances, in line with the Policy Guidelines? **Note:** Exemption application forms are available in the NCS Documents section of the Hive.	Yes ☐ N/A ☐
Hive Fee Table		
17	Does the Hive Fee Table comply with programme requirements and accurately reflect the actual fees charged for each childcare place?	Yes ☐
18	Are all the sessions offered by the service included on the Hive Fee Table?	Yes ☐
Service Calendar/Closures		
19	Are the correct opening hours recorded on the active Hive Service Calendar? **Note:** Please remember to ensure your Hive registered Service Calendar is up to date and in line with any changes to operating times e.g. changes at mid-term, Summer time, etc.	Yes ☐
20	Does the Service Calendar on the Hive reflect all planned and unplanned closure days (subsidised and/or unsubsidised) as evidenced from the attendance records? **Note:** Please remember to ensure your Hive registered Service Calendar includes all future closure dates that will occur	Yes ☐

	throughout the year.	
21	**Force majeure closures** – applications must be submitted to Pobal within 5 days of the onset of the event. **Note:** Force Majeure Application Form is available in the NCS Documents section of the Hive.	Yes☐