

**Expert Group to develop a new Funding Model for
Early Learning and Care and School Age Childcare**

Practical and Logistical Arrangements

Updated June 2021

1. Key contact points

The members of the Secretariat for the Expert Group on the Funding Model are listed below.

Secretariat members	Contact about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gillian Martin, Assistant Principal, Early Years Policy and Strategy Email: Gillian.Martin@equality.gov.ie Phone: 01 647 3104 	Expert Group papers, Research Partnership, Engagement and Consultation, Media Meeting management, finance, governance and other logistical or practical issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Andrew Burrows, Administrative Officer, Early Years Policy and Strategy Email: Andrew.Burrows@equality.gov.ie Phone: 01 664 2033 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jessica Ray, Executive Officer, Early Years Policy and Strategy Email: Jessica.Ray@equality.gov.ie Phone: 01 647 3065 	

The general mailbox for the funding model project is FundingModel@equality.gov.ie

2. Meeting location and arrangements

Since the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic, meetings have taken place on virtual platforms. Meetings between May and October 2020 took place via Skype for Business. Meetings from November 2020 onwards will take place via Webex. It is anticipated that all future meetings will take place on Webex, subject to travel and meeting restrictions.

Any in-person meetings of the Expert Group which might happen will take place at the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) HQ located at:

Miesian Plaza
Block 1, 50-58 Baggot Street Lower
Dublin 2 | D02 XW14

In the event that an in-person meeting cannot be held here, the alternative venue will be nearby. Lunch will be provided onsite and special dietary requirements should be communicated to the Secretariat a week prior to a meeting.

3. Schedule of Meetings

The Expert Group first met on 29th and 30th October 2019.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Group reassessed the original meeting schedule. Below is the

current meeting schedule:

2019	October: Tuesday 29 th & Wednesday 30 th December: Thursday 12 th
2020	January: Wednesday 22 nd May: Tuesday 19 th & Wednesday 20 th June: Thursday 25 th June July: Wednesday 29 th July September: Wednesday 2 nd & Wednesday 23 rd October: Wednesday 28 th November: Wednesday 25 th & Thursday 26 th December: Wednesday 16 th & Thursday 17 th
2021	January: Wednesday 20 th & Thursday 21 st February: Wednesday 24 th & Friday 25 th March: Thursday 25 th April: Wednesday 28 th & Thursday 29 th May: Wednesday 26 th June: Wednesday 23 rd & Thursday 24 th July: Wednesday 28 th & Thursday 29 th September: Wednesday 22 nd & Thursday 23 rd October: Wednesday 27 th & Thursday 28 th November: Wednesday 24 th

Start and end times for each meeting will be agreed in advance.

3.1. Attendance

Only appointed members of the Group may attend meetings; substitutes/alternates may not attend in their place.

4. Documentation

4.1. Pre Meeting

Save in exceptional circumstances and with the agreement of the Chair, the agenda and any papers required for a meeting will be circulated to group members by email at least one week in advance of a meeting to allow adequate time for consideration. Members will be expected to have read these papers in advance of the meeting.

4.2. Post Meeting

Minutes to record decisions taken and actions agreed will issue from the Secretariat within a week of each meeting.

5. Processes of working

5.1. Decisions

Decisions will normally be made by consensus rather than by formal vote.

5.2. Best interests of Expert Group

Each member is expected to act independently, with integrity and in the best interests of the Expert Group. Any actual or perceived conflicts of interest should be brought to the attention of the Chair as soon as possible.

5.3. Publication of papers

The submission of working papers to the Expert Group by the Secretariat and Research Partner/s will inform the agenda of the Expert Group. Following consideration of each working paper, it is proposed that the Expert Group would have the option of publishing the paper and/or developing a short position paper outlining its reflections and views on the issues raised in the working paper.

6. Confidentiality and public commentary

Members are asked to treat Expert Group discussions, information and documentation as confidential during the lifespan of the project and thereafter.

In particular, individual members should not engage in any media, political or public discourse about the project unless otherwise agreed by the Group itself for a particular purpose. Any queries from the media should be directed to the Secretariat.

7. Lobbying

There will be opportunities for engagement with stakeholders throughout the duration of project. However, given the anticipated high level of interest in the work of the Expert Group, it is possible that individual members may be approached by interested parties seeking to outline their position or exert influence. In such an event, members should explain that they are not permitted to discuss the work of the Expert Group outside the established processes, and advise the relevant party to contact a member of the Secretariat to explore how their input can best be considered. If the party persists, they should be informed that the member will be advising the Secretariat accordingly.

8. Travel & Accommodation

Members of the Expert Group who are travelling from abroad are requested to identify the economy class flights that will best match the meeting times and their circumstances. The details of these flights should be submitted to Andrew Burrows (details above) for approval to book. The cost of flights may be refunded in advance of the meeting on receipt of booking confirmation received by the Secretariat. Please note that, should a group member have to cancel the flight for personal reasons, the cost should be borne by the group member and the amount refunded to the Department. Where accommodation is required, this will be reserved and paid for by DCYA.

9. Expenses

Where Expert Group members incur out of pocket expenses related to attending meetings (e.g. travel expenses, meals etc.¹) these can be recouped upon submission of vouched receipts to the Secretariat. Please contact Andrew Burrows.

10. Professional Fees

Where professional fees are charged by Expert Group members, these will be sanctioned by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and managed by the Secretariat. Payments will be made by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth within 30 days of receipt of an invoice. Relevant taxes will apply.

¹ Circular 13/2019 Domestic Subsistence Allowances. Available at: <https://circulars.gov.ie/pdf/circular/per/2019/13.pdf>)