

Minister announces first ever minimum pay rates for childcare sector ^[1]

Author: Mulcahy, Nick

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AVAILABILITY

Minister **Damien English** has announced Employment Regulation Orders which will see minimum pay rates for childcare sector to take effect from 15 September 2022.

The Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail said new minimum hourly rates of pay for various roles will be as follows:

- €13.00 for Early Years Educators/ School-Age Childcare practitioners
- €14.00 for Early Years Lead Educators / School-Age Childcare co-ordinators
- €15.50 Graduate Early Years Lead Educators / School-Age Childcare co-ordinators
- €15.70 for Deputy Managers
- €16.50 for Managers
- €17.25 for Graduate Managers.

The minister said the Orders are being supported by government's €221m Core Funding Scheme announced as part of Budget 2022, which will see increases in taxpayer funding for the sector.

The commencement date for the Orders coincides with the official launch of Core Funding.

"The proposals submitted to me will apply to some 27,000 staff and are a welcome acknowledgement of the importance of the work carried out by everyone working in the early learning and childcare sector," the minister stated.

"The Early Years Services Joint Labour Committee is a good example of how effective the reformed Joint Labour Committee system can be when representatives of employees and employers voluntarily negotiate together to identify a mutually beneficial agreement."

The government estimates that three out of four people working in the sector will see their wages rise as a result of the Employment Regulation Orders.

The wages of 50% of employees in the sector are expected to rise by 10% or more, and the wages of 20% of employees are expected to rise by 20% or more.

SIPTU activist **Deborah Reynolds** commented: "The ERO marks an historic day for our profession. After years of campaigning, we finally have our first pay deal.

"Our profession is 98% female. We educate and care for tens of thousands of children every day yet our profession has been one of the lowest paid jobs in Ireland. Up to now a majority of Early Years educators have earned below the Living Wage of €12.90."

SIPTU Head of Organising **Darragh O'Connor** said: "Low pay has caused a staffing crisis in Early Years as services struggle to recruit and retain staff. This pay deal, and future pay increases, means that Early Years professionals can plan to stay in their chosen profession in the long term.

"These incredible union activists and members are an example to all low paid workers and show that when you get together and organise a union you can change things for the better."

Region: Europe ^[2]

Tags: early childhood education and care workforce ^[3]

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