

Early years #GE16 - Affordable, quality, accessible ^[1]

Author: Start Strong

Source: Start Strong

Format: Report

Publication Date: 15 Feb 2016

AVAILABILITY

Full report PDF ^[2]

Early Years – paid parental leave and childcare – is one of the big themes of the 2016 General Election in Ireland, and all political parties have made commitments in the area. Here’s a summary of what we believe the next government should do, and how the political parties manifestos measure up.

Affordable, quality, accessible childcare

Irish parents pay some of the highest childcare costs in the world, without any guarantee of quality for their children. The vast majority of childminders are not subject to any regulation.

What should the next Government do?

1. Develop subsidised quality childcare places
2. Link funding to quality
3. Cap prices
4. Invest in quality
5. Regulate childminders and include them within subsidised childcare plans

What do the politicians say?

All parties have plans to make childcare more affordable. Approaches differ, however. Fianna Fáil and Renua have called for tax relief for childcare costs, despite the international evidence that tax relief doesn't work. Other parties have focused on subsidised childcare (Fine Gael, Social Democrats, Labour, Sinn Féin) with most of those also proposing to cap fees for parents (Labour, Sinn Féin, Social Democrats).

Most parties have promised to support the professionalisation of the early years workforce, with several committing to introduce salary scales (Fianna Fáil, Labour, Sinn Féin). Most parties have also made commitments to invest in quality and some have committed to the regulation of childminders (Labour).

Parties have tried to ensure accessibility, through a range of proposals, investing in infrastructure (Renua), forward planning for early years services (Labour) and to open public funding to childminders (Labour).

Some parties have further commitments in their childcare policies - here, we only look at the manifestos.

Region: Europe ^[3]

Tags: federal election ^[4]

general election ^[5]

Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/16/03/early-years-ge16-affordable-quality-accessible>

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/16/03/early-years-ge16-affordable-quality-accessible> ^[2]

[http://www.startstrong.ie/files/Manifesto_Analysis.pdf?](http://www.startstrong.ie/files/Manifesto_Analysis.pdf?utm_source=Early%20Years%20update%2023%20February%202016&utm_campaign=Manifesto%20analysis&utm_medium=email)

[utm_source=Early%20Years%20update%2023%20February%202016&utm_campaign=Manifesto%20analysis&utm_medium=email](http://www.startstrong.ie/files/Manifesto_Analysis.pdf?utm_source=Early%20Years%20update%2023%20February%202016&utm_campaign=Manifesto%20analysis&utm_medium=email) ^[3]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/region/europe> ^[4] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/federal-election> ^[5]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/general-election>