

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

Statement in response to developments at the Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education

At its scheduled meeting yesterday, it was confirmed to the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment that the Department of Education and Science had decided to end the sanction for the Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education with effect from the end of September.

The Council expressed its disappointment at this decision, and noted that the loss of the Centre as a partner in the Council's work on early childhood education would be significant. The Centre had been a key strategic partner in the NCCA's work on the recently completed Framework for Early Learning.

The Council expressed concern that the future feasibility of the Framework was called into question by the closure. Such uncertainty jeopardised the considerable investment of public money, agency time, and national and international expertise in the development of the Framework to date, just as the Framework had reached the stage of implementation in the early childhood sector.

While the Council noted the intention to continue some aspects of the centre's work within the Department of Education and Science, it urged that every effort would be made to maintain the strategic coherence and internationally regarded expertise that the centre brought to the early childhood sector. The Council stressed the importance of maintaining confidence in government commitment to early childhood education. It asked for speedy action to be taken to ensure that voices and insights of the sector, which CECDE brought to the NCCA, would continue to be heard and represented at the Council and its committees and working groups.

The Council is seeking an urgent meeting with officials of the Department of Education and Science on this matter.

Ends.