You must apply for the subsidy, but it is paid directly to your childcare provider. Your provider then will subtract your subsidy from your childcare bill.

Outside term time (during school holidays), parents are entitled to the maximum number of childcare hours they have been awarded. During term time, this is reduced. See the tables below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Maximum number of wrap-around hours per week** | **Term-time hours** | **Outside term-time hours** |
| **Enhanced hours subsidy** | **Standard hours subsidy** | **Enhanced hours subsidy** | **Standard hours subsidy** |
| ECCE (pre-school) | 30 | 0 | 45 | 20 |
| Junior and senior infants | 23 | 0 | 45 | 20 |
| 1st - 6th class | 18 | 0 | 45 | 20 |
| Secondary school | 15 | 0 | 45 | 20 |

If your child is in pre-school or school and you are entitled to the **standard hours subsidy** (20 hours of subsidised childcare per week), you can only use these 20 hours for childcare during school holidays and mid-term breaks (not during term time).

The National Childcare Scheme rates are:

|  |
| --- |
| **Income-assessed subsidy** |
| **Reckonable income** | **Rate per hour (0-1 years)** | **Rate per hour (1-3 years)** | **Rate per hour (over 3, not yet in school)** | **Rate per hour (school age and up to 15)** |
| €26,000 or under | €5.10 | €4.35 | €3.95 | €3.75 |
| €27,500 | €4.90 | €4.18 | €3.78 | €3.58 |
| €32,500 | €4.22 | €3.61 | €3.19 | €3.03 |
| €37,500 | €3.54 | €3.05 | €2.61 | €2.48 |
| €42,500 | €2.87 | €2.48 | €2.03 | €1.93 |
| €47,500 | €2.19 | €1.92 | €1.45 | €1.38 |
| €52,500 | €1.51 | €1.35 | €0.87 | €0.83 |
| €57,500 to €60,000 | €0.84 | €0.78 | €0.33 | €0.33 |

You are entitled to the maximum subsidy rates if your reckonable income is €26,000 or less. Your subsidy rate decreases as your income increases up to the threshold of €60,000.