



Childcare

Childcare Assistants work with children in a variety of settings. These can include Preschools and Creches, Montessori Groups, Play Groups and Play Schemes, Community run Facilities, Naionraí and child-minding in the home.

Modes of provision include sessional care facilities, full day care, child minders, drop in centres, parent and toddler groups and after school care such as homework clubs.

Childcare workers are also found in educational settings for example Special Needs Assistants in Schools and Montessori Teachers in Preschools and Montessori Schools.



Types of jobs within this Sector:

Childcare Assistant: A childcare assistant's duties may include maintaining a safe play environment, observing and monitoring play activities, dressing and changing children, communicating with children's parents/guardians about daily activities and behaviours, identifying signs of emotional or developmental problems in children, instructing children in health and personal habits while supporting children's emotional and social development.

Qualifications: Employers generally look for a minimum of a full QQI Level 5 Childcare qualification. From September 2015 all staff in early years services will need to have at least a full QQI Level 5 qualification and all Preschool Room Leaders will need at least a full QQI Level 6 qualification.

Special Needs Assistant: Special Needs Assistants help children with a wide range of learning, physical and/or behavioural difficulties. SNAs are recruited specifically to work in an educational context.

Qualifications: Currently the minimum required standard to work as an SNA is a QQI Level 3 major award OR a minimum of 3 grade D's in the Junior Certificate OR an equivalent qualification. In practice however most employers will look for a Level 5 QQI in childcare.

Montessori Teacher: Montessori Teachers help children reach their full potential through the application of the theories and practices of Maria Montessori.

Qualifications: To become a registered Montessori teacher requires a minimum of 3 years full-time study and a Level 8 Montessori qualification. Depending on the employer it may not be necessary to be a fully registered teacher and there are jobs available with requirements for less than Level 8 qualifications.

Personal Qualities looked for:

- Excellent communication/listening skills
- Strong organisational/time-management skills
- Good teamwork skills
- Knowledge of child development
- Reasonably good level of physical fitness
- Reliability
- Patience
- Respect
- Nurturing
- Responsible/Reliable

Salaries / Payscale:

- Childcare Assistants – average of €9.41 per hour (www.payscale.com)
- Special Needs Assistants from €21,359 rising with increments to €37,339
- Montessori – varies with qualifications and role.

Employment Trends in this area:

While there is no skills shortage in the childcare sector right now, there is a high level (20%) of turnover, creating a number of vacancies for childcare workers.

Occupations in Demand:

- Childcare Assistants
- Special Needs Assistants
- Pre-school Room Leaders

Source:

- **Childcare Courses - Further Education (part-time)**

Course Provider	Course Title	QQI Level	Duration
LCETB Clare BTEI	Childcare	Level 5 (full award)	2 years
Ennis College of Further Education - Night Class Programme	Childcare	Level 5 (minor awards) Level 6 (minor awards)	Various modules available part time
St Joseph's Secondary School, Spanish Point	Childcare with SNA Childcare	Level 5 (minor award) Level 6 (minor award)	Contact college
Limerick College of Further Education	Childcare	Level 5 (minor awards) Level 6 (minor awards)	Various modules available - 12 weeks per module

- **Childcare Courses- Further Education (full-time)**

Course Provider	Course Title	QQI Level	Duration
Ennis College of Further Education	Early Childhood Care and Education with SNA	Level 5	1 year
Ennis College of Further Education	Advanced Childcare	Level 6	1 year
LCETB VTOS Kilrush	Early Childhood Care and Education	Level 5	2 years
St Patricks, Shannon	Early Childhood Care and Education	Level 5	1 year
Mary Immaculate College, Lisdoonvarna	Early Childhood Care and Education	Level 5	1 year
Mary Immaculate College, Lisdoonvarna	Early Childhood Care and Education	Level 6	1 year
Limerick College of Further Education	Early Childhood Care & Education with Montessori also SNA option	Level 5	1 year
Limerick College of Further Education	Advanced Early Childhood Care and Education	Level 6	1 year

- **Childcare Courses – Higher Education**

Course Title	Provider	QQI Level	Duration
Early Childhood Care and Education	Mary Immaculate College, Limerick	Level 8	4 years
Early Childhood Studies and Practice	NUI Galway	Level 7/8	3/4 year (part time)



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