



MACROOM FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE



Annual Report 2021-2022



Chairpersons Address / Organisational Overview



February 2022

It's with some nervousness that I can finally welcome our emergence from a long two years of local, National, and international lockdown due to Covid-19. The scars have cut deeply into the fabric of our communities and the subsequent problems are already impacting on everyday life, such as the increased cost of operating homes and businesses due to inflation and global unrest.

As I write this report, I am informed that this week commencing 14th February 2022 we have six staff members absent with Covid related issues / illnesses. This is our current reality! and it hasn't changed for two years. I know that Seamus and his team will have to immediately assess absence levels and to curtail services to manageable levels to ensure compliance with ratios and standards. This is our reality! I know that parents and guardians will now have to be informed that services may be cancelled or curtailed, which will necessitate sourcing childcare elsewhere or changing work schedules. This is the reality for parents!

I'd like for my report for the period February 2021 to February 2022 to focus on the lessons that we might learn from the experiences of the past year and perhaps how our practices may evolve as a result, of our innovative approaches to the pandemic.

One of the main features of our work over the past year has been the concentration on working in smaller groups or Pods in an effort, to reduce the spread of infection. Although this practice has limited our child numbers at times, it has contributed towards enhancing the individual child attention with our staff. We intend to continue to work in small groups of children, when possible, in our future work & to continue to provide our children with a balance of valuable interaction with other children while ensuring maximum support from staff.

In addition to working in small groups, outside activities have become even more of a daily feature in MFRC and this is as a direct consequence of Covid-19. Our outdoor facilities were enhanced during 2021 with the addition of a 100 square metre, roofed and ventilated space for our, under twos. This facility has enabled us to guarantee outdoor activity for this age group without encroaching on



the older children who have fuller access to the main play area.

TUSLA and Pobal have recommenced on-site inspections since the beginning of 2022. Although facilities such as ours greatly welcome the need for standards on a Childcare level and on a financial level, I really must ask for more understanding and latitude when it comes to approach. Inspections tend to be a tick box exercise and lacking in flexibility when it comes to understanding circumstances. At a time when, most employers and in particular Childcare employers would heap praise on the Government for the supports that were given over the past two years, it would be a shame to spoil the entire process by rushing back to a system that was already flawed. It's time to regroup, review, learn lessons and proceed on an improved path together.

This virus has challenged every aspect of our practices in our social, family and work environments. I have never been so proud to be associated with a body of people such as we have in Macroom FRC over the past year. Despite the home pressures that, each and every one of our staff and volunteers were inevitably experiencing, our people have faced up to Covid-19 in a professional, committed and resourceful manner. We have shown ourselves to be, absolutely, responsible, and capable of doing the best job possible in very difficult circumstances.

Macroom 2021

My fellow volunteers listened intently to the reports of how MFRC was being impacted by Covid-19. I've already written about the daily impacts on staff and child absences, but we also experienced significant increases in demands for counselling supports for children, families, and adults, all of whom have reached out for supports in dealing with individual, family and social issues impacting on their lives.

Our counselling in 2021 went up three-fold on the previous years.

- Children experiencing difficulties with the social isolation, caused by school closures.
- Children and adults feeling the effects of social isolation as a direct consequence of living/ working/schooling alone and without social peers.



- Families pressurised, by financial and social isolation. Many of whom were and are at breaking point.

You might be forgiven for thinking that I'm talking about Dublin or Cork, but this has been our experience in Macroom 2021.

In 2021 we became part of the Governments' response to tackle this pandemic and we made, a decision, to buy into, and trust that the national response would eventually see us through this emergency. This required the following:

- To Cease and/or limit services as and when requested in accordance with Government Health advice.
- To place all, of our staff on the government pandemic payment subsidy, which guaranteed net wage payments for the duration of scheme.
- To sacrifice all independent user fees to the Centre for the period of reduced numbers which has impacted on any projected income and possible developments.
- To operate our services in a manner that was fully compliant with best practice advice, i.e., very restricted admission to the Centre, service and group separation, enhanced cleaning, childcare through "POD" formation.

Sourcing additional and enhanced funding to support the Community in Macroom through Counselling and Child Access became a priority in 2021. We are delighted to say that in response to our requests we secured additional funding for Counselling in 2021 which has been continued in 2022. We also secured our first ever direct funding for Child Access to enable this family support to be offered and delivered locally, taking away the need for people in West Cork to travel to Cork for family supports that are needed locally. TUSLA support in accessing and delivering these services are greatly appreciated.

Our Management

- Seamus and his team have made all, of the Board commitments and aspirations, a reality. We totally rely on our reporting mechanisms and on the expertise of our staff to

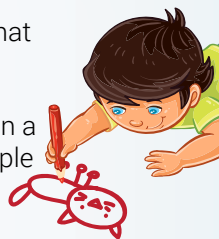


inform all, of our decisions, in terms of affordability, do-ability and sustainability.

- Adapting to an ever changing work and social environment has been a corner stone of our approach. This will continue during 2022 as we face a remodeled childcare funding programme. Yet to be announced in detail. The funding streams provided during Covid-19 have proven how the sector can benefit from core funding at a time when staffing is at an all-time low, costs are at an all-time high and pressures to deliver are immediate.
- Our team is already setting itself up for the next 5 years through a process of restructuring and re-evaluation of the work and responsibilities. MFRC will not be found wanting if there is capacity for improved working conditions or improved fee structures.

Our Staff

- It's easy for a Board to make decisions on what should be done for the benefit of an organisation or for a community, but it is the actual staff on the ground that we depend on to make our aspirations a reality.
- Childcare workers are under-paid and undervalued. In a rural location like Macroom, recruiting childcare people is extremely difficult. When MFRC opened in 2005, childcare training was a popular and well supported programme, provided locally. Trainees saw a future for themselves in childcare provision which included career progression, decent working conditions and adequate remuneration levels. None of these have come to fruition. Training levels in Macroom are limited to level 5 while Level 6 and higher is now becoming more of a minimum standard. Numbers in training for 2022 are practically nil. Who will travel from Cork or Killarney to Macroom to work in the current climate? If we don't produce our own workforce, we will need to look abroad and even this option guarantees us nothing.



- We were advised by health experts early in the pandemic that the risk of becoming infected in a childcare setting is very low, but not impossible. We know this is incorrect given the numbers of cases experienced in Macroom FRC and in other facilities. Our workers are still “Frontline Workers”
- Unlike other sectors, childcare workers are only paid for the hours that they work. Making the choice to stay out of work for personal or family reasons, normally has an immediate financial impact. Many childcare workers are not working as a choice but rather a risky necessity.
- We sincerely hope that future funding structures enable us to acknowledge and reward our staff for their contribution to seeing us through the last two years.

“Positive News”

New Childcare Service

Despite the challenges and difficulties experienced over the past two years Macroom FRC in partnership with St. Josephs Primary School opened a new childcare service on the grounds of the school. Given the difficulties in completing the project and securing registration our number of Pre-school children is low for our first year, but it is the intention to build on this innovation in the coming years. The facility is initially being offered as an additional Pre-school service in Macroom and eventually expand to provide After-schools services.



Networks

It's amazing how necessity continues to be the mother of invention. The benefits of working with and through other organisations and networks are most obvious during a crisis.

During 2021, we continued to network with our peer groups locally and regionally. We greatly value the support that we receive through two, particular networks, both of which operated via electronic support mechanisms.

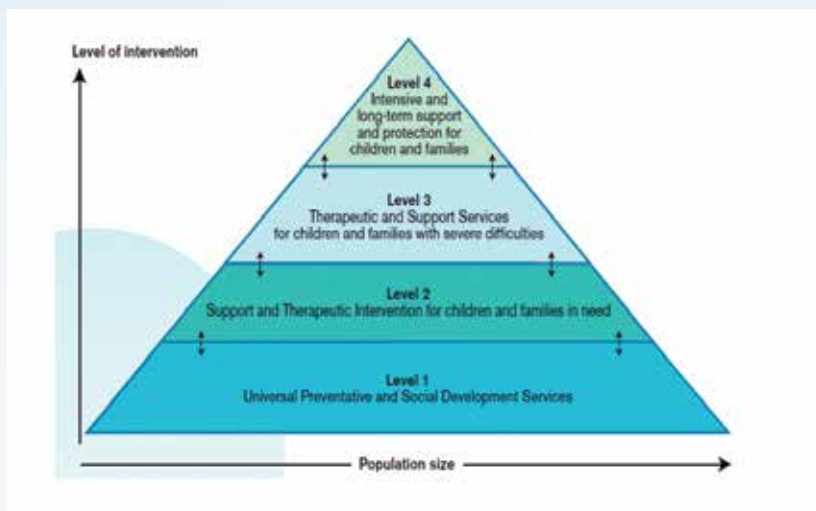
- The support group of local Macroom and state funded organisations which was established and facilitated by the HSE Community Work Department worked very well during 2021 despite the challenges. This group was primarily established to support the needs of the refugee community in Macroom. Our experience has been that the group informed itself exceptionally well, shared examples of approach and practice and succeeded in providing well planned and effective supports to the community.
- Also, during 2021, and because of the Covid-19 pandemic MFRC worked closely with the other Family Resource and Community Groupings in our region. This worked really helped to inform us about the challenges facing all such organisations and to share common experiences and possible actions. This Network was facilitated by TUSLA Community Support section and greatly benefitted Macroom FRC.

Challenges 2021

- It is our hope to influence and implement new and improved childcare structures and systems in MFRC as these come on stream.
- It will not be possible to get back to full work capacity overnight. This will need to be phased.
- We lost a number, of staff during 2020/2021 and we have not been in a position, to secure replacements. We anticipate difficulties in recruitment for replacement and for new service staffing, but this is a major challenge if we are to continue our supports in Macroom.



Measuring what we do



In Macroom FRC our workload is measured. We use a system called the “hardiker model”

- **Level One:** which is the main body of our service user population who avail of our universal services (56%)
- **Level Two:** reflects the service users in our Centre that require additional supports to access and participate effectively in their specific environment (12%)
- **Level Three:** for individuals and families who are part of our Counselling Programme, Aim Programme or Rainbows programme (20%). The demand at this level has greatly increased during 2021
- **Level Four:** for Service Users who use all or several our services and who require significant time and resource investment from our Centre (12%)



In comparison to more densely populated areas in the main cities our percentages in levels 3 & 4 would not be as high and therefore would not attract funding based on volume of needs. This is the challenge that faces Macroom and similar rural areas throughout the country.

How do we attract resourcing to local areas and limit the need to access services in the main cities?

Thanks to all those who contributed in any way to our work in 2021 / 2022. Our Service Users, Our Volunteers and Our Staff have all contributed greatly to the immense amount of valuable community activity which takes place in our Centre.

Thanks to my fellow Board Members and to our Manager Seamus for making my job as pleasant as possible under the extreme circumstances that we've worked for the past year.

Thank you most sincerely.

Olive O Riordan (Chairperson)



Secretary's Report to Annual General Meeting on Work and Activities (March 2022)

Secretarýs' Report

The Board

This report is for a period of 12 months from March 2021 to March 2022. My name is Norma O Connor and I'm currently Company Secretary for Macroom Family Resource Centre.

During the period March 2021 to March 2022, we met as a Board on 8 occasions, half of which were face to face and half via Zoom & always in accordance with Public Health Advice at that time. Our 2021 AGM was held on Wednesday 10th. March 2021.

As I write this report, I am reminded to point out that the past two weeks, i.e., 5th to the 19th of February 2022 has been the worst two weeks of the pandemic for Macroom FRC, in terms of actual impact on our people and services. A total of 14 staff, have been infected by this virus and we've had to curtail, restructure and, in some cases, cut services completely, in order to provide some services while maintaining childcare standards.

This is my organisational work report to the AGM of 9th March 2022.

The past year started positively with the advent of vaccinations for the general population in Ireland and the hope that we had at last put Covid-19 behind us. Unfortunately, this period has proven to be a continuation of 2020 in respect of our work and ambitions. As everyone now knows, the vaccination programme was a huge turning point for us all, but an immediate end to Covid was not to be, and initial vaccinations were followed by numbers two and three. From a work perspective our last year was not unlike the previous year with altered practices, reduced numbers of children, Staff illnesses and Government Subsidies. MFRC continued in our efforts to stay viable, adapt our operations, re-boot and reopen, stay safe, stay grounded and continue to impact positively on our community in Macroom.



Services Summary

Early Years

- MFRC Early Years services operated, under difficult circumstances, but continuously, for the past year.
- Underpinned by Health Guidance we worked through a POD system in all services, which was intended to minimise the contact levels of children and with adults as much as was feasible. Where possible we kept the same children with the same adults during this period and where this was not possible, we paid special attention to hygiene where adults passed between groups.
- Preschools were scheduled to operate for 10 months for the period of March 2021 to March 2022, and with a few Covid related breaks this was achieved for the 44 children involved.
- In September 2021 we opened a new Preschool facility on the grounds of St. Josephs Primary School on Chapel Hill. This addition to our services was a long-time in preparation and was delayed because of Covid-19 and Registration issues. This facility is registered for a further 18 children of Senior Preschool age.
- Childcare operated at reduced levels, for the entire year and only impacted from time to time by pandemic related breaks. Our services, during this period, looked after 38 children between Creche, Toddlers and Daycare ages.
- At this point in time, we are faced with waiting lists for children under two, and we are constantly examining our capacity to bring in new children at this age.

Counselling

- MFRC affordable counselling continued to provide services through a combination of direct face-to-face contact and Zoom meetings.
- Zoom counselling became a life saver for many service users in 2021 / 2022, and although this was not an ideal substitute



for face-to-face interventions, it did allow us to deliver community counselling to those who required this service. face-to-face interventions, it did allow us to deliver community counselling to those who required this service.

- In, most of the past year it has been possible to provide face-to-face counselling, as a result of, location modifications such as distancing, screens and hygiene protocols. This allowed some services to be delivered in a more personal setting.
- Our counselling service has been enhanced during 2021 with additional funds through Tusla who have recognised the increased demand on services and the contribution of the service to support local needs.
- Our experience during 2021 has been for a marked increase in the number of sessions requested and provided. We supported approximately 140 counselling sessions with 35 individual referrals. There has been a marked increase in the numbers of younger people using the service and whose personal and family problems / issues have been greatly exacerbated, because of isolation and the absence of socialisation.

Counseling, through Macroon FRC is described as a “low-cost model” whereby it is charged on an “ability to pay” basis.

Our Counseling Programme is funded by the Child and Family Agency (TUSLA).

We continue to provide a range of counseling options:

- One to one individual counseling.
- Relationship / Marriage counseling.
- Pre-accredited counseling for those who are willing to accept this.
- Rainbows group facilitation for Children who have experienced bereavement.
- Play therapy / counseling for some children.



Rainbows

This service did not operate during 2021.

We did not encourage the formation of groups, because of the pandemic and we followed the advice of the National Rainbows body in this regard.

Child Access

At last, during 2021 we made a breakthrough in respect of the provision of Child Access. As part of our core funding Tusla have provided a modest budget for the provision of this service locally in Macroom. It is always the case that the supports, directed at the most sensitive of cases are the ones that require the most attention and time, for us in MFRC. However, we are looking forward to professionalising this service for the local community during 2022. Already we are liaising with other services in the Cork to examine and adopt the practices / protocols that have worked well for them in delivering this service.

The nearest Supervision Centre outside of Macroom FRC is based in Cork City. Our service is fundamental in its nature and provides for Children to have Access to Parents in a safe environment which is neutral and away from difficult family situations. Our "Access Programme" is, without doubt an unrecognised resource for Macroom and it has taken a decade to secure direct funding for the service.

By its nature this type of support is provided in an atmosphere which is adversarial. This service has always tended to take up a disproportionate percentage of time and resources. When service users utilise this resource, it tends to be long-term and almost invariably involves dealing with Families, Social workers, Solicitors and directly with the Courts. Our challenges have been:

- To encourage parents / guardians to recognise this service as being in the best interest of their child or children, and to encourage them to set aside differences for the period of the access.
- To ensure that both parents / guardians respect the neutrality of our Centre, regarding the provision of this service and do not attempt to involve the Centre in actions aimed at gaining retribution against the other party.

- To guarantee a safe environment for the child/children, the visitor and for our staff.

Our approach to this service has been one of constant vigilance and by taking each situation on its individual merits.

Support Networks

At a time when communication is at its most important, but complicated, because of travel, health and contact restrictions, Seamus has continuously appraised the Board of the benefits of local networks to our work and thinking.

Although network meetings were not possible “in person”, we greatly benefitted from continuous Web meetings and Zoom calls which were facilitated by both the HSE and TUSLA.

The benefit of these networks has always been through a sharing of experiences and approaches of groups and individuals of similar mindsets and objective.

We hope for 2022 that the re-kindled network supports that were resurrected during the pandemic will be recognised as one of the positive aspects of this time and as such will be continued. Our hope is for a continuation of this support once Covid-19 is a distant memory.

MFRC Staff

If we learn nothing more from the past two years, we need to recognise how vulnerable our services are when it comes to Staffing organisations such as ours.

The vast majority, of our staff work in our childcare programme. They have been impacted negatively, continuously during 2021/2022. Childcare is not possible without committed, professional and caring Childcare Practitioners to deliver one of the most important supports to local communities and families countrywide.



MFRC does not work or exist in a bubble. We are experiencing identical problems to those being felt throughout the sector.



- Sourcing childcare practitioners at any level of qualification, at a time when trainees are at an all-time low and even worse in rural areas.
- Retaining our existing workforce for our services and indeed to the profession
- Training and re-training practitioners in an ever-evolving sector
- Trying to keep parent fees to a minimum while ensuring the viability of services and standards
- Trying to operate in a soft skilled environment while competing with professional business.

Throughout this emergency we have attempted to keep our staff fully informed in regards, to the impacts of the pandemic on services, funding, and safety. The Board adopted a policy of doing everything possible to ensure the future of our services in Macroom by

- Signing up to the state pay subsidy schemes.
- Keeping all staff employed for the period of the pandemic.
- Ensuring that staff undertook professional development during periods of closure as part of our funding commitments.
- Reopening services when advised to do so by Government.
- Accommodating priority supports to essential workers when asked to do so.

We really appreciate the faith and trust that our staff placed in our decisions and without fail undertook all functions and duties in a professional manner.

The core values of our organisation became clear, when making many of the decisions that we faced over the past year.



The difference between our Centre and a typical childcare centre became more evident as the year went by. In particular, the commitment of our staff to the core objectives of MFRC has shone through.

We hope that we're not being naïve when we place our future hopes in a promise of continued supports for this service and the key ingredient that brings it all together, Our People!.

Finances

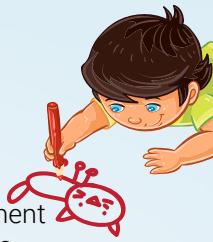
Without the wage subsidy schemes introduced by Government during 2020 and continued in 2021, we would have gone out of business. In this respect we greatly appreciate the approach taken by Government to provide supports which provided for continued income for our staff and an assured future for our Centre. Many small businesses, including childcare facilities have emerged from this pandemic in a healthy position in terms of funds.

We are, for all intents and purposes intact, which has been the intention of the subsidies and supports for the past two years. Notwithstanding this we need to acknowledge the challenges that lie ahead. We now need to know:

- What form will future supports of our sector take?
- How will we be supported to provide affordable childcare and remain viable?
- Will future supports be streamlined and accessible?
- Will supports be towards the Childcare Centres rather than be solely child-number based.
- What will the cost base for childcare and other services be in the future?
- What lessons have we learned from the pandemic in terms of practice, funding, and staffing?



Core Funding



The core funding for Macroom FRC is provided by the HSE and TUSLA. This funding guarantees MFRC funding for our Management and Administrative functions and allows us to plan our operations in a strategic manner. Funding for 2021 and for 2022 has been maintained at normal levels. During 2021 MFRC benefitted from some additional once-off funding towards increased operational costs.

Our sincere thanks to our funders, HSE & TUSLA for their continued confidence in our work.

New Developments Post Covid-19

We are committed to doing a bit more than just the bare minimum when it comes to childcare provision. Our mission is to develop standards of childcare under our remit, for the betterment of our service users and the local community.

As part of our commitment to enhancing quality of services in the Centre we have been adding to systems and approaches over the past 5 years.

“ChildPaths” has become part of our system since 2017 and since then we have continued to use the system in as many of our childcare functions as possible. This is a Child Centered appropriate software system which supports our childcare recording systems and greatly reduces the need for hard copy recording. This system records individual children and specific groups of children by way of attendance, feeding, hygiene, activities, and child development.

The most popular advantage by far in our experience has been the capacity of the system to allow parents to keep in touch with everything that their child is experiencing and doing while they are in Macroom FRC. Photographic and documented information is updated constantly and can be accessed privately by parents for their own children.

Another positive aspect of the system has been to facilitate children and parents to interact at home as a continuation of the daily activities. During the periods of closure, as a result of Covid-19 we used ChildPaths to develop and share home based activities and



videos for use by and support of parents and children at home.

ChildPaths is operated by MFRC free of charge to ensure that we can use the facility for all children and not just those who are willing to pay for it.

Smart Start

Macroon FRC are approved by Smart Start Quality Awards

This is a quality programme operated through the National Childhood Network and supported by the HSE. It focusses on Macroon Family Resource Centre becoming a Healthy Ireland Pre-school Service.

Staff in Macroon FRC have been trained in this programme and it has been operational in MFRC since 2018. The primary focus, of the programme has been to work with Parents & Children on

- Health Promotion
- Oral Health
- Nutrition
- Health & Safety
- Physical Activity
- Emotional Well-being /

Sensory Facilities

Through funding which was provided by Cork County Council MFRC has a fully outfitted Sensory Room facility. We worked with the Kids Clinic in Ballincollig to design an appropriate system for use for both typical and developmentally delayed children.

Our intention, operating in a few ways, namely:

- To inform our service users that we have this facility (Sensory Facility) and offer it for use under professional guidance for children who are already receiving sensory support privately or through HSE.



- We will also be happy to discuss with parents “undiagnosed behaviour” and see if we can find a way of providing an early intervention through use of the Sensory Facility where this is agreed by all concerned.
- We have sourced some foundation training from a Paediatric Occupational Therapist for our own staff to assist them in supporting agreed activities in the Sensory Facility for use with children attending the Childcare Services.
- We are delighted to make the public aware of the existence of this facility and its availability to them.
- Finally, we are happy to hear from other private professionals working with children from this area to discuss how we might support them in their work with local children and avoid them having to travel too far for supports.

Considerations for use of the Sensory Facility in Macroom Family Resource Centre:

- Typically Developing Children attending Childcare Services may access the Sensory Facility as part of their childcare programme routine or structure. By accessing the Sensory Facility, the child’s sensory development is being supported through a variety of sensory experiences, i.e.
 - Visual Development
 - Auditory Development
 - Tactile Development
 - Movement Development & Body Awareness/Coordination
- Use of the Sensory Facility contributes to the aims & learning goals set out in the four main pillars of AISTEAR: *the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*, e.g.
 - **Wellbeing** e.g., *Children will be as healthy & fit as they can be by gaining increasing control & co-ordination of body movements; discover, explore & refine motor skills in a multi-sensorial way; express themselves through a variety of play; develop & nurture their sense of wonder & awe.*



- **Exploring & Thinking** e.g., Children will learn about & make sense of the world around them by engaging, exploring & experimenting in their environment; develop a sense of time, shape, space & place; express feelings, thoughts & ideas through moving, playing, art, storytelling etc.
- **Communicating** e.g., Children will develop use of language & communication using a range of body movements & express themselves creatively & imaginatively using verbal & non-verbal communication; use language & movement to explore sound, pattern & repetition in language; express their feelings through a variety of multi-sensory experiences e.g. storytelling, moving to music, role-play etc
- **Identity & Belonging** e.g., Children will have a 'sense of who they are' through learning opportunities that allow them to express their ideas, preferences & needs & have a sense of co-operation, responsibility & negotiation through group play & group activities.
- Children with additional needs will benefit from participating with their group in the Sensory Facility e.g.
 - Children with gross motor difficulties, e.g., balance, ball skills, spatial awareness, etc.
 - Children with attention / concentration difficulties
 - Children with social participation difficulties / anxiety/ difficulty with transitions.
 - Children with sensory processing difficulties e.g. auditory sensitive, tactile sensitive, sensory seeking behaviours.

Our staff have been initiated / trained in the planning and implementation of effective room activities and it is hoped to develop this programme at a manageable pace during 2020



Childcare Pricing Policy from 28th August 2021

Our centre operates a **core pricing policy of between €4.80 & €6 / Hour (or part of)** depending on the type of service being availed of in Macroom FRC

We operate a **minimum stay of 3.5 hours** policy & all costs are inclusive, i.e. contributions to food and admin are not additional. Half Day 3.5hrs – 5 hrs. Full day 5 – 10 hrs

We give **priority to full-time and regular care** over part-time and intermittent care. We operate within the Gov. Subsidy Programmes

Service	5 days	4 days	3 days	2 days	Cost per day	Cost per half-day <5 hours	Cost per Additional Hours
Babies Under 1 year	€230	€193	€151	€105	€57.75	€31.5	€6.5
Wobblers between 1 and 2 years	€230	€193	€151	€105	€57.75	€31.5	€6.5
Toddlers over 2 years of age	€230	€193	€151	€105	€57.75	€31.5	€6.5
After Schools from 1.40pm	€136	€115	€92	€65	€35.5	N/A	N/A
After Schools 2.40pm & 3pm	€115	€97.5	€79	€54.5	€30.5	N/A	N/A
Pre-school Play-Group (5 sessions per week)	Free for eligible children €80 if paying				€16 / Session	N/A	N/A

Website

www.macroomfrc.com was revamped and updated during 2019. Although we do not attract many new service users through this medium, as most come through word of mouth, we value this site as a place where we can demonstrate our work and our organisational potential in an open and transparent manner to all who are interested. We have received childcare, counseling, and educational enquiries through this medium continuously over the past few years. Job enquiries are a regular form of communication to our site.

New and Developing Work

Meitheal

Many people in rural areas will be familiar with the term meitheal which has been a mainstay of life in the country for many years.

In the past few years TUSLA have adopted the term for a specific operation which they continue to roll out nationally.

Through the Meitheal Programme participating Organisations aim to work in a planned and shared manner to support children who are identified as “being in need” of coordinated supports. For example, a school can suggest that a meitheal for or on behalf of a particular child who might need coordinated support. In consultation with the parents of the child the matter would be supported by the TUSLA Meitheal Officer, and a meeting would be called of all professionals involved with the child. This could include Teachers, Social Workers, Childcare providers Health Professionals, etc.

Macroon Family Resource Centre is delighted to support and participate in this programme in line with our policies of supporting Families and Children.

Macroon Bereavement Group

This is a local group who provide independent supports for families and individuals who have been affected by bereavement. Services / Supports include drop-in supports, local meetings and planned talks. This service is provided by a local group of volunteers who have been tutored in the provision of supports to loved ones of recently deceased local people.



This is a non-intrusive and non-judgmental service which can be accessed easily in the event that an individual requires such support.

Grow

The local GROW mental health support group continues to meet in Macroom FRC on a weekly basis. The Group can be contacted through our Centre or through GROW directly. This support group operates in a private and low-key fashion and provides a local support to members of the Macroom group.

Macroom Asylum Seekers Group

In the summer of 2019 Macroom welcomed a substantial number of new residents to the town from diverse and distant locations. The Riverside Hotel is now home to over 100 residents for, a period, of time while Asylum applications are processed.

Macroom FRC are delighted to be part of the local “Asylum Seekers Support” network where we try to coordinate support s and services for the families in Riverside. In particular we have been able to support childcare services, counselling services and access to local community initiatives / groups.

While we are not in position to say how long we will be hosting this community we are very proud of the reception that they have received in Macroom. Cead Mile Failte

Centre Users / Collaborators

Over the past year our Centre has been used by a number of Groups for Community purposes. Also, we collaborated with numerous local Groups in the execution of our work. We are sincerely grateful to all concerned for their support and friendship.

- Employability Services
- West Cork Travellers Support Group
- Macroom Senior Citizens Committee
- Macroom Youth Network
- Macroom Youthreach

- Muskerry Community Employment Project
- Macroom District Environmental Group
- Macroom Youth Services
- Macroom Bereavement Group
- Macroom Adult Literacy
- Macroom CIC
- Bishop McEgan College
- Clann Aire Childcare
- MABS
- West Cork Women Against Violence
- Cope Foundation
- Macroom Community Drugs Initiative
- HSE North (Southern Section)
- Meitheal (TUSLA Programme)
- TUSLA
- GROW
- SHINE
- West Cork Development Partnership
- SECAD
- IRD Duhallow



Staffing Challenge

We are greatly challenged in recruiting new staff to work with us in childcare.

On average we require approximately 500 staff hours per week to sustain our service when we are at full capacity.

Our People are the most important element of our operations in



Macroom. Over 70% of our financial turnover is expended on our staff. Our efforts to maintain a loyal, well-trained, and content workforce is central to the quality of service that we aspire to provide. We hope to continue to build the quality of our services over the coming years through staff development programmes and better reward systems.

The qualifications, expertise and most of all the attitude of our staff to the provision of a wide range of social services is what makes our Centre special.

Mile Buiochas

2021 Staff

- Seamus O Leary is our Centre Manager and our link from the Board to all daily operations.
- Deirdre Hurley is our Centre Administrator.
- Louise Coughlan is our Childcare Supervisor with responsibility for the standards and care within our childcare programme.
- Orlaith Lynch, is our Childcare Senior who supports programme management and service standards.
- We have numerous staff who are designated to childcare
 - Amanda O Connor
 - Gina Campion
 - Margaret Kelleher
 - Bernie Spillane
 - Anne O Mahoney
 - Emma Nott
 - Sandra O Mahony
 - Belinda Costin Healy
 - Kamila Magdziak
 - Marie Relihan
 - Corina Velasco Navaro
 - Esther Martin Ceron

- Claire O Riordan
- Fiona Cunningham
- Dan Kiely
- Jerome Coakley

Our ambition is to keep our staffing turnover to a minimum so that our consistency of quality is maintained.

Norma O Connor (Secretary)

Macroom FRC Core Details

Mission Statement

Macroom Family Resource Centre (The Project) is a Community-Based Voluntary organisation which aspires to promoting and developing family support services in the Macroom Area and its hinterland.

We are committed to working with the full participation of individuals and groups towards improving our Community, socially, economically and educationally and with our priority on the most disadvantaged.

Our Values

- User friendly and approachable with an emphasis on mutual respect.
- Committed to ensuring a social balance at all levels of our operation.

Our Approach

- Working in participation with other agencies while maintaining the right to an independent view
- Achieving success by offering realistic, well planned and adequately resourced programmes and activities
- Integrating equal opportunities policies in all aspect of our work



Aims

1. To provide, promote and develop a wide range of community-based family support service
2. To create opportunities for individuals and families to become actively involved in their own learning and development
3. To encourage and provide opportunities for people to become involved in educational and developmental programmes towards realising their full potential
4. To promote and develop a community awareness in health care, education, community development, social justice and empowerment

Objectives

1. Provision of a quality childcare service for children from 3-months to 13 years
2. Provision of a professional counselling service for individuals, couples and families
3. Promotion of research into the difficulties being experienced by families
4. To encourage and provide opportunities for people with leadership qualities to become involved in the community
5. To promote educational opportunities
6. To work hand in hand with other agencies in alleviating poverty
7. To develop an information bank on community initiatives, educational opportunities, health and rights issues and to make this information available to the local community and to service users
8. To listen and respond to local community initiatives with particular focus on disadvantage



