

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Closure of Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education (CECDE).**

11th October 2008

**Treoir** calls on the Minister for Education and Science to reverse his decision to withdraw funding from the Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education (CECDE).

When the CECDE was established in 2002 by the Department of Education and Science with the aim of developing and co-ordinating early childhood education, one of their first initiatives was to establish a consultative committee comprising all those involved or interested in early education and the childcare services. Treoir is a member of the consultative committee and has been involved with the work of the CECDE. From this vantage point it is clear to us the enormous contribution which the CECDE has made to the whole area of early childhood education, particularly in its development of Síolta, the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education in Ireland.

The complete closure of the CECDE, which is threatened for the end of November, runs counter to quality improvement in the early years' sector. The CECDE has been an authoritative and accepted force for bringing about the conditions necessary for an enhancement of quality of service provision in the early years, the need for which has been acknowledged in countless official documents. Its work is far from complete.

The closure of the CECDE represents minimal savings, if any, but leads to the loss of all that has been invested since the establishment of CECDE. It will also mean a significant loss of expertise, capacity and energy in the implementation of Síolta and the other activities of CECDE. Furthermore the decision represents a disengagement from Government commitments to the early childhood sector and from commitments under educational disadvantage. This is occurring at a time when the EU has advised the Government to upgrade childcare facilities in its two most recent evaluation reports on the state's economic policies.

We urge the Minister for Education and Science to reconsider his decision to withdraw funding from the CECDE in the best interests of children, early education and childcare services in Ireland.