

Coolock Children's Disability Network Team Newsletter



December 2023

Message and Updates from the Children's Disability Network Manager

I hope that you and your family are keeping well. We are coming to the end of this year I would like to thank you for all of your input. The Coolock CDNT look forward to working with you in 2024. Wishing you a Happy Christmas and New Year.

Team Update:

We continue to work on filling our vacancies – Physiotherapy, Social Work and Occupational Therapy. We hope in 2024 we will be successful in filling our vacancies.

Niamh Giltinan
Children's Disability Network Manager

Coolock Family Forum Update

We held our second Coolock Family Forum on the 10th October 2023 hosted by our 2 parent representatives Deirdre and James. It was lovely to meet some new parents, but it was also great to see those who came back again. Updates on the team and changes we have made since the first forum were provided. The parents provided suggestions including the opportunity to rent equipment to test prior to purchase and I am delighted to share that the team has submitted a grant application for funding to hopefully provide this essential service. We will have a further update in early 2024. The parents were able to have a chat over a cup of tea and share some ideas for future meetings. We are planning to run three family forum meetings in 2024, and we would love to have you join us. We are meeting in January to plan out sessions and as soon as I know the dates I will communicate them.

Pediatric Services – How to support my child in pre-school and school? Difference between AIMS and SENO

Responding to a request made at the Family Forum we are including information on the difference between AIMS and SENO in this month's newsletter. We hope the information below is helpful.

AIMS is for Pre-school level

Access Inclusion Model (AIM) aspires to support parents, pre-schools to ensure children with a variety of needs have equal and quality access to early learning settings. AIM supports are provided through the ECCE programme. There are 7 levels of supports with 1 being more generic and 7 being unique to the child.

Such supports can be *universal* where the whole pre-school approach is designed to provide an inclusive environment. For example, pre-school staff may avail of training programmes on the use of sign language, or sensory processing to support children better. You can read more here: <https://aim.gov.ie/aim-supports/universal-supports/>

There are also *targeted* supports cater for a wide range of abilities with a more narrow focus on specific needs of the child. For example, specialist equipment or appliances (Level 5), minor building alterations (level 7), therapeutic intervention (from CDNT or Primary Care) or, in a small number of cases, extra assistance in the pre-school room (Level 5-7). You can read more here: <https://aim.gov.ie/aim-supports/targeted-supports/>

Key-points:

- Your child does not need a diagnosis to access AIM
- **Every pre-school can apply to AIM, and it is their responsibility to do so**
- Staff can avail of a variety of training through AIM to support your child
- AIM does not fund Special Needs Assistants (SNA), but staff ratio can be adjusted through application for additional funding
- CDNT will be informed of the AIM application

If the child is open to Coolock CDNT, our Early Intervention Specialist will be working closely with the pre-school staff and the family to support the child.

If the child is on the waiting list, our team may provide a consultation to pre-school to direct them what supports are needed to ensure the environment promotes inclusion and stimulates child participation. Please note this is not a pathway for your child to be open sooner by the CDNT.

You can find comprehensive information here: <https://aim.gov.ie/parents/>

SENO is for primary and post-primary support

Special Educational Needs Organisers (SENO) is the key link between your child and suitable educational setting. SENOs interact with parents and schools and liaise with the HSE in providing resources to support children with special educational needs. Specifically,

SENOs support families by providing information, establishing special classes and engaging with other professionals working with your child.

SENOs advise and support parents around the availability of special classes, special schools and other educational supports.

SENOs process Transport and Assistive Technology applications and forward to the Department of Education for sanction.

SENOs provide parents with advice and useful tips on transition from preschool to school from primary school to post primary school and onto adult services.

Our CDNT plays an important role in supporting school transitions:

- Webinars and advice clinics for parents on the processes and documentation required to access specific educational setting such as mainstream school, ASD class or special education school (both open and waiting list)
- Provide relevant assessments and documentation to apply to schools. The process is informed by the child's needs and type of school they require (open list)
- Webinars for children going into secondary schools
- Supports to schools and children to ensure smooth settling in period
- Our team do not apply, or allocate school placements

Key-points:

- Inform SENO as soon as you think your child will require additional educational supports
- Parents hold sole responsibility to apply to schools
- **CDNT has no role in school allocations, nor can they influence any decisions of SENO or school principles**
- Inform CDNT on when your child is due to transition to primary or secondary school

A list of SENOs and contact details can be found here: <https://ncse.ie/seno-contact-information>

Festive Baking: Christmas Cookies



Amidst the bustle of Christmas activities and preparations, festive baking can provide an opportunity to spend some quality time together at home. Baking offers so many sensory opportunities to calm the mind and body, from stirring batter and squashing dough to the scent of sweet treats in the oven. Older children can enjoy a sense of responsibility and achievement when following the recipe, measuring ingredients and of course helping with the clean up! Simple and straightforward recipes with just a few ingredients will work best and taking a little time to focus on the process rather than the end product will help everyone to slow down and enjoy.

Festive Baking - Christmas cookies

Ingredients:

- 100g unsalted butter, softened
- 100g caster sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1tsp vanilla extract
- 30g cornflour
- 300g plain flour

Method:

- STEP 1

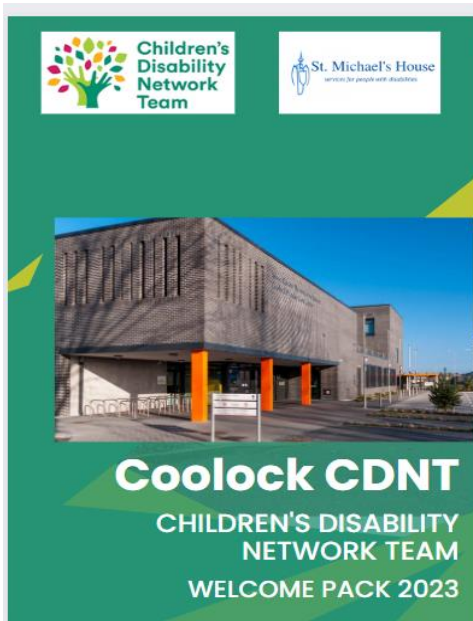
Beat the butter and sugar with an electric whisk for 4 mins until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, then add the vanilla. Whisk in the cornflour and plain flour until the mixture comes together into a dough. Put the dough between two pieces of baking parchment and roll out to a 6mm thickness using a rolling pin. Chill for 30 mins.

- STEP 2

Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Peel the top layer of parchment off the dough and stamp out circles using a 6cm round cutter (or the shape of your choice). Re-roll any offcuts and continue stamping out rounds until all the dough is used. Transfer the cookies to a second large baking sheet lined with baking parchment, spacing them 2cm apart (you may need two sheets). Bake for 7-10 mins. Leave to cool on the sheet for 15 mins, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Will keep in an airtight container for one week.

Team Welcome Pack

Coolock CDNT have developed a Welcome Pack for new families who are opened to the Service. The pack includes who we are, how we work, our contact information, our location, what to expect and an introduction to the team.



If you would like a copy of the Welcome Pack please email CDNTCoolock@smh.ie or call the office on 01 9213512.

Christmas Visuals

To celebrate the festive season we have included some Christmas Visuals. Copies of these visuals are attached to the back of this newsletter including Seeing Santa A Social Story.



Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter, we hope you found it useful. Please provide any feedback or any ideas for future editions to cdntcoolock@smh.ie