



Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice

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Version	V2.0
Issued:	June 2026
Title:	Anti Choking/Choking-Rescue Devices
Ref:	05/2026

1. Background

Anti-choking devices (also known as choking-rescue devices) are *suction-based airway clearance devices* marketed for the treatment of choking and are available in Ireland for purchase and distribution. The Early Years Inspectorate are aware of the presence of anti-choking devices in early years services. However, in Ireland the [Health Service Executive \(HSE\)](#) and the [Irish Association of Emergency Medicine \(IAEM\)](#) do not currently support their use as a response to a choking incident.

In correspondence with the Inspectorate, the [Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council \(PHECC\)](#) have advised that they support the guidance provided by the HSE and IAEM as outlined. PHECC's accredited First Aid training syllabuses do not refer to these devices, and their use is not currently endorsed by PHECC or included in their Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPGs). The most recent guidelines released in October 2025 did not change this position.

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate has reviewed the Irish positions and statements and agrees that these devices should not replace the established interventions (abdominal thrusts and back blows) for a choking incident in an early years service.

2. Decision of the Early Years Inspectorate

Pre-Schools must comply with the requirements of the [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) Regulations 2016](#). Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child: *A registered provider shall ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of a pre-school child attending the service and that the environment of the service is safe.*

School Age Services must comply with the requirements of the [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) \(Registration of School Age Services\) Regulations 2018](#), and Section 58G of the [Child and Family Agency Act 2013](#), which states *"It shall be the duty of every person providing an Early Years Service to take all reasonable measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of children attending the service"*.

Childminding Services must comply with the requirements of the [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) \(Childminding Services\) Regulations 2024](#). Regulations 11 (1) Health, safety, welfare and development of child. *A childminder shall ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of children attending the childminding service and that the environment of the childminding service is safe.*

3. Established Position Effective June 2026

In response to the guidance issued by the HSE, PHECC, IAEM the following decisions have been made

1. Anti-choking devices are prohibited for use in early years services, in the absence of the endorsement of the HSE, IAEM, and the PHECC.
2. Registered providers must remove any anti-choking device if currently available for use in the services.

3. Registered providers must ensure that at least one person in the service has up-to-date accredited first aid training (if the provider is a childminder, they have appropriate first aid training) and is available to children at all times.
4. If a parent reports that they are concerned about these devices being removed, Registered providers should refer them to information on the [HSE website](#) and the statement on the [IAEM website](#).

4. Support

Any queries regarding this Notice can be submitted to rpdd@tusla.ie