

# Alternative Education Assessment and Registration Service

TÜSLA  
An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leasú agus an Toghchán  
Child and Family Agency

ALTERNATIVE  
EDUCATION  
ASSESSMENT &  
REGISTRATION

## Home Education Newsletter Summer 2025

### Welcome to the Summer 2025 AEARS Newsletter

We are delighted to introduce the very first edition of the **Alternative Education Assessment and Registration Service (AEARS) Newsletter**. This newsletter is designed to keep parents and guardians informed about important updates, developments, and resources related to home education and alternative education settings in Ireland.

Our goal is to provide clear, timely, and helpful information to support families navigating the registration and assessment process under Section 14 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000. Whether you're new to home education or have been on this journey for some time, we hope this newsletter will serve as a valuable resource to keep you connected with the AEARS team and the wider community.

In this issue, you'll find **updates on the newly amended R1 form, changes to the assessment process, regional service developments, and initiatives to ensure equitable access to health information for all families**. We also share **insights from our recent parent survey and outline how your feedback is shaping the future of our service**.

We look forward to keeping you informed and supported in the months ahead.



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## Home Education applications

Under Section 14 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 every child being educated in Ireland in a place other than a recognised school i.e. in the home environment or at an independent school / centre of education must be registered with Tusla-Child and Family Agency.

Registration involves an assessment of the educational provision that is being provided to the child. Assessments are carried out by an assessor from the Alternative Education Assessment and Registration Service (AEARS). There is a dedicated application form for a child to be registered as attending a place other than a recognised school. This is called an [R1 form](#).

In **February 2025**, the Minister for the Department of Education published a [Statutory Instrument](#) which amended the R1 application form used for registration purposes.

### [Legislation Tusla – Child and Family Agency \(link\)](#)

New sections have been added to the new R1 form to facilitate further information. In addition, there are changes to the assessment process. Two key amendments are;

Parents who home educate their children may choose to access online programmes of education delivered by different providers. The R1 form now includes a section to incorporate details relating to online education programmes.

A further amendment in the declaration section is that an assessor will meet your child as part of the assessment process. This will be discussed in consultation with the parent and assessor when making arrangements for the assessment.

The new R1 form, Guidance and **Frequently Asked Questions** relating to Home Education can all be found on the AEARS website

[Home Education Tusla – Child and Family Agency \(link\)](#)

[Resources and Information Tusla – Child and Family Agency \(link\)](#)

## Service Developments

Over the past two years, AEARS has expanded from two to four regions: Dublin North East, Dublin South East, South West, and North West. This reconfiguration, along with the addition of more assessors, has helped reduce waiting times for assessments.

As part of ongoing service improvements, all children on the section 14 register will receive a review assessment at least every two years from the date of their initial assessment. Additional assessments can be carried out if needed to support the child's educational progress.

## Screening and Immunisation Programmes

[HSE's National Immunisation Office \(NIO\)](#) provide information on childhood immunisations to the parents / guardians of all children attending school through the Schools Immunisation Programme (SIP).

Currently, parents / guardians of children who are home educated and registered on the section 14 register are not provided with this information.

To ensure there is equitable access of information relating to childhood vaccination programmes the National Immunisation Office will issue information packs to parents/guardians of children on the register to ensure that all parents and guardians are appropriately informed of childhood immunisations.

## Home Education Survey

In 2024, AEARS gathered feedback from parents and guardians whose children received an educational assessment in 2023. The survey focused on their experience with the assessment process and how AEARS communicated and engaged with families. Overall, the feedback was very positive, and the service has taken on board suggestions for improvement.

AEARS is committed to improving communication with parents and guardians. Updates, developments and further surveys will continue to be shared through the [AEARS website](#) and newsletters.

## Understanding the AEARS Warrant

The [AEARS warrant](#) is a formal document that empowers authorised officers to carry out essential duties under the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000. The warrant ensures officers have the legal authority to assess and support the quality of alternative education provision across Ireland. While the AEARS warrant has always been in place, we've recently added information about it to [our website](#) to help ensure that parents/ guardians, education providers and the wider public are fully informed.

## Conditions of Registration

**In accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000**, if an assessment for home education results in registration being granted with specific conditions, the parent or legal guardian must agree to these conditions in writing. This written agreement must be returned to AEARS before the child's name can be added to the Section 14 Register.

This requirement also applies to children who are already registered. In such cases, the service will send an additional letter along with the final registration letter. The **agreement letter** must be signed and returned to complete the registration process.