



Support for the redeveloped Primary School Curriculum 2026/2027

To: Boards of Management, Principal Teachers and Teaching Staff of Primary and Special Schools and Chief Executives of ETBs.

1. Continuing the journey

This circular is for all primary and special schools and continues the journey set out in previous updates sent in [October 2024](#), [November 2024](#) and [April 2025](#). Alongside this circular, the *Whole-School Curriculum Planning Guidance (2026)* and *Preparation for Learning, Teaching and Assessment: Guidance for All Primary and Special Schools (Updated 2026)* are being published.

The circular provides information on:

- [Enacting the redeveloped Primary Curriculum](#)
- [Choosing your curriculum area](#)
- [Timeline of professional learning](#)
- [Supports for the redeveloped Primary Curriculum](#)
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2. Enacting the redeveloped Primary School Curriculum

Enacting the redeveloped primary curriculum is a collective effort that builds on existing strengths. It develops through collaboration and takes time to create meaningful, long-term change in schools and classrooms.

In the initial phase of enactment, school leaders and teachers in primary and special schools should familiarise themselves with the new curriculum area(s) and resources such as the Toolkits available on [Primary | Curriculum Online](#) and the [Whole-School Curriculum Planning: Guidance for all Primary and Special Schools \(2026\)](#) (more detail provided later in this document).

Time allocations

The new suggested time allocations outlined in the *Primary Curriculum Framework (2023)* should be implemented by all schools by the end of the first curriculum enactment cycle i.e. by the end of the 2027/2028 school year.

3. Choosing your curriculum area

School leaders and teachers should work together to select **at least one** curriculum area to begin enacting from September 2026. Only one curriculum area will receive support from Oide/NCSE in 2026/2027. Schools may choose to begin enacting additional curriculum



areas from September 2026, but these will be school-led and will not receive external support. Support for a second curriculum area will commence in September 2027.

Schools can identify the preferred order in which they wish to enact the curriculum areas however, Wellbeing must be included as one of the first three areas selected. Oide will assign a professional learning leader to each school to support a curricular area, taking account of their preferences insofar as possible.

Consolidation year

From the 2028/2029 school year onwards, schools may opt to take a consolidation year. This allows them to pause for one year to strengthen and embed curriculum areas already in progress.

Application process

Oide and the NCSE will communicate to schools in May with details of the application process for curriculum enactment support for 2026/2027.

4. Timeline of professional learning

Enactment is about making informed, professional decisions that reflect the curriculum's vision for inclusion, engagement, progression, and holistic development. To support this process, a range of professional learning is being provided.

Professional Learning 2026/2027	
Language supports	
Language Awareness	One assigned school closure day for professional learning experience (PLE) led by Oide for primary schools and NCSE for special schools. This will explore how the development of Language Awareness and plurilingual approaches across all stages in primary supports children as language learners in English, Irish and Modern Foreign Languages.
Modern Foreign Languages	PPLI/Languages Connect will provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation for the enactment of Modern Foreign Languages through the Say Yes to Languages programme. • Programme of language upskilling with staggered course intake throughout the year.
Curricular enactment support	
Curricular enactment support	Support for the one curriculum area selected for enactment from September 2026 provided by Oide for primary schools and NCSE for special schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • two assigned school closure days. • one in-school visit.
Whole-school collaboration on the enactment of the curriculum.	One school-led closure day. Advice will be provided on what this day should include. For optimum impact, schools should consider scheduling this day between the first and second Oide / NCSE-led school closures.



	Schools should take account of their own school calendar and give consideration to parents and families, and the standardised school year, when scheduling this day. Schools can, for example, schedule it next to an existing public holiday closure.
Leadership supports	
Leading curriculum change	Professional learning experience (PLE) by Oide for primary schools and NCSE for special schools focused on the strategic leadership of curriculum change. It supports leaders to examine how they lead and manage curriculum enactment, align their work with national priorities, and make use of available supports to sustain effective practice.
Leading the introduction of Modern Foreign Languages	Full day professional learning for school leaders (up to 3 attendees per school) by Oide for primary schools and NCSE for special schools on leading the introduction of Modern Foreign Languages as part of the Primary Language Curriculum /Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile
Leadership clinics	Clinics will continue to support school leaders to reflect on how best to lead change within their own contexts. These will be online at various stages throughout the school year led by Oide for primary schools and NCSE for special schools.
2027/2028 school year onwards	
In term three of each school year, the Department will issue a communication to all schools detailing the supports available for the following school year.	

Parents/guardians

It is important to communicate in advance with parents/guardians regarding school closures. Suggested wording that could be used in this communication is attached in appendix 1.

5. Supports for the redeveloped Primary School Curriculum

The NCCA is supporting the enactment of the curriculum through [online toolkits](#) that provide practical support for teachers on learning, teaching and assessment.

The toolkits contain:

- Teacher Guidance on each curriculum area, including preparation and assessment
- Support materials for teachers, including effective pedagogical approaches that foster rich learning and connect with home and community.
- Examples of children’s learning across the curriculum areas and subjects.
- Supports for progression across the curriculum areas and subjects.

Initial materials are currently available, and further materials will be published on an ongoing basis to support learning, teaching and assessment with the curriculum.

PPLI/ Languages Connect are developing [resources](#) to support the implementation of the language competency element of Modern Foreign Languages.



6. Funding for resources to support all curriculum areas

Multi-annual funding will continue to support all curriculum areas, with future allocations guided by budget and emerging needs during nationwide rollout.

Significant funding has already been provided to primary and special schools to ensure they have the resources needed to deliver a curriculum that meets all learners' needs:

- €9m paid to schools in December 2024 for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and Arts education. The grants were calculated as follows:
 - Fixed payment per school: €500.00
 - Per-pupil payment: €14.03
 - DEIS/SEN rate per pupil: €16.13.

- €10m paid to schools in December 2025 for the Wellbeing Curriculum area. The grants were calculated as follows:
Fixed payment per school:
 - €400 - 1 to 30 pupils
 - €500 - 31-50 pupils
 - €750 - 51 - 150 pupils
 - €1000 - over 151 pupils

Per-pupil payment: €13.10
DEIS/SEN rate per pupil: €15.10.

7. Publication of the Guidance documents

Successful curriculum enactment is a system-wide responsibility. To support this, the following resources have been developed collaboratively by the Department of Education and Youth including the Inspectorate, NCCA, NCSE, and Oide.

- (i) Whole-School Curriculum Planning Guidance (2026).
- (ii) Preparation for Learning, Teaching and Assessment: Guidance for All Primary and Special Schools (Updated 2026).

The key messages and approaches in both resources will be embedded across the professional learning programme and supports, with a clear focus on supporting school leaders and teachers to understand and apply them effectively in practice.

(i) Whole-School Curriculum Planning Guidance (2026)

Whole-school planning is described as a continuous, evolving process with three key stages:

- reflecting on the school context, learners, and the principles and competencies of the Primary Curriculum Framework (2023).
- selecting priorities and sequencing the enactment of all curriculum areas.
- enacting each curriculum area.

The whole-school curriculum plan records key decisions about the sequencing of learning and agreed approaches to learning, teaching and assessment, based on the



school's context. It should evolve over time to reflect successes, challenges and changing needs.

(ii) Preparation for Learning, Teaching and Assessment: Guidance for All Primary and Special Schools (2026)

This guidance updates *Preparation for Teaching and Learning: Guidance for All Primary and Special Schools (2021)* to reflect the full redeveloped Primary Curriculum (2025). It presents preparation as an ongoing process that supports effective curriculum enactment within the Primary Curriculum Framework (2023).

The guidance outlines three key pillars of preparation: knowledge of the child, knowledge of the curriculum and knowledge of pedagogy. It also highlights the role of assessment in informing next steps, and the importance of whole-school planning, collaboration and alignment, while recognising teacher agency.

8. Research Project

An action research project, co-constructed with educational expertise drawn from research, policy, and practice, will be established to:

- generate evidence on how schools are using the resources and materials developed to support curriculum enactment.
- gather information on the impact of the professional learning time in schools.
- gather exemplars of effective and innovative practice

Further information on the scope and design of the action research project will be provided in Term 1 of the 2026/2027 school year.

9. Further Information

Support for the ongoing enactment of the *Primary Language Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile* and the *Primary Mathematics Curriculum* will continue to be provided by Oide for primary schools and by the NCSE for special schools. The development of online resources, such as the NCCA Online Toolkits, will also continue.

Further information can be found via the following websites:

www.curriculumonline.ie

www.gov.ie

www.ncca.ie

www.oide.ie

www.ncse.ie

www.languagesconnect.ie

<https://cogg.ie/>

There will be ongoing communication to support teachers and school leaders, as well as parents/guardians and children.

This communication is available to download from the Department's website [here](#).



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5 May 2026



Appendix 1: Suggested wording for communication with parents

Our school will be closed on the dates listed to allow our teachers to take part in training for the new Primary Curriculum. This training helps ensure the curriculum is taught well and supports the best learning for every child. Thank you for your ongoing support.