



## The redevelopment of the Primary School Curriculum – continuing the journey

This update is for all primary and special schools and builds on the previous updates sent in [October 2024](#) and [November 2024](#). It provides information on:

- [Enacting the redeveloped primary curriculum.](#)
- [Timeline of support.](#)
- [Further information.](#)
- [Funding for resources for schools.](#)
- [Additional information.](#)

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) has recently completed its work on the curriculum areas of:

- Arts Education.
- Language (to include Modern Foreign Languages).
- Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Education (STEM).
- Social and Environmental Education.
- Wellbeing.

These are being sent to the Minister for Education for consideration.

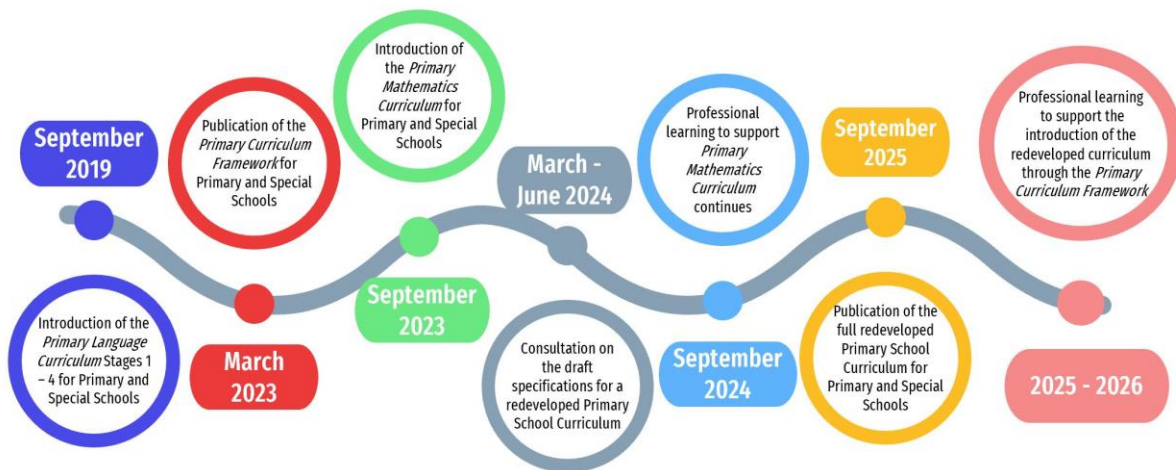


Figure 1: The curriculum redevelopment journey



## 1. Enacting the redeveloped primary curriculum

As previously stated, the introduction of the redeveloped primary curriculum will be a gradual and carefully planned process. This acknowledges that meaningful change in education takes time.

Building on the extensive support provided to date by Oide and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) for the *Primary Language Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile* and the *Primary Mathematics Curriculum*, enactment of the redeveloped curriculum will commence from the 2025/2026 school year. This will include:

- An introductory year, focusing on the *Primary Curriculum Framework*.
- Enactment of each curriculum area phased in over 2 years, with full enactment of the curriculum area at the end of the second year.

The programme of support will last for at least 6 years. Schools may wish to take an optional consolidation year to allow them to take stock and progress at a pace that suits their unique contexts.

Schools that feel ready in the 2025/2026 academic year may begin working with any of the curriculum specifications at their discretion. This approach acknowledges the unique path each school is on and the varying stages of readiness to engage with the redeveloped curriculum.

### Modern Foreign Languages

Modern foreign languages will form part of the *Primary Language Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile* and will focus on developing children's language awareness and language competency.

- At stage 3 (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> classes), the Modern Foreign Languages learning outcomes focus on building an awareness of languages and cultures. This consolidates existing knowledge of language(s) and builds a solid foundation for learning a **third language (L3)**. It aligns with the development of a whole-school approach to language and cultural awareness advocated in the *Primary Language Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile* for pupils at all stages in the primary school.
- At stage 4 (5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> classes), in addition to building awareness of languages and cultures, children will learn to communicate at a very basic to basic level in an L3).

To promote an inclusive approach to language learning which enables all children to develop their language and communication skills across languages, Oide and Post-Primary Languages Ireland (PPLI) are working together to develop a comprehensive programme of professional learning for teachers. This programme will focus on:

- Supporting the integration of modern foreign languages into the broader *Primary Language Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile*. (Oide)
- Providing supports around language awareness. (Oide)
- Providing resources to support delivery of Modern Foreign Languages. (Oide/PPLI)
- PPLI/Languages Connect now has a dedicated team of experts which includes primary teachers to prepare the ground for the enactment of the Modern Foreign Languages specification in the primary language curriculum. The team will:



- Oversee and manage a programme of language upskilling with providers including Education Support Centres, Cultural Institutes and embassies and Higher Education Institutions, which will provide modern foreign language learning opportunities over a number of years to upskill teachers in a range of languages.
- Develop resources to support the implementation of the language competency element of the specification.
- in the short term, continue to prepare the ground for the enactment of Modern Foreign Languages through a framework of support for teachers and schools through the *Say Yes to Languages* programme. Children in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> classes will be the focus of this programme as schools prepare for the introduction of modern foreign languages
- Provide bespoke professional learning for teachers in special schools (NCSE)

Further information is available on the Primary Language Curriculum – including Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) - Frequently Asked Questions which are published alongside this communication.

## 2. Timeline of support

The programme of support will last for at least 6 years. The support will commence in term 3 of the 2024/2025 school year with an interagency video.

Oide and NCSE will offer professional learning for teachers and school leaders beginning in the 2025/2026 school year. Professional learning will be facilitated by Oide for all primary schools and by NCSE for all special schools. The professional learning will support:

- Teachers and school leaders to develop their understanding of the over-arching messages from the *Primary Curriculum Framework*.
- Teachers and school leaders to develop their understanding and enactment of the new curriculum areas.
- School leaders and curriculum leaders to lead curricular change in their own school contexts.

It will be facilitated through whole-school closure days, sustained in-school support and supplementary online supports.

### (i) Term 3 2024/2025 school year - Interagency video for school leaders

During the third term of this school year, Oide will publish an information video for school leaders. This will be distributed via email to all primary and special schools.

The video will provide school leaders with:

- Support from NCCA to begin getting to know the *Primary Curriculum Framework*, understanding the vision, principles, key competencies, and the implications it has for their school.
- Details from Oide Primary and Leadership divisions regarding the support available in the upcoming and subsequent school years.
- Guidance from the NCSE on the supports available for special schools.
- An update from the Chief Inspector.



**(ii) 2025/2026 school year - Focus on the *Primary Curriculum Framework***

The priority will be on creating meaningful connections across learning areas, promoting an integrated approach that aligns with the curriculum's guiding principles. All teachers will be encouraged to explore child-centred pedagogical approaches that support active learning and the well-rounded development of knowledge, skills, dispositions, values and attitudes.

Oide/NCSE will provide the following professional learning:

- **School leaders**

Support for leading curriculum change will be available for school leaders to include online webinars, frequent drop-in clinics and in-school support.

- **Whole school engagement**

Oide will facilitate 2 whole-school closure days to introduce the foundational aspects of the curriculum specifications through the *Primary Curriculum Framework* for all primary schools. The NCSE will facilitate 2 whole-school closure days for all special schools.

It is proposed that the first closure day will be in in term 2 and the second closure day in term 3.

These 2 days of professional learning will explore the:

- Rationale for the redeveloped curriculum.
- Underlying principles of the redeveloped curriculum.
- Key competencies of the redeveloped curriculum.
- Key pedagogical approaches encompassing the vision for learning, teaching and assessment in the redeveloped curriculum.

This introductory year is essential for establishing a strong foundation, allowing all primary and special school teachers to understand and adopt the broader curriculum structure before moving into specific primary curriculum areas.

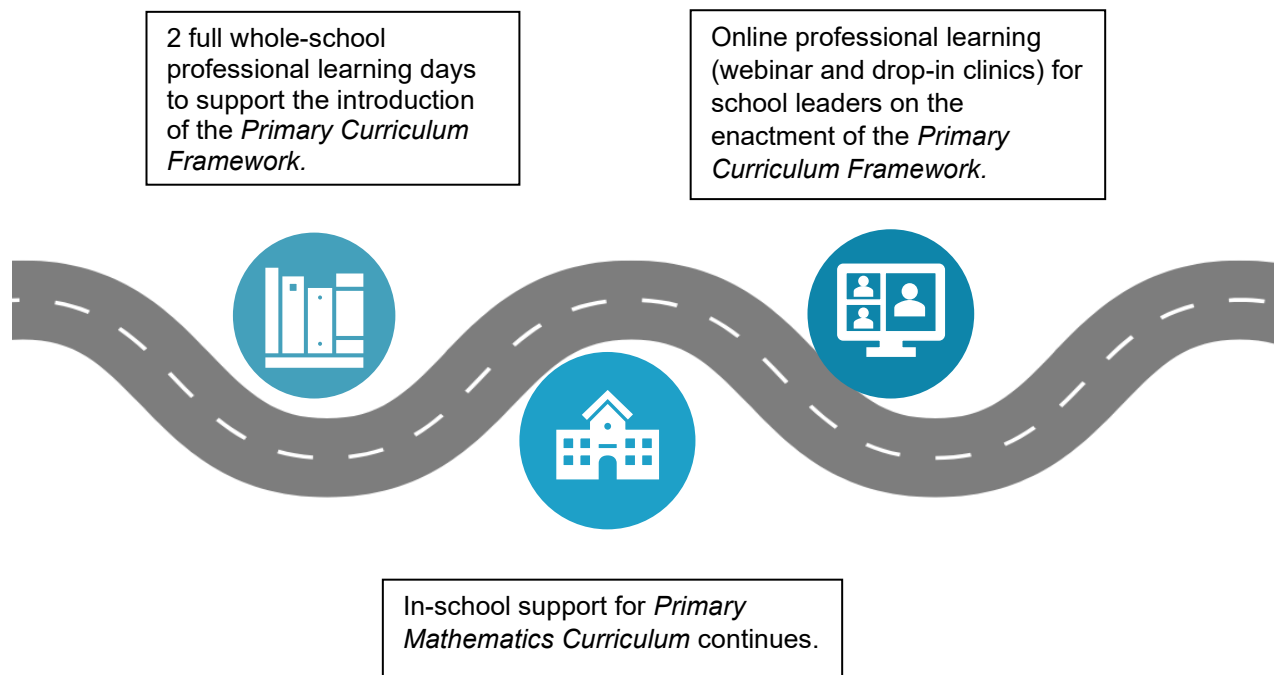


Figure 2: Supports in the 2025/2026 school year

### (iii) 2026/2027 school year

#### Leadership support

There will be dedicated in-school and online support for school leaders throughout the process with a focus on leading and managing curricular change. Oide will provide a full-day professional learning for school leaders on leading curriculum change. There will also be a full-day professional learning for school leaders (up to 3 attendees per school) on leading the introduction of Modern Foreign Languages as part of the *Primary Language Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile*.

#### Whole school engagement

Oide/NCSE will facilitate two whole school closure days:

- **First whole school closure day**

This first whole-school closure day in 2026/27 will build on the professional learning provided in 2025/2026 and will be developed to respond to the needs of schools following the introductory year of support. It will support teachers' and school leaders' deeper engagement with the over-arching messages around learning, teaching and assessment in the new specifications of the curriculum. Opportunities to explore areas such as child-centred pedagogical approaches to support the development of the Learning Outcomes across all curriculum areas may be provided.



- **Second whole school closure day**

This will provide whole-staff professional learning on Language Awareness in relation to the integration of modern foreign languages into the *Primary Language Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile*. (details outlined below)

### **In-school support**

Oide/NCSE will provide in-school support for each of the curriculum areas from September 2026. Schools will be invited to self-select a number of preferred curriculum areas on an annual basis. Schools will be facilitated to access professional learning in one of their selected areas annually, subject to Oide/NCSE capacity.

From the 2026/2027 school year, bespoke in-school support will begin and schools may request up to 3 school visits facilitated by Oide/NCSE, in accordance with the school's choice of curriculum area.

### **(iv) Modern Foreign Languages 2026/27**

#### **Oide will:**

Focus on providing professional learning in Language Awareness, pedagogy, and the integration of Modern Foreign Languages as part of the Primary Language Curriculum, ensuring that all teachers and school leaders in primary schools are supported in working with the new specification. This will provide opportunity to:

- Explore and develop their understanding of the *Primary Language Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile* to include modern foreign languages.
- Explore leadership approaches to the enactment of MFL as part of the *Primary Language Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile* at whole-school and classroom level for Stage 3 and Stage 4.
- Establish clear links to the existing practices within the *Primary Language Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile*.
- Develop a whole-school approach to Language Awareness learning with key areas such as continuity and progression to be explored.

Provide professional learning to support the whole-school closure days to:

- Explore pedagogical approaches to support the implementation of Building an Awareness of Language and Cultures throughout the school to highlight how a plurilingual approach can support language learning for all pupils in all classes.
- Empower teachers to implement the *Primary Language Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile* to include modern foreign languages, equipping teachers with knowledge and tools to bring it to life in their classrooms.

#### **NCSE will:**

- Continue to provide professional learning support for teachers and school leaders in all special schools. The NCSE will focus on promoting an inclusive approach to language learning which enables all children to develop their language and communication skills across languages, including modern foreign languages, where appropriate.



**PPLI will:**

- Continue to provide the upskilling opportunities as outlined above.

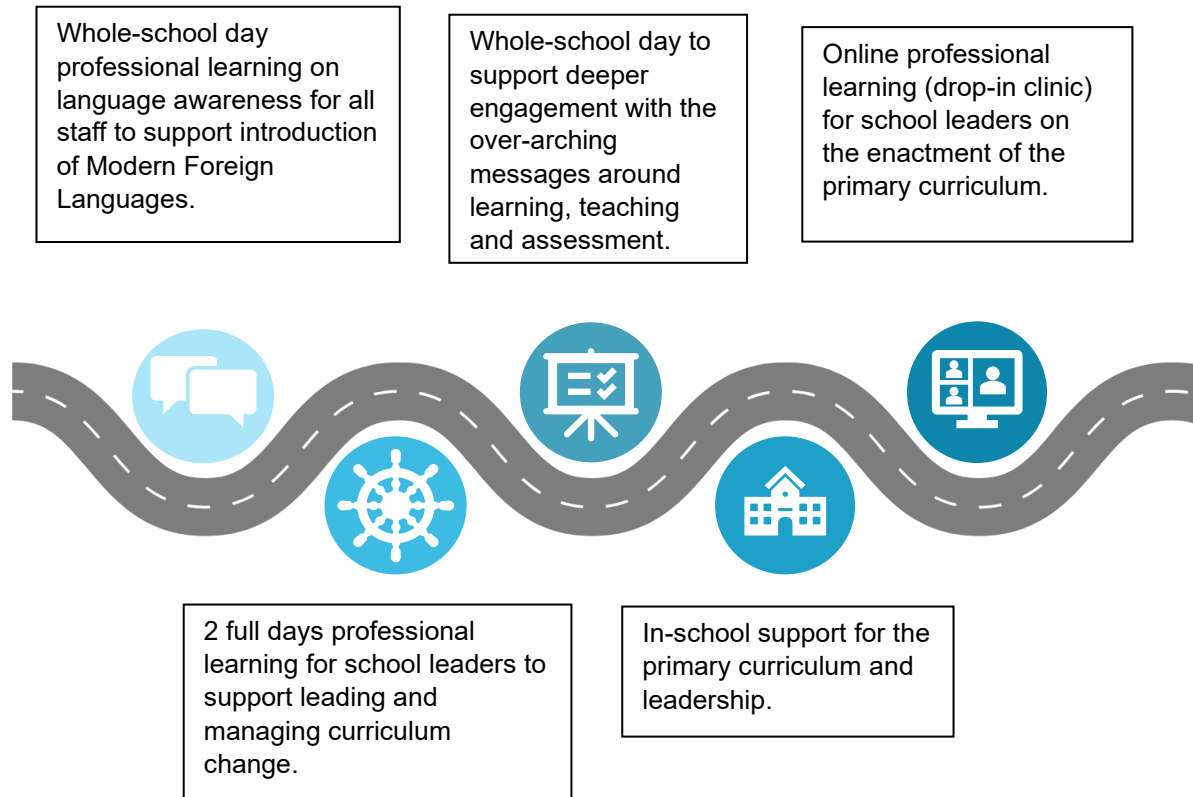


Figure 3: Supports in the 2026/2027 school year

**(v) 2027 to 2029**

Oide and the NCSE will continue to provide professional learning to primary and special schools, including on a whole-school basis, as schools continue to enact the curriculum specifications.

The ongoing supports provided by PPLI in the context of language upskilling and development of resource will also be an important part of the professional learning journey in relation to Modern Foreign Languages.

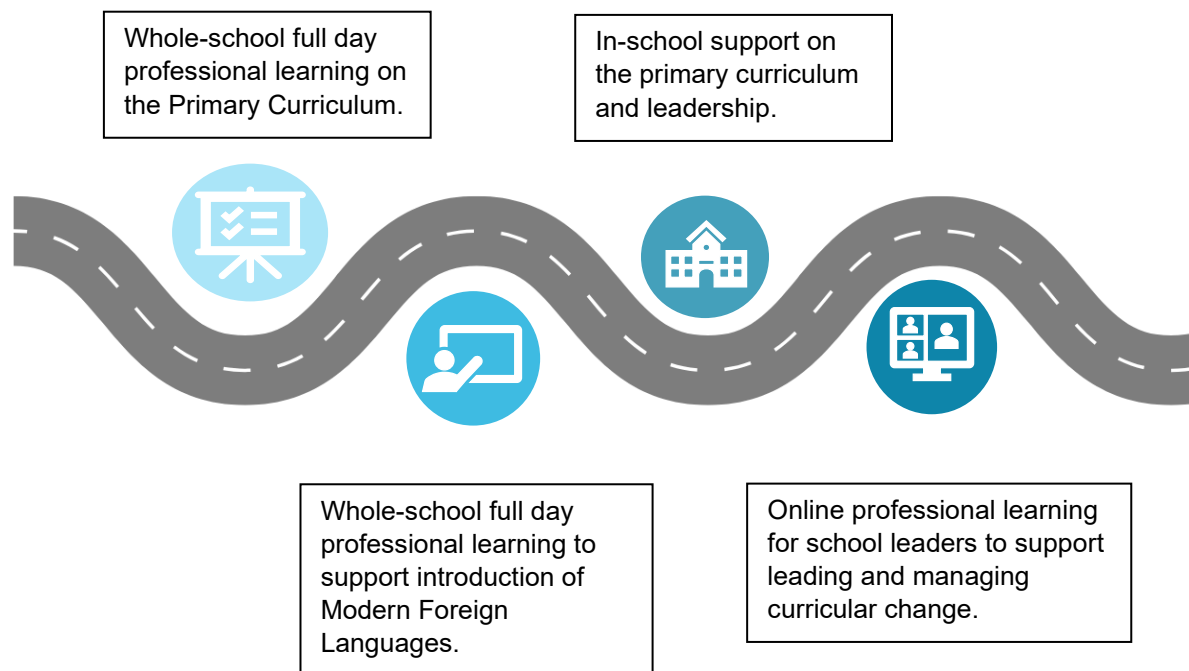


Figure 4: Supports in 2027 to 2029

#### (vi) 2029 onwards

From 2029 onwards Oide and the NCSE will continue providing professional learning to support teachers and school leaders with the enactment of each of the curriculum specifications. PPLI will continue to provide language upskilling as outlined above.

PPLI will continue to provide professional learning by way of language upskilling and development of resources as outlined above.

### 3. 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. This includes the development of online resources, such as the NCCA Toolkits, which are added to on an ongoing basis.

As we move forward there will be regular/ongoing communication to support teachers and school leaders, along with communication for parents/guardians and pupils.

The following will be provided to ensure effective support for the introduction and enactment of the full primary curriculum:

- **Finalising the curriculum specifications**

The curriculum specifications for the redeveloped have been approved by the NCCA Council. It is intended that the specifications will be published in September 2025.

A copy of the curriculum specifications for each school leader and teacher, will be distributed to all primary and special schools following publication.



Online curriculum Toolkits for each of the specifications are under development. These toolkits will be continually updated over the coming years.

- **Planning for whole-school curriculum enactment**

Guidance to support school leaders and teachers as they plan for the whole-school enactment of the curriculum is being developed by the Department of Education. This is supported by the NCCA, Oide, NCSE, school leaders and teachers. An update on this, to include timeline for publication, will be included in the next communication to schools

#### **4. Funding for resources for schools**

Significant investment of €9 million was made available to primary and special schools at the end of 2024. This was to ensure that schools have essential resources and materials to deliver a curriculum that meets the needs of all learners. The first of the grants were specifically aimed at supporting the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education and Arts education.

There will be multi-annual funding to support all areas of the curriculum, with future allocations depending on budgetary considerations and emerging needs as we roll out the curriculum nationwide.

This investment demonstrates the Department's ongoing commitment to enhancing primary education and supporting all primary and special schools in providing a robust, well-rounded age-appropriate curriculum.

#### **5. Additional information**

The Department of Education will soon roll out new Child Protection Procedures. In order for all primary and special schools to engage with these, in term 1 of 2025 / 2026, the following supports will be provided:

- Professional learning for Designated Liaison Persons and Deputy Designated Liaison Persons on the new Child Protection Procedures.
- A whole school professional learning day for all staff (teaching and non-teaching) on the new Child Protection Procedures.

Mark Bohan  
Principal Officer  
Curriculum & Assessment Policy Unit

10 April 2025