



Primary Mathematics Curriculum – Initial Information

A Phríomhoide, a chara,

As you will be aware the *Primary Mathematics Curriculum* has been the subject of review and redevelopment in recent years. The current mathematics curriculum is over 20 years old and much has changed in mathematics education since the late 1990s. The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) developed the new mathematics curriculum through a collaborative approach, informed by research, engagement with school communities, wide consultation, and extensive deliberation. Of most significance to the shaping of the mathematics curriculum was the consultation with children, which has ensured that their perspectives on learning mathematics is included in the new curriculum.

The important learning from teachers and school leaders' early experiences of introducing the *Primary Languages Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile* within their classroom contexts was also taken into consideration through the development and review process.

The *Primary Mathematics Curriculum* is for all teachers and school leaders in all primary and special schools and provides an inclusive and child-centred approach to learning, teaching and assessment. It provides an emphasis on creativity, playful approaches to learning, problem-solving, and experiences shaped by children. It is fully aligned with the vision, principles and statements on learning, teaching and assessment of the *Primary Curriculum Framework*, launched earlier this year by Minister Norma Foley TD.

The *Primary Mathematics Curriculum* will be introduced in all primary and special schools in September 2023. Schools and teachers will become familiar with the new curriculum during the 2023/2024 school year and they will work towards implementation of the curriculum from junior infants to sixth class (stages 1 – 4) from September 2024.

The mathematics curriculum will be available online from September 2023 with a copy of the curriculum document, for each school leader and teacher, distributed to schools following the launch. A circular will issue from the Department of Education in September 2023 providing further details relating to the *Primary Mathematics Curriculum* and the continuous professional development (CPD) support which will be available for schools leaders and teachers.



We appreciate that this curriculum change will take time and effort. To support the engagement, professional learning and collaboration of teachers and school leaders in becoming familiar with and implementing the *Primary Mathematics Curriculum*, a suite of high-quality professional development supports for teachers and school leaders will be provided. The Department, together with the Professional Development Service for Teachers (becoming Oide, the Department's amalgamated support service for teachers and school leaders, from September 2023), and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), will provide guidance and professional learning opportunities over the coming years.

From September 2023, Oide will provide schools with a comprehensive range of face-to-face and online supports to introduce, implement and embed the *Primary Mathematics Curriculum* (PMC) over the course of an extensive three-phase CPD framework. In the case of special schools, this comprehensive suite of support will be provided by the NCSE Primary Curriculum team.

Within the first phase (2023-2024), supports will include:

- **An InfoVideo:** This online presentation will introduce all primary and special schools to the PMC and will provide an overview of the CPD framework, in particular regarding the first two phases of becoming familiar with and implementing the *Primary Mathematics Curriculum*
- **A school and curriculum leaders' seminar:** (September – November 2023): This full day face-to-face seminar will introduce all primary and special school leaders, along with a nominated curriculum leader per school, to the PMC and will provide an overview of the CPD supports available. This seminar will be facilitated by an Oide advisor (referred to as a Professional Learning Leader from September) in the case of primary schools, or by the NCSE, in the case of special schools
- **Online collaboratives for school and curriculum leaders:** (November 2023 – June 2024): These supportive online communities will be led by an Oide Professional Learning Leader (PLL), in the case of primary schools, or an NCSE Primary Curriculum Advisor, in the case of special schools
- **School closure day:** (November 2023 – June 2024): All primary schools will be assigned a date to work with an Oide PLL to explore the PMC. Small and medium schools will be clustered together for this day off-site, with larger schools receiving their support on-site. In the case of special schools, a school closure day will be assigned and facilitated by an NCSE Primary Curriculum Advisor
- **Online clinics** (January 2024 – May 2024): Regular access for school and curriculum leaders to an Oide PLL, or an NCSE Primary Curriculum Advisor, will be provided to answer any queries as primary and special schools begin to introduce the PMC



- **Muinín online workshop series** (January 2024 –June 2024): This series of elective online workshops for teachers will explore the five strands of the PMC. Groups will be stage-focused. This workshop series will be facilitated by an Oide PLL and will be available for all schools
- **Oide online learning hub**: A repository of resources to support teachers and school leaders in exploring elements of the PMC will be made available from the outset of the year and will be added to as needs emerge
- **Additional support material**: CPD engagements will also be designed and made available via the Oide online learning hub to assist school and curriculum leaders in introducing the PMC within their context. A link will also be provided to the NCSE Primary Curriculum supports.

Further professional development supports for primary and special schools will follow in phase 2 (2024-2025) and phase 3 (2025 and beyond). These will be communicated to schools in an upcoming circular.

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment will also develop a toolkit to support teachers in primary and special schools when using the *Primary Mathematics Curriculum*. The toolkit will be continually updated over the coming years.

There is a need for ongoing communications with all members of the school community throughout the change process in relation to the primary curriculum. In this regard, the Department of Education has put into action a comprehensive communications strategy.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank school leaders, teachers and all school staff for your commitment to educating our children. Your professionalism is very much appreciated by the Department of Education.

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15 May 2023