



Circular 0021/2023

To the Managerial Authorities of all recognised primary schools

Say Yes to Languages – primary languages sampler module

Context

The Department of Education is offering all recognised primary schools an opportunity to apply to take part in the *Say Yes to Languages* sampler module (including Irish Sign Language), which will be offered again in the 2023/2024 school year.

The policy background for the introduction of a modern foreign language in a redeveloped Primary School Curriculum is found in [Languages Connect – Ireland’s Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017 – 2026](#).

The recently published [Primary Curriculum Framework](#) “acknowledges the language learning journeys that all children are on in English and Irish. It also acknowledges and harnesses the diversity of languages, including Irish Sign Language, used in Irish primary and special schools. It supports the introduction of modern foreign languages in stages 3 and 4, incrementally building on children’s existing knowledge and awareness of language and progressing from a language awareness model to a competency model in stage 4”.

Aims and Targets

In line with the model described above, the modules will target pupils from 3rd to 6th class.

The *Say Yes to Languages!* Sampler modules aim to:

- Generate awareness among pupils of the range of languages used by their peers, including Irish Sign Language, in their schools and communities which may help support greater inclusion and appreciation of diversity in society
- Encourage uptake of languages at post-primary level
- Provide opportunities for increased levels of collaboration among the school community with regard to the celebration of languages and cultures



- Support implementation of Languages Connect, Ireland's [Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017–2026](#).

Organisation and Duration

Schools will be supported by Post-Primary Languages Ireland (PPLI) in providing the *Say Yes to Languages!* Sampler modules. Schools are invited to familiarise with the following requirements, before applying:

- Schools will identify any language of their choice, including Irish Sign Language (ISL)
- Schools will make arrangements to secure a language teacher/tutor (e.g. a classroom-based teacher already working in the school, a language teacher/foreign language assistant from a post-primary school /a member of the school/wider community, including pupils' parents/guardians)
- All visiting language teachers/tutors will work under the guidance of the class teacher in terms of advice provided in [Circular 0042/2018](#), around Garda vetting and other child protection requirements
- Schools will decide the number of classes they wish to apply for, considering that the sampler module is targeted at pupils in 3rd to 6th class, and that, for funding purposes, a classroom combining two year groups will count as one unit (see the paragraph Funding and Payment below for more details on grant funds)
- The classes will take place within the normal school timetable, for a total of eight hours per classroom, over a period of eight weeks
- Each weekly hour of tuition can be a single, hour-long class or any combination of shorter classes (e.g. two half-hour-long classes) adding up to an hour
- Schools will commit to encourage their teacher/tutor to participate in training provided by PPLI
- The school's link person, hosting teachers and management representatives should also participate in information sessions provided by PPLI.

At the time of applying, schools will also commit to:

- Deliver the module within specified timeframes (PPLI will advise whether each school will take part in term 1, 2 or 3 within the school year) and for the full number of hours
- Provide feedback and facilitate school visits by PPLI staff
- Provide details of how they will engage in promotion and dissemination
- Communicate with PPLI for the successful implementation of the module
- Engage with PPLI in relation to relevant research



- Provide any further required details within specified deadlines (e.g. schools' bank account details required for the payment of grant funds, for successful applicants)

Funding and Payment

Funding for the programme is provided to successful schools: based on the number of classrooms involved and paid directly into the school's bank account.

Schools that do not have a classroom based teacher or other members of staff with capacity to teach the foreign language will make arrangements with an externally identified teacher/tutor for the payment of their work in exchange for an invoice.

Schools and teachers/tutors can refer to the hourly rates specified in the Department of Education's salary scales documentation, accessible from: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/84856-salary-scales/>

The grant amounts which will be paid to the successful schools will be based on the number of classrooms (two year groups combined in one classroom will count as one unit) involved in the sampler modules, as follows:

- 1 classroom participating, €400
- 2 classrooms, €800
- 3 classrooms, €1200
- 4 classrooms, €1600

Eligibility

This programme is open for voluntary application by all recognised English-medium and Irish-medium primary and special schools, including those already involved in the 2022/2023 school year.

Application and Selection

Schools must apply by filling all required information and submitting this [Application Form 2023/24](#)

The deadline for applying is **5pm on 12th May 2023**

Please note that the application form link will be deactivated after the deadline. Participation is not guaranteed to all applying schools, and the Department/PPLI will establish a panel to evaluate applications based on the following criteria:

- A geographical spread of schools



- A range of school contexts
- Diversity in the target languages applied for
- School has internal staff capacity to deliver the module
- School can provide contact details of teacher/tutor
- School has previously met the requirements of the programme and provided feedback as requested
- School can provide details of how they will engage in promotion and dissemination
- School committed to encouraging teacher/tutor and hosting teachers to participate in training
- School committed to providing feedback and facilitating school visits
- Commitment to deliver the module within specified timeframes and for the full number of hours
- Commitment to communicate with PPLI

Priority will be given to schools who meet most of the criteria above.
Participation will be confirmed with schools by 16th June 2023

Queries in relation to this circular

Queries in relation to this circular should be emailed to:
CAP_Helpdesk@education.gov.ie or primary@ppli.ie

Dissemination of circular

A copy of this circular should be provided to members of the board of management and the staff of the school. A copy should also be provided to the parents' association. This circular may be accessed on the Department of Education website at gov.ie/education. An Irish version of this circular is also available on the Department's website.

**Issued by: Evelyn O'Connor,
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