



**Circular 0031/2025**

**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*, which will be offered again in the 2025/2026 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 proposed inclusion was also strongly supported by many stakeholders in the consultation process on the *Primary Curriculum Framework*.

The [Primary Curriculum Framework](#), published in March 2023 acknowledges and harnesses the diversity of languages 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 fifth and sixth classes.

The redeveloped [Primary Language Curriculum](#) which includes a Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) specification is expected to be published in September 2025 and introduced on a phased basis over a number of years.

### **Say Yes to Languages - Phase two**

In line with the policy documents listed above, Say Yes to Languages (SYTL) will enter its second phase from the 2025/2026 school year, with the focus on preparation for the introduction of foreign languages as part of the curriculum, supporting the teachers to upskill in a foreign language and teach the module, as well as providing grants to support the teaching by a visiting teacher/tutor in the short term.

### **Aims**

*Say Yes to Languages* will help

- raise awareness of the importance of modern foreign language education to build transversal skills



- prepare the ground for the implementation of the redeveloped Primary Language Curriculum.
- encourage uptake of foreign languages at post-primary level
- support implementation of Languages Connect, Ireland's [Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026](#)
- improve literacy in English and Irish

### Organisation and Duration

In order to maximise its reach and allow a larger number of schools to take part, *Say Yes to Languages* will be offered to pupils in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class from the 2025/26 school year.

Schools will be supported by Post Primary Languages Ireland (PPLI)/ Languages Connect in providing the *Say Yes to Languages* module<sup>1</sup>. Schools are invited to familiarise themselves with the following requirements, before applying:

- Schools will identify foreign language capacity of the teachers within the school who would be supported by PPLI/ Languages Connect to teach the language. Where no capacity exists as yet within the school, schools will identify and secure foreign language teaching capacity within the wider community (e.g. a visiting language teacher, a foreign language assistant from a post-primary school).
- Schools will identify any language of their choice, or Irish Sign Language (ISL), based on the above and on the demographics of the pupils.
- Schools will make arrangements to secure a language teacher/tutor. Where the school can avail of the teaching capacity within the school, it will make its own arrangements locally to release the teacher to teach 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> classes where necessary, with other teachers covering that teacher's classes for the period.
- Where visiting language teachers/tutors are used, these 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 offered to pupils in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> classes and that, for funding purposes, a classroom combining two or more 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 regular school timetable, for a total

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<sup>1</sup> Post-Primary Languages Ireland (PPLI)/Languages Connect has a dedicated team supporting the development work at Primary.



of ten hours per classroom, over a period of ten weeks in either of the designated terms (PPLI will advise whether a school will take part in term 1 or 2 of the school year).

- 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 must encourage their designated teacher, whether a classroom-based teacher or visiting 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.
- Schools must ensure that visiting teachers/tutors work in collaboration with hosting teachers.
- When availing of visiting teachers/tutors for the delivery of the module, schools must encourage their teaching staff to engage in foreign language upskilling, and provide details of same in their application form.

### **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 previous school years, subject to the criteria outlined below and budget available.

### **Application**

Schools must apply by filling in all required information and submitting this [Application Form 2025/26](#)

The deadline for application is **5pm on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2025**. Please note that the application form link will be deactivated after the deadline. Participation will be confirmed to schools by 16<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

### **Selection**

Participation is not guaranteed to all applying schools, and the Department/PPLI will establish a panel to evaluate applications based on the requirements and criteria below.



### Minimum requirements

At the time of applying, schools commit to:

- Deliver the module within specified timeframes (PPLI will advise whether each school will take part in term 1, or 2 of the school year) and for the full number of hours (10 hours per pupil/class).
- 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 other required details within specified deadlines (e.g. schools' bank account details required for the payment of grant funds).
- Provide details of any engagement with foreign language upskilling by staff members.

Automatic inclusion will be granted to:

- Schools designating a registered primary teacher to deliver the module.
- Schools which nominate a teacher on staff who commits to participate in a foreign language upskilling course (various funded course options will be available throughout the year - see [languagesconnect.ie/language-upskilling/](http://languagesconnect.ie/language-upskilling/) for further information - schools may also use the *Say Yes to Languages* grant to fund alternative or additional foreign language upskilling courses).
- Schools applying to take part for the first time, provided that they meet the minimum eligibility requirements of the programme.

Additional criteria for selection

- Re-applying schools must have previously met all the requirements of the programme and provided feedback as requested, to be considered for selection, including evidence of engagement with foreign language upskilling opportunities.
- In the assessment process, priority will be given to schools which have provided contact details of their teacher/tutor at application time.

### **Funding and Payment**

Funding for the programme is provided to successful schools via a grant paid directly into the school's bank account. The payment will be based on the number of participating classrooms (please note that, for funding purposes, two or more year groups combined in one classroom will count as one unit).



Please note that, while professional development and increased opportunities for foreign language upskilling are made available to primary teachers, funding for the programme will start decreasing for reapplying schools, from the 26/27 school year. In the school year 25/26, funding per participating classroom will, however, remain unchanged, as follows:

- 1 classroom participating, €500
- 2 classrooms participating, €1,000

#### Notes:

- Schools seeking funding for multiple groups, in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class, can list them in the application form and a decision will be made by the panel subject to budget. Even where funding cannot be granted, those schools can be supported with teaching resources and training provided by PPLI.
- Schools availing of a member of staff to deliver the programme, should commit to using part of the funding to pay for foreign language upskilling courses for any registered teacher on staff. This can be as an alternative or in addition to those courses already funded by the Department of Education and made available via PPLI.
- Schools which do not have a classroom-based teacher or other members of staff with capacity to teach the module can contract the services of an external teacher/tutor and be invoiced for same. In this case, schools and visiting teachers/tutors can refer to the hourly rates specified in the Department of Education salary scales documentation, accessible from: [www.gov.ie/en/publication/84856-salary-scales/](http://www.gov.ie/en/publication/84856-salary-scales/)

#### Queries in relation to this circular

Queries in relation to this circular should be emailed to: [primary@ppli.ie](mailto:primary@ppli.ie)

A list of frequently asked questions can also be found on [Say Yes to Languages - FAQs](#)

#### 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 [www.gov.ie/education](http://www.gov.ie/education). An Irish version of this circular is also available on the Department's website.

**Issued by: Mark Bohan, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Unit**  
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