



**Circular 0040/2024**

## **Information in relation to Standardised Testing and Other Matters – Academic Year 2023/24 and Subsequent Years**

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

**Sections 1 and 2 of this circular set out important information for schools regarding Standardised Testing returns in respect of the 2023/2024 academic year. Sections 3 to 12 provide updates on a number of curriculum and other matters which are relevant to primary schools and special schools.**

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## 1. Standardised Testing in Primary Schools – Returns for 2023/24

Thank you for your continued co-operation in providing the results of your standardised testing to the Department of Education via the Esinet online system. We fully acknowledge the work of school staff in this regard.

During May/early June 2024 the tests should be carried out in your school, in accordance with circulars 0056/2011 and 0018/2012. **The results of these tests must be uploaded onto the Esinet portal on or before Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2024.**

As you are aware assessment is an enabler of effective learning and teaching. This includes regularly evaluating pupils' work and periodically reporting results to pupils and parents/guardians. All forms of assessment, including standardised tests, can be used by teachers to inform learning and teaching so as to ensure that programmes of learning in literacy and numeracy are tailored to meet the needs of individual pupils/class groups. The results of standardised testing can help schools to:

- evaluate progress in literacy and numeracy
- pinpoint areas for improvement and
- support teachers in ensuring that literacy and numeracy learning experiences meet pupils' needs.

Results of any one standardised test should not be used:

- in isolation
- as baseline data for predicting future achievements for pupils or
- for solely informing decisions regarding the provision of interventions or targets within learning plans.

Information from ability tests, teacher observations, parental reports, as well as the views of the pupils are also very important aspects of a thorough assessment. A standardised testing [information leaflet](#), gives further advice on how standardised tests form part of a broad range of assessment methods to inform the learning and teaching process, how the data can be used and how best to ensure sensitive communication about testing.

**The administration of standardised tests to whole classes is inappropriate at infant class level.** Standardised tests, if used before the end of first class, should be administered in small groups only. See [www.ncca.ie](http://www.ncca.ie) for more information.

[Assessment Guidelines for Schools](#) provides schools with:

- information on a variety of assessment methods
- advice to schools on developing, implementing and reviewing their policy on assessment and
- advice on the legislative requirements for schools in communicating information about children's progress and achievement.



[Circular 56/2011](#) also provides information on assessing children's literacy and numeracy achievement.

### **Funding**

Your school will shortly receive funding in respect of 2023/24 standardised testing. There is an increase in funding per pupil this year as the cost of purchasing the tests has risen. The following funding will be provided:

- €6.00 per pupil in English medium schools and
- €7.50 per pupil in Irish medium schools

These funds should be used to purchase test instruments and materials such as teachers' manuals, test scoring services or test-related software offered by test providers. Tests to be used are as follows:

- The Educational Research Centre (ERC) provides standardised tests in both paper and online formats
  - Drumcondra Primary Reading Test (English)
  - Drumcondra Primary Mathematics Test (in English and Irish) and,
  - Triail Ghaeilge Dhroim Conrach do Bhunscoileanna Gaeltachta agus Lán-Ghaeilge

Information on these and other tests developed by the ERC is available at <https://www.tests.erc.ie/>. Both online and paper tests can be ordered on ERC DOTS (*Drumcondra Online Testing System*) <https://schooladmin.erc.ie>. Queries can be addressed regarding the online tests to [dots@erc.ie](mailto:dots@erc.ie), and queries on the ERC's paper-based tests to [tests@erc.ie](mailto:tests@erc.ie).

- Mary Immaculate College provides paper-based
  - MICRA-T (Mary Immaculate College Reading Attainment Tests) and
  - SIGMA-T (Standardised Irish Graded Mathematics Attainment Tests) tests.

These tests are available to purchase from [www.cjfallon.ie](http://www.cjfallon.ie)

Any funds remaining after the standardised testing costs have been met may be spent on additional tests that may further explore a pupil's needs.

### **Exemptions from Standardised Testing**

As per circular 56/2011 'Students may be excluded from standardised testing if in the view of the school principal they have a learning or physical disability which would prevent them from attempting the tests or, in the case of migrant students, where the level of English required in the test would make attempting the test inappropriate'.

Information is also available at <https://www.tests.erc.ie/test-administration-faqs-general>.

Principals should use their professional judgement and consider the need for exemption from or inclusion in testing on a case-by-case basis. There will be learners, who due to their level of language proficiency, will be able to access standardised testing within their first year in Ireland. Others will need more time if their progress in



English language development is below what would be expected or if their schooling has been interrupted by accommodation issues/lack of school places/other wellbeing factors.

### Return of data to the Department of Education

Standardised test results should be uploaded onto the Department of Education [Esinet portal](#) on or before **Wednesday 17th June 2024**.

To enter and approve the data, please:

- log on to the Esinet portal
- click on 'School Data Collection', and then 'Literacy and Numeracy
- read the instructions before clicking 'Continue'.

It is particularly important that all schools, including special or infant schools without a second class, read and follow the directions in the [step-by-step guide](#) to uploading the returns.

### Reporting and Using the Results of Assessments to Improve Pupil Learning

Schools are reminded of their reporting obligations as per Part 7 of Circular 0056/2011. These include:

- **Reporting to parents/guardians:** Schools should issue a written report explaining the results to parents/guardians. This should be in sufficient time before the closure of the school for the summer holidays to allow parents/guardians time to seek a meeting(s) with the teacher(s) and/or principal to discuss the written report. All primary schools **must** use the standard report template for reporting on pupils' progress and achievement at school. There are a number of reporting templates available which include options for pupils in receipt of additional support in school. The creator tool and suite of reporting templates can be accessed [here](#).

Information for parents/guardians on understanding standardised test scores can be found on [ncca.ie](#). A video for parents/guardians explaining standardised test results in the context of the broader end-of-year report is available [here](#).

- **Reporting, analysing and using assessment information at school level;** Schools must also report information from standardised tests to their board of management.

## 2. National and International Testing

As per Circular [0056/2011](#) the Department is requesting that schools do their utmost to participate in large-scale assessments conducted by the Educational Research Centre (ERC) on behalf of the Department of Education. The Department and the ERC greatly appreciate schools' continued participation in these studies.



### **Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2026: Field Trial March – April 2025 and Main Study March – April 2026**

PIRLS that takes place every five years. It assesses the reading achievement of Fourth class pupils in primary school. Findings from the study provide important information on Ireland's reading achievement in an international context.

In March-April 2025, up to 50 primary schools in Ireland, will be randomly selected to participate in a Field Trial for PIRLS 2026. About 200 primary schools will be randomly selected to participate in the Main Study in March – April 2026. The 2026 cycle of PIRLS will mark Ireland's transition to a digital-based assessment.

If your school is selected to participate in PIRLS and you have any questions, please contact [PIRLS.Ireland@erc.ie](mailto:PIRLS.Ireland@erc.ie).

### **Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2025: Field Trial March 11<sup>th</sup> – April 19<sup>th</sup> 2024**

PISA assesses the skills of 15-year-old students in three domains: science, mathematics and reading literacy. PISA takes place every three years. Science is the main focus of the assessment in PISA 2025, while an additional innovative domain 'Learning in the Digital World' will also be included to assess students' self-regulated learning and problem solving using computational tools.

Between **11<sup>th</sup> March and 19<sup>th</sup> April 2024**, 53 schools in Ireland will take part in the field trial.

If your school has been selected to take part in PISA 2025, and have any questions or concerns, please contact the PISA team at [PISA.Ireland@erc.ie](mailto:PISA.Ireland@erc.ie).

## **3. Special Education**

The Special Education Teaching (SET) allocation model was introduced in 2017 and schools' educational profiles were updated in 2019 and again in 2022.

The Department commenced a review of the Special Education Teacher allocation model in late 2022 to ensure that it was meeting the changing needs in the area of special education. The educational profile of each school will now be updated annually from the 2024/25 school year and SET allocations will be advised to schools at the earliest possible date each year.

A unique educational profile is created for each school and is underpinned by three pillars; Enrolment Allocation, Educational Teaching Needs Profile and Educational Disadvantage.

The Educational Teaching needs profile is calculated based on educational outcome data which are collected and held within schools and submitted to the Department of



Education. Hence, the profiles are directly correlated to, and focused on, pupils with the greatest level of need in the areas of literacy and numeracy.

The data to support this pillar is derived from the Standardised Test results submitted by schools for English and Maths. In the case of Irish Medium schools, it is the mean of the standardised tests results of both English and Irish, in addition to maths, which are used to create the individual school profiles.

It is important to ensure that the Continuum of Support plans for individual pupils with special educational needs are reviewed by schools as soon as possible to ensure that they are up-to-date. This review should be done in collaboration with the relevant school staff, parents/guardians and the pupils themselves, where appropriate.

For more details regarding the Special Education Teacher Allocation model, please see Circular [0002/2024](#).

## **4. Transitions**

### **Early learning and care settings to primary school**

The NCCA *Mo Scéal* reporting templates support the transition for young children from an early learning and care setting to primary school. The purpose of these templates is to improve arrangements for the transfer of information about the learning and development of children between all state-funded early learning and care settings<sup>1</sup> and primary schools. The templates and the support materials are a resource which early learning and care settings and schools can use as they work together to make young children's transition into primary school as positive and effective as it can be.

In the case of Gaeltacht schools, a *Guide for Gaeltacht Primary Schools: Strengthening Links between Primary Schools and Early Learning and Care (ELC) Settings* has been developed to help schools to create collaborative links with their local naíonraí that will support the transition of the children to the primary school and the promotion of the Irish language.

### **Primary school to post-primary school**

The successful transition of sixth class pupils to post-primary education requires ongoing communication, collaboration and careful planning between primary and post-primary schools and the pupils and their families. Sharing information about pupils' learning is a key way of supporting their transition. This may happen at a local level through transition programmes, open days/nights (including on-line), meetings between teachers and families and the transfer of key information to the post-primary schools. The NEPS Continuum of Support and the Home School Liaison Officers in DEIS schools can also support the transition of pupils.

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<sup>1</sup> The early learning and care settings are participating in the state funded Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme providing two years of free preschool.



Schools are **required** to use the [Education Passport materials](#) to support the reporting and transfer of pupil information at the end of sixth class. Schools should ensure that an Education Passport for each pupil is sent to the relevant post-primary school following confirmation of enrolment and ideally, by the end of June. For children in receipt of additional supports, the process for the transfer of information may need to commence at an earlier stage.

The transfer of children in need of additional support can be facilitated through the [NEPS Student Transfer Form](#) which should be completed and signed by parents/guardians before sending to the relevant post-primary school. The successful transition of children with SEN can include meetings between teachers and families as well as through the transfer of key information to the post-primary schools.

## **5. Primary Curriculum Developments**

### **The redevelopment of the Primary School Curriculum**

The launch of the *Primary Curriculum Framework* for all primary and special schools marked a significant milestone in the redevelopment of the primary school curriculum. The framework provides a blueprint for the enhancement of learning, teaching and assessment for all children.

The redevelopment of the Primary School Curriculum is progressing through the work of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). Recently, draft specifications have been published in the areas of:

- Arts Education
- Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) in the Primary Language Curriculum
- Social and Environmental Education (SEE)
- Science, Technology and Engineering Education and
- Wellbeing.

These are now subject to extensive consultation with teachers, school leaders, parents, the general public and, importantly, children.

The Consultation will remain open until the 7th June, 2024. You can find more information and contribute to the consultation by visiting [NCCA's consultation webpage](#).

### **Primary Mathematics Curriculum and Toolkit**

The *Primary Mathematics Curriculum* (PMC) was published in September 2023. The PMC provides an inclusive and child-centered approach to learning, teaching and assessment with an emphasis on creativity, playful approaches and problem-solving.

The PMC is supported by an online [Primary Mathematics Toolkit](#). The toolkit includes Mathematical Concepts, Progression Continua, Support Materials for teachers and parents, and Examples of Children's Learning.





### **Supports for teachers in primary and special schools**

Oide<sup>2</sup> and NCSE will continue to offer a suite of supports to principals and teachers to assist them in implementing the Primary Mathematics Curriculum during 2023/2024 school year.

### **Supporting parents with the new mathematics curriculum**

The Department of Education has developed a two-page [information leaflet for parents](#) which outlines the key changes that parents might expect with the introduction of the new curriculum. Schools are encouraged to share this information with parents.

### **Primary Language Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile**

The *Primary Language Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile* (PLC/CTB) for stages 1 – 4 (junior infants to sixth class) was published in September 2019. The NCCA is in the process of consulting on the inclusion of Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) for stages 3 and 4 (3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Class) in the PLC/CTB as part of the full redevelopment of the Primary School Curriculum. The consultation is open until 7th June 2024 and further information can be accessed [here](#).

The curriculum is supported by an online [Primary Language Toolkit/Uirlisí Úsáide Teanga na Bunscoile](#).

Oide and NCSE is continuing to support schools in implementing the PLC/CTB. Cohort 4 Sustained Support began in September 2023, the focus has been on supporting teachers with the implementation and enactment and exploring the transfer of skills between Irish and English. The visits comprise of up to four face-to-face as well as two online. In addition, a suite of supports have also been made available including an EPV approved summer course.

Support materials for all schools including webinars are available [here](#).

To help parents/guardians support their children as they learn Irish as part of the *Primary Language Curriculum/ Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile*, a suite of tip sheets, *Gaeilge sa Bhaile*, have been published. These include:

- An Ghaeilge Mórthimpeall Orm / Irish All Around Me
- Mol an Óige agus Tíocfaidh Sí! / Praise, Praise, Praise!
- Ag Labhairt is ag Léamh as Gaeilge / Speaking and Reading in Irish
- Spreagadh agus Spraoi sa Bhaile / Fun at Home.

You can access these resources [here](#).

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<sup>2</sup> As of September 2023 the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST), Centre for Schools Leadership (CSL), National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT) and Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) merged into one support service called Oide.





## Guidance on Preparation for Teaching and Learning

To support all teachers in their preparation for teaching and learning, guidance has been developed through a collaboration led by the Department of Education and involving the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), and Oide.

The guidance is supported by an extensive set of support materials including:

- a 'Getting Started' booklet that supports schools leaders and teachers engaging with the guidance
- recordings of teachers sharing their views on the guidance
- a Frequently Asked Questions document
- an inter-agency video supporting the key messages of the guidance
- a suite of videos presenting 'preparation in action' from a range of contexts.

All materials related to the guidance can be accessed [here](#).

## 6. Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Supports

During the *Review of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) across Primary and Post-primary Schools* teachers requested greater guidance on the teaching of RSE across the primary years. In response, the NCCA has developed a resource toolkit to support teachers in RSE within *Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE)*.

The toolkit provides a single access point for freely available materials developed by Irish state agencies and organisations with expertise in SPHE/RSE. The toolkit is organised by class level and linked directly to the SPHE Curriculum ensuring age-appropriate material is available for all primary schools.

The SPHE/RSE resource portal and toolkit will continue to be added to over time and can be accessed here: <https://www.curriculumonline.ie/primary/curriculum-areas/social-personal-and-health-education/sphe-rse-toolkit>.

In tandem with the development of the online Toolkit, preparation for redeveloping and updating the SPHE curriculum has begun. A revised Junior Cycle specification was introduced in schools for all first year students in September 2023, with introduction of a Senior Cycle SPHE specification to follow from September 2024. Consultation on the new primary Wellbeing (SPHE and PE) curriculum opened on the 6<sup>th</sup> March and runs until 7<sup>th</sup> June. It is expected that the curriculum will be introduced into schools in the 2025/2026 school year.

Oide offer an RSE EPV approved Summer Course which will be available this summer.



## 7. Professional Learning for Teachers to support their work in Assessment

Oide, provides professional learning experiences (PLEs) for teachers and school leaders on learning, teaching, assessment and reporting at primary level.

The Primary Curriculum Framework (PCF) supports high-quality learning, teaching and assessment that is inclusive and evidence-based, recognising the right of all children to make progress in all areas of their learning and development. This vision is reflected in all PLE provision designed and facilitated by Oide.

Oide, when designing and facilitating professional learning experiences for school leaders and teachers, incorporates assessment, both summative and formative in all professional learning events, and through the provision of materials on Scoilnet and the Primary Maths Curriculum Hub. The professional learning leader (PLLs) can also work with individual teachers and school leaders in exploring how standardised test results, along with other sources of assessment data, can meaningfully inform future teaching and learning in classrooms during workshops and visits to schools.

More information on PLE provision provided by Oide can be found at [www.oide.ie](http://www.oide.ie)

## 8. Supporting Literacy and Numeracy

In 2011 the Department published the *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life: The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011–2020*. The Interim review of the strategy was published in 2017 with updated and new targets for literacy and numeracy, identifying the priority areas such as numeracy and DEIS.

Work is ongoing on the development of a successor Literacy and Numeracy and Digital Literacy strategy. The strategy is informed by robust research to include consideration of national and international practice, by stakeholder engagement and public consultation. It is intended that the new strategy would be published in 2024.

### Resources

Some resources to support the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, have been developed by the Department's National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS):

- **The Balanced Approach to Literacy Development in the Early Years (English & Gaeilge)**  
This [resource](#) can be used by class teachers working with children from Junior Infants to First Class. It may also be helpful to schools who have identified the need to improve reading standards as part of the school-self-evaluation process.
- [Cur Chuige Cothromaithe i leith Fhorbairt na Litearthachta i mBunranganna na Bunscoile](#) produced by NEPS and An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta & Gaelscolaíochta (COGG) is tailored to the teaching of literacy in the Irish



language, with a focus of those children who receive their education through the medium of Irish. It includes 16 short video clips of good practice in action.

- **Effective Interventions for Struggling Readers**

It is a [guide](#) for teachers, particularly special education teachers, which outlines evidence-based approaches to teaching reading to struggling readers from 6 to 18 years. It includes:

- How best to organise learning support for struggling readers
- Information about interventions that have been found to be effective in Irish schools
- A range of resources to support literacy teaching

## **9. STEM Education Policy Statement 2017–2026**

The Department's [STEM Education Policy Statement 2017–2026](#) sets out the ambitious goals and actions required to achieve and improve the STEM education experience and outcomes for all learners. The [policy statement](#) built on a range of reforms and initiatives already underway in STEM, in areas such as curriculum and assessment reform, teacher professional development, embedding digital learning and advances in initial teacher education while providing a roadmap to address the areas for development

The [STEM Education Implementation Plan 2022-2026](#) was published on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023. It is a joint plan developed by the Department of Education and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. The implementation plan sets out ambitious actions required to continue the journey in STEM education for all our learners in early learning and care, primary and post-primary school

## **10. Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018–2025**

The Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice was published by the Department in 2018 and refreshed in 2019. It sets out the ambition and vision that the promotion of wellbeing will be at the core of the ethos of every school and centre for education in Ireland. To implement this framework every school is required, by 2025, to use the School Self-Evaluation (SSE) process to initiate a wellbeing promotion review and development cycle. The policy can be accessed [here](#).

### **Teacher Professional learning(TPL)**

The national rollout of the TPL commenced in March 2022. Schools are encouraged to access this TPL delivered by Oide to help them initiate their wellbeing promotion review and development cycle. More information available [here](#).

### **Wellbeing Resources and Supports**

NEPS have developed advice and resources to support the wellbeing of all in the school community which is available [here](#).

Webinars developed by the Oide to support this process are available [here](#).



A range of new wellbeing resources in relation to stress and anxiety; self-harm and school reluctance are also available [here](#).

### **Trauma-Informed Approaches**

A webinar developed by NEPS explores the use of whole-school, compassionate and trauma-informed approaches to build safe and connected schools. Introducing a Trauma Informed Approach, *The Stress Factor – Getting the Balance Right*, is supported by accompanying resources. NEPS psychologists will be available to support implementation in schools. NEPS will communicate with all schools on the roll out of this training shortly.

The national rollout of the Wellbeing PLE commenced in March 2022. See [here](#) for information.

## **11. Public Libraries Support for Schools**

Membership of the public library is free, there are no fines for overdue books and there are no replacement charges for children's books which have been lost or damaged.

Public libraries are committed to delivering the services under the annual Right to Read Programme to support reading and literacy and may take a hybrid approach to delivering the services in libraries and online depending on local need and capacity. The national public library strategy, *The Library is the Place* sets out a commitment to build on the current provision of library services to primary and post-primary schools and explore the potential for an expanded programme of library supports which will be delivered in alignment with the Department of Education's forthcoming new national strategy on literacy, numeracy and digital literacy.

The public library provides access to a wide range of resources, facilities and activities that aim to support primary schools in developing children's literacy, numeracy, creativity and communication skills. The development of existing partnerships between schools and libraries provides many benefits for both the primary schools and for children and families. A partner library branch has been identified for every primary school based on catchment area. This information is available on the [public libraries' website](#).

Each partner library branch will provide the services outlined below and will liaise directly with each primary school during the school year. In the case of certain schools, some of the services will be provided by the mobile library, school library van or through the library headquarters, to be determined at local discretion. Under the collaborative approach, each library service will make contact with the school principal over the year to provide information in relation to the library services and resources available to each school.

The range of library services offered to primary schools includes the following:



- Facilitating class visits to libraries from primary schools, arranged locally in advance
- Providing a dedicated teacher's card with additional borrowing capacity on request to every teacher in every primary school to enable each teacher to borrow items for his/her class
- Making presentations on the library services for each school, as requested by the school and by prior arrangement, at a time agreed with the principal, or as part of in-service training. The presentation may be facilitated at the school and can be made to teachers, pupils and/or parents/guardians. Schools may cluster together for this presentation, if desired. Online presentations may also be possible.
- Providing :
  - Reading and curriculum support materials available [here](#).
  - A Resource Guide for Schools which provides information for primary and post-primary schools to develop and expand reading and literacy collections within the school setting
  - Videos on Creating a Reading Space and Creating a Reading School with suggestions to support schools and teachers in developing reading spaces and reading cultures in schools
  - Online learning resources, including over 300 Irish and international newspapers, 250 different magazine titles, comprehensive collections of e-books and e-audio books, over 400 online learning courses and 110 language courses
  - Resources and reference materials to support school projects
- Providing a reading space for children and access to electronic resources in each partnered library service
- Providing reference resources and research assistance to pupils and teachers for school project work
- Providing information for parents/guardians about the range of library resources and the activities available to support the development of their children's literacy and numeracy skills
- Providing access to a wide range of historical material about the local area, including maps, photographs, documents and information and collections relating to 1916 and subsequent commemorations.
- Providing ongoing library programmes and initiatives throughout the year, including Ireland Reads, the national day for celebrating reading, the Spring into Storytime initiative, the national Summer Stars reading programme, the Children's Book Festival and Family Time at Your Library, all of which support the continuing development of children's literacy and numeracy skills (see [www.librariesireland.ie](http://www.librariesireland.ie)). Ireland Reads national reading day takes place in February. Spring into Storytime provides story time and reading activities in branches and online during April/May. The Summer Stars Reading Adventure runs throughout the summer and is a fun reading programme open to all children who register for it at their local library. The Children's Book Festival takes place in October in libraries and online and celebrates children's books



and family reading and Family Time at Your Library offers fun events in local libraries and online in December

## **12. Literacy, numeracy and digital literacy services for parents and guardians**

[Adult Literacy for Life \(ALL\)](#) is a 10-year strategy that aims to ensure that every adult has the necessary literacy, numeracy and digital literacy to fully engage in society. In Ireland, one in six adults has unmet literacy needs. This can impact family life and affect parents and guardians in their confidence and ability to engage with schools, read a bedtime story, help with homework, or even fill out a form required to register or enroll in school. Family and intergenerational learning is identified in the ALL Strategy as a key priority as family learning programmes and activities often provide a safe and supportive route for adults to engage with their own learning and to support their children's educational development.

Family learning programmes are delivered by Education and Training Boards throughout the country. They also provide courses for adults to improve their literacy, numeracy and digital literacy skills and often work with schools and other organisations to tailor bespoke learning opportunities for parents, guardians and families. For further information please contact your local ETB Adult Literacy Service and or Regional Literacy Coordinator who is the main point of contact for local schools and educators, or the Adult Literacy for Life National Programme Office. All details can be found on [www.adultliteracyforlife.ie](http://www.adultliteracyforlife.ie) or by emailing [allinnovation@solas.ie](mailto:allinnovation@solas.ie).

[The National Adult Literacy Agency \(NALA\)](#) also offers help and advice for parents and guardians who have difficulty reading, writing, spelling or doing mathematics. NALA has a phone and online learning service [www.learnwithnala.ie](http://www.learnwithnala.ie) where adults can learn by themselves or with the support of a tutor on the phone. Learn with NALA has [professional development courses](#) that may be of interest to teachers and school staff to raise awareness of literacy needs and literacy friendly approaches. NALA also has [www.helpmykidlearn.ie](http://www.helpmykidlearn.ie), a dedicated website that provides suggestions for activities that parents/guardians can do with their children to develop their literacy and numeracy. For further information call 1 800 20 20 65 or email [info@nala.ie](mailto:info@nala.ie)

All ETB and NALA services are free. Please share these links and details with your school community.

*Evelyn O'Connor*

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8 April 2024