



Circular 0035/2026

To: The Managerial Authorities of all recognised primary schools

Say Yes to Languages primary languages sampler module

Context

The Department of Education and Youth 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 2026/2027 school year.

The [Primary Curriculum Framework \(2023\)](#) and the redeveloped [Primary School Curriculum \(2025\)](#) introduced modern foreign languages (MFL) education in stages 3 and 4 as part of the [Language Specification](#). The introduction of MFL is being implemented on a phased basis over several years.

Say Yes to Languages - Phase two

In line with the policy documents listed above, Say Yes to Languages (SYTL) entered its second phase from the 2025/2026 school year, with the focus on preparation for the introduction of modern foreign languages, 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 supports the following actions:

- Raise awareness of the importance of modern foreign language education to build transversal skills
- To 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](#)
- To improve literacy in English and Irish

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 budgetary allocation.

Organisation

In order to maximise its reach and allow a larger number of schools to take part, *Say Yes to Languages* will continue to be offered to pupils in 5th and 6th class.

Schools will be supported by Post Primary Languages Ireland (PPLI) Languages Connect in delivering *Say Yes to Languages*.

Before applying, schools are invited to familiarise themselves with the following:

- Schools should identify foreign language capacity of the teachers within the school, who will be supported by PPLI/Languages Connect to deliver the module. Where capacity does not yet exist 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 foreign language of their choice, or Irish Sign Language (ISL), based on the above and on the demographics of the pupils.
- Where the school has foreign language teaching capacity within the school, it will make its own arrangements locally to release the teacher to teach 5th and 6th classes where necessary, with other teachers covering that teacher's classes for the period.
- Schools which do not have a classroom-based teacher or other member of staff with capacity to deliver the module can contract the services of an external teacher/tutor and be invoiced for same. Where visiting language teachers/tutors are selected, these will work under the guidance of the class teacher in terms of advice provided within [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 module is available to pupils in 5th and 6th 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).

Duration

- The classes will take place within the regular school timetable, for a total of ten hours per classroom, over a period of ten weeks across either of the designated terms (PPLI/ Languages Connect 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.

Selection Criteria

Participation is not guaranteed to all applying schools. The Department of Education and Youth and PPLI/ Languages Connect 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/ Languages Connect 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/ Languages Connect staff.
- Provide details of how they will engage in promotion and dissemination of information pertaining to the delivery of the SYTL module.
- Communicate with PPLI/ Languages Connect within deadlines provided.
- Engage with PPLI/ Languages Connect 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.
- Ensure the designated teacher (classroom-based teacher or visiting teacher/tutor) participates in training provided by PPLI/ Languages Connect.
- Ensure the school's link person, hosting teachers and management representatives participate in information sessions provided by PPLI/ Languages Connect.
- Ensure visiting teachers/tutors work in collaboration with hosting teachers; submit evidence of collaboration upon completion of the module through a Collaboration Template provided by PPLI/ Languages Connect, outlining professional learning enhancement in the context of MFL delivery.
- If availing of a member of staff to deliver the module, use 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 Youth and

made available via PPLI/ Languages Connect.

Additional criteria for selection

- In the assessment process, priority will be given to schools which have provided contact details of their teacher/tutor at application time.

Please note that failure to comply with the minimum requirements listed above may result in exclusion from participation during the following school year.

Automatic inclusion will be granted to:

- Schools which designate a registered primary teacher to deliver the module.
- Schools applying to take part for the first time, provided that they meet the minimum eligibility requirements of the programme.
- Schools which nominate a teacher on staff who commits to participate in a foreign language upskilling course.

Please note that a variety of funded language upskilling options will be available throughout the year - see 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.

Application

Schools must apply by filling in all required information and submitting this [Application Form 2026/27](#)

The deadline for application is **5pm on 27th April 2026**. Applications after the deadline will not be accepted. Participation will be confirmed to schools by **5pm on 25th of May 2026**.

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 increased opportunities for foreign language upskilling are made available to primary teachers, funding for the programme will decrease for reapplying schools, from the 26/27 school year as follows.

1. Schools that are participating for the first time will receive full grant (1 classroom participating, €500; 2 classrooms participating, €1,000)

2. For reapplying schools, the grant will decrease by 20% each subsequent year.

Please refer to the table below for details of available grants:

Please note that schools seeking funding for multiple groups, in 5th and 6th class, can list

Schools participating in SYTL	Grant allocation / percentages					Grant per class/group				
	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	2029/2030	2030/2031	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	2029/2030	2030/2031
New schools	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	€ 500	€ 500	€ 500	€ 500	€ 500
Reapplying schools	80%	60%	40%	20%	0	€ 400	€ 300	€ 200	€ 100	€ -

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/ Languages Connect.

Queries in relation to this circular

Queries in relation to this circular should be emailed to: 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 and Youth website at 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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