

Primary Curriculum Review and Redevelopment

Written submission template for organisations, groups and individuals responding to the *Draft Primary Curriculum Framework*

This template is intended to support you (and your colleagues/organisation) in developing a written submission in response to the *Draft Primary Curriculum Framework*. Please e-mail your completed submission to PCRRsubmissions@ncca.ie

Individual submission details

Name	
Date	
E-mail	

Organisation submission details

Name	Association for Drama Education in Ireland (ADEI)
Position	
Organisation	ADEI
Date	February 2022

Please email your submission to PCRRsubmissions@ncca.ie

E-mail	
---------------	--

The NCCA will publish written submissions received during the consultation. The submissions will include the author's/contributor's name/organisation. Do you consent to this submission being posted online?

Yes

No

Please provide some brief background information on your organisation (if applicable).

Founded in 1999, the Association of Drama in Education in Ireland (ADEI) is a voluntary professional organisation with a committee composed of people whose educational specialization and expertise is in Educational Drama, and between us we teach at all levels – primary, secondary and third level. Our aim is to promote Drama in the classroom as an art form and as a creative, interactive way of teaching across the curriculum. We aim to support teachers, working both in and through drama. Many of our committee members are primary school teachers and primary school teacher educators which uniquely positions us as those with experience of the classroom and expertise in Drama Education.

The remainder of the template includes two sections. Section 1 invites your overall comments and observations on the *Draft Primary Curriculum Framework*. Section 2 is structured to align with the six key messages related to the framework. Each message is summarised as a support for you in working on the submission.

Please email your submission to PCRRsubmissions@ncca.ie

Section 1

Please outline your overall response to the *Draft Primary Curriculum Framework*.

ADEI welcomes some aspects of this framework, but wishes to express significant concern in relation to others. It welcomes the focus on the two key areas of **teacher agency** and broad **competencies for child development**. Our main concern is with the diminished time allocated to the arts in education. We are also concerned about the increased content areas, which are being considered under the umbrella of drama education.

While the framework emphasises teacher agency and key competencies, it nonetheless provides specific guidance in relation to time allocations for various subject areas across the age ranges. In this regard, it is clear that the traditionally valued areas of the Irish curriculum such as language and mathematics have continued to dominate over the need for a child centered, holistic and integrated curriculum. In addition, the proposed transition from ‘arts education’ to a more specific subject orientation in the senior classes does not actually materialise in terms of time allocation. The reduced time allocated to ‘arts education’ remains the same across the age ranges, as does the generic title.

These issues will be reflected upon more specifically in the sections below.

Section 2

Agency and flexibility in schools

The Draft Primary Curriculum Framework proposes that the redeveloped curriculum will:

- Be for every child.
- Recognise teachers' and principals' agency and professionalism to enact the curriculum in their individual school context.
- Give more flexibility to schools in terms of planning and timetabling to identify and respond to priorities and opportunities.
- Connect with different school contexts in the education system.
- Give greater opportunities for flexibility and choice for children's learning.

The Draft Primary Curriculum Framework outlines important messages in relation to agency and flexibility in schools. Please give your overall feedback in relation to this key message.

We welcome the emphasis on *every* child in the draft framework making it a most inclusive vision of curriculum. We hope that this opportunity to re-envisage the curriculum will mean that children's desires to learn in holistic, connected and playful ways will be realised.

It was clear from the background research papers and the presentations at consultation days that the principles of **agency** and **flexibility** were to become a strong feature in a redeveloped curriculum. This move marks a **very significant cultural shift** in the history of curriculum in Ireland and will therefore need to be acknowledged as such and appropriate support for teachers put in place. Increased flexibility and the positioning of teachers as makers of curriculum brings additional expertise and responsibility. It becomes the responsibility of the **individual teacher** to ensure that the curriculum they make is richly varied and well balanced. There is an obvious tension between a **child's right to a cultural life and the arts** (UNCRC, 1989) and **the increased global pressure to do well in literacy and numeracy** and teachers in Ireland experience these tensions. A teacher's agency is contingent upon, amongst other things, their pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986). We would therefore need to see a clear vision for the enactment of agency in the context of arts education. In the absence of such, teachers may understandably revert to pedagogies and

Please email your submission to PCRRsubmissions@ncca.ie

disciplines with which they are comfortable and which the system, either directly or indirectly, values. This is not insignificant when you consider that many children will not encounter arts experiences outside of those offered at school. To put this another way, schools' offerings of the arts are exceptionally important in the lives of children, and when we consider children from disadvantaged backgrounds, this becomes a social justice issue.

If we consider the argument that **time is an indication of the value** placed on a subject (Eisner, 1992) then the redeveloped curriculum places a significantly lower value on all of the arts combined than on mathematics alone. It has been suggested at consultation days/ in presentations made by NCCA over the period of consultation that the proposed time arrangements allow for more in-depth engagement in arts education. It is true that a rich experience is preferable to short more superficial engagements but of course this is contingent on a curriculum that respects and values the arts as other ways of knowing. ADEI feels that the suggested time allocations would need to be revised in order to achieve what Alexander (2011) refers to as a "richly rounded" curriculum and to communicate to teachers, as curriculum makers, that the child's right to artistic life is being upheld.

Curriculum connections between preschool, primary and post-primary schools

The Draft Primary Curriculum Framework proposes that the redeveloped curriculum will:

- Provide a clear vision for children's learning across the eight years of primary school.
- Link with learning experiences provided through the themes of the *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* and connect with the subjects, key skills and statements of learning in the *Framework for Junior Cycle*.
- Support educational transitions by connecting with what and how children learn at home, in preschool and post-primary school.

The Draft Primary Curriculum Framework outlines important messages in relation to curriculum connections between preschool, primary and post-primary schools. Please give your overall feedback in relation to this key message.

On page 14 of the document (Figure 3) the provision for arts education is shown. The footnote included to explain provision for children in junior infants to second class is a cause for concern to this organisation. As the arts are not envisaged as subjects, the suggestion that “broad learning outcomes in Arts Education would continue to support learning in visual arts, music and drama, as well as supporting other aspects of arts education such as dance, film and digital media” does not suggest a clear vision for children’s learning. More specifics would be needed to guide teachers in how to build on preschool drama experiences (which would typically include engagement in role play). Anecdotal evidence suggests that drama in the infant classes is currently being ‘done’ if children have some time to play with peers in a role play area (when it is their turn). Role play builds fundamental behaviours in children in the early years, but research in Ireland and internationally <https://www.routledge.com/A-Vygotskian-Analysis-of-Childrens-Play-Behaviours-Beyond-the-Home-Corner/Kingdon/p/book/9780367135928> shows that it needs to be supported and extended in specific, drama based, pedagogical approaches which are distinct from other art forms. If drama continues to be ‘done’ via role play areas only, with a lack of adult support, not only will children not have the full benefit of what drama can offer, it is possible that very little will happen once Aistear provision ends. How will teachers know how to move from drama in infants to drama in first and second class if knowledge, concepts and skills are not progressional? Sadly, the lack of specifics around drama currently aligns very well with *The Framework for Junior Cycle* as drama is not referred to by name at any point in the entire junior cycle document, while music and visual arts are specific subjects. Drama needs more clarity and a stronger endorsement across the curriculum if this *Primary Framework* will actually support creativity as a competency.

Emerging priorities for children’s learning

The Draft Primary Curriculum Framework proposes that the redeveloped curriculum will:

- Embed seven key competencies across children’s learning outcomes from junior infants to sixth class.

Please email your submission to PCRRsubmissions@ncca.ie

- Focus on developing children’s skills, knowledge, dispositions, values and attitudes. The Learning Outcomes and the Key Competencies are broad in nature to describe this wider understanding of learning.
- Have increased emphasis on some existing areas such as PE and SPHE (Wellbeing) and digital learning, and have new aspects such as Modern Foreign Languages, Technology, Education about Religions and Beliefs (ERB) and Ethics, and a broader Arts Education.

The Draft Primary Curriculum Framework outlines important messages in relation to emerging priorities for children’s learning. Please give your overall feedback in relation to this key message.

The key competencies are strong, representing a balance of desirable capacities to be developed in the child as he/she progresses through primary school. **Four of the key competencies are selected for discussion with reference to arts education broadly, and drama, specifically. The competencies focused upon are ‘Being an active citizen’, ‘Learning to be a learner’, ‘Communicating and using language’ and ‘Being creative’.** By engaging children in arts education, they can draw inspiration and motivation through their creative expression, exploring both their imagination and their sense of self (Duncan, 2013). Lithgow et al.’s (2021) review of a report commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education to investigate the impact of Covid-19 on students noted that nearly all had experienced challenges to their mental health and well-being therein. Deep engagement in the processes of creating drama, dance, music, art and “will allow children not only to survive tumultuous times, but to thrive” (Lithgow et al., 2021).

ADEI thus recommends that the competency named ‘Fostering Well-being’ acknowledge that access to, and engagement with, arts education and nurturing children’s creative capacities fosters wellbeing.

Being an active citizen demands ‘active and meaningful participation’ based on children’s developing understanding of ‘what is happening in the world within a framework of human rights, equality and social justice’ (NCCA, 2020:8). **The development of understanding in this regard, made visible through children’s values, attitudes and actions, requires the development of empathy. To**

project oneself onto the plight of another or “walking in the shoes of another”, is the essence of the unique learning drama facilitates (Heathcote and Bolton, 1994). By exposing children to diverse opinions through drama as part of arts education, preconceived ideas about others can be challenged resulting in the development of empathy, acceptance and understanding. Recent research into the development of prosocial behaviours in Californian public schools highlighted the role of drama as a prompt for adopting multiple perspectives in the negotiation of character motivations (American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2021).

Learning with and about others’ also enables children to develop empathy, an essential capacity which enables children to attune to, understand and appreciate the perceived feelings and experience of another person. Thus, the principles of drama education and social justice education are very closely aligned, with democratic engagement the goal, in the “conscious repositioning of power within the student-teacher relationship” (Aitken, 2013:36). As the teacher adopts a role co-creating with the children in process drama, the developing narrative is negotiated in a shared capacity. Drama, thus, as a component of arts education, can effectively contribute to ‘experiencing learning through democratic practices’ (NCCA, 2020: 10). **Due to its embodied nature, as part of arts education, drama is best placed to develop this invaluable dimension to learning about oneself and others in the active exploration of values and attitudes.** The experiential learning drama offers can examine the consequences of actions from a safe emotional distance through the safety of the fiction, without the fear of consequences in the ‘no-penalty area of drama’ (Johnson and O’Neil, 1984:128).

As part of *Communicating and using language*, ‘different forms of communication, including gesture, expression, spoken language, printed text, broadcast media and digital media’ are named (NCCA, 2020: 8). The multi-modality referenced represents a further strength of the draft curriculum framework as it encompasses purposeful and artistic expression through the body. Further, with the addition of corresponding outcomes, this would enable an exploration of identifying and applying appropriate language register use to context, as well as engaging children in interpreting and manipulating body language to purposeful and creative effect. Through drama, such active exploration could then be centralised in critical meaning-making processes in ‘exploring and creating a variety of texts’ (NCCA, 2020: 8). ‘Exploring alternative ways of communicating’ is laudable vis-a-vis arts education as an open communication mode which could be interpreted

through drama, dance, film, poetry, song, sculpture, etc, or a combination of these. The broadening of arts education to include film, dance, and digital media, while philosophically aligned and thereby welcomed accordingly, reduces the time available for teachers to offer the deep engagement process drama allows.

'Being Creative' features desirable attributes such as *'using creative processes'* (NCCA, 2020). However, In the absence of the availability of learning outcomes with which to connect such processes, it would be preferable to link them with a purpose. For example, in the absence of an application to *'using creative processes'*, such as, *'to develop confidence and confidence in his/her ability to create'*, the potency of *'using creative processes'* is thereby reduced. Specific emphasis on children creating by working as artists may increase the child-centred emphasis of the curriculum framework across the arts. It may also serve to support teachers in recognising and developing children's artistic and creative contributions, while making and reflecting in drama and through other art forms. This could also deepen the learning potential of the relational element of arts education already outlined, as uniquely in process drama the children and teacher work in and out of role collaboratively and creatively to explore or develop material. Finally, if *'participating and enjoying creative and cultural experiences'* were broadened to include *'participating and enjoying artistic and cultural experiences'*, this could extend opportunities for children to receive and engage with the arts, including through accessing performance and arts partnerships, for example

Changing how the curriculum is structured and presented

The Draft Primary Curriculum Framework proposes that the redeveloped curriculum will:

- Be broad and balanced in purpose and content.
- Be structured in five broad curriculum areas;
 - Language
 - Mathematics, Science and Technology Education
 - Wellbeing
 - Social and Environmental Education
 - Arts Education.

(In addition to the five areas above, the Patron's Programme is developed by a school's patron with the aim of contributing to the child's holistic development particularly from the religious and/or

ethical perspective and in the process, underpins and supports the characteristic spirit of the school. These areas connect to the themes of *Aistear* and to the subject-based work in Junior Cycle.)

- Provide for an integrated learning experience, with curriculum areas in Stages 1 and 2 (junior Infants – second Class) and more subject-based learning in Stages 3 and 4 (third class – sixth class).
- Use broad learning outcomes to describe the expected learning and development for children.
- Incorporate the new *Primary Language Curriculum / Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile*.

The *Draft Primary Curriculum Framework* outlines important messages in relation to changing how the curriculum is structured and presented. Please give your overall feedback in relation to this key message.

The idea of a broad curricular framework is welcomed and offers choice and opportunity to develop learning content organically. However, the potential for discrete drama time in the curriculum is significantly reduced - in terms of (i) the time it is afforded (9/10 hours allocated for Arts Education monthly in infants and 1 st /2 nd Class; 8 hours Arts Education monthly in 3 rd -6 th Class) and (ii) the fact that from 3 rd. class Drama Education encompasses film, dance and digital media. This is a grave concern for ADEI as the importance of process drama and the positive outcomes that arise from engaging with this type of drama cannot be underestimated. We are concerned that process drama could be replaced by film, dance and digital media in schools as these are often performance and product focused.

As each subject in Arts Education has its own knowledge, concepts, skills and intrinsic value. It is vital that Drama, that is process drama, has its own place in the curriculum for the reasons we have stated in this submission.

The proposed time frame allocates 8 hours a month for Drama, Visual Art, Music, Film, Dance and Digital Media for the senior classes. That is a significant decrease in time allocated for the Arts Subjects. The recent school closures and the cancellation of Arts related events have made it abundantly clear the importance of the Arts in people's lives and the positive impact they have on people's mental health and well-being for both children and adults alike. We would ask that the time allocation be reconsidered for Arts Education. Companies are no longer seeking grades from

their potential employees, they are looking for “soft skills”, those that can be developed through Arts Education, for example, empathy, creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving, communication and social and emotional development. These skills need to be instilled in children from a young age.

The emphasis on integration of curricular areas does not translate clearly from earlier stakeholder discussions into the key messages and structures presented. It is not clear, for example, how curriculum areas such as Wellbeing are to be translated into outcomes, which could be achieved by multiple means, such as through the use of Drama. Furthermore, there is a considerable amount of time allocated to the patron’s programme, and in the vast majority of primary schools these are denominational and religious in nature. For the children whose parents chose to opt out of Religious Education, this represents a significant loss of curricular learning time for these children.

Supporting a variety of pedagogical approaches and strategies with assessment central to teaching and learning

The Draft Primary Curriculum Framework proposes that the redeveloped curriculum will:

- Promote high quality teaching, learning and assessment.
- Conceptualise assessment as an essential and critical part of teaching and learning.
- Highlight the importance of teachers’ professional judgement in supporting progression in children’s learning.
- Encourage teachers to make meaningful connections with children’s interests and experiences.
- Recognise the significance of quality relationships and their impact on children’s learning.
- Recognise the role and influence of parents and families in children’s education.

The *Draft Primary Curriculum Framework* outlines important messages in relation to supporting a variety of pedagogical approaches and strategies with assessment central to teaching and learning. Please give your overall feedback in relation to this key message.

ADEI welcomes the recognition that assessment is a central element of effective teaching and learning for all learners in the draft curriculum framework. The draft framework acknowledges the role of assessment to enhance teaching and supports progression in children’s learning across the curriculum. However, ADEI cautions that assessment may still be defined as a measurement tool to gather, record, interpret and report information about a child’s progress. Conceptualising assessment as an essential and critical part of teaching and learning requires a broader understanding of assessment.

The redefining of assessment in the 1999 curriculum to include assessment ‘as and for’ learning acknowledged the child as an agentic learner. Thus, the development of autonomy, self-regulation, meta- cognition were recognised as important in the context of teaching, learning and assessment. This message needs to be brought forward in the context of the redeveloped curriculum. The literature identifies a reliance on textbooks to guide instruction and assessment as a factor, which mitigates against the principle of inclusive assessment practices. As teacher competency and ‘buy in’ may be an issue, appropriate support will need to be put in place to facilitate teachers to broaden their understanding of assessment.

In the context of the discourse on assessment, ADEI supports research on assessment informing the redeveloped curriculum (Lysaght et al 2019). Lysaght et al argue for the importance of integrating inclusive approaches to assessment within the redeveloped curriculum. Inclusive approaches to assessment support students from different backgrounds, abilities and learning modalities. As the arts provide children with a unique opportunity to engage in a diverse range of teaching, learning and assessment methods, they are an ideal vehicle to enable children to engage holistically with knowledge. Drama in particular provides children with an opportunity to engage with knowledge through oral, written, visual, kinaesthetic/ embodied and aesthetic ways of knowing. This happens as drama provides the context for the unfolding of an empowered teaching and learning environment grounded in creativity, experimentation and risk-taking.

As critical self and peer reflection/assessment are inherent to the process of making and responding to drama, drama provides the teacher and the child with an opportunity to engage in multi-modal inclusive methods of assessment. Furthermore, as the child is empowered to co-construct knowledge with the teacher during a drama encounter, unanticipated and undetermined learning outcomes add richness to the learning experience.

Thus, the diverse range of assessment practices, which are embedded in the arts, facilitate assessment practices, which support the development of critical thinking and problem solving rather than the regurgitation of propositional knowledge. Within the context of the redeveloped curriculum, it is unfortunate that the time allocated to arts education have significantly been reduced. ADEI urges more recognition of the arts in the redeveloped curriculum.

Building on the successes and strengths of the 1999 curriculum while recognising and responding to the challenges and changing needs and priorities.

The 1999 curriculum contributed to many successes including:

- Enhanced enjoyment of learning for children.
- Increased use of active methodologies for teaching and learning.
- Improved attainment levels in reading, mathematics and science as evidenced in national and international assessments.

The Draft Primary Curriculum Framework proposes that the redeveloped curriculum will:

- Address curriculum overload at primary level.
- Take stock of strategies, initiatives and programmes and clarify priorities for children's learning.
- Link with *Aistear* and *the Framework for Junior Cycle*.

The *Draft Primary Curriculum Framework* outlines important messages in relation to building on the successes and strengths of the 1999 curriculum while recognising and responding to challenges and changing needs and priorities. Please give your overall feedback in relation to this key message.

As has been outlined in this document, the centrality of arts in the curriculum is significant in the context of the holistic development of the 21st century child. The arts, and in particular drama, contribute to the development of the physical, emotional, aesthetic, intellectual, moral, social dimensions of human experience (O'Neill, 1995). One of the many strengths of the 1999 curriculum, was the recognition of the value of the arts as a core part of the child's educational experience. As each subject area was allocated a discrete time of one hour per week, teachers and children were given quality time to meaningfully engage with each art form in its own right.

One of the concerns which emerged from the 1999 curriculum was the issue of curriculum overload, which has been identified by teachers and stakeholders, specifically relating to arts education (INTO, 2009; McCormack, 2020; NCCA, 2010). The review process of the 1999 curriculum outlined that parents did not reference drama as a subject (NCCA, 2019), which could be owing to this overload. In relation to the framework document addressing the curriculum overload at primary level, the Draft Primary Curriculum Framework now encompasses more subject areas under Arts Education (including Drama, Visual Art, Music, Dance, Film and Digital Media), which are all valued and, in theory, welcomed. However, the time allocation proposed for Arts Education (8/9 hours per month) is not sufficient to enable meaningful engagement with each of the discrete arts areas. This is also problematic given the addition of Dance, Film and Digital Media are now appearing under the umbrella of arts education.

While we welcome the monthly allocation to arts education in the redeveloped curriculum, the Association of Drama in Education in Ireland (ADEI) is calling for an increase in the monthly time allocated to Arts Education, to protect the integrity and discrete teaching of all arts subjects. This is of particular importance as we emerge from the Covid 19 pandemic, where children missed educational experiences, and as a result have not received adequate input in the arts subjects

(Kaffenberger, 2021). Drama has been shown to support young people in making sense of complex and traumatic life events (Gibbs et al., 2013), such as Covid-19, and therefore, now more than ever, it is essential that it is given sufficient time to support students in this time of uncertainty in the world.

The proposed time frame of the redeveloped curriculum has significantly reduced the time devoted to the arts from 12 hours per month to 8/9 hours per month. This represents a significant change in the time allocated to arts education in the redeveloped curriculum. Therefore, from an Arts Education, and specifically drama perspective, the area of curriculum overload is (one) of more concern than in the 1999 Curriculum. This will need to be further explored with regard to time if an Arts Education curriculum is to be implemented to support teachers in successful implementation of Arts Education.

The development of key competencies to support children's learning and development, as outlined in the draft curriculum document. In particular, the recognition of 'Being Creative' as a competency, strongly aligns with drama and Arts Education more broadly as the creative process involves imaginative engagement, the ability to generate diverse ideas, problem-solving, critical thinking and the creation of a product (O'Sullivan, 2021). Creativity, in this regard, can be considered a process and a product. As the arts in education and in particular drama support the development of creativity and require extended time to enable deep engagement, the inclusion of 'Being Creative' as a competency necessitates the recognition of the arts as both a subject and a tool to support the development of this competency.

Reference List

Aitken, V. (2013) 'Dorothy Heathcote's mantle of the expert approach to teaching and Learning: a Brief introduction', in *Connecting Curriculum: Linking Learning*. NZCER Press, pp34-56.

American Academy of Arts and Sciences (2021) *Art for Life's Sake: The Case for Arts Education*. A Report on the Commission of the Arts. Cambridge, Massachusetts: American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Duncan, K. (2013) *Art Works: Using the arts to promote emotional health and wellbeing in schools*. Nottingham, UK: City Arts. Available at: <https://city-arts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Art-Works.pdf> (accessed 18 February 2022).

Gibbs, L., Mutch, S., O'Connor, P., & MacDougall, C. (2013). Research with, by, for and about Children: lessons from disaster contexts. *Global Studies of Childhood*, 3(2), 129-141

Heathcote, D. and Bolton, G. (1994) *Drama for Learning. Dorothy Heathcote's Mantle of the Expert approach to education*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Press.

Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO). (2009). *Creativity and the Arts in the Primary School*. Vere Foster House: Deirbhile Nic Craith.

Johnson, L. and O' Neill, C. (eds.) (1984) *Collected Writings on Education and Drama*. Illinois: Northwestern University Press/ Stanley Thames Ltd.

Lithgow, J.A., Rutter, D.F, and Tretheway, N.D. (2021) 'The case for arts education is strong: our commitment should be too'. *Chicago Tribune*, 4 November 2021. Available at: <https://www.amacad.org/publication/case-for-arts-education> (accessed 20 February 2022).

Kaffenberger, M. (2021). Modelling the long-run learning impact of the Covid-19 learning shock: Actions to (more than) mitigate loss. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 81, 1-8. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2020.102326>

McCormack, C. (2020). *The Arts in Irish Primary Schools: An Investigation of Teachers' Personal Experiences of the Arts and How it Impacts their Teaching* (unpublished masters thesis). The Marino Institute Of Education, An Associated College of Trinity College Dublin, The University of Dublin. Dublin

NCCA (2019). Primary Curriculum Review and Redevelopment: Report of main findings from parents on the review and redevelopment of the Primary Curriculum.

NCCA (2010). Curriculum Overload in Primary Schools: An Overview of national and international experiences.

O'Neill, C. (1995). *Drama Worlds: A Framework for Process Drama*. Canada: Pearson Education Canada.

O'Sullivan, C. (2021). *A Transdisciplinary Approach to Drama with Children and Young People on the Autism Spectrum: Introducing the Social Drama Model*. [Manuscript submitted for publication]

Covid-19

Since the publication of the *Draft Primary Curriculum Framework*, Covid-19 has presented a big challenge for schools. Please give your views on the implications of schools' experience of the pandemic for the finalisation of the *Primary Curriculum Framework*.

Please give your views on the implications of schools' experience of the pandemic for the finalisation of the *Primary Curriculum Framework*.

While COVID-19 greatly affected the lives of many, given the challenges presented to children during the pandemic, ADEI argues that there has never been an more important time for recognition of the critical role the arts play in the life of a child. The arts as critical to a child's holistic development and as such should be recognised in the context of the discourse on wellbeing and inclusion within the redeveloped curriculum. A contention is made that well-being should not be confined to something which is learnt cognitively. Instead ADEI argue for the importance of the curriculum supporting children's well-being through engagement with subjects which facilitate a creative outlet for the child. As arts education greatly support children's well-being, we argue that they require more recognition within the redeveloped curriculum. This has never been a more pressing concern in light of the pandemic. This contention is reinforced by recent research conducted by Davis & Phillips (2020) who argue for the importance of sufficient space within the curriculum for the human dimension of learning.

Davis & Phillips (2020) *Teaching during COVID 19 times – The experiences of drama and performing arts teachers and the human dimensions of learning*, NJ, 44:2, 66-87, DOI: [10.1080/14452294.2021.1943838](https://doi.org/10.1080/14452294.2021.1943838)



Data Protection

The NCCA fully respects your right to privacy. Any personal information which you volunteer to the NCCA will be treated with the highest standards of security and confidentiality, strictly in accordance with the Data Protection Acts. If you require further information related to data protection please visit www.ncca.ie/en/privacy-statement or you can contact the NCCA's Data Protection Officer at dpo@ncca.ie.

Thank you for your submission.

Please email your submission to PCRRsubmissions@ncca.ie