

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	Michael Kelly
Position	CEO
Organisation	GIY – Schools Programme
Date	31 Dec. 20
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 email your submission to PCRRsubmissions@ncca.ie

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

GIY is a leading social enterprise and food sustainability organisation that supports people around the world to live healthier and more sustainable lives by growing some of their own food. In 2020, GIY has inspired, supported and educated over 950,000 people to grow, cook and eat some of their own food at home, **school**, work and in the community. We envision a world where all food is produced and consumed in a manner that is healthy for the planet and its people.

We have an track record of creating and delivering national awareness and educational content and resources. For example, the big grow – national primary schools campaign run in the UK and Ireland, partnering with innocent reaching 175,000 school children in 5500 schools per annum. Our proven insight is that when children grow some of their own food, it shifts their behaviour, attitude and knowledge about food and empowers them to make healthier and more sustainable choices.

Evidence shows that children who grow their own food are more likely to eat fruits and vegetables and are also more likely to continue healthy eating habits throughout their lives. Our school programmes include:

- The big grow – classroom based growing experience for children
- GROW2CEO – food entrepreneurship programme for secondary schools
- GROW at School – supporting school growing in primary schools
- Community Classroom – linking community gardens with schools to create community classrooms
- Eat Together – in-classroom social eating programme for children in schools in Waterford from GROW HQ
- School Tours and Teacher Training at GROW HQ

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*.

At a general level GIY supports the Framework. However, we believe there is a strategic gap in relation to the potential for Food Education on the Curriculum.

We believe embedding food education in every subject and in every school context can deliver essential life skills for children, and provide them with agency in relation to their own health and the health of the planet – educating the next generation in personal and national resilience.

GIY has experience of delivering programmes in Schools as set out in our attached submission. We are currently engaged in the Food in Schools Policy Network. We support the aims of the Network and through action research can contribute our insights about the opportunity for behavioural change and learning outcomes for Primary Curriculum through Food Education in the Curriculum.

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.

At a general level GIY supports these key messages. However, we believe there is a strategic gap in relation to the potential for application of these key messages in the Framework in relation to Food Education.

GIY has experience of delivering programmes in Schools as set out in our attached submission. We are currently engaged in the Food in Schools Policy Network. We support the aims of the Network and through action research aim to demonstrate the opportunity for behavioural change and learning outcomes for Primary Curriculum through embedded Food Education in the Curriculum.

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.

See attached submission on GIY Schools programmes.

GIY believes these programmes can inform policy development and an expansion of the vision for children’s learning to include life skills in Food Education – embedded across preschool, primary and post-primary levels.

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.
- 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 progressive and child centred approach to primary education being proposed by the NCCA is very welcome. However GIY Schools, have initiated with partners the Food in Schools Policy Network. The members of the Network believe that food education is not given appropriate consideration within this Framework. Food education is critical in equipping children to make healthy, sustainable food choices throughout their lives. This will provide brighter futures and improve outcomes for children and young people from all societal groups in Ireland.

In February 2019 a creative day of action was held which brought together people and organisations that want **sustained food education** embedded in the school system. This day of creative action was a facilitated workshop, and focused the group on the need for policy action, explore collaboratively what it means to ‘embed food in education, and identify the next steps for action.

GIY Schools offer to contribute our experience, insights and action research from the work in schools done to date to inform NCCA future policy and programmes.

See attached information on GIY Schools.

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.

As noted above, GIY believes there is a strategic gap in relation to Food Education.

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.

We believe embedding food education in every subject and in every school context can deliver essential life skills for children, and provide them with agency in relation to their own health and the health of the planet – educating the next generation in personal and national resilience.

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.

The ever complex challenges of personal resilience, climate change, and health and well being means an ever increasing level of skills and knowledge for children around food – a whole systems approach. The ultimate goal of the Network that GIY supports is the development of a **holistic ‘whole school’ food education** that equips children to make delicious and nutritious food choices throughout life. An education is **sustained** and that encompasses an appreciation for the value of food **culture**, food **growing**, **cooking** and teaches life **skills**, as well as providing the **nutritional** knowledge about how food impacts bodies, health and wellbeing.

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