



NCCA

An Chomhairle Náisiúnta
Curraim agus Measúnachta
National Council for
Curriculum and Assessment

Information Booklet



National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)

01

About NCCA

08

Our structures

10

How to get in touch?



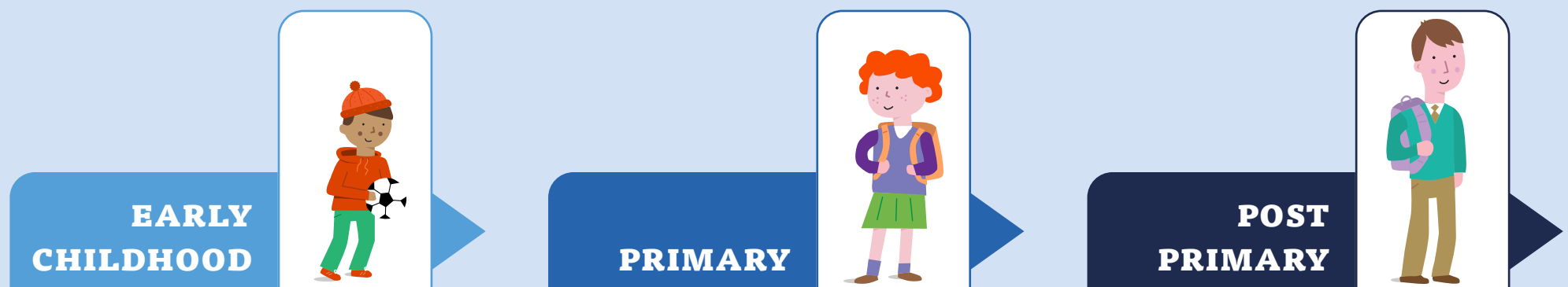
About NCCA

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, more commonly known as the NCCA, works with education stakeholders to shape the curriculum for children and students in Ireland. NCCA was established in 1987 as a successor to the Curriculum and Examinations Board and was reconstituted fourteen years later, in July 2001 as a statutory body advising the Minister for Education on curriculum and assessment for:

- early childhood education
- primary schools
- post-primary schools.

We also advise the Minister on assessment procedures used in schools and examinations as part of the curriculum.

Our vision is to lead and sustain developments in curriculum and assessment that are sufficiently far-reaching so that all children and students can experience and benefit from enjoyable, engaging, relevant and appropriately challenging experiences to support learning, living in, contributing to, caring for, and working in a changing world.



So how do we do this?

We develop our curriculum and assessment advice by drawing on the following four key pillars.



1. Research

We critically review and debate cutting-edge research from across the globe and commission new research where this is needed.



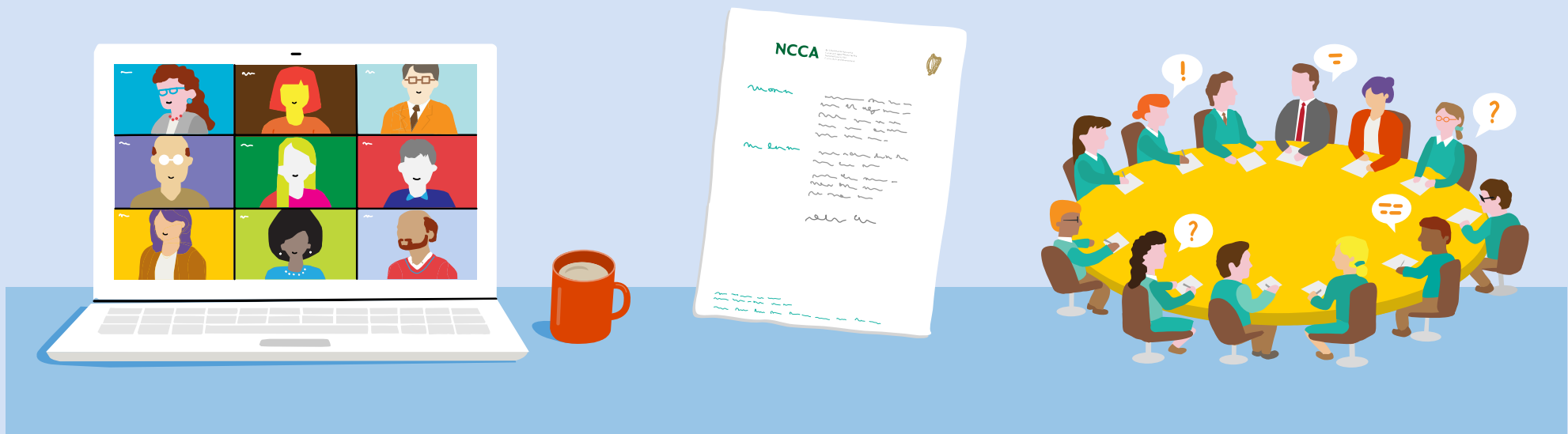
2. Network activity

We pay close attention to what works and we get feedback from our networks. We work with children, students, practitioners, teachers, parents and school leaders as key ideas about learning, teaching and assessment are developed, tried out, discussed and evaluated.



3. Consultation

We hold public consultations so people can engage with the key ideas about curriculum and assessment change. We use a range of consultation methods to gather feedback on these ideas. Hearing directly from children and students is central to all our consultations.



4. Discussion

Drawing on research, work with schools and settings, and consultation findings, we work closely with the members of our Council, Boards and Development Groups to generate and agree advice for the Minister.

This highly consultative and deliberative approach supports us in our work across research, policy and practice in shaping decisions in education which aim to provide exciting and relevant learning experiences for young people from early childhood to the end of post-primary education.



Principle	How the principle is reflected in our work
Inclusion and diversity	Our work enables the development of curriculum and assessment that recognises the uniqueness and rights of each young person and the importance of supporting all children/ students to reach their potential.
Partnership and collaboration	Using a variety of communication formats, we work in partnership with early childhood settings and schools, and with the wider education sector, national and international, to shape curriculum and assessment developments.
Consultation	We consult widely and use a variety of tools and processes to ensure that the rich diversity of voices, perspectives and views that makes up Irish society, informs our work.
Child/student voice	Our work respects and actively promotes the right of children and students to have their voices heard and included in shaping the curriculum and assessment advice we develop. Our engagement with young people is age- and stage-appropriate and takes account of how they communicate.
Research-informed	We draw heavily on a wide range of research, national and international, to inform our thinking on curriculum and assessment.
Innovation and responsiveness	We value inquiry and are open to new ideas and thinking as we build on the education system's strengths and develop curriculum and assessment advice that is responsive and relevant while being appropriately innovative and ambitious.
Coherence, continuity and progression	We pay attention to curriculum and assessment coherence within and across sectors to support appropriate continuity and progression in a young person's educational journey while respecting the distinct nature and identity of each stage and sector.
Learning organisation	We are committed to improving the educational experience of young people. In support of this, we promote and nurture a culture of learning amongst our staff and within the structures of NCCA.

The development of the advice is also underpinned by eight principles set out in our Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025. Threaded through these principles are the values of respect, equality, professionalism and integrity that are central to our work on curriculum and assessment.

Our structures

Our Council has twenty-six members. The members represent teachers, students, school managers, parents, third level educators and business interests, and also include ministerial nominees. The Minister for Education appoints our Council and our chairperson. The Council sets out its work priorities in a four-year [Strategic Plan](#) and meets regularly to advance developments in curriculum and assessment. The work priorities centre on three strategic goals in the areas of *Curriculum and Assessment*, *Engagement and Collaboration*, and *Knowledge and Research*. Four strategic enablers – *People and organisational culture*, *Governance*, *Information and Communications Technology*, and *Communication* – provide critical support for achieving the three strategic goals. Each enabler requires significant investment and plays a central role in fulfilling NCCA’s vision and mission.

The Council is supported by its Boards and Development Groups which work together to research and develop curriculum and assessment advice. There are currently three boards in NCCA:

- the Board for Early Childhood and Primary
- the Board for Junior Cycle
- the Board for Senior Cycle.



Comhairle CNCM
NCCA Council



Bord don Luath-óige agus don MBunscoil
Board for Early Childhood and Primary



Bord don tSraith Shóisearach
Board for Junior Cycle



Bord don tSraith Shínsearach
Board for Senior Cycle

Each Board is supported by Development Groups. Like Council, the members of the Boards and Development Groups are from a range of educational organisations and bring relevant expertise in and experience of the subject/curriculum area/aspect of curriculum under consideration. The members comment on and contribute to a range of draft documents. They ensure that information on issues and developments is fed back to nominating organisations. They support consultation processes at key stages in the development process. They also work to ensure the views of all members are included in the curriculum and assessment advice. This helps to ensure that the advice we offer is well-informed and that it is in line with wider developments in the early childhood, primary and post-primary sectors. The advice is discussed further and approved by Council. It is then sent to the Department of Education for the Minister to consider.

The day-to-day work of our Council is led by the Chief Executive Officer and the full-time staff. The Council's staff includes Deputy Chief Executives, Directors and Education Officers. These are usually early years practitioners, teachers and school leaders from educational settings around the country. Our work at the NCCA is supported by our Corporate Services Team.



How to get in touch?

If you have a question about our work or want to learn more, please visit our website ncca.ie, email us at info@ncca.ie or call us on 01 661 7177.

