Updating *Aistear* Phase 2 Consultation

Written submission template for organisations, groups and individuals

This template is intended to help you (and your colleagues) develop a written submission in relation to Updating *Aistear*. Please e-mail your completed submission to updatingaistear@ncca.ie.

The template is structured according to the Principles, Themes and Supporting *Aistear*. Each section is briefly summarised as a support for working on the submission. Before completing the template, please read the draft updated *Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* at this link: https://ncca.ie/en/early-childhood/early-childhood-education-developments/updating-aistear/consultation/.

Data Protection Statement

The NCCA is committed to protecting your privacy and does not collect any personal information about you through this template, other than the information you provide. Any personal information you volunteer to the NCCA will be respected in accordance with the highest standards of security and confidentiality in accordance with GDPR (2016) and the Data Protection Act (2018).

NCCA, as a public body operating under the Open Data and Public Service Information Directive (2021), is required to publish publicly funded research. All data from this survey will be further anonymised and aggregated before being published and only made available after the final report on this consultation is completed. Further information on the NCCA's Data Protection Policy can be found here.

*If you are contributing your views as an **individual**, please provide details below*

Name:	Eileen McDermott
E-mail address:	
Do you wish to be listed as a contributor to this consultation on the NCCA website?	Yes/No Yes
Do you wish to have your written submission published on the NCCA website?	Yes/No Yes

*If you are contributing your views on behalf of an **organisation or group**, please provide details below*

Name	
Email address:	
Name of organisation/group:	
Does your organisation wish to be listed as a contributor to this consultation on the NCCA website?	Yes/No

Please email your submission to updatingaistear@ncca.ie

Does your organisation wish to have this written submission published on the NCCA website?	Yes/No

Key Messages of the Proposals

Phase 1 indicated that *Aistear* has stood the test of time and remains broadly relevant. However, it was indicated that some areas could be updated. This section seeks to understand your views on the proposed updates.

To what extent do the proposals keep the structure of Aistear but update individual sections?
I have already completed the online survey and I would like to congratulate all who are involved in the work of updating Aistear.
A couple of items I would like to comment on which do not I believe sit comfortably within this new document.

Inserting Irish throughout the document is a great idea and well done overall on this.
However may I suggest alternative translations for the following.
Page 31
Ní neart go cur le chéile (There is nothing we cannot do together)
The English translation 'There's no strength without unity' would read better I believe
Page 34
Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí (Praise the youth and they will succeed)
Would the English translation ….."Praise the young and they will flourish" be better here ? especially as this document is aimed at young children rather than youth!

Page 30 reads Tógann sé meitheal chun leanbh a thógáil (It takes a village to raise a child)
As this is an African Proverb I believe it does not lend itself well to direct translation and indeed the meaning is quite different in the Irish translation above, so I suggest leaving the African Proverb as a standalone phrase without translating into Irish

P. 33 An áit a bhfuil do chroí is ann a thabharfas do chosa thú (Your feet will bring you to where your heart is)   ……… not sure if this is relevant here??

P 45 Being involved in fundraisers to support children and families?????not sure why this is here, and I suggest this is removed as I do think this is not relevant and will potentially draw criticism from many educators and parents who already feel overstretched with the cost of living ……would it be better to encourage educators and children to avoid food waste in their daily lives!! (Anecdotal evidence suggests the free school meals for Junior and Senior infants in DEIS schools involve a huge amount of waste which is totally incompatible with living in a sustainable manner)

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Finally I have an issue with overuse of the work Agentic Child and Agentic Educator and humbly suggest this word would be replaced in some places with the word Autonomous.

While Bandura proposed this word for children and educators, the word Agentic is a contested term with different meanings.

A search of Google gives the following meanings for Agentic

What does Agentic really mean? Albert Bandura who published the Social Cognitive Theory: An Agentic Perspective describes agentic people as self-organising, proactive, self-reflective and self-regulating as times change. This sits perfectly with the requirements for a modern day student.

What is the opposite of agentic?

Autonomous state the opposite of being in an agentic state is being in an autonomous state . ' Autonomy' means to be independent or free. So a person in an autonomous state is free to behave according to their own principles and therefore feels a sense of responsibility for their own actions.

What is the opposite of the agentic state in psychology?

The opposite of this state is known as an autonomous state, where the person takes personal responsibility for their actions. When a person changes state from autonomous to agentic this is known as an agentic shift, once this shift has taken place the person will obey blindly.

What must be in order for a person to enter the agentic state?

Milgram suggested that two things must be in place for a person to enter the agentic state:
- The person giving the orders is perceived as being qualified to direct other people's behaviour. ...
- The person being ordered about is able to believe that the authority will accept responsibility for what happens.

What is the difference between autonomous and agentic?

- The main difference between the Agentic State and the Autonomous State is that in the former, individuals act as agents for others and feel little control over their actions, while in the latter, individuals act on their own behalf and take responsibility for their actions.

Thank you for taking the time to read this submission and for the vast amount of work undertaken to bring this document to this stage.

Yours sincerely

Eileen McDermott

Please email your submission to updatingaistear@ncca.ie

Do the proposals draw greater attention to the importance of interactions and relationships between babies, toddlers, young children, parents, educators and other important people in their lives?
Do the proposals emphasise babies, toddlers and young children as citizens with rights to meaningfully participate and exercise influence on decisions that affect them?
Do the proposals embed the concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion?
Do the proposals emphasise and reaffirm the centrality of learning through play and hands-on experiences?

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Do the proposals support greater continuity of experience and progression of learning for babies, toddlers, and young children?

Principles of *Aistear*

The number of Principles has been revised from 12 to 9 and reframed. Additionally, the proposals aim to integrate the Themes of *Aistear* in a seamless manner across the Principles. We are interested in receiving your feedback about these changes.

Please insert your feedback on the Principles of *Aistear* here:

Themes of *Aistear*

Aistear is underpinned by four Themes of learning and development. It is proposed that the Learning Goals within each Theme remain broad, but observable statements that support babies, toddlers and young children's learning and development. It is also proposed that the Principles of *Aistear* be interwoven and visible throughout *Aistear*'s Themes.

This section seeks your detailed feedback as to whether these key changes are visible within the draft proposals. The draft proposals are available here for your information.

Please give specific feedback in relation to each of the Themes of *Aistear*.
Theme: Wellbeing
Theme: Identity and Belonging

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Theme: Communicating
Theme: Exploring and Thinking

In your reading of the proposals, are the Principles of *Aistear* interwoven and visible throughout *Aistear*'s Themes?

Please insert any additional feedback that you would like to share with us about the proposals here:

Supporting Aistear

Part 1: Guidance for Good Practice

Pages 27 to 33 describe the Guidance for Good Practice. The Guidance for Good Practice expands on some of the important ideas introduced in the Principles and Themes. It also reflects other important messages, or big ideas, from Phase 1 of the consultation to update Aistear, as well as from research and wider societal and policy changes. The big ideas are organised according to Aistear's original Guidelines for Good Practice.

- *Partnerships between Parents and Practitioners*
- *Learning and Developing through Interactions*
- *Learning and Developing through Play*
- *Supporting Learning and Development through Assessment*.

It is proposed that these will be extended and supplemented through resources developed for the online *Aistear* Toolkit. Sample resources are available in Appendix 1 of the draft proposals.

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Please give your overall feedback in relation to the Guidance for Good Practice.

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Please email your submission to updatingaistear@ncca.ie

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Part 2: Supporting Educators

Page 34 of the proposals explains how this consultation is an opportunity to gather information on the nature of supports required to support the early childhood educators in working with the curriculum framework.

Please provide feedback on how early childhood educators can be supported in working with the curriculum framework. For example, what resources would be helpful to include in the Guidance for Good Practice?

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