



Circular 31/2019

DIVERSIFICATION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES PROVISION IN THE CURRICULUM

**ADDITIONAL ALLOCATION OF HOURS FOR POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS INTRODUCING
LESSER TAUGHT AND NEW FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN THE SCHOOL YEAR 2019-20**

UNDER

**LANGUAGES CONNECT - IRELAND'S STRATEGY FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN
EDUCATION 2017-2026**

**TO BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT, PRINCIPALS AND TEACHING STAFF OF POST-PRIMARY
SCHOOLS, AND TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVES OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARDS**

1. Introduction

The purpose of this Circular is to notify school authorities of the availability of additional allocation for post-primary schools introducing additional foreign languages to the curriculum. This is being done in the context of *Languages Connect Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026*. A key target set out in Languages Connect relates to increasing the number of students studying foreign languages in schools and diversifying the range of languages taught.

The initial consultation process which took place in advance of publication of the strategy identified the need to increase the diversity of languages on offer, and the strategy recognises the value that linguistic and cultural diversity delivers to individuals, society and the economy. The arrival of immigrants from almost 200 countries since 2000, is a social, cultural and national resource to be welcomed and nurtured and this is the context for the introduction of additional allocation for the provision of a range of new languages in the curriculum.

As part of the foreign languages strategy it was planned that the results of an *Audit of Foreign Languages Provision in Post-Primary Schools 2017* (available [here](#) or at http://languagesinitiative.ie/images/PPLI_Audit_of_Foreign_LanguagesFinal.pdf) would also be used to inform future actions. The audit identified Mandarin Chinese and Spanish as the top two languages of interest to schools in terms of an increase in foreign languages provision but there was also significant interest in German, Polish, Italian, Japanese, and Russian in this order. When principals were asked what resources they would need in order to increase the provision of foreign languages on the curriculum in their school as part of this audit, 58% mentioned an increase in teacher allocation.

As set out in Action 2.A.6 of the Implementation Plan of the Languages Connect Strategy, post-primary schools will be incentivised to diversify the range of languages on offer by means of additional allocation where possible and appropriate. For the academic year 2019-20 the hours

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are being offered for Italian, Japanese and Russian, new and lesser taught languages that have availability of fully registered post-primary teachers.

The Post Primary Languages Initiative (PPLI) is a 100% D.ES funded initiative charged with progressing some key actions in Languages Connect. Currently they provide ex-quota teachers of Japanese, Korean, Lithuanian, Polish and Russian in schools to facilitate the introduction of new languages in the curriculum. It is envisaged that they may provide teachers of Mandarin Chinese also to facilitate the introduction of this new curricular language from September 2020. This model of provision is, however, only temporary and does not facilitate a mechanism that facilitates schools in taking ownership of the new subjects in the longer term. This circular therefore outlines a means whereby schools are enabled to take ownership of the new subjects. It is envisaged that this new model will build in sustainability in the longer term and facilitate mainstreaming of these teachers.

2. Criteria for application for additional Foreign Language Allocation for post-primary schools (September 2019 - August 2020)

Schools that fulfil the following criteria will be eligible to apply for additional allocation in 2019/2020 for the specific purpose of introducing a new foreign language to the curriculum in their school:

- School must have availability of a **post-primary registered and qualified teacher**
- The hours must be used to provide a **language that the school is not currently providing out of existing allocation for school year 2018-19**
- Application may be made for **one language per school** under the scheme
- **Commitment to provide the language for a minimum of 2 years with a view to long term provision provided through the schools' regular allocation.** The following are the possibilities for provision of a new language within a school curriculum envisaged:
 - 2 years in the case of a Junior Cycle short course
 - 2 years in the case of a language provided ab initio in 5th year
 - 3 years in the case of a full subject specification provided from 1st year, OR
 - 3 years in the case of a language provided for 3 years in senior cycle from TY
- A new language should be introduced in 1st year of Junior Cycle in the case of a full specification or in 1st or 2nd year in the case of a short course OR at the beginning of Senior Cycle where providing an ab initio language or support for a non-curricular language at Leaving Certificate (either Transition Year or 5th year as appropriate). In Year 2 the language should be provided in two year groups, and in Year 3 in three year groups. **Foreign Language Allocation will be increased each year as set out in the Table at 3 below.**



- The application for the coming academic year (2019/20) may be made for any one of the following:
 - Italian (a lesser taught curricular language available as a full subject in both Junior and Senior Cycle but could also be provided as short courses in the context of the generic short course specification developed by Post-Primary Languages Initiative (PPLI);
 - Japanese or Russian (available as short courses in Junior Cycle and as full subjects in Senior Cycle);
- Schools should have a minimum number of students enrolling in the new foreign language subject. The minimum number of students required to justify provision of the hours has been decided as follows based on the results of the Audit of Foreign Languages Provision in Schools and also on the numbers of students currently enrolled in these languages.
 - Italian, Japanese, and Russian: 8

3. Implementation of the scheme

- **Hours** will be allocated to post-primary schools participating in the *Scheme* as follows:

Diversification of Foreign Languages in the Curriculum scheme	
Years of Participation in scheme	Additional allocation of hours to school per week
Year 1	3
Year 2	6
Year 3	9
Year 4	7
Year 5	5
Year 6	3
Year 7	0

In circumstances where the teacher is currently provided by PPLI the school may apply for the number of hours currently provided by PPLI, a reduction being put in place from Year 4 on a sliding scale as above. The use of these hours will be monitored by the PPLI which will also conduct periodic reviews as part of an ongoing audit process.

It is envisaged that a school participating in the scheme would have been given sufficient opportunity to make the new language subject self-sustaining by Year 7.



Schools may apply to share a teacher under the Scheme to Share Teachers between Recognised Post-Primary Schools for 2019/20 school year in accordance with Circular 0015/2019. If two schools wish to share a teacher for the teaching of Italian, Japanese, or Russian, one school should identify itself as a base school, and the second school as a host school.

- **Continuing Professional Development (CPD):** Post-primary schools participating in the *Scheme* will be provided with additional CPD for relevant teachers in the context of new languages (Japanese, Russian), co-ordinated by PPLI. This will be conducted through classroom observations and through dedicated training days.

An application form (to be completed annually) may be viewed in Appendix 1. Application should be made by **clicking [HERE](#)**

4. Evaluation of the Diversification of Foreign Languages Scheme

Ongoing evaluation by PPLI will measure the extent to which the implementation of this circular meets the objectives of Languages Connect Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026.

The continuing participation of post-primary schools in the *Scheme* will be contingent on satisfying the conditions of this Circular and any other circulars relating to the *Scheme*. Where the PPLI, at any time, determines that the conditions of the *Scheme* are not being fulfilled, the right is reserved to remove a school from the *Scheme*.

5. Further Information

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Unit in the Department of Education and Skills will oversee the implementation of this scheme. *Applications, management and support will be administered by PPLI.*

Queries in relation to application for these hours should be emailed to info@languagesinitiative.ie

Principals of post-primary schools are asked to please bring this Circular to the attention of each member of the board of management/Education and Training Boards, teachers (including those on leave of absence), the school patron, ancillary staff, parents/guardians, and the local school community. This Circular can be accessed on the Department's website at the following LINK: www.education.ie

**Evelyn O'Connor
Principal Officer,
Curriculum and Assessment Policy Unit
Department of Education and Skills
21st May 2019**



APPENDIX 1

Application Form

Contact Details

1. Name of School
2. Roll number
3. Principal
4. Designated contact person
5. Address
6. Phone

Foreign Languages provision in school

7. **What languages do you currently provide? What numbers take each of these languages in Junior Cycle, TY, and for Leaving Certificate?**
8. **What language would you like to introduce?**
Mandarin Chinese
Italian
Japanese
Lithuanian
Polish
Russian
9. **What year group would you like to provide the language for?**
10. **Projected number of students**
11. **How many class hours per week?**
12. **Name of proposed teacher**
Email address:
Phone:

Declaration:

- I confirm the following:
 - I have a fully qualified and registered teacher (under Route 2 of the Teaching Council registration) available to teach the hours
 - The school is committed to providing the subject for three years and to providing it out of our own allocation in the longer term
 - The school will encourage the teacher to engage in relevant CPD

Signature of Principal:

Date: