



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/>.

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

Name:	
E-mail address:	
Do you wish to be listed as a contributor to this consultation on the NCCA website?	
Do you wish to have your written submission published on the NCCA website?	

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

Name	Childcare Committees Ireland (CCI)
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Please email your submission to updatingaistear@ncca.ie



Email address:	
Name of organisation/group:	Childcare Committees Ireland (CCI)
Does your organisation wish to be listed as a contributor to this consultation on the NCCA website?	Yes
Does your organisation wish to have this written submission published on the NCCA website?	Yes

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?

The structure & integrity of the document remains

The Irish language addition has been incorporated in a way that is interwoven into the document, this will be a new addition for practitioners and will take some time to navigate, the demographic/diversity of our sector do not necessarily have Irish and maybe would need support? For example; phonetically spelling of Irish words. Many of the settings would not be used to using the Irish wording intermittently within the curriculum. However, alignment with the Irish focus of the primary curriculum is evident and this is important.

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?

A lot of reference to slow relational pedagogy woven through the document. The use of this language is welcome and ensures that relational pedagogy is more evident.

There is a visible intent to demonstrate the importance of interactions and relationships which mirrors Bronfenbrenner's Ecological systems theory.

Meeting the aims through relational pedagogy is referenced explicitly, the intent of and importance of the interactions highlighted as very important.

Do the proposals emphasise babies, toddlers and young children as citizens with rights to meaningfully participate and exercise influence on decisions that affect them?



The Language change from needs to rights, shows the document is now speaking to a children's rights perspective and acknowledges children having a democratic right to participation. The use of global citizen and active participation again speaks to a rights-based approach.

Do the proposals embed the concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion?

Visible and stronger focus in this document again speaking to the rights of children the fact that this document draws the attention to the different stages of childhood is positive

Evident in the communication themes and is broader than previous version runs throughout the document

The use of the term equity is welcome, however would need to align with Equality Diversity & Inclusion (EDI training)

Brings back the interwoven nature of equality & diversity

Stronger and more visible highlighting that this is not an extra piece of work but a fundamental principle

LUNDY model visible

Do the proposals emphasise and reaffirm the centrality of learning through play and hands-on experiences?

Yes the fundamental nature of the Aistear Framework is learning through play and this is evident throughout the document. The recognition of the slow pedagogical approaches to learning also takes into account the environmental input of the educator, partners in learning allows for a shift to process as opposed to end product. Bringing forward use of the words Agentic learner and Agentic Educator supports the role of educators to embrace time and allow for the importance of the organic nature of ELC to thrive.

The Acknowledgement of ELC as a time of being rather than a time of actively preparing for the next phase is welcome.

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



Yes supporting the identity of each stage of childhood will support early educators in the recognition of the child at the particular stage encouraging the 0-3yrs. The ELC is a time of being not actively preparing for the next phase

Slow pedagogical learning supposes process and working in the here and now rather than a focus on the end product.

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:

Reduction is a positive move and the integration of areas into the 9 is positive, these read differently and make sense in a more fluid way, with interlinking being demonstrated. Overlap described well the visual give the reader a sense of interconnectedness

The emphasis on the role of dispositions in learning remains strong in the document and this is welcome. Dispositions are referenced in the introduction, under transitions and widely across all themes and associated aims.



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

- *Irish welcome addition reflecting culture*
- *Building of slow pedagogical learning this update reflects current evidence base/ research*
- *Equality and diversity connection*
- *Far easier to read and understand relevant to the changing nature of society culture and considers our responsibilities environmentally.*
- *Supports children to be reflective*
- *Reflects key areas of wellbeing*

Theme: Identity and Belonging

Stronger language used with regard to children's rights approach, understanding their value, building resilience, empathy and compassion highlighted well. Grounded in a children rights perspective focussing on what supports I need to be able to achieve and how the Early years educator support what I need.

Theme: Communicating

Communicating as a theme is considerably demonstrated throughout the document, again highlighting the importance of the child at the centre and a children's rights perspective evident.

Theme: Exploring and Thinking

Theme explores the emphasis of fostering meaningful interactions and creating an environment that promotes enquiry learning. Emphasis placed on the individual needs of children and sensory learning.

The description of educators and children as agents in their own learning supports the whole concept of exploring, thinking and curiosity.



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

Yes, this is very evident throughout the whole document demonstrates a seamless consideration of the whole child, the age and stage and the important role of the Early years educator in supporting the child's learning and development. Figure 2, page 11, of the document provides a strong graphic of the interwoven nature of the Themes and Principles.

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

Some observations to consider

- 1. Creating a whole new range of buzz words – look at the key concepts to make sure they don't become buzz words*
- 2. New phraseology – he she/worldview diversity - intentional pedagogy*
- 3. Support the educators CPD what are the values of the practitioners*
- 4. Whose responsibility is it to ensure the support for the educators ensuring these concepts are embedded in all of the ELC training and support programmes?*



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.](#)

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

- *Key elements excellent*
- *What will the resources be?*
- *Ensure user friendly and adaptable and flexible have the ability to be individualised to services to ensure that this doesn't become another template to fill out*
- *Specific contextual resources*
- *Formative assessment – nobody talks about how do you do this?*
- *Serious consideration needs to be given to the delivery of the updated Aistear guidelines. Consideration of both in person and online opportunities.*
- *If we are supporting educators in terms of CPD the how bit needs to be very defined and implementable within our Education of Educators*
- *Guidance for good practice needs to be more than a resource manual it needs a shared, consistent, well planned and adequately resourced approach to upskilling and CPD in order to embed quality practice.*



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?

- *Emphasis on continued professional development*
- *Examples of how to for example what is an example of slow relational pedagogy*
- *Videos – links to journals*
- *General overview of the update will be needed*
- *Ensure that the resources that are present in the original document are still applicable with updated version and ensure user friendly, for example, sub groups similarly to a peer support network to share practice experiences and to support the further implementation of the updated framework.*
- *Templates for observations may need to be reviewed to ensure they are not onerous and take from the Educators experience and expression of the uniqueness of each service and child's individual experience.*

What other resources will be required?

- *Provision of CPD plan for the Early years educator.*
- *Provision of time/cost to complete CPD for example the early years educator will have access to in-service provision days to support the implementation as is currently the case for the primary school sector*
- *Glossary of terms updated*
- *Cross reference between LUNDY Model/EDI etc*
- *CPD required in supporting the knowledge of participatory models of practice*