NCCA

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

Bunscoil
Primary

Leading Out Seminar Series

Seminar 1

10:00	Registration and networking opportunity
10:30	Welcome and Outline of the Leading Out Seminar Series Prof. Mary O'Sullivan, Chairperson, NCCA
10:45	Primary Curriculum Review and Redevelopment Arlene Forster, Deputy CEO, NCCA
11:15	Facilitated table discussion
12:00	System Conditions and Enablers John Hammond, CEO, NCCA
12:15	Facilitated table discussion
12:45	Plans for Future Engagement Patrick Sullivan, Director of Curriculum and Assessment (primary)
13:00	Close

Welcome and Outline of the Leading Out Seminar Series

Prof. Mary O'Sullivan

Primary Curriculum Review and Redevelopment

Arlene Forster, Deputy CEO

Curriculum birthday

Primary School Curriculum
Introduction

Curaclam na Bunscoile
Réamhrá

Changes aiming to light learning fire

Irish Independent, 10/09/1999

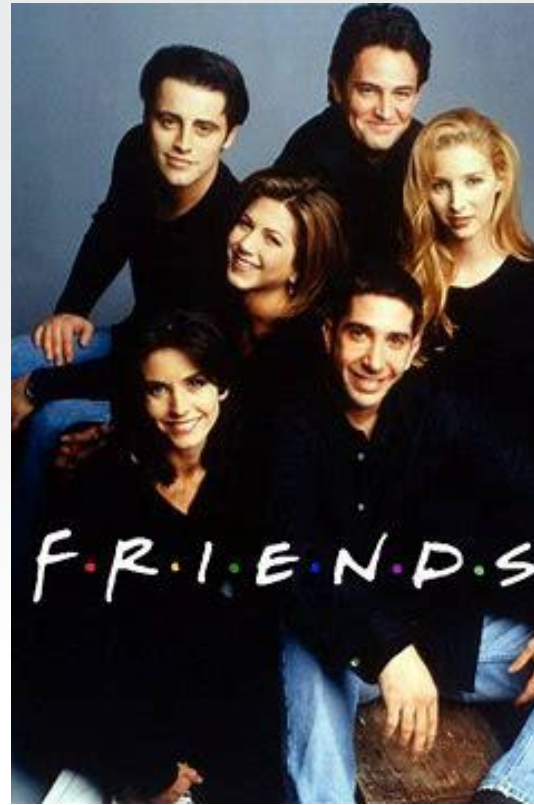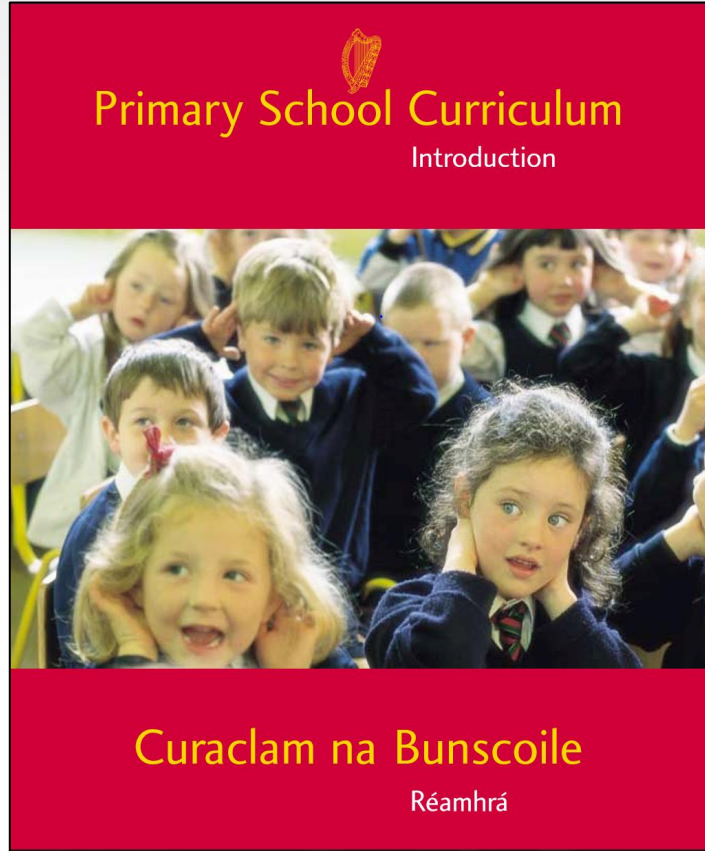## Radical overhaul announced for primary curriculum

Irish Times, 10/09/1999

Motivation is driving force behind innovation: Martin
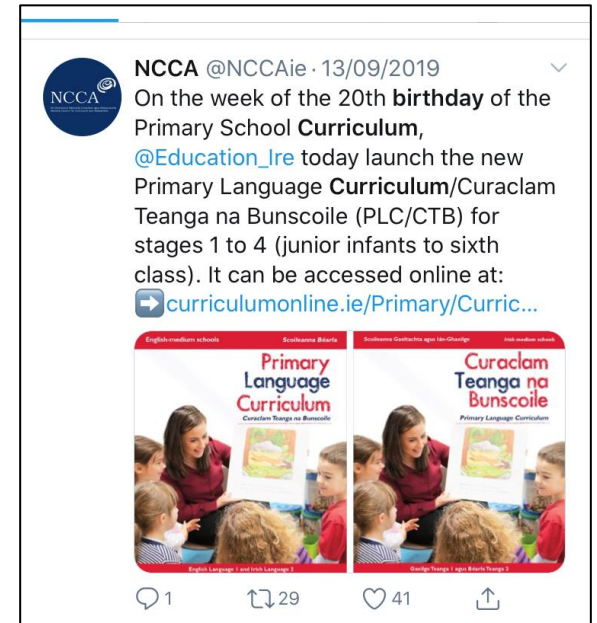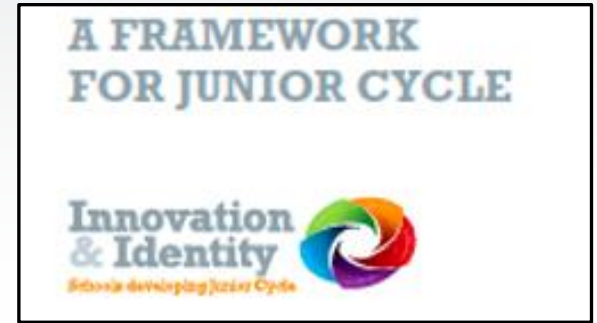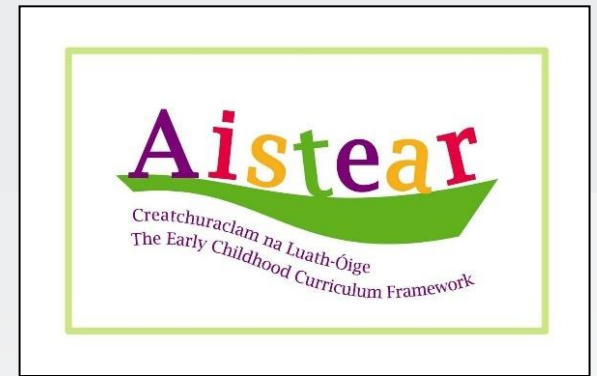
Irish Examiner, 10/09/1999

1999
Reeling in the Years

Two decades later

- 1999 curriculum is 'of its time'

- Curriculum reviews and evaluations

- Work with schools

- Research

- Changing expectations

- Developments in the EC and JC sectors

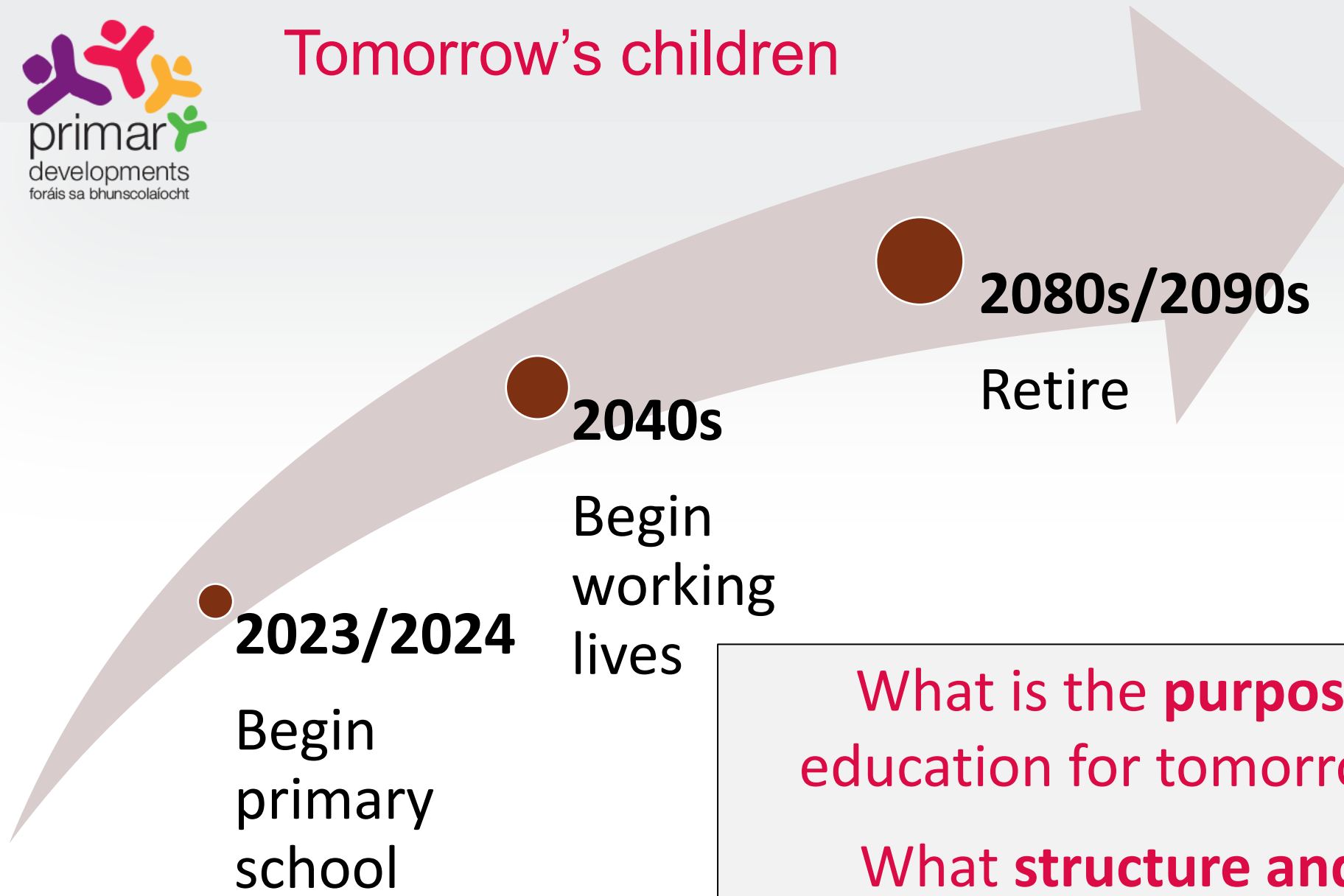- *Primary Language Curriculum / Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile* (2019)

Successes alongside challenges

Images removed

- Children's enjoyment of learning
- Increased emphasis on active learning
- Improved attainment in areas such as literacy, numeracy and science

- Curriculum overload; paperwork
- Supporting every child to make progress in their learning
- Responding to and taking account of a changing society

Defining features of curriculum development

- Shared vision with curriculum principles
- Curriculum framework – sectoral links
- Child voice
- Changing priorities for learning
- Broad learning outcomes – teacher and school agency
- Role of exemplification

primary
developments
foráis sa bhunscolaíocht
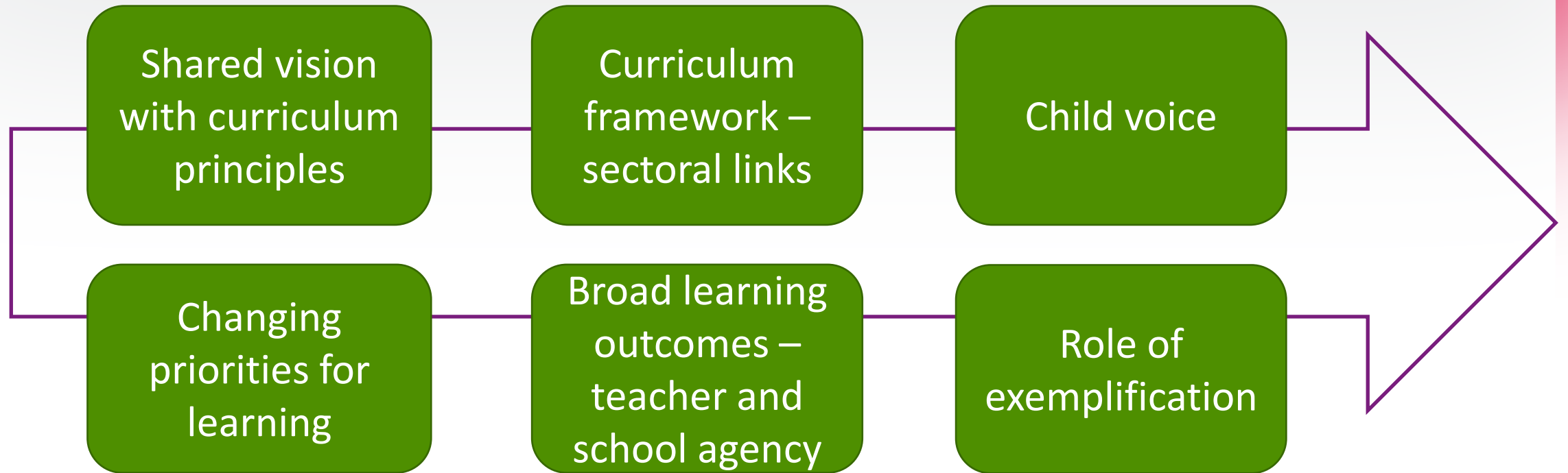
Review process

Three strands

- Drawing on extensive research

- Collaborating with education partners and wider stakeholders

- Working closely with schools and preschools

Building on the **successes** and **strengths** of the 1999 curriculum while responding to **challenges** and **changing needs and priorities**

Schools Forum

- Includes 44 schools representing the richness of primary school contexts
- Meets every 4-6 weeks
- Teachers and schools as central agents in curriculum development
- Share experiences, perspectives and reflections, and discuss key ideas for a redeveloped primary curriculum

Images removed

Stakeholder engagement through curriculum seminars

- Education partners and wider stakeholders meeting and working together

- Organisational perspectives and experiences to discussions on key ideas for the redeveloped curriculum

- Focus not on curriculum details; on exploring possibilities and broad directions for change

Images removed

Seven key themes

- Moral purpose
- Teacher agency
- The learning context / environment
- Consultation during the developmental and implementation phases
- Curriculum alignment
- A playful pedagogy
- Joined-up thinking
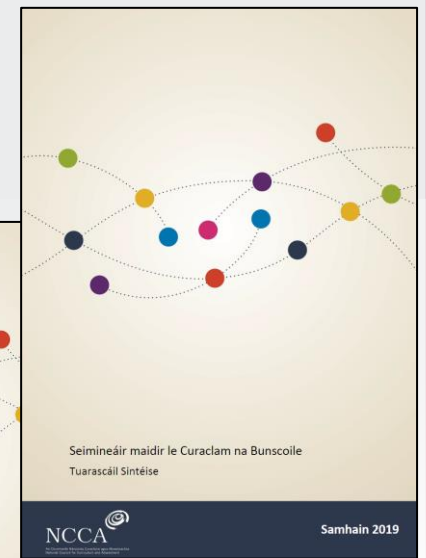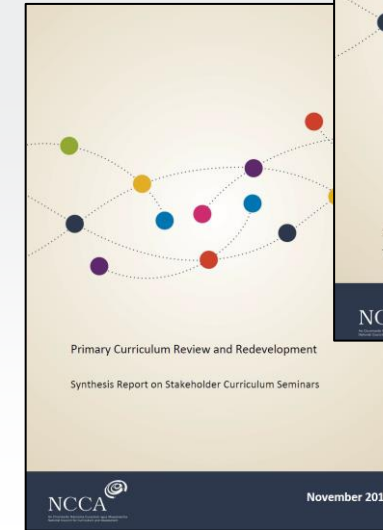
Tuarascáil Sintéise / *Synthesis Report*

Proposals for curriculum change

Overview of *Draft Primary Curriculum Framework*

- Curriculum Vision
- Curriculum Principles
- Key Competencies
- Curriculum Areas and Subjects
- Time Allocations
- Curriculum Statements
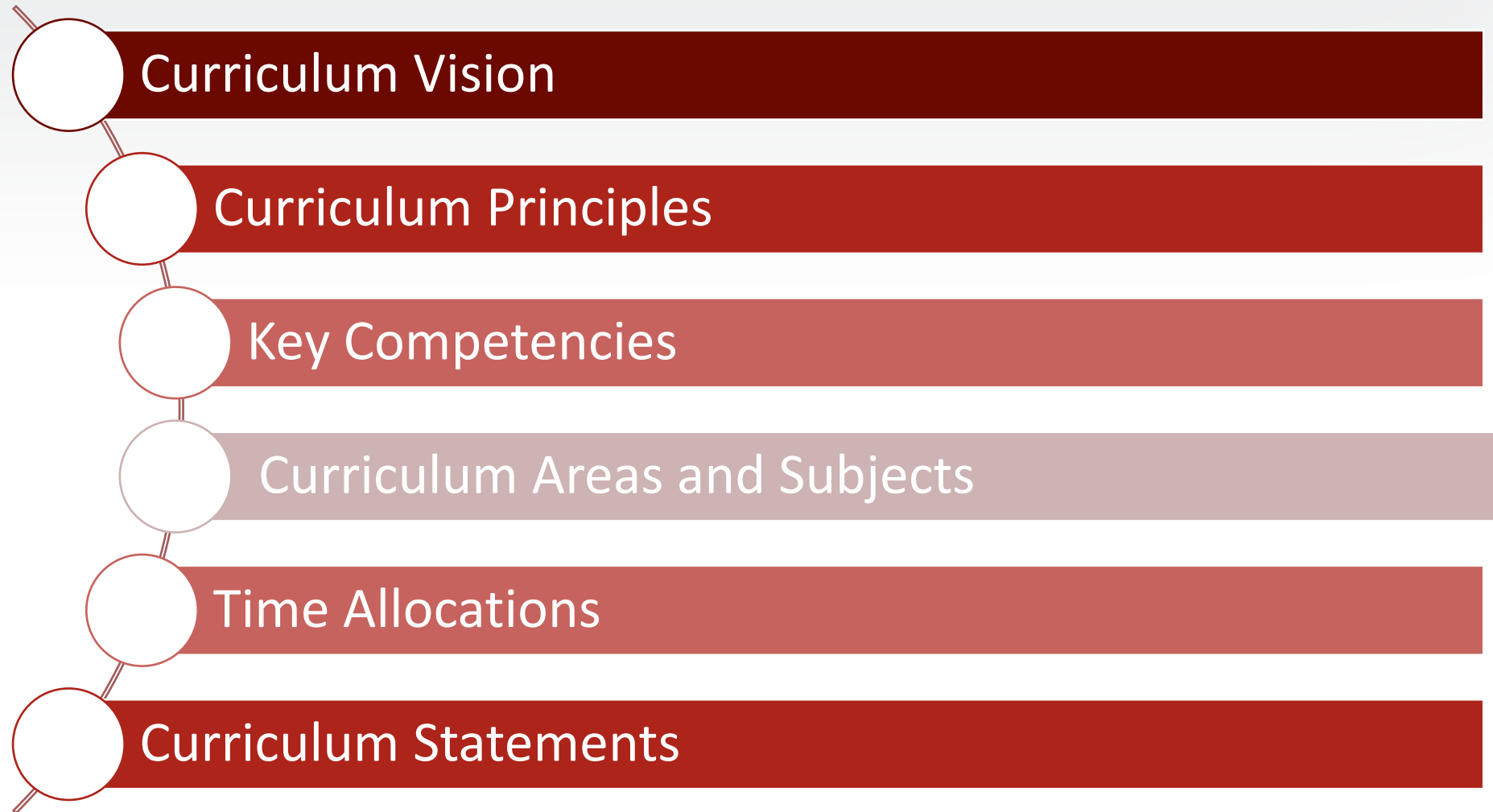
Curriculum vision

- Supporting each child to grow, learn and flourish; unique, capable and caring individuals
- Teachers as committed, skilful and agentic professionals
- High quality teaching and learning that is inclusive and evidence-based

Principles to guide teaching and learning

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Curriculum principles

Engagement

Partnerships

Relationships

Pedagogy

Inclusive education and diversity

Learning environments

Assessment

Continuity and progression

Priorities and structure

- Supporting educational **transitions**

- **Consolidating** initiatives, programmes and strategies – clarifying **what's important** for primary education

- Moving from subjects to a more **integrated curriculum** structure for early primary

- **Retaining subjects** to structure the curriculum for the later years in primary

- Exploring the integration of **new areas of learning** in the curriculum, e.g., key competencies, ERB and Ethics, modern foreign languages

Time allocations

- Revisiting time allocations in light of calls for **more time for some areas** and requests for **new areas of learning**

- Providing **greater flexibility** with **time** allocations

  ➢ Continuing with weekly allocations for language and maths, and considering this for the area of wellbeing

  ➢ Moving to allocations over longer periods for other areas

  ➢ Reinstating 'discretionary time' – with guidance – each school decides in response to its own priorities

- **Time taken from most** aspects of the curriculum
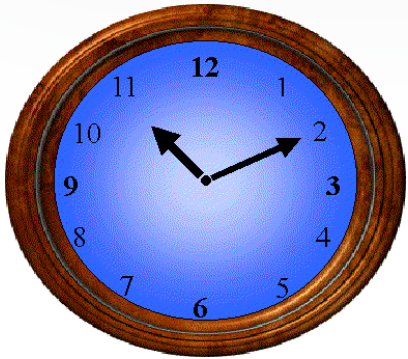
Learning, teaching and assessment

- Supporting **inclusive practices** that enable children to belong, feel respected, confident and safe so they can engage in meaningful learning

- Promoting **pedagogy** that **responds** to children's interests, needs and local circumstances

- Promoting more **play-based, inquiry-based and active** learning and teaching with a focus on the **outdoors**

  - Providing more practical supports for **curriculum integration**

  - Re-conceptualising **assessment** as a central part of teachers' work and valuing their professional judgements

Redeveloping the Primary Curriculum

- Building on the **successes and strengths** of **1999**

- Updated **curriculum vision** – images of teachers and children

- Increased **agency** and **flexibility** for schools

- Strengthening **connections** across the education sectors

- Changing how the curriculum is **structured and presented**

- Clarifying **priorities** for children's learning

- Supporting a variety of **pedagogical approaches and strategies** with **assessment** central to teaching and learning

KEY MESSAGES

primary
developments
foráis sa bhunscolaíocht

Consultation: January – June 2020

Finalise the *Primary Curriculum Framework* in Q4, 2020

- Focus groups
- Online questionnaire
- Bilateral meetings
- National consultative conference
- Work with the Schools Forum
- Written submissions
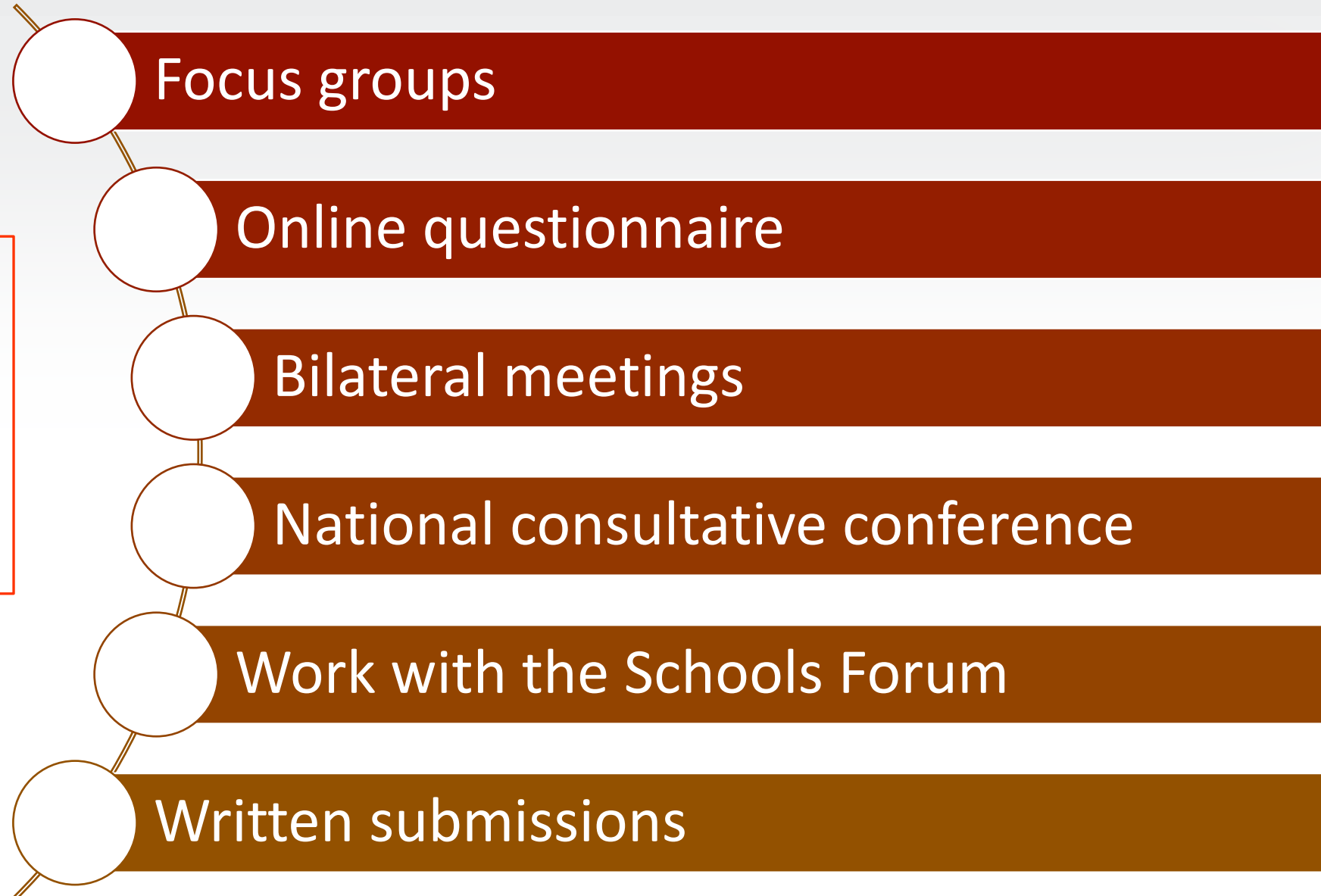
Stakeholder engagement throughout PCRR

- Encouraging colleagues / members to participate in the consultation

- *Leading Out* seminar series – stakeholders actively identifying and advancing key enablers for curriculum change

The Draft Framework will set out the purpose, structure and content of the redeveloped curriculum AHEAD of curriculum specifications.
This presents a key opportunity to build capacity and to develop 'readiness' to enact the next curriculum.

Think/pair/share…….

From what you've listened to, what for you and your organisation is the most significant key message and why?

What opportunities do you foresee in supporting this key message to become a reality?

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System Conditions and Enablers

John Hammond, CEO

NCCA and curriculum development

- 'Schools change reforms as much as reforms change schools' Cuban (1998)
- The curriculum as a resource and a basis for building understanding of the change involved
- The teacher and the school as key agent and stakeholder in *mediating* and *enacting* the resource
- The teacher as the key *change agent* and *curriculum developer*

Developing features of NCCA curriculum development work

- Establishing an evidence base
- Clarifying vision and purposes
- Pursuing continuity and progression across sectors
- Using curriculum frameworks
- Clarity around learning – use of learning outcomes
- Supporting practice through exemplification
- Moving towards more cyclical, systemic review

Conditions conducive to curriculum development

Shared vision and purpose	Research, data and information	Stakeholder engagement and communication
Timing and pacing	Securing Resources	Feasibility and Capacity building
Recognising teacher and school agency	Model of CPD	Cyclical, systemic review

Conditions conducive to supporting change

Research, data and information

- Our Children's Lives – Primary Longitudinal Study
- Research papers
- Evidence base for thinking and decision taking

Conditions conducive to supporting change

Stakeholder engagement and communication

- More than involvement
- Mutual trust
- Clear and frequent communication
- Public dialogue

Conditions conducive to supporting change

Securing Resources

- Time and pacing
- Complementary policy alignment

Conditions conducive to supporting change

Feasibility and Capacity-building

- Existing knowledge/skills
- Multiple levels – ITE to classroom materials

Conditions conducive to supporting change

Model of CPD

- Continual
- Well-resourced
- School and network-based
- Specific and capacity-building
- Aligned
- Mutual adaptation/local enactment

Centrality of stakeholder engagement

…engaging stakeholders is important…because it facilitates ownership of the vision and trust in the process, which are key for design, implementation and eventually for sustainability of any policy…in the medium and long terms. Stakeholder engagement is, in this sense, a self-reinforcing exercise, as education professionals who see their role valued in the policy process are more likely to make further contributions. Stakeholder engagement can also help adjust the policy design to make it more realistic to schools' needs by building on stakeholders' knowledge, experience and practical contributions.

OECD Implementing Education Policies: Ireland Senior Cycle Review – An OECD Assessment (2019)

Discussion/activity

From your perspective what 3 conditions are significant at system level?

Thinking about the short term (next 1-2 years) what are the most immediate conditions that are critical to support curriculum change?
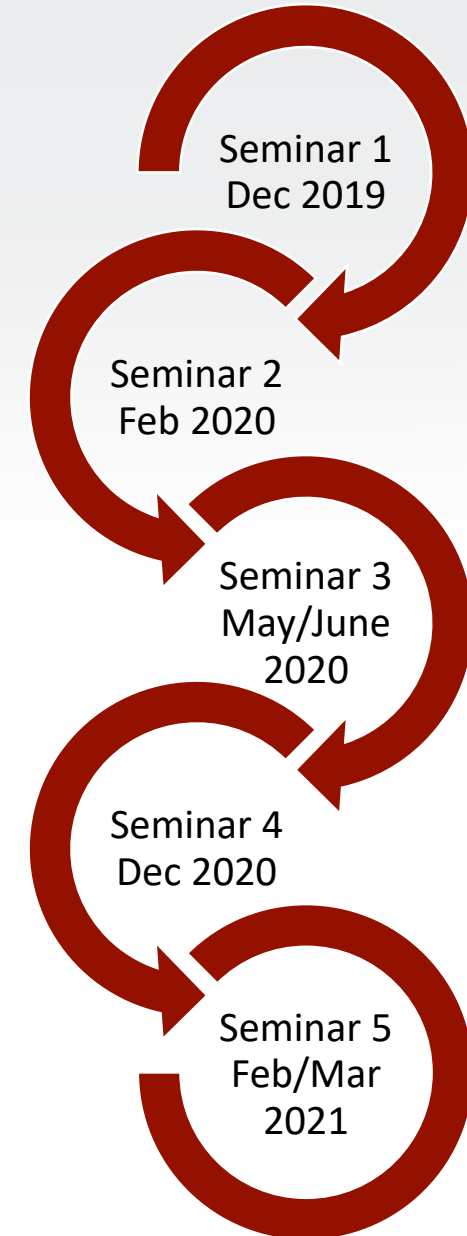
Mentimeter

Plans for Future Engagement

Patrick Sullivan, Director

Seminar series

Sustained engagement

Participant led

Evolving

Seminar 1
Dec 2019

Seminar 2
Feb 2020

Seminar 3
May/June
2020

Seminar 4
Dec 2020

Seminar 5
Feb/Mar
2021

Thank You!

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