



An Roinn Oideachais  
Department of Education

# **Educational Provision for Students from Ukraine, International Protection Applicants and Students with Recognised Status**

Guidance for Post-Primary Schools  
September 2023

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## 1 Why this guidance is being provided

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for post-primary schools regarding educational provision for students who

- are beneficiaries of temporary protection following the Russian invasion of Ukraine
- are applicants for international protection
- have applied for or been granted refugee status, subsidiary protection or permission to remain in Ireland.

The term 'students from Ukraine, IP applicants and students with recognised status' is used throughout this guidance to refer to all of these groups, each of which has the same rights as Irish students regarding access to post-primary education in Ireland.

Schools have shown flexibility and creativity in adapting their practices to welcome these students and support their inclusion in school life. This guidance document for post-primary schools takes into account the ways in which schools' practice has evolved in response to their needs. It restates and clarifies key principles informing provision for these students and provides guidance on issues that pose particular challenges for schools. The Department of Education acknowledges the significant work that schools and their communities have done to welcome and include students from Ukraine, IP applicants and students with recognised status. We remain committed to providing schools with the ongoing support and guidance that they need in order to continue this important work.

## 2 How the Department supports educational provision for students from Ukraine, IP applicants and students with recognised status

### 2.1 Regional education and language teams (REALT)

Ireland responded to the unprecedented migration of families from Ukraine from early 2022 with a whole-of-government approach. As part of this approach, the Minister for Education, in conjunction with the education partners, established regional education and language teams (REALT) under the aegis of the education and training boards (ETBs). In each of the sixteen ETB areas, the REALT works to provide access to education for school-aged children and young people and to provide support both to their families and to the schools in which they are enrolled. REALTs also advise and support the Department in developing new capacity where required, and in co-ordinating the provision of education services to schools and families.

### 2.2 Teaching resources

#### ***Special Education Teacher allocations***

Every school has a defined special education teaching (SET) allocation to support teaching and learning, based on the school's educational profile. This SET allocation is used by schools to provide additional support for children and young people who have identified special educational needs (SEN), and those for whom English is an additional language (EAL). All schools may use a proportion of their existing SET allocation to address EAL needs.

### ***The New Entrants Allocation Scheme***

In 2022, when the enrolment of large numbers of children and young people from Ukraine commenced, the Department provided additional resources to schools to support them in meeting the needs of the children and young people arriving to Ireland from other countries. These resources comprised additional teaching hours based on the number of children and young people with EAL arriving in Ireland. This scheme is called the New Entrant Allocation Scheme (NEAS). To date, the Department has allocated 931 whole-time equivalent (WTE) posts under the scheme (674 in primary schools and 257 in post-primary schools).

### ***Additional Special Education Supports***

In 2022, the Department also provided additional temporary special education supports for schools enrolling students from Ukraine. This scheme was designed to ensure that the children and young people could continue their education in the most inclusive environment possible. The allocation of these supports is based on school enrolments and is adjusted approximately every six weeks to take account of changes in enrolments. At the end of the last school year, a total of 548 schools had received additional teaching hours under this scheme and 329 schools had received additional temporary special needs assistants (SNAs). Schools are expected to use these additional special education resources in line with the Continuum of Support and with their existing systems for identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people with special educational needs.

## **2.3 Information and guidance**

The Department of Education has published materials in a range of languages to support families in accessing the education system and to support early learning and care settings and schools in meeting their needs. The materials are on a dedicated section of the Government website, which is available [here](#).

# **3 Students' sense of connection and belonging**

## **3.1 Connection and belonging as elements of wellbeing**

Evidence shows that when young people feel connected and have a sense of belonging, they are more likely to commit to and engage in school life. This improves educational outcomes and serves as a protective factor for mental health and wellbeing. Our experience of COVID-19 has led to a renewed sense of the importance of wellbeing. Schools have developed their policies and practices in this area in a way that enhances their capacity to support the wellbeing of students from Ukraine, IP applicants and students with recognised status.

The *Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice* identifies positive relationships with peers and teachers as being among the factors that protect student wellbeing. Among the factors that are identified as posing a risk to wellbeing are disengagement, absenteeism, isolation and alienation.

In August 2022, the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) published *Supporting the Wellbeing of Young People from Ukraine in your School: Guidance for Post-*

*Primary Schools.* This document, which is available [here](#), provides evidence-based strategies and resources for schools. It is based on research evidence that if young people feel a sense of belonging and connection to their new school, they will do better in the long term.

### **3.2 Students' sense of connection and belonging to their new school community**

Schools can support the students' sense of connection and belonging to their new school community in a range of ways, including the following:

- Integrating students into the appropriate mainstream classes and avoiding arrangements that result in the segregation of these students
- Assigning key adults and volunteer students who will check in regularly on each newly-enrolled student and from whom these students may seek help when needed
- Gathering information about the interests of individual students and sharing this information with others in their peer group where relevant
- Including all students in social and extra-curricular activities
- Providing opportunities for all students to participate in the school's student council
- Providing opportunities for students from Ukraine, IP applicants and students with recognised status to avail of a summer programme, where available
- Providing opportunities for all students to avail of all curricular provision for their year group
- Ensuring that staff members are familiar with the strategies and resources in *Supporting the Wellbeing of Young People from Ukraine in your School: Guidance for Post-Primary Schools*
- Including support for wellbeing of students from Ukraine, IP applicants and students with recognised status among the context-specific school priorities for review and development in school self-evaluation (SSE) for the period 2023-2026
- Including support for wellbeing of students from Ukraine, IP applicants and students with recognised status in the wellbeing promotion review and development cycle to be initiated by 2025.

Advice offered by REALT and school networking can enhance the successful inclusion of students into the school setting. Contact details for REALT teams are available [here](#). A list of Education Support Centres is available [here](#).

### 3.3 The students' sense of connection and belonging to their community of origin

As well as prioritising the inclusion of students and their families in the school community, schools should also take opportunities to support students' identification with the heritage and culture of their place of origin. Initiatives for the school to consider in supporting this sense of connection for students include the following:

- Promoting appreciation of the cultural heritage of students from Ukraine, IP applicants and students with recognised status among the wider school population; for example, displays and project work about the countries of origin in classrooms and in the school's reception areas.
- Viewing the students' competence in their home language as a key strength that helps scaffold the acquisition of new knowledge and skills, the language of schooling and other new languages. For example, children and young people are often already bilingual before arriving in Ireland. This can be highlighted with them and their families as a key skill that will support them in acquiring the languages of schooling (English / Irish) as well as other European languages.

A wide range of resources for schools on inclusion, diversity, intercultural education and related matters has been prepared by DE support services and other agencies. These are available on the Scoilnet website [here](#). *Intercultural Education in the Post-Primary School*, published by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) is available [here](#).

Post-Primary Languages Ireland (PPLI) has a school library funding scheme to support schools in providing books and other relevant home-language resources for students whose home language is not the language of instruction in the school. Dual-language books, which are available for different age groups, are particularly useful. Further information on the *School Library Funding Scheme* is available [here](#)

### 3.4 Attendance

Attendance at school can be a significant factor in supporting the integration of students from Ukraine, IP applicants and students with recognised status, and their families, with their local community. These students are particularly vulnerable to the risks associated with poor attendance. This is highlighted in a report published by the United Nations High Council for Refugees (UNHCR), which is available [here](#).

In order to experience a sense of connection with their peers, to learn and enjoy other advantages of school life, once enrolled in a school, students must attend school every day for the full school day. All schools are required to have an attendance strategy, the purpose of which is to promote maximum attendance and engagement by all students. The school's attendance strategy should be shared with and explained to all students and their parents/guardians. Effective school practice in promoting and supporting good school attendance among students from Ukraine, IP applicants and students with recognised status includes the following:

- Building effective partnerships with parents/guardians and communicating high expectations for school attendance
- Keeping information on the Department's online system, PPOD, up to date
- Ensuring that teaching and learning are engaging and relevant to the needs and ambitions of students and developing positive initiatives to promote attendance
- Following the graded steps in the school's attendance policy to address non-attendance including liaison with Tusla Education Support Service
- Consideration of issues relating to accommodation and transport that may have an impact on student attendance in consultation with REALT

### 3.5 Partnership with parents/guardians of students from Ukraine, IP applicants and students with recognised status

When students see positive engagement between their home and school, it supports their sense of connection and belonging to the school community. Schools should begin to build positive, affirming relationships with parents/guardians at the earliest opportunity. It is important that schools:

- Identify the languages spoken by the student and their family
- Establish a learning profile for the student, including details of prior experience of schooling, and learning strengths and needs (including any special educational needs)
- Learn about the wishes of parents/guardians regarding their child's educational pathway, class placement and other practical arrangements
- Communicate the school's expectations with regard to attendance and engagement with the Irish curriculum
- Provide information, or links to information, on the progression pathways open to the student in the Irish education system, including information on state examinations, such as that provided [here](#)
- Provide parents/guardians with information regarding any capacity that the school has to facilitate students in pursuing elements of the Ukrainian curriculum within the school
- Establish a link between the family and the school's Parents' Association

Schools should ensure that parents/guardians have opportunities to contact school personnel when they have a concern and are facilitated to participate in all relevant school functions. Schools with a significant number of students from Ukraine, IP applicants and students with recognised status should seek to involve at least one parent/guardian from this group in the parents' association.

### 3.6 Students with special and additional educational needs

Where students have additional and/or special educational needs other than language needs, the provision of additional support should be informed by principles of inclusive education, as set out in the Department of Education's *Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools: Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools*, which is available [here](#). Supports provided to these students should be based on identified needs and informed by regular reviews of progress (in consultation with parents and students) as outlined in *A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools: Guidelines for Teachers*,

which is available [here](#). Communication with representatives of NEPS and the National Council for Special Education on the local REALT team may support this process.

## **4 Placing the student with a view to progression**

Placing students in the most appropriate class, year group and programme is a key priority in supporting wellbeing, identity and belonging, as well as educational progression and outcomes. Schools' practice in placement of students should include the following:

- Placing the student in the same year group as their age-peers
- Ensuring that students from Ukraine, IP applicants and students with recognised status have access to all aspects of the Irish curriculum, along with their peers in the year group
- Considering all available results of assessments completed by the student, including those relating to special educational needs
- Consulting with the student and their parents/guardians in order to establish their subject choices and preferred educational pathway
- Considering how current subject choice is best aligned with subjects already studied by the student before entering the Irish education system
- Advising the student and their parents/guardians regarding
  - class participation, assessment and other requirements for this progression pathway
  - key transition points in this progression pathway, both within the post-primary school setting and beyond
  - accommodations and other supports available
- Consulting subject teachers, class tutors and other relevant staff members as appropriate

## **5 Support for the student's proficiency in the language of instruction**

### **5.1 The importance of acquiring proficiency in the language of instruction**

Acquiring sufficient proficiency in the language of instruction of the school is a key challenge for many students from Ukraine, IP applicants and students with recognised status. Schools may be able to provide support from within their existing teaching allocation. In circumstances where a school does not have any capacity within its existing allocation, an application for EAL supports can be made to the Department using the relevant form, which is available [here](#). If a post-primary school is unable to source a teacher to provide EAL supports, they may avail of an ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) tutor. Schools should contact the ESOL Co-ordinator in their local education and training board (ETB).

Planning for language support should consider students' learning needs in two distinct aspects of language.



### ***Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS)***

This is the language required for everyday social interactions. Students typically acquire these skills through immersion in the language of the school. Placement in mainstream classrooms with peers who are native speakers of the target language is an important factor in developing BICS.

### ***Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)***

This refers to the language required to understand and discuss lesson content and to achieve progression in learning. Its development requires teachers' practice to include the direct teaching of relevant terminology and ongoing support for students in the use of this language. The development of CALP typically takes longer than the development of BICS.

## **5.2 Effective practice in supporting learning of English as an additional language**

In order to support effective teaching and learning of English as an additional language, the school's practice should include the following:

- Assessing and set targets for students with EAL in reading, writing, speaking and listening, by using assessments that are aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), such as those set out [here](#)
- Sharing language targets with the student, their parents/guardians and relevant teachers
- Promoting and supporting teachers' practice in mainstream and other settings to support students' learning and progression in language acquisition
- Maintaining a language-support file for each EAL student that clearly records the student's current CEFR level, the targets for improvement and planned interventions
- Supporting teachers in making every lesson a language lesson, in which the language that the student requires to demonstrate their learning in the subject is taught explicitly, using strategies such as those suggested [here](#)
- Teaching the skills of autonomous language learning, including the use of dictionaries and digital applications
- Providing regular opportunities for students with EAL to speak independently during lessons and to engage in peer work with native English speakers
- Acknowledging that students may have an ongoing need to use their native language on occasion for communicative and academic purposes
- Providing students with formative feedback to support improvement
- Deploying the EAL teacher in mainstream settings as appropriate
- Using time in support settings to reinforce language and concepts taught in the mainstream classrooms

## 6 Students who wish to engage with the Ukrainian curriculum<sup>7</sup>

### 6.1 Current context

An order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine in May 2023 has stated that Ukrainian students attending school in an EU Member State are not required to have engaged with online Ukrainian education as a prerequisite for continuing their education in Ukraine at an age-appropriate grade after their return. This is noted in a document jointly agreed by the EU and Ukraine, which is available [here](#). Schools should bring this to the attention of Ukrainian students and their families.

It is understandable, however, that Ukrainian students and their families would wish to maintain engagement with the Ukrainian curriculum. Since early 2022, many Ukrainian students in Ireland have been engaging with elements of the Ukrainian curriculum online. In some cases, this takes place outside of the school day. In other cases, this takes place during the school day where schools have the capacity to facilitate this. The school is not required to do so unless it has the capacity. Students should be in school every day for the full school day.

### 6.2 Students who engage with the Ukrainian curriculum outside of the Irish school day

There is a cohort of students who attend school in Ireland but who engage with the Ukrainian curriculum prior to attending school in the morning or after school finishes in the evening. In supporting these students, effective practice by schools would include the following:

- Establishing the extent of students' engagement with other curricula outside of the Irish school day
- Discussing the challenges involved with students and their parents/guardians
- Being attentive to the effect of the dual workload on the wellbeing of the student.

### 6.3 Students who request an opportunity to engage with the Ukrainian curriculum during the Irish school day

A school may have the capacity to facilitate students who have expressed a wish to engage with elements of the online Ukrainian curriculum during the school day. Where this is the case, the school should consider scheduling online engagement with the Ukrainian curriculum as an additional block in an optional band on the school timetable.

Where a Ukrainian student has an exemption from the study of Irish, subject to the criteria set out in Department of Education Circular 0055/2022, the school should consider

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<sup>7</sup> Where parents/ guardians express a preference not to enrol their children in a school with the intention of them engaging exclusively with the online and distance learning offerings from Ukraine parents/ guardians must apply to the Child & Family Agency TUSLA to have their child placed on the register of children educated outside of a recognised schools. Details of the application process can be found at <https://www.tusla.ie/services/family-community-support/alternative-education-assessment-and-registration-service/>

scheduling the student's online engagement with the Ukrainian curriculum for the periods during which the student would otherwise be attending Irish lessons.

Where circumstances allow for the school to facilitate students who have expressed a wish to engage with elements of the online Ukrainian curriculum during the school day, schools should:

- Get written confirmation of the request from the student and their parents/guardians that the student access the online curriculum during the school day
- Communicate clearly with the student and their parents/guardians regarding the school's capacity to facilitate access to the Ukrainian curriculum
- Give consideration to
  - timetabled subjects that the student is taking when scheduling access to online learning
  - the possibility of accessing aspects of the Ukrainian curriculum through asynchronous tuition thereby providing a degree of flexibility in timetabling
  - the impact of proposed arrangements on the school's strategies for inclusion
  - the impact of proposed arrangements on the day-to-day experience of the school for all students
- Provide access to suitable digital resources
- Update and share the school's acceptable-use policy for digital resources
- Provide an appropriate supervised space

## Appendix 1

### Summary of resources to which links are embedded in the text

Information provided by the Department of Education for schools on provision for pupils from Ukraine

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/48639-information-for-schools-ukraine/>

*Supporting the Wellbeing of Young People from Ukraine in your School: Guidance for Post-Primary Schools* (NEPS, August 2022)

<https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/219624/a2fb5086-46e1-4464-9a29-55a1219759e5.pdf#page=null>

Information on Regional Education and Language Teams for Ukraine

<https://www.etbi.ie/regional-education-and-language-teams-for-ukraine/>

Contact details for the network of Education Support Centres

<https://www.esci.ie/education-centres.html>

Cultural and linguistic supports available on Scoilnet

<https://www.scoilnet.ie/go-to-post-primary/clsupports/>

Intercultural Education in the Post-Primary School: Guidance for Schools (NCCA, 2006)

[https://ncca.ie/media/1798/intercultural\\_education\\_in\\_the\\_post-primary\\_school.pdf](https://ncca.ie/media/1798/intercultural_education_in_the_post-primary_school.pdf)

Information on the school library funding scheme

<https://languagesconnect.ie/school-library-funding-scheme-2022/>

*Stepping Up: Refugee Education in Crisis* (UNHCR, 2019)

<https://www.unhcr.org/steppingup/wp-content/uploads/sites/76/2019/09/Education-Report-2019-Final-web-9.pdf>

*Guide to the Irish Education System: Guide for Parents*

<https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/04e0c8-parents-guide-to-the-irish-education-system/>

*Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools* (Department of Education, 2017)

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/56c43-supporting-pupils-and-students-with-special-educational-needs-guidelines-for-schools/>

Guidelines and resource packs regarding the Continuum-of-Support framework

<https://www.sess.ie/special-education-teacher-allocation/post-primary/continuum-support-post-primary>

Forms for post-primary staffing arrangements

<https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/2d706-staffing-arrangements-at-post-primary-level-forms/#form-u-eal-2022>

*EAL Post-Primary Assessment Kit* (NCCA)

[https://ncca.ie/media/3306/eal-fv\\_1.pdf](https://ncca.ie/media/3306/eal-fv_1.pdf)

Effective teaching strategies for EAL learners (PDST)

<https://www.pdst.ie/post-primary/literacy/eal/teaching-strategies>

Arrangement for Co-operation on Education between the European Commission and the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine

[https://eu-solidarity-ukraine.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-06/Arrangement%20for%20cooperation%20Education\\_EN.pdf](https://eu-solidarity-ukraine.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-06/Arrangement%20for%20cooperation%20Education_EN.pdf)