Supporting Parents
Supporting Children

Research Proposal: Parental involvement and engagement in their children's learning during the primary school years

Request for Tender

Closing date: 4.00pm on 5th May 2017

Contents

Introduction

This document outlines the context for, and details of, research on parental [1]involvement and engagement in their children's learning during their primary school education. The research is being commissioned by the National Parents Council Primary with funding from the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

Section One provides the context for, and details of the proposed research.

Section Two provides important information for those tendering for the research, along with details of how to tender.

Section One

National Parents Council Primary (NPCP)

The NPCP is the national representative organisation for parents of primary school children. NPCP's role is to ensure that parents' voices are heard and to support and empower all parents through their Helpline, Training and Website. Full details of the organisation and its remit can be found on http://www.npc.ie/. The NPCP is a member of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and its representative structures.

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)

The NCCA advises the Minister for Education and Skills on curriculum and assessment for early childhood education and for primary and post-primary schools. Full details of the organisation and its remit can be found on www.ncca.ie. The NCCA is funding the research on parental involvement and engagement in their children's learning during their primary school education.

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[1] The term parent refers to the child's primary caregivers and educators. These include the mother and father and/or guardians.

NCCA resources and supports for parents

The NCCA provides a range of resources to help parents in their important role in supporting their children's learning. Informed by, and building on *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* (2009)*, the Primary School Curriculum* (1999), and developments at junior and senior cycles, the NCCA has developed a range of online materials for parents and also to help settings/schools work with parents. These include resources for parents of children in primary school:

- Information sheets for parents on the new language curriculum are available (http://www.curriculumonline.ie/getmedia/96b88c3e-0047-40df-b02b-e64422051d32/Primary-Language-Curriculum_Parents_1-page.pdf)

- Tip sheets are available for parents on using play to support learning in seven different languages (2.5-6 years). Tip sheets are also available on using books to promote discussion (3-6 years), supporting your child to become bilingual (birth to 6 years), helping your young child with maths, helping your child learn about measure, helping your young child to read and write (3-6 years). (See http://www.ncca.ie/en/Practice-Guide/Building-Partnerships-With-Parents/)

- A booklet called *Your child's learning: Guidelines for parents to the 1999 Primary School Curriculum* (2000), which was distributed to all parents. (See

  http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Parents/Primary/Your_childs_learning_2000.pdf)

- The *What, Why and How of children's learning in primary school* (DVD) (2005), which was distributed to parents all over the country to help them learn more about the 1999 Primary Curriculum. Companion information leaflets on each of the four two-year bands (junior and senior infants, first and second classes, third and fourth classes, fifth and sixth classes) are available on-line. (See http://ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Parents/Primary/Infant_Classes/)

- Tip sheets for parents on how to help children with the maths curriculum for primary school are available in five languages. Twelve video clips showing how to support maths are also available. (See

  http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Early_Childhood_and_Primary_Education/Primary-Education/Primary_Developments/Maths/Parents/Information-for-Parents.html)

- Information sheets for parents on standardised tests, on school reports and on the Education Passport are available. The Education Passport is the suite of materials that is shared as a child moves from primary to post-primary school. It includes *6th Class Report Card*[2]*, My Profile* sheet for children to fill in and *My Child's Profile* sheet for parents to complete. (See http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Early_Childhood_and_Primary_Education/Primary-Education/Assessment/Report_Card_Templates/Resources_for_schools_and_parents.html)

Ongoing work for the NCCA includes developing materials to support the important transition between pre-school and primary school, including a template that will provide information for parents and for teachers on children's learning and development as they make the transition. Late 2015 saw the publication of the new Language Curriculum (English and Irish) for junior infants to second class. Work is ongoing on a language curriculum for third to sixth classes. A new mathematics curriculum is being developed beginning with the first four years of primary schooling. Education about Religious Beliefs (ERB) and Ethics curriculum is underway. NCCA is also providing advice on the time and structure of the primary curriculum following a consultation due to take place early in 2017. From an NCCA perspective, this is an ideal time to look more closely at how to support parents' involvement and engagement in their children's primary education and has funded the NPCP to manage this research.

The proposed research

The NPCP is inviting tenders for two pieces of research.

Part One

A **review of national and international literature** on parent-school partnerships that support involvement and engagement of parents in their children's learning during their primary school years. This research will provide direction for the NCCA and NPCP on how parents and schools can work in partnership to support children's holistic learning and development during the primary school years.

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[2] http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Parents/Primary/School_Reports/

Part Two

Case studies of good practice in parent-school partnerships in Ireland that support involvement and engagement of parents in their children's learning during their primary school years. Part Two will have two elements. Element one will look at what 4/5 schools, which are innovators in the area of partnership with parents in Ireland, are doing already. It will also look at whether and how the resources for parents developed by NCCA are being used by these schools. Element two of the research will involve working with these schools as they help parents support their children's learning using the new language curriculum (English and Irish) for junior infants to second class. It is envisaged that Part Two of the research will commence around the time of the interim report on the literature review so that learning from it can inform the case study work.

The two parts of the research are outlined below in more detail. An individual researcher/group of researchers may **tender for one or both parts** of the research.

Context: Building partnerships between parents and primary school

Importance of parental involvement and engagement

The Irish Constitution, in Article 42, acknowledges that the *primary and natural educator of the child is the family and guarantees to respect the inalienable right and duty of parents to provide, according to their means, for the religious and moral, intellectual, physical and social education of their children*. The home learning environment has a huge impact on children's lives. The importance of involving parents in their children's learning and development, particularly in the early years and at primary level, has been demonstrated over and over again in international and national research. Research reviews such as those by Desforges and Aboucaar (2003), Goodall and Vorhaus (2008) and others in the UK, Emerson, Fear, Fox and Sanders (2012) in Australia, and an OECD review of parent involvement in 14 countries conducted by Borgonovi and Montt (2012), all show that children do better when their parents are actively involved with their education. Parental involvement is taken to include the quality of parenting in the home as well as the extent of parental contact with the early childhood setting or school. Parental involvement is greatly influenced by family social class, the mother's level of education, mental wellbeing and single parent status, poverty, and, to a lesser extent, by family ethnicity. The extent of parental involvement diminishes as the child gets older, but

at all ages parental involvement is important. Parents of primary school children can engage with their children's school in different ways, although how they go about this may look slightly different as children get older and their needs and capabilities change (Desforges, 2003).

The role of parents is even more significant when children need extra support for learning, as in the case of children with special educational needs, children with English as an additional language, children experiencing disadvantage. Parents also have an important role to play at times of transition when children move from home to the early childhood setting and from the pre-school/early childhood care and education (ECCE) setting to primary school and from primary to post-primary school.

Parental involvement in education has been defined as parents' interactions with schools and with their children to promote academic success (Hill et al., 2004, p.2). Such interactions extend beyond the engagement with schools, to the home life and the expectations and values for education that are communicated directly and indirectly to children[3]. This involvement can take different shapes, and there is some evidence to show that particular kinds of involvement or engagement are more effective than others at promoting children's learning (see, for example, Borgonovi and Montt, 2012, and http://www.education.com/reference/article/parent-involvement/). The proposed literature review needs to consider these to ensure we know how best to support partnerships with parents that can help realise children's full potential.

Desforges's (2003) research shows that 'at-home good parenting' has a significant positive effect on children's achievement, even after all other factors affecting attainment have been taken into account. Good parenting in the home includes:

- The provision of a secure and stable environment

- Intellectual stimulation

- Parent-child discussion

- Constructive social and educational values

- High aspirations relating to personal fulfilment and good citizenship.

In essence, good parenting means shaping the child's self-concept as a learner and through setting high but realistic aspirations/goals. However, differences between parents are associated with

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[3] http://www.nea.org/tools/17360.htm

parental perceptions of their role, and their levels of confidence in fulfilling it. A number of obstacles to partnership with parents have been identified in the literature (Hoover Dempsey et al., 2005, Patrikakou, 2008). All parents wish to do the best for their children, but some may be unsure about how to support their learning. Some parents are discouraged by feeling undervalued by schools and teachers and suffer from low self-esteem. Social and economic factors may have a role in this, but one of the major factors in parents' decisions to become involved is their relationship with the school - whether they are encouraged to become involved (or not), and if they are given information and support to enable them to engage effectively to support their children's learning (Mapp, 2003). Therefore, primary schools play an important role in determining how involved and engaged parents are by helping them overcome feelings of fear and lack of confidence. Specifically, they should make parents feel welcome. They should communicate regularly with parents about what children are learning and also outline their expectations of parents in supporting this learning and, where necessary, provide supports about how it can be achieved. For example, schools can provide opportunities for parents to talk with staff about parents' role in their children's education through home visits, family nights, well-planned parent-teacher meetings and open-door policies in schools. They can also provide family literacy projects and other resources like tip sheets on play or different subject areas (as developed by NCCA) to help parents support their children's learning.

It should also be noted that higher levels of parent involvement are not always associated with higher levels of academic achievement. The reason for this may be that parents have more contact with the school when their children are encountering difficulties, displaying challenging behaviour or disengaging. However, the overall finding from syntheses of research is that the outcomes for children are far better when their parents are engaged with and supportive of their learning at school (Borgonovi and Montt, 2012; Desforges and Aboucaar, 2003; Epstein 1996, Epstein 2011; Jennings and Bosch, 2011; Henderson and Map, 2002; Goodall and Voorhaus, 2010).

Types of parental involvement and engagement

Much of the work on partnership with parents (for example, National Network of Partnership Schools and also Project Appleseed[4], a national campaign for public school improvement, both in the USA, and *Aistear's Guidelines on Building Partnerships with parents* (NCCA, 2009) in Ireland has been based on the work of Epstein (2009, 2011). Epstein's 'Six Types of Parental Involvement' categorise parental involvement as follows (Table 1).

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[4] http://www.projectappleseed.org/sixstandards

Table 1: Six types of parental involvement (Epstein, 2009)

1. Parenting	Assist families with parenting skills, family support, understanding child and adolescent development, and setting home conditions to support learning at each age and grade level. Assist schools in understanding families' backgrounds, cultures, and goals for children.
2. Communicating	Communicate with families about school programmes and student progress. Create two-way communication channels between school and home and design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communication about school progress and children's progress.
3. Volunteering	Improve recruitment, training, activities, and schedules to involve families as volunteers and as audiences at the school or in other locations. Enable teachers to work with volunteers who support students and the school.
4. Learning at home	Involve families with their children in academic learning at home, including homework, goal setting, and other curriculum-related activities. Encourage teachers to design homework that enables students to share and discuss interesting tasks.
5. Decision making	Include families as participants in school decisions, governance, and advocacy activities through school councils or improvement teams, committees, and parent organisations, develop parental leaders and representatives.
6. Collaborating with communities	Coordinate resources and services for families, students, and the school with community groups, including businesses, agencies, cultural and civic organizations, and colleges or universities. Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programmes, family practice and student learning and development.

Types 1 and 4 are of particular interest to this research, although there is overlap between the categories.

Current information on parental involvement and engagement in primary school education in Ireland

The NCCA published *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framewo*rk in October 2009. *Aistear* supports children's learning and development from birth to six years and can be used by parents and by practitioners in the range of early childhood settings, including infant classes in primary schools. Developed ten years after the Primary School Curriculum, *Aistear* draws on more recent research including that of Epstein (2009). *Aistear's* guidelines, *Building partnerships between parents and practitioners*[5] focus on four ways in which parents can engage with their children's early learning and development:

1. Supporting learning and development (providing information to support learning and development at home)

2. Sharing information (ensuring good communication between home and pre-school/school setting and vice versa)

3. Contributing to the setting (parents sharing time, experience, talents with the pre-school/school)

4. Making decisions and advocating different courses of action (for their own child, for the school/pre-school, for children in general).

These guidelines can be used to build partnerships with parents by all ECCE settings including junior and senior infant classes in primary schools.

In Ireland, primary schools and parents work together in a number of different ways. Schools may organise an open day before the child begins and there may be an information session on the curriculum at the beginning of each year. All schools provide parents with an annual parent teacher meeting and a report on the child's learning and development is posted home at the end of the school year (Hall et al, 2008; INTO, 2008). Parents can become involved in Boards of Management and in Parents Associations and parents are often asked to help out with fundraising or going on trips (Kennedy, 2013; Mac Giolla Phádraig 2010). Schools are increasingly using ICT and social media such as Facebook to communicate with parents - using blogs and class websites to share what the children are learning, using these to inform parents about children's homework, sharing the poem or song of the week, and generally communicating about the work of the school.

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[5] http://www.ncca.biz/Aistear/pdfs/Guidelines_ENG/Practitioners_ENG.pdf

One of the main ways that parents interface with the curriculum during the primary school years is through helping their child with homework. Homework can have both positive and negative effects on children's learning and family relationships depending on how it is structured (Marzano and Pickering, 2007; Center for Public Education, 2007, Cooper et al., 2006). Marzano and Pickering (2007, p.70) suggest that appropriate homework

> *should involve parents in appropriate ways (for example, as a sounding board to help students summarize what they learned from the homework) without requiring parents to act as teachers or to police students' homework completion and that the amount (and type) of homework should be monitored so that it is appropriate to the student's age level and allows time for other out-of-school activities.*

Especially for younger children, it is important for them to be able to talk to parents about what they are learning, and the importance of parents reading to their children at home cannot be underestimated (OECD, 2011).

In 2016 the NPCP undertook a survey on homework which received over 8,000 responses - 2,330 from children, 5,752 from parents and 1,337 from teachers. The initial feedback from the survey shows that the 'standard' 'one size fits all' type of homework which often consists of work-sheets, colouring and preparation for weekly spelling and tables tests, can be a stressful experience for both children and parents, for all children from junior infants to sixth class. The NPCP were also recently involved, in collaboration with the Irish Primary Principals Network (IPPN), in a joint pilot project called Partnerships School Ireland[6] that involved three schools working on parental involvement and engagement. This project was inspired by a visit to Ireland by Joyce Epstein, director of both the Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships and the National Network of Partnership Schools in the USA. Both of the recent NPCP projects are still being evaluated but a lot has already been learned from them. It is the view of the NPCP that now is an opportune time to look more closely at how to support parents' involvement and engagement in their children's primary education and hence their involvement in this research.

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[6] http://www.ippn.ie/index.php/9-uncategorised/6810-partnership-schools-ireland

The research project

The proposed research will have two parts. Part One will review good practice nationally and internationally on parent-school partnerships and will focus, in particular, on parent engagement and involvement that supports children's learning and development during their children's primary education, and will attempt to answer the questions posed in Table 2. Part Two, informed by the initial findings from Part One, will report on the case studies conducted in primary schools in Ireland as set out in Table 3.

Part One

National and international literature review on parent-school partnership: Parental involvement and engagement in their children's primary education

This part of the research, a desk-top study, will draw on relevant literature and research studies particularly from the last ten years, and reflect current thinking in the field. Qualitative and quantitative research and findings from research reviews will be included as appropriate. This review will show what building and developing good parent-school partnerships looks like. The review will outline strategies that work in different jurisdictions including Ireland. This part of the research will look at:

a) the evidence on parental involvement and engagement with children's learning linked to partnerships between the home and school, and its immediate and long-term effects.

b) examples of how parents are encouraged and supported by schools to become involved and engaged in their children's learning during their primary school years.

In addition to research reviews such as those by Desforges and Aboucaar (2003), Goodall and Vorhaus (2008) and others in the UK, Emerson, Fear, Fox and Sanders (2012) in Australia, and the OECD review of parent involvement in 14 countries conducted by Borgonovi and Montt (2012), the review should look at current examples of support and initiatives on partnership with parents, such as the work of the Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships[7] and the National Network

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[7] http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/may04/vol61/num08/Partnering-with-Families-and-Communities.aspx

of Partnership Schools[8] in the USA, the work currently being done in Australia on parent engagement[9], the Education Scotland support for parent engagement[10] including the toolkit for practitioners, and the work being done in New Zealand on engaging parents from diverse backgrounds in their children's education.

In Ireland, the role of the Home-School Community Liaison (HSCL) Scheme[11] is relevant, as is the *Reporting to Parents* study (Hall et al, 2008) and NALA's *Help my kid learn* initiative. Also relevant are smaller pieces of research on home-school partnerships such as that by Kavanagh (2013), Mac Giolla Phádraig (2010), INTO (2008), Murphy (2001), and other pieces of research on parents and families (see the audit of research from 1996-2006 conducted by Walsh and Cassidy (2007)). Questions to guide this part of the research are outlined in Table 2 below.

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[8] http://nnps.jhucsos.com/

[9] https://www.studentsfirst.gov.au/engaging-parents-education *and* http://www.aracy.org.au/projects/parent-engagement

[10] http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/learningandteaching/partnerships/engagingparents/index.asp

[11] All DEIS Urban Primary schools are currently included in the HSCL Scheme. The HSCL Coordinators are teachers in these schools, assigned to HSCL, to work primarily with the adults in the child's life, so that they can better support their children to attend school, participate in education and develop positive attitudes to life-long learning. Central to the initiative, is the identification of needs and the provision of a tailored and proportionate response to those needs, through a range of interventions, which are evidence-based, focused and structured.

Table 2: Key questions for Part One to guide the proposed literature review (national and international)

Area	Questions
Building partnerships with parents - Parental involvement and engagement	Drawing on national and international research: 1. What are the **features of good parent-school partnerships** during the primary school years and focusing, in particular, on supporting children's learning at home? 2. How can **parents actively contribute** to these good parent-school partnerships? 3. How can **schools actively contribute** to these good parent-school partnerships? 4. What are the **key obstacles** to parent-school partnerships focused on children's learning, and how might these be **overcome**? 5. What **strategies** are particularly effective in enhancing partnerships between parents and schools where **extra support may be needed**, for example, for children with SEN, children from disadvantaged communities, children with EAL, children from ethnic minorities? 6. What are the features of a **good home learning environment** during children's primary school years? 7. What **role does homework play**, if any, in helping parents to engage with their children's learning during the primary school years?
Key implications	What are the **key implications** for: ▪ Curriculum development? ▪ For those working with parents in support roles?

Part Two

Case studies of good practice in parent-school partnerships in primary education in Ireland (children in primary education 4/5 to 12/13 years)

This piece of the research will commence following the interim report of the literature review so that the key messages from the review can inform this qualitative research. It will have two elements. As noted earlier, the first element will look at four or five case studies of good practice in parent-school partnerships in Ireland, primary schools that use innovative practices to help parents interface with the primary curriculum to support their children's learning and development. Criteria for identifying innovative schools will be agreed by the researchers in partnership with the NPCP and NCCA. Case study is among the most widely used types of social research (Swanborn, 2010) and is a common research method in education (Bryman, 2008; Robson, 2002). Since the diversity of practice in schools regarding parental involvement is likely to bring a variety of perspectives into the context, a case study approach—with its emphasis on understanding the complexity of the singular and multiplicity of participants' views—is therefore a natural choice for this research. The research may involve face-to-face interviews and the sharing of materials that are used to support parental involvement and engagement. One of the questions asked of participants will be whether the parent resources developed by the NCCA such as the tip sheets supporting learning through play or the video podcasts on helping parents with primary maths, are being used. If they are not, it will be important to find out why this is the case.

The second element will involve working with the same schools to develop and document innovative ways to involve parents with the new language curriculum (English and Irish) (http://www.curriculumonline.ie/Primary/Curriculum-Areas/Language-New-Junior-infants-2nd-class) for junior infants to second class. The work will focus, in particular, on oral language and teanga ó bhéal and will take place in the 2017/2018 school year when schools will be in the initial stage of implementing the new language curriculum. The research will focus on different aspects of parent-school partnership including involvement and engagement in children's learning and development, and will give particular attention to homework which supports children's oral language and teanga ó bhéal.

The final report on the research will outline the different strategies and information being used in these innovative partnerships, and will show how parents are supported in their role as educators in the home learning environment during the primary school years. It will also show how the richness of families' experience, culture and language is captured, acknowledged, and integrated in schools' work and classroom activities to enhance learning for everyone in the school community. The report will also indicate whether or not the resources developed by NCCA for parents are used in the case study schools, and if so, how they're used. Questions to guide Part Two of the research are outlined in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Key questions to guide Part Two of the proposed research: Case studies of good practice in parent-school partnerships in Ireland (involvement and engagement)

Area	Questions
Element 1: **(Spring/Summer 2017)** Innovative practice in Ireland in building partnerships with parents to support them in their role as educators	In these case studies: 1. How do **parents actively contribute** to good parent-school partnerships? 2. How do the schools **support parents' involvement in their child's educational journey**? 3. How is **homework** designed to **promote a partnership** between school, child and parents? How do schools support and learn from the **home learning environment**? 4. What **strategies** do schools find most effective in enhancing partnerships with parents of children who may need **extra support** in primary school - children with SEN, children from disadvantaged communities, children with EAL, children from ethnic minorities? 5. What **resources developed by NCCA are being used** to support parents and **how are they useful**? If they are not used, what is the reason for this?

Area	Questions
Table 4: Key questions to guide Part Three of the proposed research: Developmental work	
Element 2: **Autumn 2017/Spring 2018** Innovative practice in helping parents support their children's learning through the new language curriculum with a focus on Oral Language and Teanga ó Bhéal (junior infants to second class)	How can the key messages from the literature review about homework etc., inform schools' work with parents and, in particular, in helping their children's oral language (teanga ó bhéal) development? 1. How are the schools currently using **homework** as a way of supporting children's oral language (teanga ó bhéal) development as presented in the **new primary language curriculum?** 2. Through **working collaboratively** (teachers and teachers, teachers and parents), what types of oral language (teanga ó bhéal) homework activities do the schools and parents design for use as part of the research? 3. How do these 'new' **homework activities** linked to oral language (teanga ó bhéal) **differ** from the types of homework activities previously used by the schools? How do these differ across the four classes from junior infants to second class? 4. What are **children's thoughts** on these 'new' homework activities? What are **parents' thoughts**? What are **teachers' thoughts**? 5. What are **the impacts**, if any, of the 'new' homework activities on children's experience of homework? On parents' experience of homework? On teachers' experience? 6. What **types of supports**, if any, would schools welcome in order to support them in planning more engaging, interactive and real-life homework activities with the children? 7. What **types of supports**, if any, would parents welcome in order to support them in helping their children to develop their oral language (teanga ó bhéal) through fun and interactive experiences

Area	Questions
	at home?
Key implications	What are the **key implications** of the research for:
	▪ Curriculum development?
	▪ For those working with parents in support roles?

Structure of the final reports

There will be three final reports. The first, Part One, will be the literature review, which should be structured so as to address the questions in Table 2. The research questions focus on partnerships with parents and families. The second report, Part Two, informed by the findings from Part One (at interim report stage), will report on the primary school case studies conducted as outlined and should be organised and structured around the categories of key questions in Table Three. The third report, Part Three will report on the development work conducted with the language curriculum and should be organised and structured around the categories of key questions in Table Four.

Where questions focus on parental involvement strategies, the report should also include examples of these and some information could be provided in tabular format with hyperlinks to important documents followed by a summary of key messages. The concluding section should draw together the important messages and discuss their implications for stakeholders including key implications of the research for curriculum development and for those working with parents in support roles. As part of the reports, the researchers should also provide a glossary of terms.

The researcher(s)

It is required that the person(s) commissioned to undertake this work will have expertise and experience in the area of parental involvement and will have previously published in the area, or have publications currently in a review process. The NPCP welcomes proposals from consortia across institutions as well as from individual institutions. In the case of a proposal from more than one researcher, at least one of the team will be required to meet this criterion.

Working with the NPCP

Aine Lynch, Chief Executive of the NPCP will be the designated contact person for this research. She will provide the researcher(s) with all relevant information in support of the work and receive all interim and draft reports and the final reports.

Publication of research

You will note in Section Two that the end product of the research is the property of the NPCP and the NCCA. However, the publication of funded research, whether in journals, book chapters or conference presentations is encouraged. In such cases the NPCP and the NCCA ask that they be notified in advance, that the NCCA's funding of the study be acknowledged in the publication or presentation and that no such dissemination by the researchers be undertaken until six months after the submission of the final report. This is to allow for the implications of the research to be considered by Council in its role on advising the Minister for Education and Skills.

Suggested Timescales

The table below outlines a suggested timescale for the work.

Table 5: Suggested timescale

Part One	
Action	**Completion Dates**
Issue request for tender	**6th April 2017**
Receive all tenders	**5th May 2017**
Evaluate tenders/shortlist	**17th May 2017**
Award contract	**31st May 201**
Complete interim report – Part One	**14th July 2017**
Feedback on interim report – Part One	**4th August 2017**
Complete final report of literature review - Part One	**8th September 2017**
Present completed report to NCCA's Early Childhood and Primary Board and Council	**Up to four dates, TBD***

Part 2[12]	
Action	**Completion dates**
Issue request for tender	**6th April 2017**
Receive all tenders	**5th May 2017**
Evaluate tenders/shortlist	**17th May 2017**
Award contract	**31st May 2017**
Initial report on Part Two	**5th January 2018**
Interim report on Part Two	**20th April 2018**
Final report on Part Two	**8th June 2018**
Present completed report to NCCA's Early Childhood and Primary Board and Council	**Up to four dates, TBD***

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[12] In the case of Part Two of the research being awarded to a different organisation, it is important that the work draws on the findings from Part One. The Interim Report from Part One will be available from August 2017

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Section Two

How to tender

Tenders must be received by **4 pm on 5th May 2017.**

Tenders must be delivered via email to alynch@npc.ie or in hard copy to

Ms Aine Lynch
National Parents Council 12 Marlborough Court
Marlborough Street
Dublin 1

Researchers interested in undertaking this work should submit a proposal of 1,200 words for each part of the research – the literature review and the case studies. These should describe how they would undertake the work, taking account of section one above. In particular, it should give an overview of the research design and for Part Two it should set out how they propose identifying schools for the case studies.

A statement of cost should be included. All costs to be quoted in euro. Prices quoted in the tender cannot be increased during the currency of the tender. VAT, where applicable, should be shown separately.

In addition to the proposal the researcher(s) should submit the relevant curriculum vitae of each of the researchers to be involved in the work. Experience and expertise of particular significance for the project should be highlighted.

The following should also be included:

- Name, address, telephone number, mobile and e-mail address of the tenderer.
- Name of contact person dealing with the tender if different from the above.
- Name, address, telephone number and e-mail address of any other person(s) involved in the tender and their role.
- A statement from the tenderer that none of the excluding circumstances listed in paragraph 1 of Article 20 of EU Council Directive 93/96/EEC (co-ordinating procedures for the award of public supply contracts) applies to him/her – See Appendix 1.
- Confirmation of acceptance of the Terms and Conditions detailed in Appendix 2.

Tenderers are reminded that responsibility for the delivery of the reply remains with the

tenderer and that proposals received after the final date and time specified for receipt of tenders will not be considered. There is no charge associated with NCCA/NPCP tender processes and the NCCA/NPCP does not accept responsibility for information relayed (or not relayed) via third parties.

Contract

A contract will be concluded with the researcher(s) whose tenders are deemed to be the most economically advantageous in terms of the specifications in this document. The contract will not be concluded/take effect until 14 days after unsuccessful tenderers have been notified of the result of this tendering process.

Financial standing

Prior to the awarding of any contract the successful tenderers shall be required to produce a reference on headed paper from a recognised financial institution, signed and dated within the past three months from the closing date of receipt of tenders, stating that to the best of its knowledge, the tenderer is in good financial standing.

Tax clearance

Prior to the award of any contract the successful tenderers shall be required to produce a Tax Clearance Certificate from the Irish Revenue Commissioners. Alternatively, the tenderer may supply the certificate and registration numbers, as they appear on the Tax Clearance Certificate, to facilitate online verification of their tax status by the NPCP.

Information and query handling

Every effort has been made to ensure that this documentation contains all the necessary information for completion of tenders. However, in the interests of equity, requests for additional information, clarification on the content of this document and all other queries of substance must be directed to alynch@npc.ie **by 5pm on 4th May 2017**

Appendix 1

Extract from Article 20, Paragraph 1 of EU Council Directive 93/36/EEC of 14th June 1993 co-ordinating procedures for the award of public supply contracts.

Any supplier may be excluded from participation in the contract who:

a) is bankrupt or is being wound up, whose affairs are being administered by the court, who has entered into an arrangement with creditors, who has suspended business activities or who is any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure under national laws and regulations;

b) is the subject of proceedings for a declaration of bankruptcy, for an order for compulsory winding up or administration by the court or for an arrangement with creditors or of any other similar proceedings under national laws and regulations;

c) has been convicted of an offence concerning his professional conduct by a judgement which has the force of *res judicata*;

d) has been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authorities can justify;

e) has not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which he is established or with those of the country of the contracting authority;

f) has not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which he is established or those of the country of the contracting authority; is guilty of serious misrepresentation in supplying the information required under this Chapter.

Appendix 2: Terms and Conditions

1. Tenders which are delivered late shall not be considered and tenders which are incomplete will be rejected.

2. All communications from tenderers must be by way of the etenders website.

3. The NCCA/NPCP reserves the right to update or alter any information contained in this document at any time. In the event that any addition or amendments to the request for tenders, as set out in this document, be deemed necessary prior to the closing date for receipt of proposals, these will be issued to applicants in the form of supplementary documents and shall form part of the request for tenders.

4. Canvassing will lead to automatic disqualification. Canvassing is an attempt by a third party to influence a decision on the award of a contract.

5. The issue of this request for tenders does not imply that the lowest tender or any tender will be accepted. NCCA/NPCP reserves the right not to award the contract on the basis of tenders received.

6. The successful tenderer/s will be responsible for the delivery of all services provided for within the contract on the basis of a fixed price agreement set at the beginning of the period of contract and as agreed between NCCA/NPCP and the successful tenderer/s on an annual basis. Prices quoted in the tender cannot be increased during the currency of the tender. Similarly, terms and conditions cannot be altered.

7. Under the terms of the Tax Clearance Certification Scheme, evidence from the Irish Revenue Commissioners that the successful tenderer's tax affairs are in order will need to be provided before the award of the contract. Where a Tax Clearance expires within the course of the contract, the NCCA reserves the right to seek a renewed certificate. All payments under the contract will be conditional on the contractor(s) being in possession of a valid certificate at all times.

8. In the case of non-resident proposers, the successful tenderer shall provide a statement of suitability on tax grounds from the Irish Revenue Commissioners being the competent authority in Ireland and should be in a position to produce certificates issued by the competent authority in the country in which it is established.

9. Tenderers must be in good financial and professional standing. Tenderers to which any of the circumstances listed in paragraph 1 of Article 20 of EU Council Directive 93/36/ECC apply will be excluded from the competition. Such circumstances are set out in Appendix 2

10. A statutory deduction of withholding tax at source may apply on the total invoiced. Withholding tax does not represent an additional tax, rather a payment of tax on account.

11. A contract entered into on foot of this request for tender is subject to the Prompt Payments of Accounts Act.

12. The contractor shall keep accurate and systematic accounts and records in respect of the services provided in such form and detail as will clearly identify all relevant charges in respect of reimbursable expenditure invoiced to NCCA/NPCP.

13. The NCCA/NPCP or its auditors shall, on giving reasonable notice, have the right at any time to visit the offices of the contractor to audit the accounts and records as they apply to the services provided to the NCCA/NPCP.

14. The NCCA/NPCP retains the right to withhold payment where a contractor has failed to meet his/her contractual obligations in relation to the delivery of all services provided for under the terms of the contract to an acceptable level of quality.

15. If for any reason the contractor does not deliver the ordered service within the agreed time, the NCCA/NPCP may, at its discretion deduct two per cent from the contract price for each week, or part thereof, of late delivery.

16. The NCCA/NPCP may, at its own discretion and at any time terminate the contract and inform the contractor of its decision by written instruction to that effect. In the event of the contract being thus terminated, the contractor shall take such steps that are necessary to bring the services to an end in a cost effective, timely and orderly manner, (including terminating any sub-contracts placed by the contractor).

17. The NCCA/NPCP undertakes to use it best endeavours to hold confidential any information provided by the tenderer subject to the NCCA's obligations under law including the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act, 1997. Should the tenderer wish that any of the information supplied should not be disclosed because of its sensitivity, the tenderer should, when providing the information, identify same and specify reasons for its sensitivity. The NCCA/NPCP will consult with the tenderer about this sensitive information before making a decision on any Freedom of Information request received. If tenderers consider that none of the information supplied by

them is sensitive, they should make a statement to that effect. Such information may be released in response to an FOI request.

18. The NCCA/NPCP requires that all information pursuant to this invitation to tender will be treated in strict confidence. Under no circumstances may information be disclosed to other parties without the express permission of the NCCA/NPCP. The successful party may be required to sign a formal confidentiality/non-disclosure agreement.

19. Ethics in Public Office – Any registrable interest involving the tenderer and members of the Government, members of the Oireachtais, employees of the NCCA/NPCP or their relatives must be fully disclosed in response to the Request for Tender. If such information becomes known prior to the submission of the tender and before the award of the contract, it must be communicated immediately to the NCCA/NPCP. The terms 'registrable interest' and 'relative' shall be interpreted as per Section 2 of the Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995.

20. The NCCA/NPCP will not be liable in respect of any costs incurred in the preparation of tender proposals.

21. In the event of a group of tenderers jointly submitting an acceptable offer the contract will be awarded by the NCCA/NPCP to one contractor who acts as the agreed prime contractor. The prime contractor is responsible for the delivery of all services provided for under the terms of the contract and shall assume all the duties, responsibilities and costs associated with the position of prime contractor.

22. The NCCA/NPCP will remain the sole owner of all end-products e.g. electronic files, video or audio recordings, artwork, photographs, etc, with the exception of those materials that are subject to the Copyright Act 2000, irrespective of whether or not a project is terminated prior to its completion.

23. The work carried out by the tenderer, irrespective of where their offices are located shall be deemed to be carried out in Ireland and shall be governed by the laws of Ireland.

24. If a contract is awarded arising out of this tender process, written notice of acceptance of this tender will be issued by NCCA/NPCP to the successful tenderer. No tender will be deemed to have been accepted until such notification has been given.

Appendix 3: Evaluation of tenders for Part One

All of the requirements of the specification have been met	Yes	No
		Specify what is missing

Area	Total Mark	Mark
Relevance The proposal shows evidence of reflection on the requirements of the specification and sets out how the research questions will be addressed. There is a strong relationship between the research questions and the proposed sources of evidence.	30	
Design The phases of work are clearly outlined.	20	
Researchers At least one of the research team has a published track record in the area. Skill sets, qualification and experience of others involved in the work are suitable.	20	
Quality of the writing The proposal is well constructed and written with clarity and coherence.	20	
Value for Money The overall cost of the research appears reasonable relative to the design and the scale of the study. A detailed breakdown of costs is provided for the different components of work.	10	

Appendix 4: Evaluation of tenders for Part Two

All of the requirements of the specification have been met	Yes	No
		Specify what is missing

Area	Total Mark	Mark
Relevance The proposal shows evidence of reflection on the requirements of the specification and sets out how the research questions will be addressed. There is a strong relationship between the research questions and the proposed sources of evidence.	30	
Design The phases of work are clearly outlined. Clear proposals on how schools will be identified for the case studies are provided.	20	
Researchers At least one of the research team has a published track record in the area. Skill sets, qualification and experience of others involved in the work are suitable.	20	
Quality of the writing The proposal is well constructed and written with clarity and coherence.	20	
Value for Money The overall cost of the research appears reasonable relative to the design and the scale of the study. A detailed breakdown of costs is provided for the different components of work.	10	