



Summer Camp Programme

Teachers' Handbook



Navan Education Centre



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna
Department of
Education and Skills



Dublin West Education Centre
Ionad Oideachais Bhaile Átha Cliath Thiar

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Teacher Education Section (TES) wishes to thank St. Joseph's National School, Tom Bellew Avenue, Dundalk, Co. Louth, Ireland for permission to use photographs throughout this hand book.



I. Introduction

Thank you for considering to run a Summer Camp Programme in your school this year. The programme has been in existence for many years, and has been delivered successfully in more than 70 eligible primary schools each summer.

In the context of the school closures associated with Covid-19, the programme is extended this year to all DEIS primary schools. During the closures, schools communicated with pupils and their families, endeavored to support their wellbeing, and maintained the continuity of schooling using a variety of approaches. Schools provided hard copies of learning activities to pupils and used a range of electronic platforms to engage pupils with learning at home. Despite the efforts of schools to establish and maintain contact with pupils, principals in their conversations with the Inspectorate indicated their concern about a number of pupils who were hard to reach or whose engagement with schooling was inconsistent and who were thereby at risk of further educational disadvantage. The Summer Camp Programme is an opportunity for schools to reach out to these pupils and reactivate their engagement in education in a unique and interactive way.

Rationale

The Summer Camp Programme which has been extended to all DEIS Primary Schools in 2020 will support pupils' wellbeing, their sense of connectedness and enable them to re-connect with peers and teachers and to promote their re-engagement with school. The emphasis of the programme is on supporting those pupils who are considered by the school as having the greatest level of need, particularly in relation to the themes of the school's DEIS action plan.

The summer programme will enhance the pupils' sense of well-being and belonging. Pupils will have a sense of shared achievement by the end of the camp. The summer camp programme supports and encourages schools to draw on their best teaching, learning and assessment methods in providing pupils with high-quality learning experiences in classrooms and outdoor environments. Pupils learn best by being actively involved in the learning process and by connecting what they learn in camp with their learning experiences at home and in school.

To promote pupils involvement, the design and organisation of the programme should enable pupils to have more of a say in what they learn and how they learn during the camp experience. Parents and guardians should be encouraged to support the camp in meaningful and interactive ways.

As always, there will be a strong emphasis in the camps on Mathematics and on language learning, either Irish or English, in a playful interactive way. This is a key principle of the Primary Language Curriculum 2019.

Aims

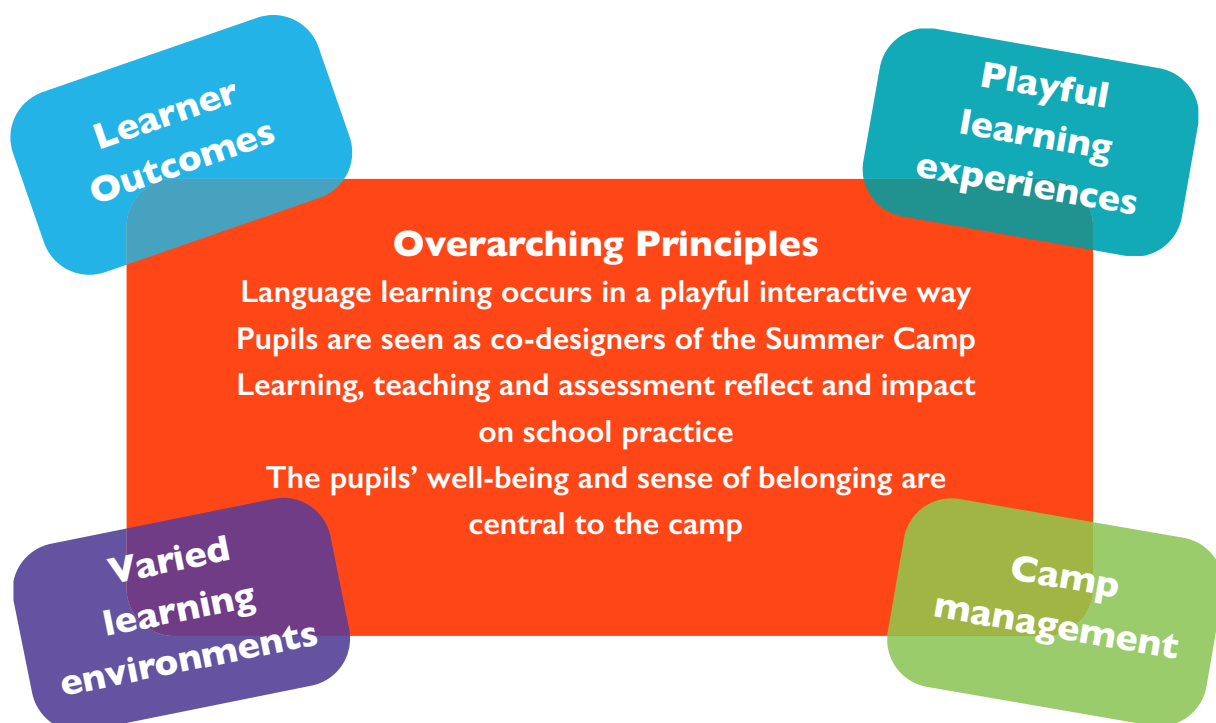
The aims of the Summer Camp Programme are to:

- Support pupils' social, physical and emotional wellbeing.
- Enable pupils to build relationships with peers, teachers and to support their reconnection with school
- Provide a variety of rich educational experiences for pupils in a range of environments, fostering a sense of their wellbeing, belonging and creativity, and which promotes their confidence in learning

2. General framework and guiding principles of the Summer Camp Programme

Camp Programme Framework

The design and delivery of all Summer Camps, whether delivered through English or Irish, will be guided by the four domains of the programme and underpinned by four overarching principles.



Criteria for each of the four Domains

Please ensure that the following criteria guide your planning and delivery of the camp. They will be used for the selection of schools and to inform inspectors' evaluations of summer camp provision.

Criteria for Learner Outcomes

- They are directly related to the pupils' identified needs in language and/or Mathematics
- Pupils talk about their learning with understanding and reflection
- Pupils are motivated as learners and experience a sense of achievement
- The planned learning outcomes make meaningful links with the work of the school
- The pupils' learning outcomes are monitored and assessed by the teachers appropriately

Criteria for Playful Learning Experiences

Pupils are:

- highly engaged in stimulating and playful learning activities
- active, work collaboratively and undertake tasks that are appropriately challenging
- engaged in activities where they solve everyday problems
- enabled to gain a sense of ownership and responsibility for their learning

Criteria for Camp Management

The camp organisers ensure that:

- the principal, HSCL coordinator, teachers and pupils have a role in planning the camp
- an orderly, secure, safe and healthy learning environment is established
- DES requirements regarding Child Protection and other policy areas are fulfilled
- full attendance and punctuality are promoted each camp day, such strategies are published
- optimal use is made of available funds to support and enhance the pupils' learning
- the team plans daily to deliver high-quality learning experiences
- opportunities for meaningful parental and community involvement are provided

Criteria for use of Varied Learning Environments

Learning environments:

- extend beyond the classroom
- are used to promote enquiry-based experiential learning
- have a clear focus on the target language and learning outcomes



3. Planning a Summer Camp

Schools are free to target the cohort of children they feel appropriate taking due cognisance of the importance of early intervention and pupils' individual needs. Schools may allocate places to any age range.

The design of your Summer Camp will be decided by your school, based on your pupils' needs. The programme is funded to target educational and social disadvantage. It seeks to assist pupils who are experiencing social or academic difficulties in language and numeracy who would benefit from a week-long Summer Camp with a very small teacher-pupil ratio. Most camps will have a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:12 with a total of 36 pupils. However, schools with up to and including 8 mainstream teachers may apply to run a Summer Camp comprising 2 teachers and 24 pupils (ratio of 1:12 maintained).

Before you begin, here are some questions to consider when planning a camp:

1. What are my pupils' specific learning needs?
2. What playful learning experiences will support the pupils' needs?
3. What varied learning environments can be used to make learning fun?
4. How will the pupils' learning be monitored and assessed?

Please be aware of the following administrative requirements:

Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the Board of Management

- All necessary arrangements including insurance, suitable accommodation, engagement and payment of qualified teachers from the staff, and ensuring that the project meets all legal, taxation and other employer responsibilities.
- Financial oversight of camp
 - spending of grant on authorised payments only
 - records and original receipts maintained
 - camp report prepared certifying attendances and income and expenditure
- All relevant school policies are adapted (where necessary) and implemented
- The school has in place adequate child protection measures for the summer camp and these include clear reporting procedures for ensuring that any child protection concerns arising within such activity or service are reported promptly to Tusla in accordance with the relevant

requirements of Children First National Guidance 2017 and the Children First Act, 2015. Such procedures include clearly documented procedures for ensuring that the DLP of the school is kept appropriately informed of any child protection concerns that arise within the activity or service concerned

- In accordance with the Children First Act, 2015, the school's risk assessment and Child Safeguarding Statement take account of any such activity or service and specify the risks of harm identified and the procedures that are in place to manage those risks

Responsibilities of principal in close consultation with the HSCL coordinator

- Guides and makes recommendations in relation to the selection of pupils
- Works collaboratively with team in the planning the camp
- Ensures the pupils' wellbeing learning is linked to the work of the school
- Provides opportunities for the camp team/participants to share outcomes with school community during the year

Responsibilities of camp teachers

- Selection of pupils, in consultation with principal and HSCL coordinator
- Teacher/pupil ratio 1:12 is maintained
- Each teacher is committed for the full week of the camp
- Ensuring all camp framework criteria are fulfilled
- Ensuring Irish is the sole language of communication in the Irish-medium camps

Identification and selection of pupils

- Pupils most in need
 - educational or social needs
 - based on assessment outcomes
 - consideration of importance of early-intervention
 - consideration of age-cohorts
 - all classes eligible
- A contingency list of pupils to fill vacancies should they arise is maintained to ensure that the required number of pupils are in attendance on each day of the camp
- A camp attendance sheet should be completed each day.

School Policies

- Schools will be required to apply their policies on Child Protection, Health & Safety, Anti-Bullying, Behaviour, Critical Incidents and Healthy Eating to the Summer Camp. Each teacher must have copies of these policies and they should be available for review.
- The name of the DLP and the Child Safeguarding Statement must be prominently displayed near the entrance to the school which is used during the camp.
- Vetting requirements must be fulfilled for parents and community members contributing to the work of the camp and they are to be informed of all relevant policies and procedures. They must also be informed that a Child Safeguarding Statement is in place during the summer camp activities.
- A designated health and safety officer must be available on site for the duration of the camp and named on the relevant policy document.

The Grant

A grant is payable and is comprised of:

- €900 (gross) per teacher (To include all pre and post planning and administration)
- €6 per pupil per day towards expenses such as lunches, resources etc.

Subject to the school confirming that it will adhere to the terms and conditions of the Summer Camp programme, the full grant will be paid by Dublin West / Navan Education Centre to your school's bank account via electronic funds transfer (EFT) before the camp commences.

Running a Camp

- Each camp will run for five days, from Monday to Friday inclusive
- The optimal time of delivering the Summer Camp Programme is as close to the official reopening of schools as possible.
- Activities will be provided for 22.5 hours over the course of the week
- The starting time for a camp is to be no later than 10 o'clock
- Four hours of instruction must be provided each day
- In addition to the four hours instruction, a total of 30 minutes is set aside each day for a fully-supervised lunch/break period

- A camp attendance sheet is filled in each day
- A healthy lunch should be provided, in consultation with the pupils
- Irish is the sole language of instruction in Irish-medium camps
- All camps may incorporate a library visit. It would be worthwhile to make contact as soon as possible with your local librarian to explore what may be possible for this visit.
- Where breakfast is provided, it will not detract from the four hours of instruction
- A lead teacher must be appointed to oversee the following
 - Promoting punctuality and recording attendance
 - Overseeing the finances and financial reporting
 - Completion of final report which is available from the Education Centre



4. Practical ideas to support effective teaching and learning

The four principles in action

Language learning occurs in a playful interactive way

Learning experiences are carefully planned and resourced, optimising the full engagement of pupils with their teachers, peers and parents

- Focus on target language
- Explicit teaching of new language
- Aistear, Drama, communal singing
- Use of outdoors - trails, orienteering, hunts, field trips, picnics
- Collaborative activities: hands-on preparation of lunch, cookery, experiments, investigations, craftwork, models, design-and-make
- Structured library visits; school library
- Optimal use of assembly and dismissal to discuss, reflect, present and share learning in a communal setting
- Showcasing learning to parents and peers-displays, presentations, drama at assembly/dismissal, Friday after lunch (depends on HSE guidelines as they apply at time of camp operation)

Pupils are seen as co-designers of the Summer Camp

Pupils are encouraged and supported to help design the camp, parental contributions welcomed as well

- **Pre-and during Camp stage:** ideas elicited from pupils
- **Camp delivery:** Teachers will on an ongoing basis
 - Share and agree the learning intentions each day
 - Consolidate pupils' learning at the end of each lesson
 - Facilitate a review of pupils' learning at the end of the camp



Learning, teaching and assessment reflect and impact on school practice

The camp complements and extends school practice by developing meaningful links between both.

- Effective elements of school practice such as teaching methodologies and assessment practices are used.
- Use of effective methodologies to support small group learning
- Successful camp methodologies brought back into the classroom in the following school year
- The creation of simple baseline and end-of-camp assessments will inform curriculum focus in school
- Opportunities are provided for pupils to share their learning with the school/class, e.g. at assembly

The pupils' well-being & sense of belonging are central to camp design & delivery

The selected pupils experience the joy of teamwork and a collective identity for the duration of the camp.

- Focus on relationship building through collaborative non-competitive games
- Collective goal setting
- Warm, fun, inviting camp environment
- Camp song
- Inviting welcoming camp sign at school entrance
- Affirmations, daily WOW announcements, encouraging notes for pupils, wish boxes
- Camp t-shirt, cap, water bottle, pencil
- Focus on active learning as a group, team, pair and whole-camp tasks and games
- Encourage pupils to step out of their comfort zones

Language-learning Methodologies

The internationally recognised communicative approach is the most effective approach to language learning. This involves immersion in the target language and ongoing opportunities for speaking and communicating.

Assembly and Dismissal

Morning assembly and afternoon dismissal times provide valuable opportunities for teachers, pupils and parents to meet, greet each other and develop a sense of community and a shared purpose. These are ongoing occasions for pupils to sing camp songs, share their hopes and learning intentions, showcase their achievements and engage in team-building activities.

Lunchtime

Lunchtime is an ideal occasion to give the pupils a say in the food choices and be involved in planning the menu, preparing, ordering and enjoying food, setting the table and tidying up. Teachers can help the pupils by modelling and encouraging appropriate social skills and conversation. In the best settings, teachers use these opportunities for language learning and extension.

Show and Tell

A natural 'show and tell' can be a rich addition to the camp. Parents and family members are the ideal audience for this celebration of pupil achievement, if Health and Safety Guidelines permit. This presentation should not be over-rehearsed or take up too much time from the normal camp activities, rather it should evolve seamlessly from each day's activities as an oral, musical, visual presentation of the camp activities. The 'show and tell' should only be conducted in the last hour of the last day of the camp as a form of celebratory graduation.

Learning Environments

Careful consideration will be given to including a variety of outdoor and indoor learning environments that are:

- Welcoming and comfortable
- Places that promote creativity
- Spaces for pupils to be active
- Conducive to the development of social skills and problem-solving skills

Some examples: The school yard and grounds, local green spaces, school library, school hall, general purposes room, Aistear room, computer room, staff room, parents' room, corridors as well as classrooms.

Parental Involvement

The Summer Camp Programme should strive to include parents in as many ways as possible. Some suggestions are:

- Make contact with parents to inform them of the theme/activities of the camp
- Provide families with summer reading lists of books available in their library to help them continue to build reading skills over the summer
- Include some suggested activities they could do at home
- Invite families to the show and tell, the library and allow for opportunities for pupils to showcase their achievements
- During events, provide books, journals or other literacy/ numeracy supplies as prizes
- Host fun activities where pupils and families work on fun curriculum activities together

Library Visit

A visit to the local library is a recommended component of the Summer Camp Programme if Health and Safety Guidelines permit. This must be planned well in advance of the camp to maximise success. Participating teachers should meet with the local librarian/s to plan the visit based on the theme and language of the Summer Camp and the ages and interests of pupils. It is recommended that the visit take place in the second half of the day. This allows for pre-visit teaching and learning and also affords an opportunity for parents to visit the library when collecting the pupils. Many libraries use this opportunity to assist parents to join the library and present brochures to them on the activities and events taking place over the summer for their children.

Team-building activities

Team-building activities will provide opportunities for pupils to learn skills such as teamwork, cooperation, creative thinking collaborative engagement, social skills and give pupils the chance to build relationships with each other. Central to the ethos of the Summer Camps Programme is the enrichment of pupils' communicative skills in the target language through working and playing together.

Assessment

Assessment information will be used to identify pupils' learning needs, inform the selection of pupils and the design of the camp, and assist in adjusting teaching during the camp and celebrating learning. Practical assessment strategies for use during the camp include:

- Use of Success Criteria
- Provision of Effective Feedback
- Effective use of Questioning
- Self- Assessment
- Peer-Assessment
- Rubrics, checklists, learning log/journey, annotated drawings, concept maps, photographs, video clips, scrapbook, SALF folder



5. Training

TES will provide training to all teachers participating in the Summer Camp Programme. This is compulsory. The training will consist of a number of live webinars. These will cover important aspects such as supporting teachers' and pupils' wellbeing, learning environments, playful teaching methodologies, the library visit, and also planning and assessment and administrative requirements. Training sessions for the delivery of Summer Camp Programme will be hosted on Dublin West Education Centre Website at the end of June. Further details will issue to all participating schools.

6. Additional guidance for teachers to support the summer camp programme

- Effective language learning and teaching
- Effective planning and preparation
- The role of the summer camp facilitators
- The role of the Inspectorate
- Resources

Effective language learning and teaching

A core component of the summer camps is teaching the children to **communicate in the language of the camp**. Before children can engage in effective communication during activities and tasks, they must first be taught the target language exemplars effectively, either in English or Irish.

The internationally recognised **communicative approach** is the most effective approach to language learning. It involves real scenarios and relevant topics where children are chatting and communicating with a definite purpose in mind. The children must have **choices** about what they will say, so no scripts! Remember that teaching the children to **ask questions** is the key to good communication.

The core elements of effective language learning involve:

1. **Listening**
2. **Understanding**
3. **Repetition**
4. **Speaking and communicating**

All four elements complement and scaffold each other but speaking and communicating together are the ultimate aims of language learning.

So where do you start?

1. Begin by focusing on the theme or the context of the camp
2. Plan the new target language associated with the theme and set out the specific questions, phrases, instructions etc. that the children will use to communicate within that context (e.g. playing a board game:- 'my turn', 'who's go is it?', 'go back'...)
3. Plan the specific activity or task so that the children can practise the new language exemplars (e.g. snakes and ladders)
4. Plan how you will assess the quality of the pupils' use of the target language (checklist, video...)

The three phases of effective language-learning

The pre-communicative phase

- Stimulus -picture, poster, video, poem, song, slides etc.
- Language function identified together with selected exemplars of language & vocabulary. These include new words, sentences and most importantly, questions.
- Language input follows – lots of energetic direct teaching.
- Lots and lots of repetition - mostly by pupils singly, in pairs and groups - of new words, phrases and questions, always building up from words, through to sentences and questions using pictures as prompts.
- Teacher models correct pronunciation, sentence structure and activities. Pupils repeat/practice this language/ vocabulary, engage in drills - embed language structures.
- Learning environment supports target language.

The communicative phase

- Pair/small group tasks/ games - children practise newly-acquired language
- Role play, games, drama activities, tasks.
- Lots of support from teacher in a facilitative role

The post-communicative phase

- Teacher addresses errors identified in the communicative period of lesson. Incidental language noted for future planning.
- Sentence structure / language is extended and used in other contexts.
- Action songs, poems, rhymes are taught.
- Teacher assesses the quality of the children's language learning and plans next steps.

Effective planning and preparation

Teachers of the summer camp programme are required to put in place a number of mandatory policies and procedures to ensure the safe and smooth running of the camp. These are listed in the handbook.

In addition, it is a requirement of each camp that teachers prepare and plan appropriately to ensure that stated learning outcomes are achieved. To this end, teachers should prepare an **overview / weekly plan of the camp** which clarifies the intended learning in a general way. It should answer questions such as:

- What is the theme or focus of the camp?
- What particular learning outcomes in language learning will be focused on?
- What particular learning outcomes in numeracy will be focused on?
- What other learning outcomes will be focused on?
- What methodologies will be used to achieve these outcomes?
- What playful learning experiences will be planned?
- What different contexts will be used (e.g. lunchtime, assembly)
- What learning environments will we use?
- What resources will be used?
- How will we assess the pupils' learning?

In addition, teachers are required to plan on a daily basis, for each lesson or learning context. **Daily planning** should be linked to the planning of specific lessons and learning context, drawing from the weekly plan. It should involve reflecting on and answering the questions outlined above but, this time, with more specific detail. This planning should take account of children's different abilities, needs and interests as well as reflections on the previous day's learning. How you present your planning is for you to decide. The important element is that the team have gone through the process of planning and preparing together.

The role of the summer camp facilitators

Facilitators who work with each Education Centre are there to support and assist you in using the most effective methodologies to enhance learning in a playful way. Support is provided by phone. Details of phone support will be provided to teachers at the online information sessions. You may choose to discuss any aspect of your Summer Camp Programme with the facilitators, however, the primary focus will be on the playful teaching and learning that is going on in the camp.

The role of the Inspectorate

The Inspectorate also play a role in advising on and supporting the work of the Summer Camp Programme. An inspector will make contact with some camp organisers to arrange a time that will be suited for a conversation about the work of the camp, to affirm the work of the camp organisers, and also to offer advice and support. The conversations will provide an overview to Teacher Education Section on the work of the camps and teachers' views on the potential impact of the programme on supporting pupils' wellbeing and re-connecting with their peers and school again.

Resources

The summer camp programme does not provide planning templates, lesson plans or resources. Instead, it provides guidelines to support teachers to utilise what they already have in their own school. In addition, there is a wealth of resources and support material available on the websites of the NCCA, PDST and Scoilnet. Further details of relevant links to these websites will be provided at the information evening for teachers. We encourage you to use these links to support play-based learning in your camp.