



**CSL**

**CHILDREN'S  
SCHOOL LIVES**

National longitudinal cohort study  
of primary schooling in Ireland

## **Report Number 6:**

# **What Children, Teachers and Parents Think About What Children Learn in School**

**UCD School of  
Education, Dublin  
2024**



**UCD School of Education**  
Scoil an Oideachais UCD



**NCCA**

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

# INTRODUCTION



Have you ever wondered what it is like to be a child in primary school in Ireland today?

Children's School Lives is an exciting study that is finding out about what primary school is like for you children.



There are nearly 4000 children taking part in this study, in nearly 200 schools right across Ireland!



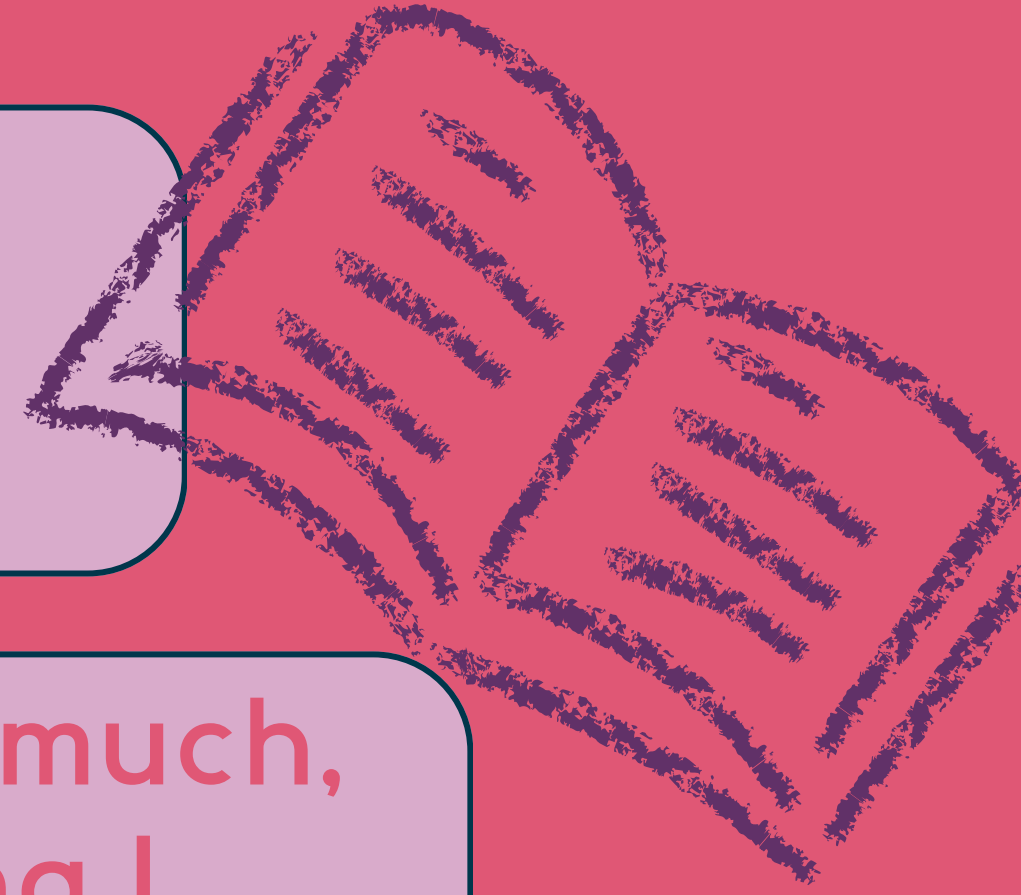
The study lasts for 6 years and follows 2 groups of children, some of the children were in preschool when the study started in 2019 and the rest of the children were in 2nd class.

Researchers in the study are learning from children, teachers, school principals, mummies and daddies and even some grannies and grandads too! To find out about what it is like to be a child or a teacher in primary school.



# What children think about the subjects they learn in school

Children like P.E. the most ! They think it is super interesting



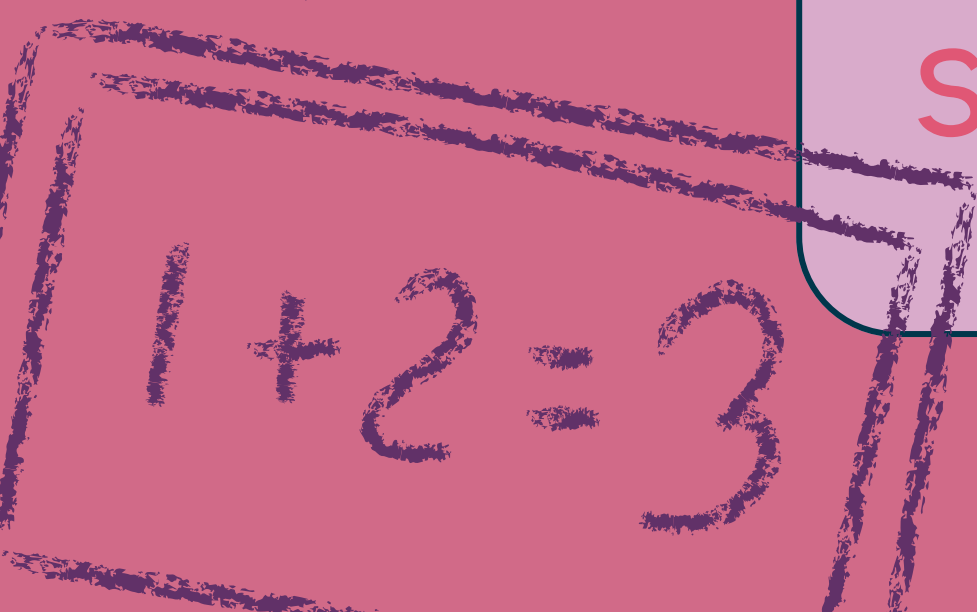
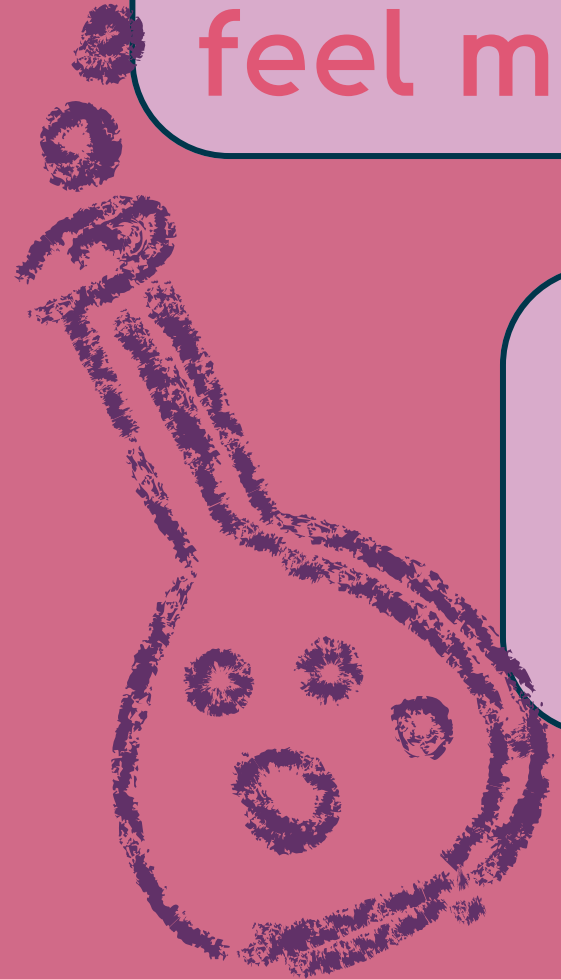
Most children don't like Irish as much, they say it is not so interesting !

Lots of children like to learn Maths and English

Children say that sometimes Irish and Maths can be confusing and children feel most bored learning these subjects

Some children think Irish is hard because they learn new words with strange sounds

Children think PE, Maths, English and SESE are the most important subjects to learn



# What Teachers Think About the Subjects They Teach

Teachers spend the most time teaching Maths and English

Teachers spend the least amount of time teaching Religious Education

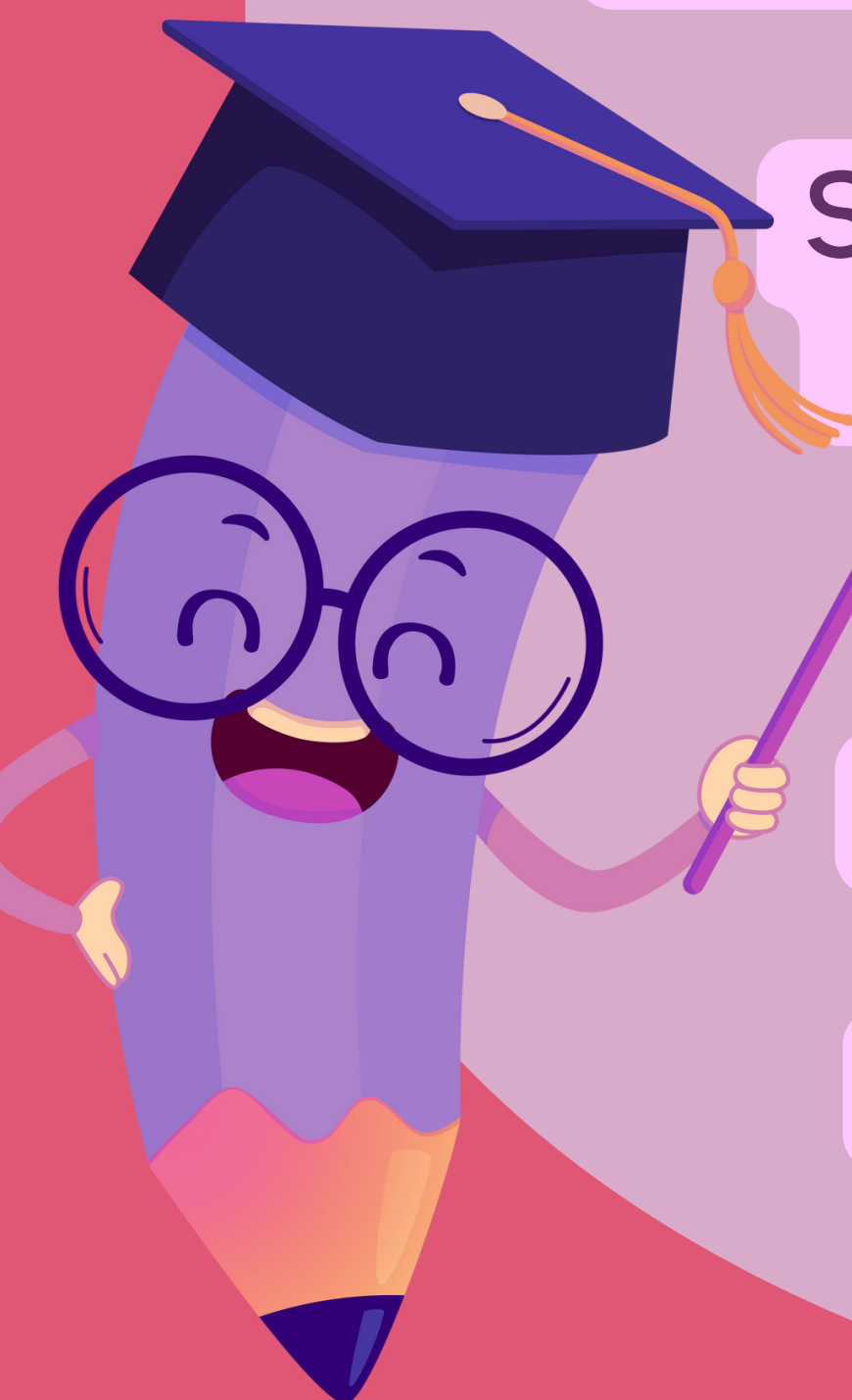
Teachers like teaching English and Maths

Teachers are excited to teach children all their subjects

But.. teachers don't like teaching Religious Education or Drama as much

Sometimes teachers say that they have too much to teach and not enough time

Teachers teach subjects in many ways so learning is interesting for children, for example Projects!



# WHAT CHILDREN THINK ABOUT TESTS IN PRIMARY SCHOOL

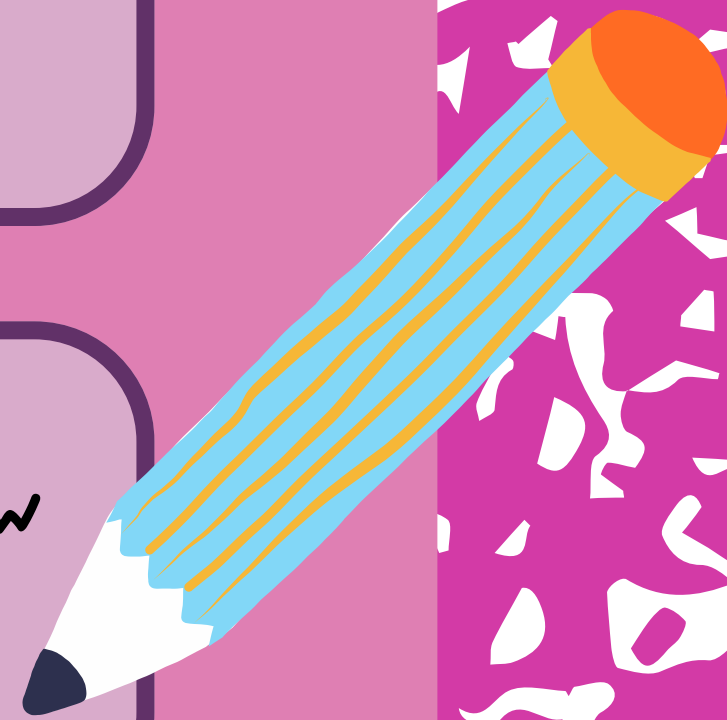


Some children say that tests make them feel anxious



Children think that tests can help them to learn

Many children think tests can show them how much they are learning in school



Lots of children think it is important to do well in their tests



Most children like when the teacher talks to them alone about their schoolwork



# What Do teachers think about tests in class?

Teachers say that tests can help them see how children are learning in school

Teachers say tests show can show them if some children need help with their schoolwork

Teachers think tests cannot show things like how happy a child is in school

Teachers say that tests are not the only way to see how children are learning in school

Teachers say that tests can cause stress for some children and for some parents too!



## What Do Children Think About Homework?

- Lots of children say that homework can be boring!
- Many children think that homework means they have less time to spend with their friends and family
- Children say that homework takes away time from playing after school



## What Do Parents Think About Children's Homework?

- Parents think homework helps their children to learn
- Sometimes it can be hard for parents to help children with their homework, especially when the house is very busy!
- Homework can show parents how their children are doing in school
- Parents find it hardest to help their children with Irish and maths homework



# LEARNING AND TEACHING SUBJECTS DURING COVID-19



## What Do the teachers Have to Say?

- After lockdown teachers spent more time teaching English, Maths and SPHE and less time teaching subjects like Religious Education and SESE.
- When schools reopened, teachers taught children lots of English and Maths.
- Lots of teachers also taught children about their feelings and how to deal with big feelings
- Teachers found it hard to teach subjects like Art, PE, and Maths because of social distancing rules. After lockdown lots more teachers used technology in their classrooms



## What Do Children and Parents Have to Say?

- During the Covid-19 lockdown, Children said Maths and Irish were the hardest subjects to learn at home
- Parents also found it hard teaching their children Irish during lockdown



[www.cslstudy.ie](http://www.cslstudy.ie)