



ANNUAL REPORT 2025
JOAN RUSSELL (ETBI)

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME www.instructionalleadership.ie

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National Steering Committee Members

Ms. Joan Russell, Education Research Officer (ETBI) (Chairperson)

Ms. Sarah Buckley, Graduate & Principal, Schull Community College

Dr Sharon Coffey, Graduate & Principal, Grennan College, Kilkenny

Ms. Anne Mc Hugh, Chief Executive, Donegal ETB

Ms. Orlagh Ní Fhaoláin, Graduate & Príomhoide, Gaelcholáiste Cheatharlach, Easca, Ceatharlach (Member as of December 2025)

Dr Finn Ó Murchú, Former Head of Education Department, Mary Immaculate College

Mr. Gerard O' Sullivan, Graduate & Acting Director Curriculum and Assessment

Mr. Eugene Power, Graduate & Retired Principal, St. Declan's Community College, Kilmacthomas

Dr Rebecca Saunders, Assistant Professor in Education, Mary Immaculate College, Thurles

Ms. Veronica Walsh, Acting Principal, Coláiste Treasa, Kanturk, Co. Cork

Ms. Paula Fitzpatrick, IL Administrator, Education and Training Board Ireland

Sub-Committee Members

Partnerships at National and International Level

Ms. Anne McHugh (Chairperson)
Dr. Sharon Coffey
Ms. Joan Russell
Ms. Veronica Walsh
Dr. Rebecca Saunders

Planning for the Sustainable Delivery of the Programme

Ms. Joan Russell (Chairperson)
Mr. Gerard O' Sullivan
Mr. Eugene Power
Dr Sharon Coffey
Dr Rebecca Saunders

Research

Ms. Joan Russell (Chairperson)
Dr Sharon Coffey
Dr. Finn Ó Murchú
Dr. Rebecca Saunders

Support Structure for Graduates

Mr. Eugene Power
Dr Sharon Coffey
Ms. Veronica Walsh

Committee Meetings 2025

The Steering Committee met on the following dates:

28/10/2025 - Minutes 281025.pdf
16/12/2025 - Minutes 161225.pdf

Meeting – 28/10/2025	Attendance	Not in Attendance
Joan Russell	√	
Anne McHugh	√	
Sharon Coffey	√	
Rebecca Saunders	√	
Eugene Power	√	
Finn O’ Murchú		√
Veronica Walsh		√
Gerard O’ Sullivan		√

Meeting – 16/12/2025	Attendance	Non-Attendance
Joan Russell	√	
Anne McHugh	√	
Sharon Coffey	√	
Rebecca Saunders	√	
Eugene Power	√	
Finn O’ Murchú	√	
Sarah Buckley		√
Orlagh Ní Fhaoláin	√	
Veronica Walsh		√
Gerard O’ Sullivan		√

Introduction

The *Instructional Leadership Programme (ILP)*, facilitated by Dr Rebecca Saunders through Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI), is a programme of professional learning aimed at enhancing teaching and learning at primary, post-primary, and further education levels.

In 2023, The IL Programme National Steering Committee published a strategic plan aimed to support the National Steering Committee the further development of the programme. The plan, 2023 – 2026, set out actions under five key priority areas:

- Further Progress and Implement a plan for the sustainable delivery of the IL programme.
- Implement a Support Structure for Graduate School and Teacher leaders.
- Facilitate and Support Research and Evaluation.
- Nurture Partnerships at National and International level.
- Develop and Advance Professional Learning Opportunities to support school and teacher leaders as Instructional Leaders.

The plan is available www.instructionalleadership.ie

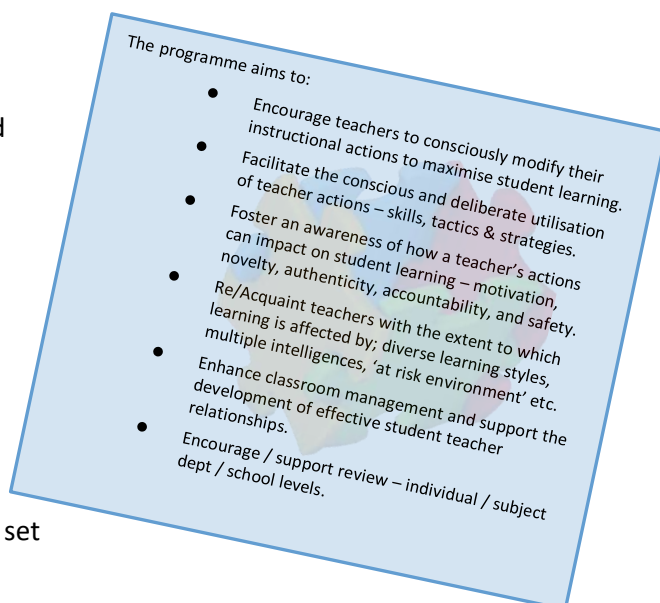
We are pleased to publish this report, which outlines the progress made for the actions set out under each of the priority areas.

I wish to extend my appreciation to Committee Members who gave tirelessly of their time, on a voluntary basis, to progress the actions set out.

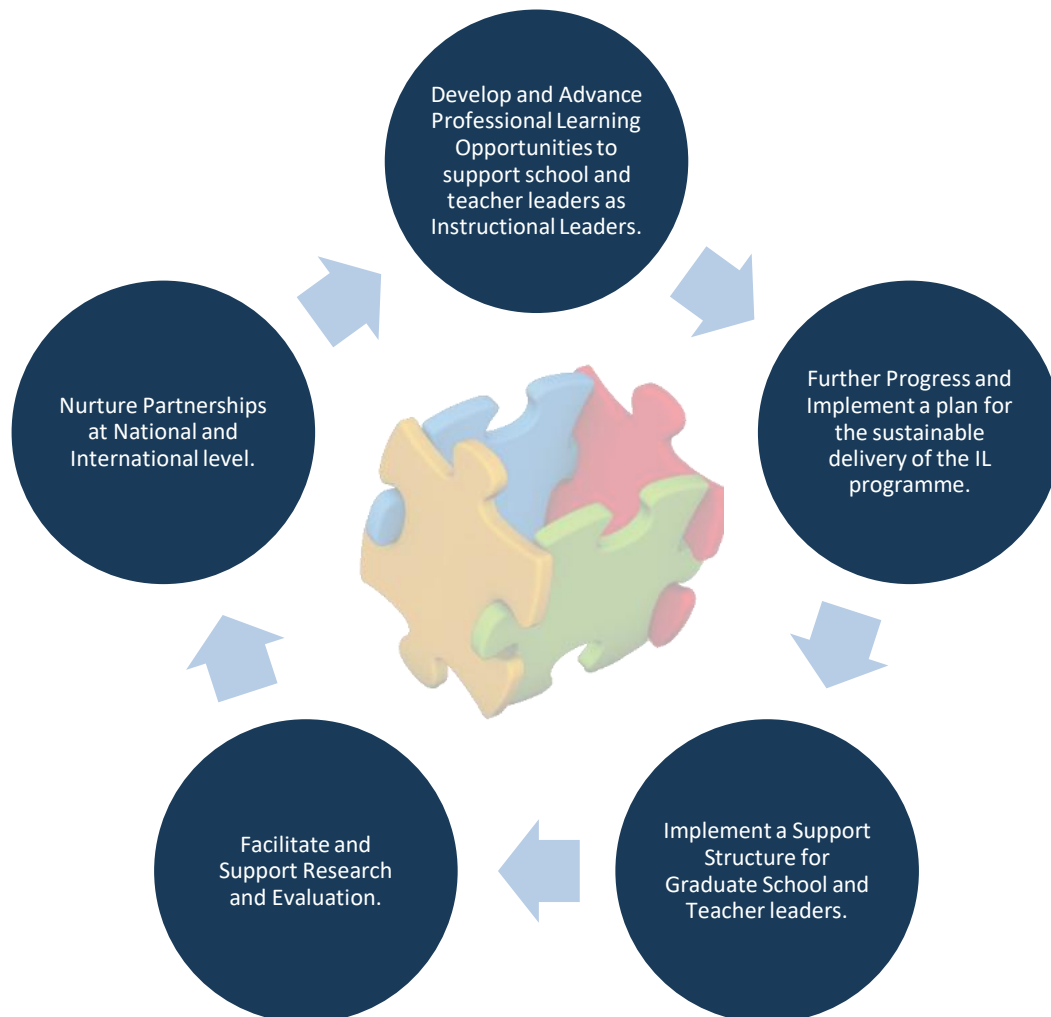
We look forward to further progressing the actions in 2026.



Joan Russell
Chairperson
National Steering Committee
May 2025



Strategic Priorities 2023 – 2026



- **Further Progress and Implement a plan for the sustainable delivery of the IL programme.**

The targets set under this priority aim to identify and progress actions that ensure the delivery of the IL Programme, to meet the demand, across a range of contexts, at primary, post-primary, and FET levels.

- **Implement a Support Structure for Graduate School and Teacher leaders.**

The targets set under this priority aim to facilitate individual and collaborative professional learning of graduate school and teacher leaders at regional and national levels.

- **Facilitate and Support Research and Evaluation.**

The targets set under this priority aim to identify actions that will facilitate ongoing research with a view to:

- Informing policy and practice relating to the ILP
- Contributing to the field of educational research
- Enhancing the learning and practice of school and teacher leaders

- **Nurture Partnerships at National and International level.**

The targets set under this priority aim to maintain and nurture relationships with national and international partners with a view to supporting professional learning and the implementation of national policy at school level.

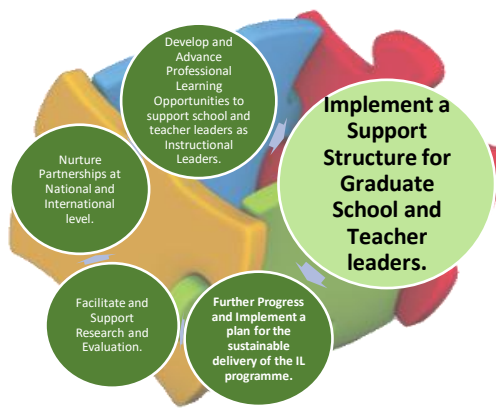
- **Develop and Advance Professional Learning Opportunities to support school and teacher leaders as Instructional Leaders.**

The targets set under this priority aim to consolidate the delivery of existing programmes as well as designing and facilitating new professional learning opportunities for school leaders and teachers.

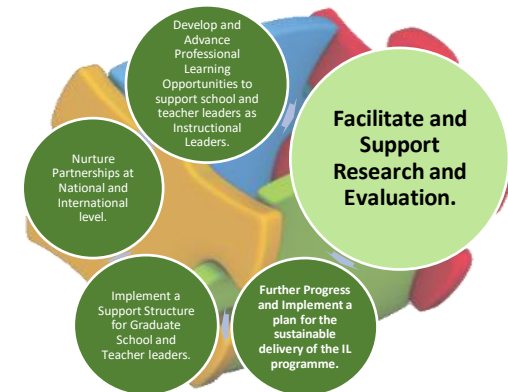
Action:	Outcome 2025:
<p>Cohort 16</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohort 16 of the Instructional Leadership Programme completed session 2 in March 2025 and session 3 in November 2025. Cohort 16 are scheduled to graduate March 2026. • This cohort is the first group facilitated by Dr Rebecca Saunders, Assistant Professor and Lecturer in Education, School of Education, in Mary Immaculate College, Thurles Campus. • The programme has been further developed to include elements of 'Tribes' which focuses on creating positive learning environments by fostering collaboration, respect, and social-emotional well-being among students. <p>Please see Photo Gallery on page 16</p>
<p>Plan for the ongoing delivery of the programme:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A draft plan has been developed to support the continued delivery of the ILP. The identified actions will be implemented throughout 2026 to ensure the sustained delivery of the ILP , meeting demand across a range of contexts at post-primary, primary, and Further Education and Training (FET) levels. • Work is ongoing



Action:	Outcome 2024:
<p>Further develop the website</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IL website was redesigned admin@instructionalleadership.ie. It went live on Wednesday 12th November 2025. <p>Please see analytics page 14 which outlines active users, views and engagement rate for the IL website for the period 1st Jan to 31st Dec 2025.</p>
<p>Create a greater presence on social media (Twitter & Instagram)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Twitter plan for 2025 was developed and implemented. Twitter @ILProgramme <p>Please see page 15 which outlines details of total posts and followers for X (formerly Twitter) and includes an example of a tweet with analytics for 2025.</p> <p>In December 2025, in alignment with ETBI policy, it was agreed to retire the @ILProgramme X (formerly Twitter) account from active posting and transition it to a monitoring-only role.</p>
<p>Establish regionally based support networks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deferred to 2026
<p>Publish resources for schools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources and articles were created and uploaded to the IL website. <p>www.instructionalleadership.ie</p>
<p>Establish an online forum to support teaching and learning conversations between teachers across schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deferred to 2026



Action:	Outcome 2025:
Develop a Research Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Research Plan is available on the website. Instructional Leadership Programme Research Plan.pdf
Conduct Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and data collection across a number of areas is ongoing as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Research on the impact of professional & collaborative reflection on the participants’ learning and practice of the ILP is ongoing. Data has been gathered and is being analysed. ➤ Research on exploring the perspectives of post-primary school teachers of the attributes of effective professional learning opportunities is ongoing. ➤ Research on participants’ understanding and practice of instructional leadership pre and post engagement with the Lasair to inform the design on the future delivery is ongoing.
Evaluation of the Instructional Leadership Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ETBI provided funding to conduct an external evaluation of the impact of ILP, to explore how participation in the ILP has impacted on post-primary teachers’ individual and collective practice and student engagement and achievement. Following a tender process in November 2025, Dr Barry Morrissey, Dr Aoife Brennan and Dr Alan Gorman, DCU were awarded the contract in December 2026. The external evaluation will commence in the first quarter of 2026 and will be published in the third quarter.
Host a Research Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deferred to 2027.



Action:	Outcome 2025:
<p>Continue to progress and grow our partnerships and collaborations with relevant organisations to support the development of the Programme and provide access to it by varying audiences.</p>	<p>The members of the ILP Steering Committee are pleased to work in partnership with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Council • NAPD • DRUSTVO RAVNATELJ, Slovenia • Leargas • Limerick Education Centre • NCSE
<p>Explore the establishment of a partnership with Northern Ireland</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions have commenced
<p>Further progress collaborations with ETB Sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eleven KCETB schools will participate in IL Cohort 17, which is scheduled to commence in 2026. A Community of Practice will be established to support their learning over a two-year period, and research will be conducted to evaluate its impact.



Action:	Outcome 2024:
Peer Instructional Conferencing and Coaching Programme – Cohort 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer Instructional Conferencing and Coaching, Cohort 2 facilitated by Dr Rebecca Saunders continued with session 2 in January 2025 and session 3 in April 2025. The participating schools graduated on the 2nd of April 2025. <p>Please see Photo Gallery page 16</p>
Lasair; Supporting Principals and Deputy Principals as Instructional Leaders – Cohort 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ILP in continued partnership with NAPD further developed the programme <i>Lasair: supporting principals and deputy principals as instructional leaders</i>. Cohort 1 of the programme commenced in 2025 with 12 schools at cross sectoral post-primary level. Members of the ILP Steering Committee attended the NAPD Conference on the 17th of October 2025 and participated in a panel discussion. Registration opened for Cohort 2 and is scheduled to commence in 2026. <p>Please see Photo Gallery on page 16</p>
Leading and Sustaining Educational Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On behalf of the NCSE, the ILP team developed and facilitated a three-module programme to support primary and post-primary schools in the implementation of <i>Universal Design for Learning (UDL)</i>. The Three Module programme is designed to provide an understanding and strategies to initiate, implement and sustain UDL in schools.

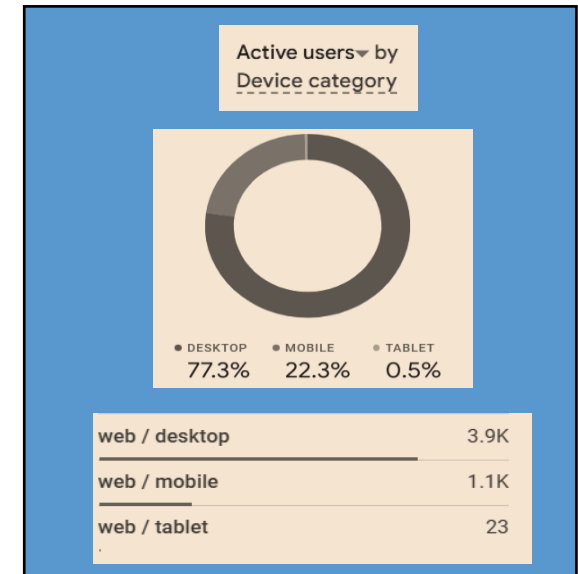


	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Module 1 commenced in October 2025 with a Cohort in Carlow and a Cohort in Athlone. The programme will conclude in 2026.
Further develop the programme for primary level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eochair– the key to happy, active, and inclusive learning. The programme was facilitated by Ms Linda O Meara, Milford Primary as a Cursá Samhraidh for primary teachers in the Limerick Education Centre in July 2025.

Website and Social Media Analytics – IL Website

Active users ▼	Views ▼	Engagement rate ▼	Average engagement time per active user ▼	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Total clicks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Total impressions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Average CTR	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Average position
5K	22K	35.4%	1m 22s	2.09K	104K	2%	16.5

Top queries	↓ Clicks	Impressions	CTR	Position
instructional leadership	143	4,018	3.6%	38.1
lasair	60	515	11.7%	10.4
barrie bennett	45	567	7.9%	1.6
principles of instructional leadership	40	520	7.7%	3.1
instructional leadership in education	29	848	3.4%	72.5
instructional skills	25	1,327	1.9%	6.9
instructional leadership programme	23	97	23.7%	4.9
barrie bennett classroom management	21	130	16.2%	5.1



Total Clicks - is how many times a user clicked through to the ILP site.

Total impressions - is how many times a user saw a link to the ILP site in search results.

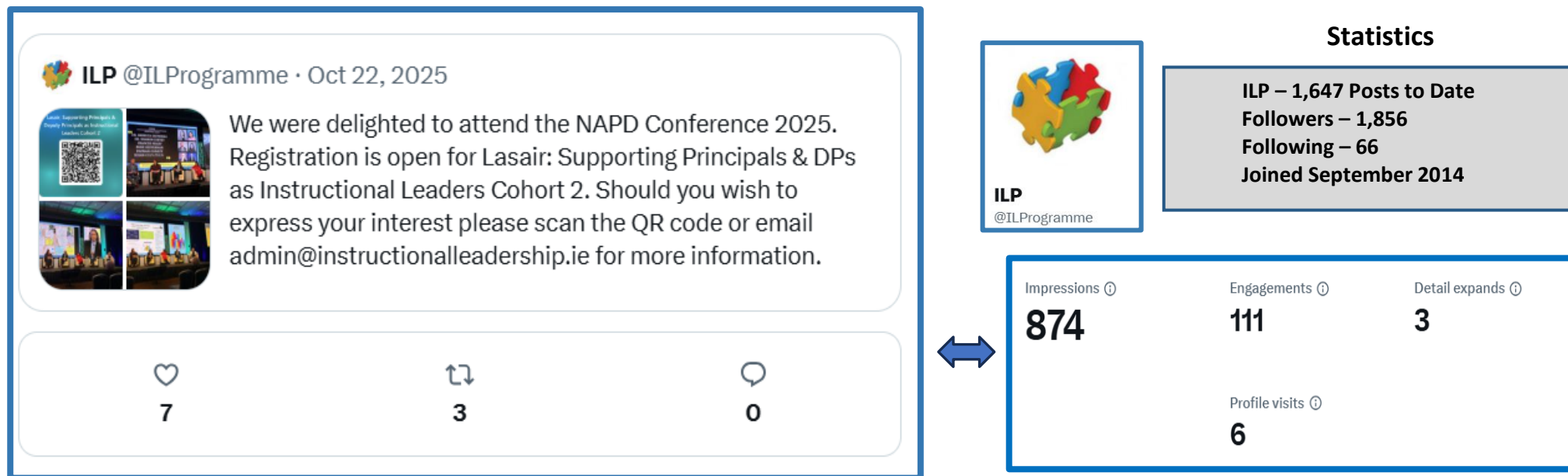
Average click-through rate (CTR) - is the percentage of impressions that resulted in a click.

Average position - is the average position of the ILP site in search results, based on its highest position whenever it appears in a search.

Engagement Rate – quantifies how actively users interact with the ILP website content.

Difference between impressions and total views - "Impressions" typically represent the frequency with which the content is displayed on a user's screen. "Total Views" signify that the user interacted with the content

Website and Social Media Analytics – IL X Analytic



An example of a simple analysis of a tweet (2025), a premium subscription is required for full analytics.

Impressions - Impressions are the number of times a tweet has been seen by users on the social media platform.

Profile Visits - Profile visits refer to the number of times other users visit the ILP account's profile page in the X app or its website over a certain period. These are users who clicked your profile to learn more about the ILP.

Engagements - Total number of times a user interacted with a Tweet. Clicks anywhere on the Tweet, including Retweets, replies, follows, likes, links, cards, hashtags, embedded media, username, profile photo, or Tweet expansion.

Detail Expands - Times people viewed the details about a post.

Mentions - is when an X user includes another user's handle in their tweet, using the '@' symbol followed by the username (e.g., @username).

Photo Gallery



Cohort 16 Session 3 November 2025



Cohort 16 Session 2 March 2025



Peer Instructional Conferencing and Coaching Programme – Cohort 2 Graduation

Lasair; Supporting Principals and Deputy Principals as Instructional Leaders - Cohort 1



Instructional Leadership Programme Annual Report 2025



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