Pilot Feedback

TERM 2 2025

With the intention of implementing two new curriculum documents in 2026—Mathematics and Statistics (Mātemātika e te Tātitiki) and English (Ingiriti)—the CICR development team sought schools willing to pilot the draft documents in 2025. Seven schools volunteered to pilot the draft Maths and English documents. These pilot schools will provide valuable feedback to support curriculum development through first-hand experience and active use in the classroom.

Feedback was collected in Term 2 through face-to-face meetings, online surveys, and classroom observations. This report outlines the shared challenges, proposed solutions, and opportunities for improvement identified by the pilot schools.

The feedback was gathered in the following four key areas:

- Feedback on the draft learning documents
- Support and Professional Development
- Areas for Improvement
- Planning and Resources

PILOT SCHOOLS

APII ARORANGI
English Phase 1-2
Mathematics Phase 1-3

APII NIKAO
English Phase 1-2
Mathematics Phase 1-3 (DMIC)

APII TE UKI OU
English Phase 1-2
Mathematics Phase 1-3

MANGAIA SCHOOL
English Phase 1-2
Mathematics Phase 1-3

NUKUTERE COLLEGE
Mathematics Phase 3

ST JOSEPH'S
English Phase 1-2
Mathematics Phase 1-2

TITIKAVEKA COLLEGE
Mathematics Phase 3

Mathematics

PHASE 1 TO 3

1: Feedback on the draft learning area document.

Prompt One: I have had enough time to read and unpack the draft learning area document with my team.

Responses indicate mixed engagement with the draft learning area document. While some teachers have had enough time to read and unpack the document, others have only partially reviewed it, focusing mainly on the learning activities and available resources such as Oxford books and online tools. One school identified not having enough physical copies of the curriculums as reason for teachers not having enough time to unpack the document.

Prompt Two: What has been the most used or helpful section of the draft learning area document, and why?

Responses highlight a range of experiences with the draft learning area document. Several schools found the clear structure from Years 1 to 8 and the inclusion of the UKD Model at each phase particularly helpful. The teaching considerations for progress steps were also seen as useful for guiding lesson delivery, especially for less experienced staff. Other schools were unable to answer as they had not had time to engage with the document due to workload.

Prompt Three: What are the top 3 things that you would change in the draft learning area document, and why?

Responses suggest a focus on changes to the Oxford resources rather than changes to the draft learning area document itself. One school did indicate they would not change the document while another made layout and structure suggestions, for example adding alphanumeric codes for each progress step. Changes identified in relation to the Oxford resources were the need for better connectivity and access to devices for the online components. There was also a concern about the effectiveness of Oxford booklets, with a preference for using them as reinforcement rather than primary teaching tools.

59.1% of teachers felt they did not have enough time to read and unpack the maths document

WHAT IS YOUR CONFIDENCE LEVEL WHEN USING THE DRAFT MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS LEARNING AREA DOCUMENT?

WHAT IS YOUR CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR USING THE DRAFT MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS LEARNING AREA DOCUMENT FOR PLANNING?

2: Support and Professional Development.

Prompt One: What kind of support or additional training would help teachers implement this curriculum learning area effectively?

Schools requested PD focused on teaching strategies for differentiated groups, mathematical vocabulary, and concepts. Support is needed for teachers less confident with IT, specifically training on using Oxford resources and conducting online assessments. Practical needs were also identified such as access to devices, the ability to print assessments, and guidance on supporting students who enroll mid-term. Schools expressed a desire for more hands-on support from learning area advisers, including capacity building, classroom and one-on-one mentoring.

Prompt Two: Did you feel confident navigating and interpreting the curriculum document on your own?

Schools generally did not feel confident navigating and interpreting the curriculum document on their own. Limited time and a need for additional support were cited as key reasons, with some schools expressing that they required help to fully understand the document, for example greater explanation around the Understand, Know, Do Model..

Prompt Three: How did you work with colleagues during the pilot?

Collaboration among colleagues during the pilot varied across schools. Some worked closely through team planning, asking questions, and supporting each other when clarification was needed. One school noted helpful support from the Head of Department, while another faced challenges due to a teacher being new to both the school and the country.

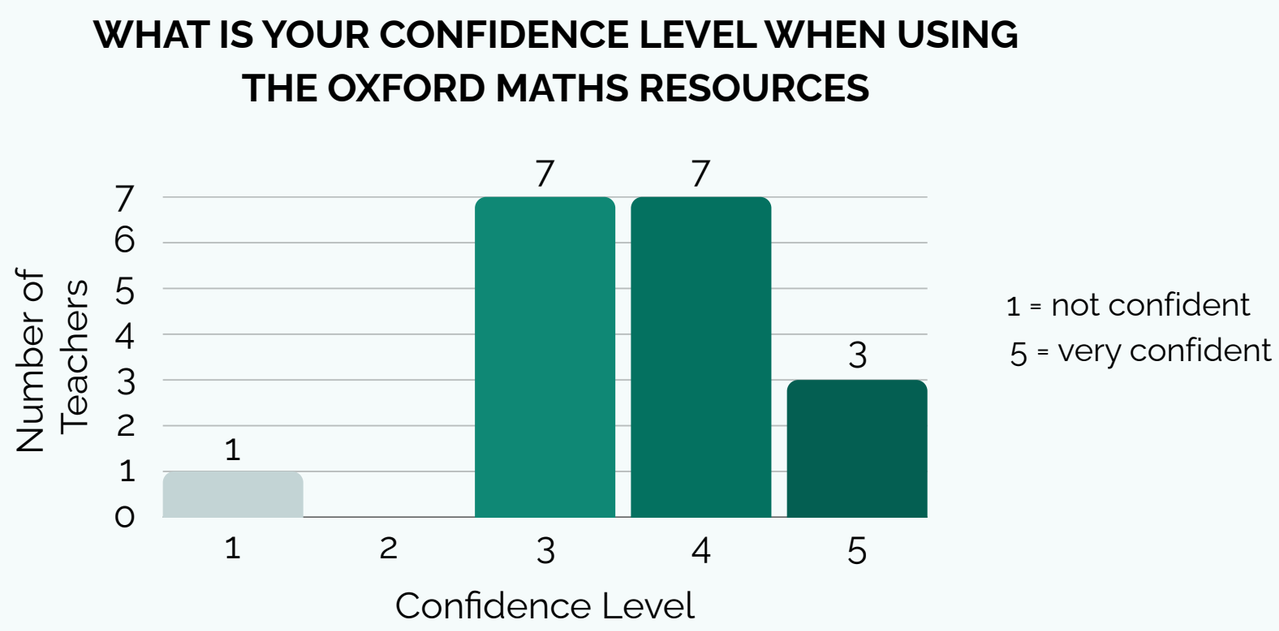
Prompt Four: Would you recommend any collaborative practices for other schools implementing the new curriculum documents?

Schools strongly supported the idea of collaborative practices when implementing the new curriculum documents. There was a clear call for increased cross-school collaboration and mutual support, with several schools emphasising that working together—rather than competing—would be beneficial.

3: Areas for Improvement

Prompt: What changes would you suggest before the curriculum is rolled out more widely? Are there any gaps you feel should be added or emphasised?

Most responses focused on the changes needed to the Oxford resources rather than the curriculum documents. Once school did make multiple suggestions including examining the language used in the document, its layout and structure as well as including more supporting documents which better explain the different sections. The suggested changes to the Oxford resources included the streamlining of assessments by reducing the number of pre- and post-tests and ensuring the accuracy in test answers and marking. Some noted that alignment between year-level planners needs improvement, particularly for composite classes. Schools also emphasised the need for follow-up professional development from Oxford to support teachers as well as access to reliable devices and stable Wi-Fi. Other general areas of improvement identified were providing more opportunities for schools to collaborate with each other and providing more time for teachers to familiarise themselves with resources before using them.



66.7%
of teachers
Would be happy to use Oxford as the maths resource in 2026

4: Planning and Resources

Six of the seven pilot schools have also been trialing *Oxford Mathematics and Statistics* as their primary resource for teaching mathematics. This resource includes year planners, unit plans, and lesson plans, along with student workbooks and online digital dashboards for both students and teachers.

Classroom observations were conducted to assess how teachers and students were engaging with the Oxford resources. The majority of teachers were not using the program as intended. Many were not implementing the Oxford grouping system (above, at, and below level groups), instead delivering lessons to the whole class or entire year group. Some teachers relied solely on the Oxford workbooks, skipping the interactive and exploratory components of the lessons. There are several contributing factors influencing this implementation gap, which will be discussed below.

Factor One: Lack of access to devices, TVs, and the need for training in IT.

A key component of the Oxford resource is the use of pre- and post-tests, which students complete at the beginning and end of each topic. These assessments are currently designed to be completed on digital devices. However, several schools lack sufficient devices to support all year levels, particularly when testing is required up to twice per week.
To manage this, some schools have opted to conduct multiple tests within a single lesson, others have resorted to using paper-based tests or have chosen to skip the tests altogether. The topic pre-tests help teachers group students into three ability groups which are used to differentiate the learning for that topic. If these tests are not done, teachers are unable to utilise the groupings and therefore are more likely to default to whole class or year level teaching.
In addition, a number of teachers are not using the teacher dashboard or the online interactive activities—either due to limited IT skills or the absence of a TV or projector in their classrooms. As some lessons require teachers to use an interactive from the dashboard as part of the lesson, teachers who are not using the dashboard are skipping these lessons and focusing on the workbook instead.

Factor Two: Composite Classes

Several of the pilot schools have composite classes, where two year levels are taught together. While Oxford provides separate year plans tailored for composite classes, teachers have found these plans challenging to implement—particularly when the year levels are covering entirely different topics. For example, in one class, Year 7 students were learning about factors, primes, and multiples, while Year 8 students were working on adding fractions with different denominators. This required the teacher to divide their attention between the two groups.
As a result, teachers in composite settings often did not use ability-based groupings, as managing up to six groups simultaneously was not feasible. Instead, they tended to work with two to four broader groups. Additionally, these teachers were more likely to skip interactive or exploratory lessons in favor of using the workbooks, which allowed them to more effectively allocate their time across both year levels.

Factor Three: Further professional development required

In nearly all observed lessons, students were engaged and meaningful learning was evident. However, teachers would benefit from additional professional development to help them use the Oxford resources more effectively and further enhance student outcomes. This professional development could focus on areas such as: using the digital dashboard, implementing effective grouping strategies in the classroom, adapting lesson plans when resources are limited, and supporting students who are working well below the expected level.

Other Contributing Factors

- Not having the required resources (eg. unix cubes, magazines etc.)
- Using other worksheets to supplement learning
- Not utilising the mastery tasks or activity sheets
- Wanting to include DMIC lessons into the unit plan
- Students not writing in their work books and having to copy questions into math books
- Student literacy levels
- Year planners not having revision weeks
- Too much work to cover in given unit plans
- Wookbooks and activity tasks not always culturally responsive

English

PHASE 1 TO 2

1: Feedback on the draft learning area document.

Prompt One: I have had enough time to read and unpack the draft learning area document with my team.

Responses indicate a mixed level of engagement with the draft learning area document. Some schools have had sufficient time and professional development in Term 1 to understand the document in detail. However, others report only a brief or surface-level review, often limited to syndicate discussions or specific aspects like progress steps and terminology changes. A few schools mention that no dedicated time has been allocated for curriculum development beyond ministry-arranged meetings with other schools

Prompt Two: What has been the most used or helpful section of the draft learning area document, and why?

The most commonly used and helpful section of the draft learning area document has been the progress steps. Schools find them clear, detailed, and useful for understanding learning progression and planning what to teach. They help track coverage across the curriculum and support reporting. While teaching considerations are appreciated, they are used less frequently, as teachers often rely on their own activities. The reading and writing strands have been the main focus, with oral language explored to a lesser extent.

Prompt Three: What are the top 3 things that you would change in the draft learning area document, and why?

Responses suggest three main areas for improvement in the draft learning area document. First, teachers would like the progress steps and content to be separated by year level to make it easier to find relevant information quickly. Second, some feel the document should offer more prescriptive guidance on what to teach and when, to reduce the need for interpretation and planning. Lastly, while the document is seen as more navigable and simpler in language than the old curriculum, its overall size remains a challenge, with some finding it too large or having insufficient time to fully engage with it.

WHAT IS YOUR CONFIDENCE LEVEL WHEN USING THE DRAFT ENGLISH LEARNING AREA DOCUMENT?

38.1%
of teachers

felt they did not have enough time to read and unpack the English document

2: Support and Professional Development.

Prompt One: What kind of support or additional training would help teachers implement this curriculum learning area effectively?

Key suggestions include ongoing collaborative planning support, clear notated examples of planning, and professional development focused on how to use the curriculum. There is a strong desire for more hands-on support, such as school visits to observe trial schools, modelling with feedback sessions, and greater involvement from curriculum advisors. Schools also recommended working in clusters to share ideas, having a clear PD roadmap, and ensuring resources are linked directly within the curriculum document. Many feel the rollout is rushed and suggest a slower, phased approach with increased ministry involvement.

Prompt Two: Did you feel confident navigating and interpreting the curriculum document on your own?

Schools shared mixed responses, some found it user-friendly, with clear language in the progress steps and helpful planning templates that made it easy to track progress. Others, however, expressed less confidence—citing limited time, lack of in-depth review, or not yet having engaged with the document as a syndicate.

Prompt Three: How did you work with colleagues during the pilot?

Schools reported a range of collaboration experiences during the pilot. Some engaged in regular professional development to unpack the document and begin planning, developing planning formats and sharing their work with senior management. There was also collaboration within specific teams, such as junior classes working together on iDeaL. Others held regular staff meetings or had informal discussions between teachers. However, a few schools noted that no formal syndicate meetings or structured discussions had taken place yet.

Prompt Four: Would you recommend any collaborative practices for other schools implementing the new curriculum documents?

Schools emphasised the importance of collaboration in successfully implementing the new curriculum documents. They recommended ongoing professional development beyond a single session, as the content is substantial and requires time to fully understand. Sharing planning among teachers was seen as particularly beneficial, and several schools suggested working in clusters to exchange ideas, experiences, and learning.

3: Areas for Improvement

Prompt: What changes would you suggest before the curriculum is rolled out more widely? Are there any gaps you feel should be added or emphasised?

Respondents suggested several improvements before the curriculum is rolled out more widely. A key recommendation was to restructure the document by year levels instead of the current Phase 1 and 2 format, and to include a detailed list of skills or teaching points per year. One school requested a supplementary document which provides a horizontal overview of progress steps across all year levels. Stronger links between early childhood education and school readiness were also requested. Many emphasised the need for supporting resources, planning templates, and colour coding to aid navigation. Concerns were raised about the lack of an overall roadmap, the need for more professional development from the Ministry, and better alignment between resources and the curriculum—though some noted this is now addressed by iDeaL. Respondents wanted more time to familiarise themselves with the curriculum and suggested delaying the full rollout to 2027, allowing trial schools to consolidate and better support others. Collaborative planning, both within and across schools, and ensuring all classrooms have adequate digital infrastructure, were also highlighted as important.

4: Planning and Resources

Planning:

The implementation of the new curriculum has seen varying levels of planning across schools. Teachers expressed the need to become more familiar with the iDeaL resource before being able to be fully engaged with the planning aspects required for the delivery of the curriculum. There was a general consensus that additional input from the Ministry of Education (MoE) and collaboration between schools would significantly enhance planning capabilities.

It can be seen that the majority of planning undertaken thus far has primarily involved the use of the curriculum's progress steps. As a support to teachers, planning templates for yearly, unit, and terms were provided. There were a number of teachers successfully integrating these into their practice. There is a disparity in digital capability of teachers across the schools and this could be addressed by designating a teacher at each school to offer support to those with less capability. The effectiveness of executing literacy blocks was dependent on teacher capability and proficiency, but overall was seen to be effective in coverage of the necessary components. This was apparent through a number of classroom observations at pilot schools.

Resources:

All primary schools involved in the trial have adopted iDeaL for structured literacy instruction, focusing on spelling and reading. The feedback from teachers has been overwhelmingly positive, particularly in relation to the resources available through the platform. These resources include planning tools, assessments, literacy activities, and professional development opportunities such as instructional videos, webinars, and readings. Teachers have expressed a desire to continue using iDeaL beyond the trial period.

As schools prepare for the 2026 implementation, additional resources were identified as necessary to further support the structured literacy program. These include:

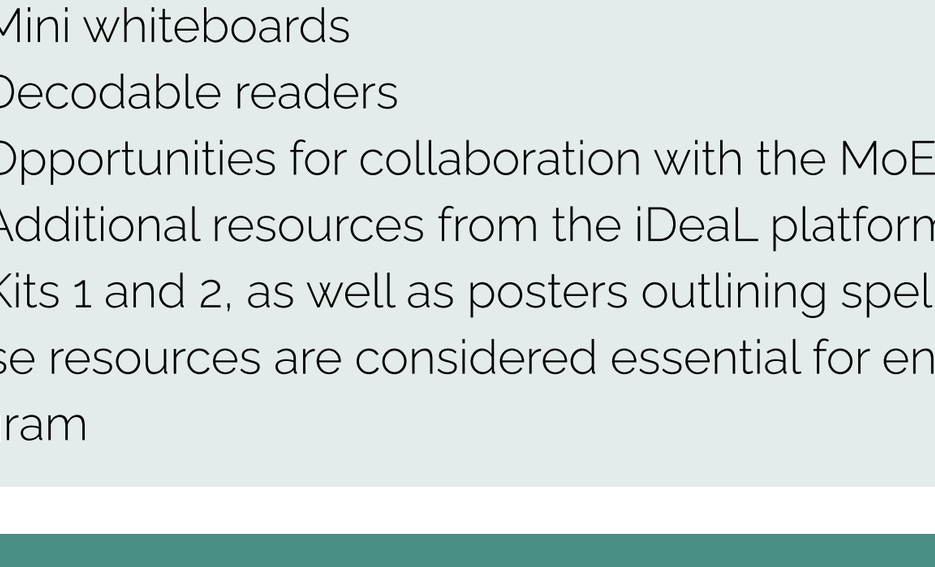
- Big books
- Digital planning tools
- Mini whiteboards
- Decodable readers
- Opportunities for collaboration with the MoE and other schools, particularly through cluster group initiatives
- Additional resources from the iDeaL platform, which were not included in the trial, such as Running Record Kits 1 and 2, as well as posters outlining spelling rules, syllables, and other key concepts.

These resources are considered essential for ensuring the continued success and sustainability of the literacy program

88.9% of teachers

Would be happy to use iDeal as the resource for structured literacy in 2026

WHAT IS YOUR CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR USING THE DRAFT ENGLISH LEARNING AREA DOCUMENT FOR PLANNING?



WHAT IS YOUR CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR USING THE IDEAL RESOURCE?