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## Practical Literacy & Technology



**CDETb**

An Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna Oideachais Bhaile Átha Cliath  
City of Dublin Education and Training Board



EUROPEAN REGIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT FUND



# Latch-On

## Practical Literacy & Technology

Practical Literacy & Technology (Latch-On) is two-year literacy programme for adults with Down syndrome, which supports students to both start and continue their literacy development.

Latch-On was developed at the University of Queensland, Australia and is now taught in centres across Ireland. City of Dublin ETB will run Latch-On courses in their Adult Education Centres in Dublin. It will take place three mornings/afternoons a week over two academic years. The funding for the course delivery is provided by City of Dublin ETB Adult Education Service. The course is free of charge to students.

There are four modules, each focusing on a variety of topics.

## Year 1

### **Module 1: Starting a Journey of Self Discovery**

The first module looks at topics that students are generally familiar with, e.g. family, pets, growing up.

### **Module 2: Beyond Self and Into the Community**

The second module looks at the students' interests such as music, film and sport.



## Year 2

### **Module 3: Reaching Out into the World**

The third module has a wider focus and students learn about topics such as advertising, world landmarks, and museums.

### **Module 4: Taking On the World**

The fourth and final module focuses on practical tasks such as budgeting, planning a dinner party, and the world of work.



# Latch-On

There is a maximum number of eight students in the class working with two tutors.

The course begins late-September and it runs until end May.



Students use technology during the course and learn how to email, text and access information online. There is also a numeracy component which supports students with problem solving, analysing information, decision-making and making choices.

The course is designed for students, who are ready for independent learning in an adult education mainstream setting.

We will have a short interview/ meeting with each student before the course starts to make sure this is the right course for you and to answer your questions. It will be an opportunity for you to see the adult education centre and to make sure it is the right centre for you.

There are a limited number of places on each course.



**Closing date for applications: 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2021**

**Applications are only accepted on the online form.**

## **Latch On course feedback**

*"I reached my goal for Latch on, I now can read more quickly and I write poetry. I am going to write a poem for my brother's birthday" (student).*

*"I interviewed my friend Emma about her favourite T.V. programme, we recorded it, it was one of the favourite things we did in Latch on" (student).*

*"If someone told me on the day she was born that we would be talking about poets and unpublished work, it would have made a difference." (parent).*

# Latch On Programme for You?

## Guidelines

- You must be 18 years old
- You must be a member of Down Syndrome Ireland
- You are ready for independent learning in a mainstream further education setting. This means:
  - ✓ You will have a high level of independence.
  - ✓ You will have a high level of personal responsibility.
  - ✓ You will have good social skills and good communication skills.
  - ✓ You will be responsible for your travel arrangements to and from the centre.
  - ✓ You are ready to work in a group setting with up to seven other learners for four hours per day.
  - ✓ We will contact you directly so it is important that you have a smart phone or a way to contact us by WhatsApp.
  - ✓ We do not have any facilities for keyworkers/support workers, carers or parents to wait in the centres during class.
- Your class will take place in a City of Dublin ETB Adult Education Centre based in the community. Our part-time courses cater for a wide range of students learning new skills and preparing for work or college.
- The centres are busy mainstream environments with a wide diversity of learners of all ages and backgrounds.
- Due to Covid-19 restrictions, we do not have canteen spaces or waiting areas. When you arrive at the centre, you will go to class immediately and leave the centre straight after the class.
- You must commit to attending the course three mornings or afternoons per week (course times depend on the centre) for the two-year programme.
- We will only consider applications made by individuals.
- We will not take any applications from day services/service providers.

## **Guidelines continued**

Five of our centres are interested in delivering Latch On:

1. City of Dublin ETB Adult Education Centre Finglas
  2. City of Dublin ETB Adult Education Centre Ballymun
  3. City of Dublin ETB Parnell Adult Education Centre\*
  4. City of Dublin ETB Adult Education Centre Coolock
  5. City of Dublin ETB KLEAR in Kilbarrack
- If we have more applicants than places, we will prioritise students who live locally. We may also use a lottery to decide on places.

\*City of Dublin ETB Parnell Adult Education Centre is in 1, Parnell Square, an old Georgian building immediately opposite the Gate Theatre. It is very accessible for buses coming from the north and south side and very close to the Luas on O'Connell St. There is no access for cars and it would be very difficult to drop off or pick up with students from this building.

- This location is ideal for independent travellers who may be thinking of further education in a college or third level institution.

## **Application Form**

You can fill in the online application form by clicking on this link

LINK: <https://bit.ly/Latchon>

**Closing date for applications: 23rd August 2021.**

**Informal interviews/meeting with students will take place in the week starting 30th August 2021.**

If you have any queries, please contact:\*

latchon@aes.cdetb.ie Tel/WhatsApp: Joan Banks 086 013 8147

Alternatively, you can contact

Nicola Callaghan. nicola.callaghan@aes.cdetb.ie Tel: Tel/WhatsApp. 087 194 8468

This is new course for us too and we may not have all the answers to your questions.

## **The classes will be held in the following locations:**

### **Finglas( Tues, Weds, Fri-10am-1.30pm)**

City of Dublin ETB Adult Education Centre Finglas  
Barry Road, Finglas West.  
D11 CDR9

### **Ballymun (afternoons)**

City of Dublin ETB Adult Education Centre, Ballymun  
Ballymun Road, Ballymun, Dublin 11 (beside the Library)  
D11 YK4H

### **Parnell (afternoons)**

City of Dublin ETB Parnell Adult Education Centre  
1 Parnell Square East. Dublin 1  
D01 K194

### **Kilbarrack:**

CDETBA Adult Education Service  
KLEAR  
Swan's Nest Rd. Kilbarrack, Dublin 5

### **Donnycarney (working with an existing group limited places)**

City of Dublin ETB Coolock Darndale Adult Literacy Service  
Community and Youth Centre  
Collins Ave East  
Donnycarney,  
Dublin 5  
D05 X535

# Understanding and teaching learners with Down syndrome through the Latch-On program



Latch-On Team, The School of Education, The University of Queensland

## Continuing learning by young people with Down syndrome

- Increased recognition and application of continued education
- Historical misconceptions of educators and community leading to narrow beliefs and options
- High degree of self-interest and independent motivation of adults with an intellectual disability
- Cognitive development continues – learning is lifelong
- Limited post-school options beyond life-skill training

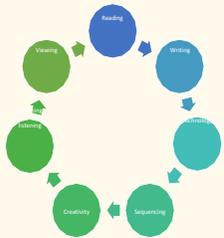
## The importance of foundational skills

Language, literacy and numeracy are the essential underpinning skills that enable people to be productive in their work, to continue to learn and develop, and to participate fully in society.

This is an obvious statement, the truth of which has been recognized for decades. But it needs to be made ... as progress has been slow.

*No more excuses: an industry response to the language, literacy and numeracy challenge. Canberra: Australian Government.*

## Understanding literacy



A set of fundamental educational skills that offers an individual a lifetime of

opportunities.

## What do we know about literacy and Down syndrome?

Data from diverse groups of participants provides evidence of capabilities and progress in literacy across the lifespan. Adults with Down syndrome

- are capable of learning
- already have some literacy skills and these are diverse
- are interested and motivated, this interest appears to grow

We have information about a range of literacy elements to develop a balanced understanding of literacy skills and learning

- Oral language
- Reading comprehension
- Digital literacy

We can identify evidence-based effective learning and teaching strategies in a range of contexts

## The Latch-On Program

Latch-On recognises that everyone is a learner with ideas worth communicating and builds on this recognition to frame the development of a literacy and numeracy program specifically designed to meet the needs and interests of learners with an intellectual disability

Latch-On delivers an evidence-based literacy and numeracy program which provides opportunities for adults with an intellectual disability to continue their literacy and numeracy development in an age-appropriate, post-secondary school environment, leading to development of a broad range of literacy and numeracy skills, self-confidence, independence and enhanced employment opportunities.

## Why Latch-On

- A two-year program
- Specifically designed for young people with intellectual disabilities
- A responsive and flexible curriculum framework
- Research-based
- Four semesters of fully resourced work in a balanced program
- All strategies and activities have been successfully trialled
- Key teachers are registered and accredited through the Latch-On program

## Special Features

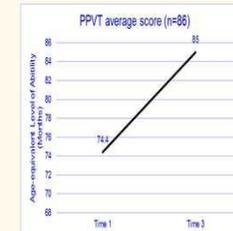
- Small group
- Socio-cultural approaches to literacy and numeracy
- Access to technologies including email, internet and word processing
- Professional development and ongoing support
- Evaluation and monitoring of learning
- Monitoring and updating of the program and resources
- Delivered and sequenced through focus on real life experiences

## The four core modules

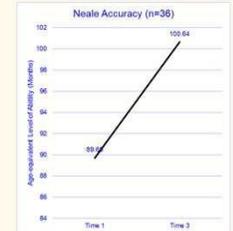
- Starting on a journey of self-discovery
- Beyond the self and into the community
- Reaching out into the world

Taking on the world

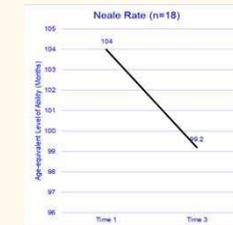
## Results from Latch-On in Ireland



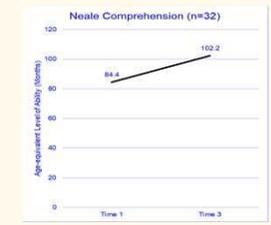
The gain in 10 months is significant – PPVT is very hard to shift and there is some research that suggests this declines after the age of 20 for people with Down syndrome



The gain in 10 months is significant. This provides evidence that students are recognizing more words and a broader range of words



The decrease in rate is small and not unexpected. When readers are paying more attention to understanding rather than just decoding the text, the rate/speed of reading may decrease.



The gain of 17 months in two year is almost an increase in pace with time. BUT this is an average. Some students could not each baseline, and some students stayed the same

## Individual student results from site A

