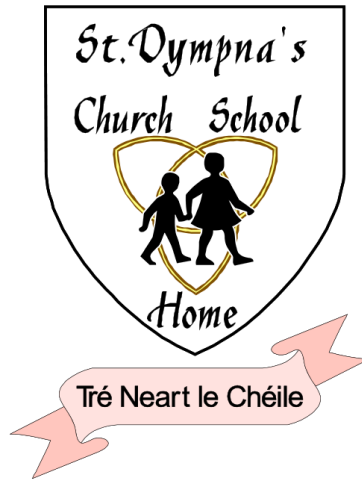




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Kildalkey N.S. Policy on Exemption from Irish



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Introduction:

This policy was drafted by staff and Board of Management in response to recent changes in special educational provisions and the publication of circular 54/2022 which revised circular 12/96

Rationale:

The purpose of this policy is to advise parents and guardians, staff and other professionals of the revised arrangements for the exemption of pupils from the study of Irish. It supersedes our previous policy and references to Circular 54/22. Existing exemptions from the study of Irish granted under Circular 12/96 and 52/19 and held by pupils will continue to apply until the end of their post-primary education.

Aims and Objectives:

- To allow for pupils of differing abilities, interests and circumstances.
- To enhance inclusivity within the school.
- To enable children of all abilities to access the curriculum in a learner friendly manner.

Policy Content:

Exempting a pupil from the study of Irish should be considered only in exceptional circumstances. The decision to exempt a pupil from the study of Irish is an important decision that has implications for his/her access to the curriculum and his/her future learning.

The decision to grant an exemption from the study of Irish is made by the principal teacher, but it must be made following detailed discussion with the pupil's parent(s)/guardian(s), the class teacher, special education teachers, and the pupil (where appropriate).

A decision to grant an exemption will only be considered in the circumstances outlined below

Exemption from the study of Irish may be allowed in the following exceptional circumstances only:

- A) pupils whose education up to 12 years of age (or up to and including the final year of their primary education) was received outside the State and where they did not have opportunity to engage in the study of Irish or is enrolling following the completion of the full course of primary education recognised by another state.

OR

- B) pupils who have at least reached second class and present with significant learning difficulties that are persistent despite having had access to a differentiated approach to language and literacy learning in all subjects across the curriculum over time and, at the time of application, present with a standardised score on a discrete test in either Word Reading, Reading Comprehension or Spelling at/below the 10th percentile.

Documentary evidence to this effect, held by the school, will include

- Student Support Plans.
- Detailing regular reviews of learning needs as part of an ongoing cycle of assessment target-setting if involved with SEN.
- evidence-informed intervention and review, including test scores (word reading, reading comprehension, spelling, other scores of language/literacy) at key points of review.

OR

- C) Pupils who experience a high level of multiple and persistent needs that are a significant barrier to the pupil's participation and engagement in their personal life.

In this instance, an exemption may be granted to a pupil:

- Who has at least reached second class



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- Who experiences a high level of multiple and persistent needs that are a very significant and continuing barrier to his/her participation and engagement in his/her learning and school life.
- Who has substantial written evidence that these needs persist despite targeted and individualised Student Support Plans to address those needs
- Who has substantial written evidence that these Student Support Plans have been implemented over not less than two school years and have been monitored and reviewed by the school and the parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Who has been given every reasonable opportunity to participate in the learning of Irish in mainstream classes for as long as possible in keeping with the integrated approach in the Primary School Curriculum and acknowledging that pupils at a young age adapt and improve over time.
- Where the principal is satisfied that the granting of an exemption is in the overall best interest of the pupil concerned.

Normally, this will mean that the pupil will be expected to engage with the study of Irish at least to the end of fifth class. However, in exceptional circumstances, where the Principal is satisfied that an exemption is warranted to address the high level of multiple and persistent needs of the pupil, and certifies that all of the conditions above have been met, it may be granted at an earlier stage but in no case may this be earlier than second class.

OR

- D) Pupils who are in a special class or who was previously enrolled in a recognised special school or class or who has a recommendation and has been deemed eligible for a place in a recognised special school and/or in a special class in a mainstream school.

OR

- E) A pupil whose parent(s)/guardian(s) is a/are diplomatic or consular representatives of another country to Ireland irrespective of age or educational history.

Procedures:

A parent/guardian must make an application in writing to the principal of the school for a Certificate of Exemption from the study of Irish on behalf of a pupil.

Considering an application for exemption The principal will:

1. Ensure that the date of receipt of the application by the school is recorded on the form.
2. Acknowledge receipt of the application for exemption from the study of Irish in writing.
3. Discuss the written application with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and confirm the sub-paragraph on which the application is based as soon as practicable following receipt of a written application.
4. Advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the next steps in processing the application.
5. Inform the parent(s)/guardian(s)/pupil regarding any implication of an exemption from the study of Irish for the student while in post-primary education and into the future.
6. Inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the application will be processed and the outcome confirmed in writing within 21 school days of receipt of the application.
7. Explain to the parent(s)/guardian(s) that a signed Certificate of Exemption will issue where a decision is reached that an exemption from the study of Irish may be granted.



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8. Inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that, where an application is refused, the school's decision may be appealed to the Irish Exemptions Appeal Committee within 30 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent(s)/guardian(s).
9. Explain to the parent(s)/guardian(s) the arrangements for the pupil's learning in the case of an exemption being granted.

The outcome of the application process will be conveyed by the school principal in writing to the parent(s)/guardian(s).

Where an exemption is granted, a Certificate of Exemption, signed and dated by the school principal will be issued.

The Certificate of Exemption will also state the name and address of the school, the school roll number, the pupil's name, date of birth and the sub-paragraph under which the exemption is being granted.

Parents/guardians and pupils will be informed of the option not to exercise the exemption granted, without any loss of the right to exercise it at a future time.

The school requires a written application for exemption from the parents/guardians of the particular child. It must be accompanied by documentary evidence such as age, previous schooling etc. and a psychologist's report (if relevant).

The principal, in consultation with staff, class teachers and BoM will grant an exemption if warranted and will present a certificate of exemption to the parents in accordance with Circular 12/96.

The school grants the exemption and keeps the form on file.

Reporting on exemptions granted to the Department

The school management will provide statistical information relating to the number and the grounds on which exemptions were granted under this Circular in the previous school year as part of the Primary School Annual Census.

A copy of the Certificate of Exemption must also be given to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the pupil being exempted.

Pupils transitioning to other schools

It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to ensure that a copy of the pupil's Certificate of Exemption is made available to the receiving school.

Roles and Responsibilities:

In-school Management, class teachers SEN, BoM will contribute to the implementation of school procedures.

Success Criteria:

- Seamless integration of non-nationals and pupils with learning difficulties
- Happy school learning environment
- Positive teacher/parental feedback



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Review:

This policy will be reviewed in accordance with any changes in Department of Education policies and circulars.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Management:

Chairperson: *Mary Reidy* **Date:** 07/03/23

Principal: *Nedlag O' Neill-Forde* **Date:** 07/03/23



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Appendix One:

Application for Exemption from the Study of Irish Primary Schools For completion by the parent(s)/guardian(s)		
Name of Pupil		
Date of Birth		
Class		
Name of School		
<p>I/We wish to apply for an exemption from the study of Irish on behalf of _____</p> <p>Please indicate (✓) the grounds for an exemption from the study of Irish in accordance with Circular 0054/2022</p>		
2.2.1(a)	The pupil is not less than 12 years of age on the day of their enrolment or re-enrolment whose education was received outside the State (for a minimum period of three consecutive years) where he/she did not have the opportunity to engage in the study of Irish.	
2.2.1(b)	The pupil's education was received outside the State (for a minimum period of three consecutive years) where he/she did not have opportunity to engage in the study of Irish and who is enrolling following the completion of the full course of primary education recognised by another State.	
2.2.2	The pupil has at least reached second class and experiences significant literacy difficulties which are an obstacle to their learning across the curriculum and which are persistent despite having had access to a differentiated approach to language and literacy learning in all subjects/across the curriculum and over time and presents with a standardised score on a discrete test in either Word Reading, Reading Comprehension or Spelling at/below the 10th percentile.	



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2.2.3	The pupil has at least reached second class and experiences a high level of multiple and persistent needs, that persist despite targeted and individualised Student Support Plans to address those needs (over not less than two years) and which are a significant barrier to the pupil's participation and engagement in their learning and school life and who been given every reasonable opportunity to participate in the learning of Irish in mainstream classes for as long as possible and the Principal is satisfied that the granting of an exemption is in the overall best interests of the pupil <i>concerned</i> .	
2.2.4(ii)	The pupil has a recommendation and has been deemed eligible for a place in a recognised special school and/or in a special class in a mainstream school	
2.2.5	The pupil's parent(s)/guardian(s) is a/are diplomatic or consular representatives of another country to Ireland irrespective of age or educational history.	

Please provide detail of any supporting documentation being submitted to the school

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

For the purpose of this application the documentation provided will be assessed, by relevant school personnel and other professionals where necessary, to determine whether there is grounds to grant an exemption from the study of Irish. Tick the box if you wish to proceed.

☐

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

For school use only

Date of receipt of application:

Principal: _____ **Date:** _____

School roll number: _____



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Log of Actions:

- Reviewed by staff on 07/03/2023
- Ratified by BOM on 07/03/2023