

# *Scoil Naomh Eoin*

Killenard, Portarlinton, Co. Laois, R32 F782.

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**Principal:** Stephen Donovan

**Deputy Principal:** Anne T. Hillery

## **Policy on Exemption from Irish**

### **Aims**

1. To cater for the needs of pupils with differing abilities, differing first languages and differing educational circumstance
2. To ensure that Scoil Naomh Eoin caters for the needs of children who have been granted an exemption from Irish due to one or more of the stipulated criteria in Circular 0054/22 at an appropriate stage in their education
3. To assist teachers in providing appropriate differentiation for pupils with special education needs

### **Eligibility for Exemption from the study of Irish in Primary School (Circular 0054/22 Section 2.2)**

*An exemption from the study of Irish may be allowed in the following circumstances, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 2.2.4 or 2.2.5 only:*

#### **2.2.1 A pupil moving from a different country without previous experience of learning the Irish language**

An exemption from the study of Irish may be granted to a pupil whose 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 either (a) or (b)**

(a) who is not less than 12 years of age on the day of their enrolment or re-enrolment

#### **OR**

(b) who is enrolling following the completion of the full course of primary education recognised by another state.

### **2.2.2 A pupil who experiences significant literacy difficulties which are an obstacle to their learning across the curriculum**

#### **An exemption from the study of Irish may be granted to a pupil:**

(i) who has at least reached second class

#### **AND**

(ii) who presents with significant literacy difficulties that are persistent despite having had access to a differentiated approach to language and literacy learning in all subjects/across the curriculum and over time. Documentary evidence to this effect, held by the school, should include Student Support Plans detailing:

- regular reviews of learning needs as part of an ongoing cycle of assessment
- target-setting
- evidence-informed intervention and review, including test scores (Word Reading, Reading Comprehension, Spelling, other scores of language/literacy) at key points of review

#### **AND**

(iii) who, at the time of the application for exemption presents with a standardised score on a discrete test in either Word Reading, Reading Comprehension or Spelling at/below the 10th percentile.

*Pupils availing of an exemption under this category are encouraged to engage with the study of oral Irish language for as long as possible in keeping with the integrated approach in the Primary Language Curriculum and acknowledging that pupils at a young age adapt and improve over time.*

### **2.2.3 A pupil who experiences a high level of multiple and persistent needs that are a significant barrier to the pupil's participation and engagement in their learning and school life**

It is recognised that there is a small cohort of pupils who have a high level of multiple and persistent needs that are a significant barrier to their participation and engagement in their learning and school life. In the case of these pupils, consideration may need to be given to adjusting the range of learning experiences to ensure that their needs are met and that they may engage purposefully in their learning in school. In very exceptional circumstances, this means that consideration may need to be given to exempting them from the study of Irish.

**An exemption from the study of Irish may be granted to a pupil:**

(i) who has at least reached second class

**AND**

(ii) 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

**AND**

(iii) whose school has substantial written evidence that these needs persist despite targeted and individualised Student Support Plans to address those needs

**AND**

(iv) whose school has substantial written evidence that these individualised Student Support Plans have been implemented over not less than two school years, and have been monitored and reviewed by the school in collaboration with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the pupil

**AND**

(v) 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 Language Curriculum and acknowledging that pupils at a young age adapt and improve over time

**AND**

(vi) the principal is satisfied that the granting of an exemption is in the overall best interests 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 very 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 in (i) to (vi) above have been met, it may be granted at an earlier stage, but in no case may this be earlier than second class.

**2.2.4 A pupil in a recognised special school or 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**

(i) Where a pupil is currently enrolled in a recognised special school or special class in a mainstream school or who has previously been enrolled in a recognised special school or special class in a mainstream school and who is transitioning to mainstream provision, that pupil is automatically entitled to an exemption from the study of Irish without an application.

**OR**

(ii) Where a 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 an application for an exemption from the study of Irish will be required.

*Pupils availing of an exemption under (i) OR (ii) of this category will be encouraged to engage with the study of oral Irish language for as long as possible in keeping with the integrated approach in the Primary Language Curriculum and acknowledging that pupils at a young age adapt and improve over time.*

**2.2.5 A pupil whose parent(s)/guardian(s) is a/are diplomatic or consular representative(s) of another country to Ireland irrespective of age or educational history**

An exemption from the study of Irish may be granted to a pupil whose parent(s)/guardian(s) is a/are diplomatic or consular representative(s) of another country to Ireland irrespective of age or educational history.

**The following procedure will be followed in the granting of Exemptions from Irish**

1. A written application for exemption will be made by a parent or guardian to the principal of the school. This application will specify the grounds on which the exemption is sought.(Appendix 1)
2. The processing of this application will be done in accordance with Circular 0054/22.
3. The outcome of the application process will be conveyed by the school principal in writing to the parent(s)/guardian(s).
4. Where an exemption is granted, a Certificate of Exemption, signed and dated by the school principal will be issued to the parents. 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. **(Department of**

### **Education: Exemptions from the Study of Irish: Guidelines for Primary Schools August 2022)**

5. The application, copy of certificate of the exemption and other relevant documents will be retained by the school and will be made available for inspection by DES.
6. All exemptions must be included in the Annual Census Returns.
7. Exemptions will be noted at BOM meetings.
8. Irish Exemptions will be noted on Aladdin(Green code) and in children's support files.

***Where the application for exemption from the study of Irish is refused, a parent/guardian can appeal the school's decision to the Irish Exemptions Appeal Committee (IEAC) as per Circular 0054/22.***

***An appeal must be lodged within 30 calendar days from the date the decision of the school not to grant an exemption was notified in writing to the parent(s)/guardian(s). Appeals should be made using The Irish Exemptions Appeal Form. (Appendix 2)***

### **Identifying Pupils who may require an exemption from Irish**

#### **Special Educational Needs**

1. Scoil Naomh Eoin follows the continuum of support to identify pupils with special educational needs.
2. Where the request for an exemption from Irish arises for a specific pupil, this will be discussed with the teachers, psychologist(if applicable)parents and with the pupil in line with the Eligibility for Exemption from the study of Irish in Primary School (Circular 0054/2022)
- 3. In general an Irish Exemption will not be granted prior to a pupil reaching 3<sup>rd</sup> class. Exceptions may be granted for those applying under 2.2.4 or 2.2.5 above**

#### **Differentiating for pupils with Exemptions from Irish**

1. Pupils are not excluded from Irish classes and are included in all aspects of the lesson except for written Irish homework and written Irish classwork.
2. Pupils who have an exemption from Irish should never be required to learn Irish spellings list or lists of vocabulary
3. Pupils who have an exemption from Irish should be assigned alternative written work appropriate to their needs, planned for by the class teacher in consultation with the child's SET

**As per Circular 0054/2022 all children in Scoil Naomh Eoin are encouraged to participate in Oral Irish lessons on a daily basis.**

**Ratification and Review**

This policy was ratified at a meeting of the Board of Management of Scoil Naomh Eoin on \_\_\_\_\_. (date)

Our Irish Exemption policy will be reviewed in the 2026/27 year.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management

### Appendix 1

<b>Application for Exemption from the Study of Irish Primary Schools For completion by the parent(s)/guardian(s)</b>		
<b>Name of Pupil</b>		
<b>Date of Birth</b>		
<b>Class</b>		
<b>Name of School</b>		
<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>		
<b>2.2.1(a)</b>	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.	
<b>2.2.1(b)</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.	
<b>2.2.2</b>	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.	

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:** \_\_\_\_\_



**Appendix 2**

<b>IRISH EXEMPTIONS APPEAL FORM (PRIMARY) Circular 0054/2022</b>	
<b>Please complete in BLOCK CAPITALS</b>	
<b>Name of pupil</b>	
<b>Date of birth</b>	
<b>Name of school</b>	
<b>School address</b>	
<b>School roll number</b>	
<b>Name of Appellant</b>	
<b>Relationship to pupil</b>	
<b>Address of Appellant</b>	
<b>Email of Appellant</b>	
<b>Please indicate (✓) the sub-paragraph in Circular 0054/2022 on which the application to the school was based.</b>	
<b>2.2.1(a)</b> 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.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>2.2.1(b)</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.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>2.2.2</b> 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	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comprehension or Spelling at/below the 10th percentile.

**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 have 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 *concerned*.

**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 representative(s) of another country to Ireland irrespective of age or educational history.

**Date of application to the school for an exemption from the study of Irish:**

**Date of written confirmation of the school's decision not to grant an exemption:**

**Please set out the specific grounds on which you are challenging the school's decision not to grant an exemption from the study of Irish.**

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(Additional pages may be added for this section)

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this Form to: Irish Exemption Appeals, Department of Education, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co Westmeath or by email to [IrishExemptionAppeal@Education.Gov.ie](mailto:IrishExemptionAppeal@Education.Gov.ie)**

**All personal data collected on this form is in accordance with the law on Data Protection and will only be used for the purposes of the Appeal regarding the individual pupil.**

**Further information in relation to the Departments policy on Data Protection is available on the Department's website here: [gov.ie](http://gov.ie) - [Data Protection \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)**

**Outcome of Appeal (For Official Use only):**