



**Circular 0016/2023**

**To: Boards of management, principals and teaching staff of primary schools in the Gaeltacht not currently participating in the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme**

## **Policy on Gaeltacht Education**

### **Invitation to Primary Schools in Gaeltacht Language-Planning Areas to Consider Joining the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme**

#### **1. Purpose of the Circular**

The purpose of this Circular is to notify school authorities of an opportunity which is being provided by the Department of Education (Department) to schools in Gaeltacht language-planning areas to join the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme (Scheme) in 2023.

The Policy on Gaeltacht Education recognises the uniqueness of the Gaeltacht as an area of significant linguistic, cultural and economic importance. It reaffirms the Government's commitment to the regeneration and survival of the Gaeltacht as a viable Irish-speaking entity, and recognises the role that schools and early learning and care settings play in providing high quality Irish-medium education for young people and in fostering Irish-language proficiency and usage in the wider Gaeltacht community.

Participation in the Scheme provides many advantages for the school and the pupils. The Department is committed to providing additional resources for schools in Gaeltacht language-planning areas to support them in fulfilling the Irish language-based criteria to gain recognition as a Gaeltacht school, under the terms of the Scheme. Almost 80% of primary schools in the Gaeltacht are currently participating in the Scheme.

The main aim of the Scheme is to strengthen immersion education experiences in Irish to support pupils' language acquisition and enrichment. Early-immersion gives the opportunity for pupils to acquire Irish as a natural means of communication through activity-based learning and play in infant classes to support them on their language-learning journey. Bilingual education greatly helps with the development of pupils' communicative, creative and higher-order thinking skills.

The Department urges schools to consider the educational benefits of immersion education and the opportunity schools can provide to make a meaningful impact on

addressing the challenges relating to the decline in the use of Irish as a living language in Gaeltacht communities.

This Circular follows on from Circular 0012/2022 and previous circulars on the Scheme covering the period from 2017 to 2021/22.

**Part A** of the Circular sets out the steps involved in order to join the Scheme in 2023.

**Part B** outlines the additional supports that will be provided at planning and implementation stages for new applicant schools in 2023/24.

### Summary of key points:

- Schools located in Gaeltacht language-planning areas that are not currently participating in the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme are being given a further opportunity to join the Scheme.
- To join the Scheme, a school must complete an Expression of Interest Form attached to this Circular (**Appendix 2**).
- A school opting to participate in the Scheme will be required to develop an action plan based on the language-based criteria to strengthen immersion education<sup>1</sup> taking account of the school's particular context.
- Additional targeted supports at planning and implementation stages will be provided to support schools joining the Scheme. Following the approval of action plans, schools will have access to Irish-language support hours, a grant for the purchase of Irish-medium teaching resources, additional continuing professional development (CPD) provided by COGG and advisory visits/sessions from the Inspectorate.

### Appendices attached to this Circular:

**Appendix 1:** Language-based criteria for recognition as a Gaeltacht primary school.

**Appendix 2:** Expression of Interest Form for primary schools in Gaeltacht language-planning areas opting to join the Scheme in 2023. The completed Expression of Interest Form must be submitted to the Department **by 28 April 2023**.

**Appendix 3:** Guide on how to make the most effective use of the additional support hours for Irish.

**Appendix 4:** School Cluster Application Form: This application form is provided for primary schools participating in the Scheme that wish to cluster or combine their Irish-language support hours and/or special education teaching hours to form shared full-time temporary teaching posts.

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<sup>1</sup> In the context of a Gaeltacht primary school, immersion education refers to the practice of teaching all curriculum areas entirely through the medium of Irish, apart from the English curriculum. Early-immersion refers to the practice of implementing a two-year total immersion programme through Irish in infant classes, where English is not taught during this period.

**Appendix 5: Sample Action-Planning Template:** This template will assist schools in setting out targets and actions to fulfil the language-based criteria to strengthen immersion education.

## PART A

### 1. Invitation to schools in Gaeltacht language-planning areas to join the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme in 2023

A further opportunity is being made available to schools in Gaeltacht language-planning areas that are not already participating in the Scheme to consider joining the Scheme in 2023.

**Table 1** below provides an overview of the activities and additional supports which will be allocated to schools joining the Scheme in 2023.

| <b>Table 1: Summary of activities required to be eligible to participate in the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme</b>  |   |   |  |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|---|--|
| <b>Planning Phase</b>  |   |   |  |   | <b>Initial Implementation Phase</b>  |
| <b>March-April 2023</b>  | <b>28 April 2023</b>  | <b>April-June 2023</b>                                      | <b>16 June 2023</b>  | <b>June 2023</b>  | <b>September 2023</b>  |
| Consultation with the school community and the local language-planning committee   | Submission of the Expression of Interest Form to the Department | Preparation of action plan to implement immersion education | Submission of the action plan to the Department for review | Provision of feedback to schools and approval of action plans | Commencement of implementation of the targets and actions set out in the action plan to strengthen immersion education |
| Initial supports provided to schools will include release time for action-planning in the period April to June 2023, CPD provided by COGG and advisory visits from the Inspectorate. |   |   |  |   | Resource grant and additional Irish-language support hours will be provided.   |

#### 1.1 Expression of Interest to join the Scheme in 2023

The first step for schools wishing to join the Scheme is to complete the Expression of Interest Form. The decision to participate in the Scheme should be made following consultation with the school's patron, the teaching staff, the parents' association and the local language-planning committee. The approval of the school's board of management must be obtained. In making the decision to participate in the Scheme, the Department urges schools to consider the educational benefits of immersion education and the opportunity schools have to impact meaningfully on the current challenges regarding the decline in the use of Irish as a living language in Gaeltacht communities.

Once the decision to join the Scheme in 2023 has been made, the Expression of Interest Form included in **Appendix 2** must be completed and returned electronically (signed and scanned) to [aog@education.gov.ie](mailto:aog@education.gov.ie) **by 28 April 2023**.

## **1.2 Whole-school action-planning to strengthen immersion education (April to June 2023)**

Schools joining the Scheme in 2023 will have a period of time from April to June 2023 to develop an action plan for school improvement, linked to language-based criteria to strengthen immersion education, and taking account of the school's context. The language-based criteria for primary schools to gain recognition as a Gaeltacht school are set out in **Appendix 1**.

The Scheme is based on the continuing development of immersion/Irish-medium education through the effective use of the school self-evaluation (SSE) process. The school's action plan for improvement will set out how the school will fulfil the language-based criteria to improve immersion education for its first and second-language learners of Irish in a phased, incremental manner. This includes planning for purposeful links with the school community and with local language-planning committees to extend the use of Irish in Gaeltacht communities.

School self-evaluation facilitates schools to engage in a cyclical action-planning process that includes regular review. The action-planning process should involve gathering evidence, making judgements, setting specific targets, implementing actions, monitoring and reviewing progress, and setting new targets to strengthen the quality of immersion education in schools.

Schools participating in the DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) programme and in the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme are required to continue to identify and review targets and actions for improvement, and to record these **in a single clearly-labelled action-planning document**. The DEIS themes<sup>2</sup> and language-based criteria for immersion education, and/or any other SSE priority area(s), should be included under relevant headings in the action plan to facilitate the monitoring of progress.

Schools should share a short summary of the school's self-evaluation report and the school improvement plan with the school community annually.

A sample action plan template to support schools in fulfilling the language-based criteria for recognition as a Gaeltacht primary school is provided in **Appendix 5**. Schools may use this template and adapt it to suit their own particular school context. Each school applying to join the Scheme in 2023 must submit its action plan to the Department for review **by 16 June 2023**.

Following the review by the Department of action plans submitted, feedback will be provided by the Gaeltacht Education Unit to each school seeking to join the Scheme. Schools will then have an opportunity to make any necessary amendments to the action plans in **September 2023**. When the action plans have been approved, schools will be able to access the additional resources provided by the Department for schools participating in the Scheme to support the implementation of immersion education from **September 2023**.

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<sup>2</sup> DEIS Plan 2017 themes: attendance, retention, literacy, numeracy, supporting educational transitions, partnership with parents and others, leadership, wellbeing and continuing professional development (CPD).

## PART B

### 2. Initial supports available to primary schools in the Gaeltacht new to the Scheme during the action-planning phase (April to June 2023)

During the action-planning development phase, the following additional supports will be provided for primary schools joining the Scheme (April to June 2023):

- **In the case of primary schools with teaching principals:** two additional principal release/administrative days with substitute cover will be provided for teaching principals to support the development of an action plan to strengthen immersion education.
- **In the case of primary schools with administrative principals:** one additional release/administrative day with substitute cover will be provided for one member of the teaching staff to support the administrative principal in the action-planning process. These release days must be used in the period from April to June 2023 for the purpose of progressing the action-planning process.
- Advisory visits from the Inspectorate will provide support and feedback to schools on the school improvement action-planning process.
- Additional CPD will also be provided by COGG.

### 3. Additional resources and supports available to primary schools in the Gaeltacht new to the Scheme during the first phase of implementation (September 2023 - August 2024)

Following the approval of schools' action-plans, schools new to the Scheme will be eligible to access additional resources and supports in 2023/24 to assist them in the implementation of their action plans.

- **Irish-language support hours:** From September 2023, additional Irish-language support hours will be allocated to primary schools participating in the Scheme whose action plans have been approved **to fulfil the language-based criteria to strengthen immersion education.**

**Table 2** outlines how the additional Irish-language support hours will be allocated to primary schools participating in the Scheme.

| <b>Table 2: Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme – primary schools</b> |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Primary school enrolment on 30/09/2022</b>                         | <b>Number of additional Irish-language support hours per week per school for the school year 2023/24</b> |
| <50   | 5  |
| 51-80   | 7.5  |
| 81-140  | 10   |
| 141-173   | 12.5   |
| 174-242   | 15   |
| 243-464   | 17.5   |
| >465  | 25   |

The language-support hours for Irish should be used solely to support the identified needs of native speakers and learners of Irish in order to develop and enrich their proficiency in Irish, and in particular, in oral Irish. **Appendix 3** provides additional guidance on how to make the most effective use of the additional support hours for Irish. The use of these hours will continue to be monitored during Inspectorate advisory visits.

The Irish-language support hours will be allocated as part-time hours to primary schools participating in the Scheme. Hours for 2023/24 are allocated based on enrolments on 30 September 2022<sup>3</sup>. Schools will be expected to manage the allocation of these Irish-language support hours effectively to ensure the maximum benefit for pupils' Irish-language learning.

A group of schools may form a cluster to create a temporary full-time teaching post by combining the part-time Irish-language support hours allocated to each school in the cluster. A School Cluster Application Form is available in **Appendix 4**.

While the additional language-support hours for Irish under the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme and the hours under the Special Education Teaching Allocation are allocated separately due to administrative reasons, schools within the cluster can combine these hours to create temporary teaching posts in 2023/24. In such cases, schools must ensure that the teachers selected for these posts are registered with the Teaching Council and have a high level of proficiency in Irish and a good understanding of immersion education.

- **Grant allocation:** A grant of €1,200 will be paid to schools participating in the Scheme for the purchase of Irish-medium teaching resources to support the provision of high-quality immersion education. A list of resources in Irish may be accessed on the [COGG website](#).

For audit purposes, in accordance with public procurement and financial procedures (see provisions of Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 0013/2014), schools are required to retain all receipts and records of expenditure incurred. School authorities must also ensure that the requirements of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the Department of Education are met in the public procurement, usage and disposal of assets.

- **Inspectorate Support:** Inspectors will carry out advisory visits to provide support to schools in implementing the language-based criteria to achieve Gaeltacht school recognition. They will also provide information to the Department of Education on the progress being made by schools. In collaboration with schools, inspectors will assist in the identification of examples of innovative practice relating to the provision of high-quality immersion education.
- **Continuing Professional Development (CPD):** Primary schools participating in the Scheme will be provided with CPD support by COGG. Other nationally-provided CPD can continue to be accessed as normal by these schools. A combination of face-to-face and distance-learning webinars and resources will continue to be provided to support the evolving CPD needs of schools in implementing immersion

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<sup>3</sup> On an exceptional basis for the 2023/24 school year, in response to high incidences of new entrants being welcomed by schools, schools may apply for additional Irish language support hours where enrolment has increased significantly since 30 September 2022. Further details are set out in the [guidance](#) issued to schools participating in the Scheme in March 2023.

education. COGG will continue to facilitate opportunities for the development of principal and teacher networks to enable the sharing of good practice. Every effort will be made to minimise disruption to pupil-teacher contact time.

Where necessary, and as resources permit, substitute cover for attendance at seminars/workshops will be provided for through the Online Claims System (OLCS) up to a maximum of two days for two teachers in the school year 2023/24. These days may be claimed from the OLCS by selecting the following: *Continuing Professional Development/Professional Activities – Gaeltacht Education Policy*.

Details in relation to CPD plans for schools participating in the Scheme will be provided by COGG. In addition, all schools in the Scheme can apply to [Oide](#) for customised school support in all areas of teaching, learning and school self-evaluation.

- **COGG Web Portal:** A range of Irish-language teaching and learning resources are available on the COGG web portal, [An Tairseach](#). Support is being provided to schools on how to access and use the online resources, and on how to develop and share their own resources on the portal.
- **[Guide for Gaeltacht Primary Schools: Indicators of Good Practice for Immersion Education](#)**, published in December 2020, provides practical support for boards of management/Education and Training Boards (ETBs) and schools on how best to implement high quality immersion education.

The Guide can be used by schools to:

- reflect on teaching and learning practices through the medium of Irish in the Gaeltacht school
  - guide professional discussion on learning, teaching, management and leadership to support the implementation of immersion education
  - identify, develop and extend good practice in immersion education
  - identify targets and actions to fulfil the language-based criteria for immersion education
  - reflect on good governance practice in relation to the implementation of immersion education.
- **Links between Early Learning and Care settings and Primary Schools:** [A Guide for Gaeltacht Primary Schools: Strengthening links between primary schools and early learning and care \(ELC\) settings](#), commissioned by COGG, was published in June 2021 to support the implementation of immersion education. This evidence-based guide provides practical advice, and exemplars of good practice, to ensure that the transition from the naíonra to the primary school is a positive experience for children in the Gaeltacht.
  - **Links with the language-planning process:** [A Guide for Gaeltacht Schools: Partnership with the community in promoting the use of Irish](#) has been developed by the Department of Education in collaboration with the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Údarás na Gaeltachta, COGG, Gaeloideachas and other relevant agencies. This guide, published in June 2021, provides practical advice on how best to strengthen links, engagement and participation between school management, the wider school community and the local language-planning committee.

- **Special Education in Immersion Settings:** A Guide for Gaeltacht schools on supporting pupils with special educational needs in Irish-medium immersion education settings is being developed in collaboration with COGG. This will support the implementation of the Department’s *Guidelines for Primary Schools (Appendix 5): Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools*.
- **Dissemination of examples of good practice:** Plans will progress in 2023/2024 to identify and share examples of innovative practice in immersion education in schools participating in the Scheme. Further details will be circulated to schools in the Scheme in due course.
- **Validation Process for Recognition as a Gaeltacht School:** The [validation process](#) for schools already participating in the Scheme commenced in October 2022. The purpose of the validation process is to ensure that Schools are implementing the language-based criteria set out for the Scheme. The process takes the form of a visit from the Inspectorate. Schools joining the Scheme in 2023 will be given sufficient time – commensurate with that available to other schools in the Scheme – to progress the implementation of the language-based criteria before being included in the validation process.

#### 4. Further Information

The continuing participation of schools in the Scheme will be contingent on satisfying the conditions of this Circular and any other circulars relating to the Scheme. Where the Department, at any time, determines that the conditions of the Scheme are not being fulfilled, the right is reserved to remove a school from the Scheme. In the case of dissatisfaction with the Department’s decision regarding any specific aspect of the administration of the Scheme, an appeal will be considered by an independent panel.

Additional information on the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme and on the Policy on Gaeltacht Education is available on [gov.ie](http://gov.ie).

Queries in relation to the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme or the Policy on Gaeltacht Education should be emailed to [aog@education.gov.ie](mailto:aog@education.gov.ie).

**Lisa Nic Dhoinnléibhe**  
**Gaeltacht Education Unit / An tAonad um Oideachas Gaeltachta**  
**Department of Education / An Roinn Oideachais**

**March 2023**

Principals of primary schools in Gaeltacht language-planning areas are asked to please bring this Circular to the attention of each member of the board of management and teachers (including those on leave of absence), the school patron, ancillary staff, parents/guardians, and the local school community.

This Circular can be accessed on [gov.ie](http://gov.ie).



## Appendix 1

### Language-based criteria for recognition as a Gaeltacht primary school: Self-monitoring the school's progress in fulfilling the language-based criteria to strengthen immersion education

|   | The language-based criteria for a Gaeltacht primary school   | 1                 | 2             | 3                 |
|---|--|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
|   |  | to be implemented | progress made | being implemented |
| 1 | Implement a <b>two-year total-immersion programme</b> <sup>4</sup> through Irish in infant classes, during which no English will be taught   |                   |               |                   |
| 2 | Implement a <b>total-immersion approach</b> , where all areas of learning, apart from English, will be taught through Irish  |                   |               |                   |
| 3 | Deliver <b>high-quality educational experiences</b> through Irish to all pupils focusing particular attention on the <b>differentiated language needs</b> of native Irish speakers <sup>5</sup> as well as learners of Irish   |                   |               |                   |
| 4 | Develop a whole-school <b>action plan for improvement</b> that will:<br>a) set out how the school will ensure the use of Irish as the language of communication, instruction and socialisation within the school and<br><br>b) communicate and promote the benefits of learning Irish and learning through Irish to the school community (principal, staff, pupils, parents and board of management) | a)                |               |                   |
|   |  | b)                |               |                   |
| 5 | <b>Review</b> the quality of educational provision through Irish to ensure continuous improvement <b>through the school self-evaluation (SSE) process</b>  |                   |               |                   |
| 6 | Provide Irish-language learning experiences in accordance with   |                   |               |                   |

<sup>4</sup> A total-immersion programme in infant classes means that the learning environment operates solely through Irish and the teaching of English will commence from first class. This enables the fuller development of children's Irish-language capacities in infant classes.

<sup>5</sup> A native speaker of Irish is defined as a child who is raised through Irish in an Irish-language community and whose parents speak Irish as the main language of communication in the home, such being declared at the point of enrolment for school (*Policy on Gaeltacht Education*, p 11)

|    |  |  |  |  |
|----|--|--|--|--|
|    | the <b>L1<sup>6</sup> learning outcomes in the <i>Primary Language Curriculum for Gaeltacht</i></b> and Irish-medium schools   |  |  |  |
| 7  | <b>Use Irish-language resources</b> to support the teaching of all curricular areas through Irish, apart from the English curriculum   |  |  |  |
| 8  | Deliver curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular <b>activities</b> (where provided) through Irish   |  |  |  |
| 9  | <b>Support their school community in the language-planning process</b> (under the Gaeltacht Act 2012) by contributing to the use and maintenance of Irish in the school and local Gaeltacht community  |  |  |  |
| 10 | <b>Prioritise the use of Irish in communicating</b> with parents, the local community and other parties  |  |  |  |
| 11 | Establish useful and mutually-beneficial <b>language and cultural links</b> with local Irish-medium <b>early-years settings</b> ( <i>naíonraí</i> )  |  |  |  |
| 12 | Establish useful and mutually-beneficial language and cultural <b>links</b> with local Irish-medium <b>post-primary schools</b> and other Irish-medium primary schools   |  |  |  |
| 13 | Make every effort to recruit <b>teaching and ancillary staff</b> who are proficient in Irish and have a knowledge and understanding of pedagogical practice relevant to teaching through Irish as well as an understanding of the language and cultural dynamics of the Gaeltacht. |  |  |  |

<sup>6</sup> L1 refers to Irish as the main language of the school in relation to teaching and learning, and communication in official, administrative and recreational affairs.

## Appendix 2

### Expression of Interest Form

**To be completed by the management of primary schools expressing an interest in participating in the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme in 2023**

Please return your completed Expression of Interest Form to the [Gaeltacht Education Unit](#) electronically (signed and scanned) by **28 April 2023**.

School name: \_\_\_\_\_ Roll number: \_\_\_\_\_

School address:

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to confirm that the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme and the content of Circular 0016/2023 was discussed at meetings with the teaching staff, the parents' association, and the board of management.

|  | Signature | Date |
|--|-----------|------|
| Principal of school                    |           |      |
| Chairperson of the board of management |           |      |

I wish to confirm that the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme and the content of Circular 0016/2023 was discussed with the Chairperson of the local Gaeltacht language-planning committee.

|  | Signature | Date |
|--|-----------|------|
| Chairperson of the Gaeltacht language-planning committee |           |      |

**3) In expressing interest in joining the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme in 2023, please provide a short account on the following (max 200 words):**

- The school's decision with regard to participation in the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme in 2023
- The steps which were taken, including consultation with the school community, to come to the decision to participate in the Scheme in 2023
- Any initiatives in which the school is currently involved to promote the Irish language in the community
- The contact the school has made with the committee responsible for the language plan in its Gaeltacht language-planning area to ensure that the committee is aware of the school's interest in participating in the Scheme to achieve Gaeltacht school status.

It is possible that the information provided by you in this form may become the subject of a request under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2014, and this may lead to some or all of it being released to a requester. We are therefore requesting you, as part of your reply, to identify any information in your reply which you deem to be sensitive and exempt from release under the FOI Act. This will assist the Department of Education in the decision-making process if an FOI request is received. Please note that information contained in this form may also be provided to COGG to facilitate their role in the implementation of the Policy on Gaeltacht Education.

**I wish to REGISTER OUR SCHOOL'S EXPRESSION OF INTEREST in participating in the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme**

|   | <b>Signature</b> | <b>Date</b> |
|---|------------------|-------------|
| <b>Principal of school</b>                    |                  |             |
| <b>Chairperson of the board of management</b> |                  |             |

## Appendix 3

### Guide on how to make the most effective use of the additional support hours for Irish

#### At school management level

- The school's board of management and senior management team should monitor continuously how successfully the additional support hours for Irish are implemented to improve pupils' learning. The effectiveness of provision should be reviewed regularly through the school self-evaluation process.
- Collaboration at whole-school and class levels is required so that the role and responsibilities of mainstream teachers, the special education teacher, the support teacher for Irish and the language assistant are agreed in order to provide differentiated language support for pupils.

#### Planning for teaching and assessment in collaboration with mainstream teachers

- Both formative and summative assessments of the pupils' language competence in Irish should be carried out to monitor their progress, and this should be done in collaboration with other relevant teachers and with the language assistant.
- As part of the school-improvement planning process, schools should make use of recent assessment results to identify the language-learning needs of pupils. This will assist all teachers to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the language needs of pupils, and to plan interventions accordingly to address the priority language competences of pupils.
- Clear records of the progress of all learners in Irish should be maintained to inform the teaching and learning process, and the relevant information should be shared with parents, as appropriate.
- It is particularly important that pupils' self-awareness as language learners be developed through the assessment process and it would be beneficial to develop pupils' self-assessment and peer-assessment skills.
- It is recommended that pupils be enabled to develop a language diary/learning log to demonstrate their language competence and progress and help them monitor and self-evaluate their learning journey. This diary/log could be designed in a manner that would show pupils' learning goals, their learning goals attained, and the learning experiences that proved challenging on their language-learning journey.

#### At class level

- Pupils need to be taught the academic language and terminology associated with the various curricular areas. Regular opportunities should be provided to enable pupils to practise and acquire the new terminology in creative and innovative ways.
- Pupils' early experience of language learning is an important starting point for further language development. In infant classes, an early intervention Irish-language literacy programme, based on the principles of Aistear, should be implemented in collaboration with the support teacher and class teacher, with a particular focus on the specific language needs of both native speakers and learners with limited Irish.
- The native speaker of Irish provides a rich source for the language development of all pupils. Their language competence should also be developed and further enriched through group activities and team teaching.
- The use of differentiated teaching strategies, questioning, games and communication tasks is recommended. Enriched language input from the teacher

and participation in interactive tasks, such as project work, role-play, drama, discussion, and cooperative learning, help pupils to identify and manipulate target structures in the language. This greatly enhances their self-confidence in speaking Irish.

- Pupils' participation can be encouraged and their language skills developed through the use of digital technology and Irish-language digital links, whether pupils are in school or at home.
- Literature should be used to develop pupils' writing and reading skills as well as to develop their language enrichment, accuracy, awareness and creativity in an integrated manner, as laid down in the Primary Language Curriculum.
- It is especially important that pupils be provided with a wide range of reading and literary material in Irish covering a wide range of genres, including local and oral literature, which is suited to their interests, age and ability in the language.
- Pupils should be made aware of celebrated speakers of Irish in the local community and further afield, who are a source of Irish-language enrichment and wisdom. The school should avail of opportunities to invite such guest speakers to stimulate pupils' pride in Irish language and culture.

### **Outside of the class**

- It is through participation in language and cultural events that pupils' motivation, language competency and identity as Irish speakers in their own community and beyond are strengthened. Such activities include literary competitions or festivals, entrepreneurship, reporting, debating, arts and sports as well as participation in Irish-language movements and in networks with pupils in other L1 all-Irish schools.

**Appendix 4**  
**School Cluster Application Form 2022/23 and 2023/24**

**Application Form to create a temporary full-time teaching post through school clusters for the 2022/23 and 2023/2024 school years.**

This form must be completed and an electronic copy (scanned with signatures) returned by email [aog@education.gov.ie](mailto:aog@education.gov.ie) to the Gaeltacht Education Unit **by 9 May of the school year to which it applies.**

**Schools must ensure that the teacher selected for the post has a high level of proficiency in the Irish language and can fulfil the roles, as appropriate.**

|          | Cluster options  | Please tick one option |
|----------|--|------------------------|
| <b>A</b> | Irish-language support hours combined <b>between schools</b>   |                        |
| <b>B</b> | <b>Combine</b> Irish-language support hours <b>and</b> special education teaching hours <b>between schools</b> |                        |
| <b>C</b> | <b>Combine</b> Irish-language support hours and special education teaching hours <b>in the same school</b>     |                        |

| <b>Details of the Base School for the new full-time temporary post created by clustering hours (1 post = 25 hours)</b> |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Name of the Base School:</b><br>(The base school must be participating in the Scheme)                               |  |
| <b>Roll Number:</b>  |  |
| <b>School Address:</b>   |  |
| <b>Email Address:</b>  |  |
| <b>Phone Number:</b>   |  |

| <b>Details of partner schools for the new full-time temporary post created by clustering hours (partner schools must be in the Scheme) (1 post = 25 hours)</b> |             |             |  |  |  |
|--|-------------|-------------|--|--|--|
|  | School Name | Roll Number | Total no. of Irish-language support hours allocated to the school under the Scheme | No. of Irish-language support hours in the cluster | No. of special education teaching hours in the cluster |
| <b>Base school</b>   |             |             |  |  |  |
| <b>2<sup>nd</sup> school</b>   |             |             |  |  |  |
| <b>3<sup>rd</sup> school</b>   |             |             |  |  |  |
| <b>Total cluster hours:</b>  |             |             |  |  |  |

**Details of part-time Irish-language support hours not used in this cluster (i.e. total Irish-language support hours minus the Irish-language support hours in the cluster). These hours will be approved as part-time hours on the OLCS.**

|                        | School Name | Roll Number | Number of Irish-language support hours <u>NOT</u> used in cluster |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|---|
| Base school            |             |             |   |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> school |             |             |   |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> school |             |             |   |
| <b>Total:</b>          |             |             |   |

All cluster arrangements **relating to the creation of new full-time temporary posts arising from the combination of Irish-language support hours will be for the 2022/23 and 2023/24 school years only.**

**Please note:** In the exceptional case that a school is involved in more than one cluster arrangement, the appropriate form must be submitted for each cluster.

**Declaration**

I declare that the above information is correct and that I agree with the proposed cluster arrangements for this post as outlined above.

**BASE SCHOOL:** School name: \_\_\_\_\_ Roll No: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of principal of base school      Signature of chairperson of base school

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**2<sup>nd</sup> SCHOOL:** School name: \_\_\_\_\_ Roll No: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of principal of 2<sup>nd</sup> school      Signature of chairperson of 2<sup>nd</sup> school

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**3<sup>rd</sup> SCHOOL:** School name: \_\_\_\_\_ Roll No: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of principal of 3<sup>rd</sup> school      Signature of chairperson of 3<sup>rd</sup> school

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Relevant sections of the Department will be provided with the information in this form, as required. The Department's Teacher Allocation Section will also be provided with a copy of this form for its records.



The main purpose for which the Department requires the personal data provided by you is for the arrangement of school clusters for the creation of temporary shared teaching posts in the school years 2022/23 and 2023/24. This on the basis of the additional hours allocated to schools under the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme. The personal data provided may be exchanged with other sections within the Department of Education and with other schools involved in the clustering arrangement. Full details of the Department's data protection policy setting out how we will use your personal data, as well as information regarding your rights as a data subject, are available on [gov.ie](http://gov.ie).

## Appendix 5

### Teimpléad Samplach do Phlean Gníomhaíochta do chur i bhfeidhm na gcritéar teanga don tumoideachas

|                             |  |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>Ainm na scoile</b>       |  | <b>Uimhir rolla</b>         |  |
| <b>Dáta</b>                 |  | <b>Data athbhreithnithe</b> |  |
| <b>Comhthéacs na scoile</b> | <p>Tabhair cuntas achomair soiléir le pointí urchair de réir mar atá ábhartha (<i>m.sh. líon foirne agus rollachán; stádas DEIS; comhthéacs teangeolaíochta na scoile; cleachtas reatha maidir leis an teagasc trí Ghaeilge; tacaíochtaí don Ghaeilge ar fáil sa scoil/sa phobal scoile; comhpháirtíocht le tuismitheoirí; nasc leis an gcoiste pleanála teanga áitiúil; naisc le scoileanna eile/naíonraí &amp;rl</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul> |                             |  |

Seo a leanas sampla de theimpléad a d'fhéadfaí a úsáid chun plean a dhearadh do chritéar teanga amháin a chur i bhfeidhm. D'fhéadfadh sprioc amháin nó níos mó a bheadh ag an scoil don chritéar sin. Is féidir an teimpléad a chóipeáil de réir mar is gá, ag brath ar líon na gcritéar teanga agus líon na spriocanna atá á chur i bhfeidhm sa tréimhse ama ar leith. Moltar plean a dhearadh do bhliain amháin ar dtús le go bhfeicfead an dul chun cinn atá déanta taobh istigh den tréimhse ama sin.

| <b>Critéar Teanga</b>          |                                 |                  |                                     |   |                                 |                            |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Spriocanna feabhsúcháin</b> | <b>Gníomhartha riachtanacha</b> | <b>Fráma ama</b> | <b>Ba(i)ll foirne atá freagrach</b> | <b>Monatóireacht agus Athbhreithniú</b> |                                 |                            |
| 1                              |                                 |                  |                                     | <b>Dáta</b>                             | <b>Gnéithe atá bainte amach</b> | <b>Forbairt le déanamh</b> |
|                                |                                 |                  |                                     |   |                                 |                            |
| 2                              |                                 |                  |                                     | <b>Dáta</b>                             | <b>Gnéithe atá bainte amach</b> | <b>Forbairt le déanamh</b> |
|                                |                                 |                  |                                     |   |                                 |                            |
| 3                              |                                 |                  |                                     | <b>Dáta</b>                             | <b>Gnéithe atá bainte amach</b> | <b>Forbairt le déanamh</b> |
|                                |                                 |                  |                                     |   |                                 |                            |

