



Ballinahinch National School

Scoil Náisiúnta Baile na hÍnse

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Policy on Exemption from

Learning Irish.

Introduction:

This policy was drafted by staff and Board of Management of Scoil Náisiúnta Baile na hÍnse in response to a growing demand by parents for exemptions and recent changes in special educational provisions. It was formulated during February 2014 and reviewed in November 2018. Upon reviewal the staff and Board of Management were happy to continue with this policy with no amendments deemed necessary.

Rationale:

Circular 12/96 requires that many non-Irish nationals may be entitled to an exemption from the study of Irish. The number of children with special educational needs has also increased and many of these children receive reports from psychologists with recommendations for an exemption from the learning of Irish e.g. children with specific learning difficulties, general learning disabilities and/or sensory impairments.

Relationship to the school Ethos:

This policy is in keeping with the mission statement of the school, which strives to enhance the self-esteem of all through providing for the intellectual, physical, moral and cultural needs of all.

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
- To give clarity on the process.

Policy Content:

Before granting an exemption from Irish, the school requires evidence of a specific or general learning disability from a qualified psychologist or in the case of a child with a sensory impairment, from a qualified medical practitioner. Children of foreign nationals who are resident in the country may be granted an exemption from Irish, particularly if their grasp of the English language is limited and if they are late entrants to primary school.

Procedures:

- The school requires a written request 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). This report must not be more than two years old (in compliance with Circular 12/96).
- The application needs to be accompanied by a report from the class teacher and the special education teacher (where relevant) in support of the application.
- The principal, in consultation with relevant staff members, 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.

Note: The school no longer needs to send a copy of the exemption form to the DES. The school grants the exemption and keeps the form on file.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Principal, class teachers and BoM will contribute to the implementation of the school procedures in accordance with Circular 12/96.

Success Criteria:

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

Ratified on 15th November 2018 by the Board of Management.

Signature of Chairperson: _____.

Review:

This policy will be reviewed in 2021.

