

Polasaí na Gaeilge agus na Gaelscolaíochta

Introduction

Polasaí na Gaeilge agus na Gaelscolaíochta relates to the students and teachers in this school, not only teachers within the Gaelscoil but all teachers in the school, and the school community as a whole. The entire school community has an opportunity to support Irish and *Polasaí na Gaeilge agus na Gaelscolaíochta*.

Gaelscoil na Tríonóide

Gaelscoil na Tríonóide is a unit within Pobalscoil na Tríonóide. Irish medium education is offered to students within the aonad and great support is given to Irish by the Máthairscoil. According to best practice, a detailed '*Plean Gaeilge agus Gaelscolaíochta*' needs to be developed and implemented in the school for teachers, students, parents/guardians and the wider school community.

There are huge challenges in relation to both the use of the Irish language among our students and the provision of Irish-medium education. Many positive steps have already been taken, and we must continue to build on these.

Aims

- To promote and develop Irish – medium education
- To promote a bi-lingual culture within the school and to support Irish as a living language.
- To foster a positive attitude towards the Irish language and Irish culture amongst all students.

The Body of the Policy

Accommodation

- As advised by The Commission on School Accommodation (Report of the steering Group), a distinct area within the school should be provided for the aonad lán- Ghaeilge

Enrolment

- Irish-medium education in Pobalscoil na Tríonóide is an option for those who have attended an all-Irish primary school. It is also an option for those who have attended other primary schools in the

area. Students need to have a good standard of Irish and must be genuinely interested in learning through the medium of Irish. Parental support is important. This information will be distributed to parents prior to enrolment. The terms of Pobalscoil na Tríonóide's enrolment policy will apply.

- We will endeavour to organise events through Irish for Primary school students each year.

Irish – The spoken language

- Irish shall be the language of communication in the Gaelscoil, not merely the language of instruction within the classroom. Students are expected to speak Irish in the classroom, as they go to class and when they communicate with the teaching staff of the Gaelscoil and other teachers who communicate with them through Irish.
- English is the first language of almost all of the pupils in their homes. As a consequence of this, students must be given opportunities to use Irish in different situations: on trips, listening to guest speakers, participating in debates, games etc. so that they see that Irish is a language beyond the classroom.
- A positive merit scheme should be established in the Gaelscoil to encourage the speaking of Irish (perhaps a stamp system in the diary).
- Students in the Gaelscoil will use the Irish version of their surname and when students are reluctant to use an Irish version of their first names then it should be agreed between the student and the school the exact version of their name to be used on all school documents and on all school correspondence.

Curriculum and exams

- It is vital that all subjects should be available to students up to Junior Certificate and as soon as possible to Leaving Certificate. It is expected that students in the Gaelscoil will do their subjects through the medium of Irish when those subjects are available to them through the medium of Irish. It is disadvantageous for students in the Gaelscoil to be unable to access their subjects (particularly in senior cycle) through Irish.
- It is very important that all exams within the Gaelscoil are done through the medium of Irish and an appropriate system should be in place to ensure this. Students should be given a glossary instead of a bilingual paper. In this way students will not come to depend on English translation. In the case of Junior and Leaving Certificate teaching groups, they should be given Irish and English versions of their papers in the pre-examinations (as this is how it is on the day of the state exams).

Junior and Senior Cycle

- Students enrolling in the Gaelscoil have varying levels of fluency in Irish and ways of supporting those students whose standard may fall short of the mark must be looked at. If it is the case that at the end of First Year, a student has made absolutely no effort to embrace Irish as the medium of his/her education, then this student may not be permitted to continue accessing Irish-medium education.
- Each first year student will be given a basic terminology dictionary to help him/her.
- The homework club, when such a club is in the school, should be provided through Irish as a support for students in the Gaelscoil.
- Other educational supports, for example learning support, should be provided through Irish.
- Transition Year offers many opportunities that might enrich students' Irish. Genuinely interested students from the Máthairscoil are welcome to apply for a Transition Year place in the Gaelscoil.
- Students who demonstrate commitment to Irish as a medium of communication/education are welcome to continue within the senior cycle of Gaelscoil na Tríonóide . A student who continuously refuses to embrace Irish as the medium of his/her education may not be permitted to continue accessing Irish-medium education.

Announcements/Notices School Business etc.

- School events and relevant literature should reflect the bilingual ethos of the school.
- It is recommended that any certificate presented to a student in the Gaelscoil should be worded in Irish or at the very least be bilingual.
- Irish should have a prominent place on any notices posted within the school or such notices should be bilingual.
- Notices posted within the Gaelscoil should be in Irish.
- It is recommended that Gaeilge be given prominence on school stationary and school correspondence.
- It is recommended that Irish language secretarial and administrative services be made available to Gaelscoil na Tríonóide.

- It is recommended that all announcements on the intercom contain cúpla focal Gaeilge.
- It is recommended that Gaelscoil na Trionóide be recognised in the school magazine and on the school website.

School uniform

- It is important that a distinct difference exist between the school uniforms of students in the Gaelscoil and the Máthairscoil.

Scholarships

- It is recommended that the school offers scholarships (3) to students to attend an Irish summer course in the Gaeltacht.

The Students' Council and the Leadership Programme

- Two students with a high standard of Irish, who are happy to work with students in the Gaelscoil should be selected as leaders. This will ensure the development and promotion of Irish in the Gaelscoil and the school in general.
- The Constitution of the Students Council should ensure that at least one student from the Gaelscoil is selected to sit on the Executive.

The Review System

- This policy will be operational from the beginning of the school year 2008-'09.
- A review of *Polasaí na Gaeilge agus na Gaelscolaíochta* will take place one year after it is put in place and regularly thereafter.

‘Bíodh tóir ar ár dteanga féin’