EXEMPTIONS FROM THE STUDY OF IRISH: GUIDELINES FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS (ENGLISH-MEDIUM)
TO NOTE
The first version of these guidelines was published in conjunction with Circular 0052/2019 in August 2019. This version aims to further clarify the process schools should follow when considering applications for exemption based on the advice and feedback of parents, school principals and other stakeholders. **THERE ARE NO CHANGES TO THE TERMS OF THE CIRCULAR.** These Guidelines also include advice for special schools and mainstream schools with special classes where, in accordance with subsection 1.2 of the Circular, a formal application for a Certificate of Exemption is not required in the case of pupils/students enrolled in these settings (see section 8). Pupils/Students in these settings may be considered to be exempt without holding a Certificate of Exemption.
1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to schools on the practices and procedures involved in processing applications for exemption from the study of Irish in primary schools. This guidance on exemptions from the study of Irish is provided in the context of a revised circular which has been introduced by the Department of Education and Skills with effect from September 2019. Circular 0052/2019 is a revision of Circular 12/96. These Guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Circular.

Circular 0052/2019 sets out the exceptional circumstances in which consideration may be given to granting a pupil an exemption from the study of Irish. The decision to exempt a pupil from the study of Irish is an important decision that has implications for his/her learning now and into the future. Detailed guidance on processing applications in the case of each of the exceptional circumstances presented in the Circular is provided in these Guidelines. The Guidelines also provide schools with a glossary (Appendix 1), an application form, Certificate of Exemption and checklists to guide the processing of applications, recording keeping and reporting as well as detail about the appeal mechanism (Appendices 2-5).

These Guidelines have been developed in response to the extensive feedback received in response to the public consultation on draft circulars on exemptions from the study of Irish\(^1\). They reflect good practice in identifying and addressing pupils’ language and literacy learning needs and the principles of equity and inclusion. The Guidelines are also informed by the principles underpinning the *Primary Language Curriculum* (PLC) and the benefits of bilingualism to be accrued by all learners by engagement in the study of both Irish and English.

1.1 The principles underpinning the Circular

Irish and English have been fundamental blocks in the curricula in Irish schools since the foundation of the State. This stems from the position of both as official languages as set out in the Constitution and the explicit aim of successive Governments to develop a bilingual society. The inclusion of both languages in national curricula gives language learning and the advantages of bilingualism a particular status in the learning experience of pupils. Developing lifelong language skills from an early age through engagement with both languages has the potential to prepare children well for learning additional languages as they journey through education and participate in a global society.

Languages are for everyone. The PLC makes language learning accessible to all pupils at primary level and the specification for Junior Cycle Irish builds and deepens pupils’ Irish language skills and competences as they move towards senior cycle. The teaching of Irish and English in our primary schools means that our children become familiar with bilingualism from an early age\(^2\). Schools also include new Irish who bring with them their own languages from almost two hundred countries around the world.

The advantages associated with learning two languages simultaneously include improvements in cognitive, linguistic functioning, creativity and problem-solving by enhancing their communicative and thinking skills, as well as their participation in society. The principles of inclusion and differentiation are to the fore in current curricular provision and developments. Learning two languages develops pupils’ linguistic functioning through the development of a deeper understanding of how language works and can be used to communicate. It enhances their ability to analyse how language works, to

\(^1\) Flynn, N. et. al. (2019) *Report on Public Consultation on Exemptions from the Study of Irish in Schools*.

compare languages, and to reflect on how they learn languages in addition to advantages in other curricular areas.

1.2 Language in the primary school curriculum
The PLC which is aimed at all learners, including those in special schools and settings, sets out the learning outcomes and progression continua for both Irish and English. The structure of the PLC is based on the premise of an integrated approach to language learning, one that supports the transfer of language learning skills between Irish and English. This approach marks a fundamental change in the language learning experience of children in primary schools and settings and sets the context in which the criteria for granting exemptions from the study of Irish in line with terms of this Circular need to be considered.

The Circular and these Guidelines are also set in the context of the Special Education Teaching Allocation\(^3\) model. This model allows mainstream schools to provide additional teaching support to all pupils who require such support in their schools based on their identified learning needs in school, as opposed to being based primarily upon a diagnosis of a particular disability.

1.3 Why is it considered necessary to allow some pupils be exempt from the study of Irish?
The PLC provides flexibility in addressing pupil’s individual language learning needs and a range of supports is accessible to schools including their autonomy to address and allocate resources as seen fit at local level in line with the Special Education Teacher allocation model. It is acknowledged that despite the flexibility afforded in the PLC, the range of supports and access to targeted intervention over time, there may be exceptional circumstances in which a child continues to struggle to make adequate progress in acquiring the language of instruction of the school (English as L1\(^4\)).

Exempting a pupil from the study of Irish should be considered in the context of the Department’s Continuum of Support framework which assists schools in identifying and responding to pupil’s needs. This framework recognises that special educational needs occur along a continuum, ranging from mild to severe, and from transient to long term, and that pupils require different levels of support depending on their identified educational needs.

These Guidelines aim to support schools in addressing a wide diversity of pupils’ learning needs by

- providing a differentiated learning experience for pupils in an inclusive school environment
- guiding schools in considering each application for exemption from the study of Irish while recognising and supporting pupils in maximising their potential for engagement with Irish and experience the advantages of bilingualism thus preparing them for learning additional languages as they journey through education and participate in a global society
- recognising the autonomy of mainstream schools to provide additional teaching support for all pupils who require such support based on their identified learning needs in school, as opposed to being based primarily upon a diagnosis of a particular disability (Special Education Teaching Allocation model)
- recognising that decisions need to be based on pupils’ response to targeted intervention over time.

\(^3\) Circular 0013/2017 and Circular 0007/2019 to the Management Authorities of all Mainstream Primary Schools: Special Education Teaching Allocation

\(^4\) An English-medium school is a school where English (L1) is the primary language of instruction, except in the case of Irish. In English-medium schools, Irish is taught as a second language (L2). Department of Education and Skills (2011) Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life: The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011-2020.
2. What are the key changes to processing an application for exemption?

The key changes presented in Circular 0052/2019 aim to support pupils’ full engagement and access to the Primary Language Curriculum in line with their abilities and to assist schools and teachers in providing for those needs.

- **Consideration of the language of instruction in the school**

The Circular and these Guidelines are for implementation in English-medium primary schools only.

- **The language learning needs of pupils in special schools and in special classes in mainstream schools**

The authority devolved to the management authorities in decision making concerning the Irish language learning needs of pupils enrolled in special schools and special classes in mainstream schools in these contexts is recognised.

- **The exceptional circumstances in which an exemption may be granted**

The exceptional circumstances in which pupils may be granted an exemption from the study of Irish reflect developments in curricular provision and education more generally including current understandings of learning difficulties and differences.

- **Consideration of the most appropriate stage at which to grant an exemption from the study of Irish**

Reflecting the principles underpinning the Primary Language Curriculum and the Continuum of Support, the Circular sets 12 years of age (or up to and including the final year of primary education) as the most appropriate time to consider an application for an exemption from the study of Irish where pupils:

   i. may have received their primary education outside the state or
   ii. are re-enrolling following a period abroad.

In the case of pupils with significant and sustained learning difficulties, an exemption may be considered where they have at least reached second class in primary school.

- **Moving from away diagnosis towards the identification of pupils’ learning needs**

In line with Department policies in the area of special educational needs, this Circular moves from a diagnostic categorical model to a needs-based model.

- **Psychological assessments and cognitive ability scores**

Psychological assessments and cognitive ability scores are no longer necessary to process applications for exemption from the study of Irish.

- **Literacy attainment scores as criteria**

In the case of pupils with significant learning difficulties, the criteria for exemption include only one literacy attainment score in either Word Reading, Reading Comprehension or Spelling at or below the 10th percentile.

- **Appeal mechanism**

Where an application for exemption from the study of Irish is refused, the process may be appealed to the Irish Exemptions Appeal Committee.
3. The process of considering an application for exemption from the study of Irish

Exempting a pupil from the study of Irish is an important decision that should be considered only in exceptional circumstances as it has implications for a pupil's future learning. The decision to exempt a pupil from the study of Irish also needs to be considered in the context of the school's own policy, if any, on exemption from the study of Irish. Parents or guardians may request the exemption from the study of Irish process to be initiated.

Once it is clear that the parent(s)/guardian(s) intend(s) to apply for a Certificate of Exemption, the principal should ensure that each step of the process, including all necessary documentation, is clearly explained (see Sections 3.2 and 3.3).

3.1 The grounds for making an application for exemption from the study of Irish

Section 2.2 of Circular 0052/2019 sets out the exceptional circumstances in which consideration may be given to granting a pupil an exemption from the study of Irish:

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

b. pupils who were previously enrolled as recognised pupils in primary schools who are being re-enrolled after a period spent abroad, provided that at least three consecutive years have elapsed since the previous enrolment in the state and are at least 12 years of age on re-enrolment or

c. pupils who:
   i. have at least reached second class and
   ii. present with significant learning difficulties that are persistent despite having had access to a differentiated approach to language and literacy learning in both Irish and English 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. at the time of the application for exemption present with a Standardised Score on a discrete test in either Word Reading, Reading Comprehension or Spelling at/below the 10th percentile or

   d. children of foreigners who are diplomatic or consular representatives in Ireland.

3.2 What are the procedures for granting an exemption from the study of Irish?

In the case of each of the exceptional circumstances set out above and in Section 2.2 of the Circular, the parent(s)/guardian(s), on behalf of the pupil must make a formal written application (Appendix 2) to the school for a Certificate of Exemption from the study of Irish. In reaching a decision on whether
to grant or refuse an exemption, the principal will, as relevant, consult with the parent(s)/guardian(s), the pupil on whose behalf the application is being made and relevant school personnel and satisfy himself/herself that all key evidence has been accessed.

3.3 Processing an application for exemption from the study of Irish

The school principal, on behalf of the school’s board of management, processes applications received by the school for a Certificate of Exemption from the study of Irish. The formal written application submitted by the parent(s)/guardian(s) must indicate the exceptional circumstance that forms the basis for the application in accordance with sub-paragraphs 2.2a, 2.2b, 2.2c or 2.2d of Circular 0052/2019.

In considering the application the principal will:

- Ensure that the date of receipt of the application by the school is recorded on the form.
- Acknowledge receipt of the application for exemption from the study of Irish in writing.
- Discuss the written application with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and confirm the sub-paragraph on which the application is based (2.2a; 2.2b, 2.2c or 2.2d) as soon as practicable following receipt of a written application.
- Advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the next steps in processing the application.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 in writing to the parent(s)/guardian(s).
- Explain to the parent(s)/guardian(s) the arrangements for the pupil’s learning in the case of an exemption being granted.
- Use the provided Quick Guide and Checklists (Appendix 3 and Appendix 4) to guide the processing of applications in the case of the relevant sub-paragraph in Section 2.2 of the Circular.
- Convey the outcome of the application in writing to the parent(s)/guardian(s).
- Make arrangements for the retention of the application form and all supporting documentation, including a copy of the Certificate of Exemption (Appendix 5) where applicable, and the Checklist in accordance with data protection law.
- In the case that an Exemption from the study of Irish is granted, the pupil’s record on the Primary Online Database (POD) should be updated with details of the date and grounds on which it has been granted.

3.4 What is the appeals procedure?

If a parent/guardian wishes to make an appeal, the appeal will be confined to a review of whether the school adhered to the guidelines for processing the application for an Irish exemption as set out in the Circular and these Guidelines.

The parent(s)/guardian(s), may appeal the school’s decision not to grant an exemption to the Irish Exemptions Appeal Committee within 30 calendar days from the date on which the schools decision was notified in writing (The appeal form is provided on the Department’s website, https://www.education.ie/en/Parents/Information/Irish-Exemption/application-forms.html)
This written appeal should contain the specific reason(s) why the decision is being appealed by the applicant and the circumstances in which it is considered that the process has not been correctly applied.

A parent/guardian who is unhappy with the outcome of the appeal to the Irish Exemptions Appeal Committee will have recourse to the offices of the Ombudsman for Children if the pupil on whose behalf the application is made is under 18 years of age, or to the Ombudsman.

4. What are the record keeping requirements?
All documentation concerning the application and processing procedure, including detail of the determination/copy of the Certificate of Exemption where relevant, should be maintained in the Student Support File/Exemption File as relevant, and be available for review by authorised Department officials.

5. What are the reporting requirements?
School management will be required to provide statistical information to the Department relating to the number and the grounds on which exemptions were granted under the terms of Circular 0052/2019 in the previous school year using the Primary Online Database (POD).

All pupils who have been granted an exemption from the Study of Irish should be recorded on the Primary On-line Database (POD) system including those who have opted not to exercise the exemption granted in a given school year (see section 2.3 of Circular 0052/2019).

6. What are the arrangements for pupils who are exempt from the study of Irish?
Schools, where appropriate, should take account of the literacy learning needs of pupils who are exempt from the study of Irish when deploying available special educational needs resources. To support inclusion practices, and in keeping with the principles underpinning language learning in primary schools, a pupil who is exempt from the study of Irish should be included in a meaningful way in aspects of Irish language and cultural activities in line with his/her ability and interests.

Where a pupil has English as an Additional Language (EAL) needs, he/she should be provided with access to an intensive EAL programme in preparation for his/her full engagement with the Primary Language Curriculum at a level commensurate with his/her ability.

7. What are the arrangements for pupils who do not meet the criteria for an exemption from the study of Irish?
Pupils with Special Educational needs who do not meet the criteria for an exemption from the study of Irish should be provided with a differentiated approach to language learning and any other supports in accordance with Guidelines for supporting pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools and with Special Educational Needs: A Continuum of Support.

In such cases, the school should review how a differentiated learning approach can be provided to best assist the pupil to engage in their learning to the greatest extent possible and at a level appropriate to their needs. The principal can also consider a consultation with a psychologist from the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS).
8. How should information about a pupil’s Certificate of Exemption be shared between schools?

Where an exemption from the study of Irish is granted to a pupil in a mainstream school, a Certificate of Exemption (see Appendix 5), should be completed and issued to the parent(s)/guardian(s).

In the case of a pupil transitioning to a mainstream school/class from a special school/class, in order to assist transition, the Principal of the special school/class should provide the pupil with a Certificate of Exemption granted in accordance with Section 1.2 of the Circular. The pupil’s Student Support File should be up-to-date and a copy of the Certificate of Exemption included.

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.

9. What are the recommended assessment tests?

The Department of Education and Skills has published a short note of Guidance on Test Selection which can be accessed here: https://www.education.ie/en/Parents/Information/Irish-Exemption/. Guidance on assessment and intervention can also be found at https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/Resources-Publications.html. Advice on the appropriate tests to use for a particular purpose and details regarding their administration is also available from NEPS, NCSE and the test publishers themselves.

10. Enquiries on the Irish Exemption Circulars

E-mail: CAP_Helpdesk@education.gov.ie
Address: Curriculum and Assessment Policy Unit
Department of Education and Skills
Marlborough Street
Dublin 1.
D01 RC96
Phone: 01-889 2257 / 2384

11. Enquiries on the Irish Exemption Appeals Process

E-mail: irishexemptionappeal@education.gov.ie
Address: Schools Financial and Database Section
Department of Education and Skills
Cornamaddy
Athlone
Co. Westmeath.
N37 X659
Phone: (090) 648 3896 / 4269 / 4030
APPENDIX 1: GLOSSARY

**Differentiated Learning Experience**
Differentiation is a framework for effective teaching that involves providing different pupils with different avenues to learning. It is a process within which differences between learners are accommodated, so that all student or pupils in a group have meaningful access to the curriculum and can participate in their learning. It ensures that what a student learns, how he/she learns and how that learning is demonstrated is a match for the readiness level, interest and preferred mode of learning for each individual. Differentiation is a proactive way of adjusting teaching and learning methods that involves planning at an individual teacher and whole school level.

**English-medium school**
An English-medium school is a school where English (L1) is the primary language of instruction, except in the case of Irish. In English-medium schools, the Primary Language Curriculum requires that both Irish and English are used in its delivery.

**Guidelines for Primary Schools: Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools**
These guidelines support schools in the implementation of the revised model for allocating special education teaching resources. Effective provision for pupils with special educational needs is situated within an inclusive whole-school framework which emphasises effective teaching and learning for all and good collaboration and engagement between schools, parents/guardians and pupils.

https://www.education.ie/en/The-Education-System/Special-Education/

**Inclusive Education**
The NCSE (2011) described inclusion as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of learners. It involves removing barriers so that each learner will be enabled to achieve the maximum benefit from his/her schooling. www.ncse.ie/inclusive-education-framework and https://www.sess.ie/special-education-teacher-allocation/primary/continuing-professional-development-cpd-primary

**Key Points of Review**
Under the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, standardised assessments are now compulsory at three mandatory points. Section 6.4 of Circular 0056/2011 states that schools are required to implement standardised testing in English Reading and Mathematics during the period May/June for all pupils in 2nd, 4th and 6th classes.


**Primary Language Curriculum**
The Primary Language Curriculum is for teachers of children of all abilities, in all school contexts. The integrated curriculum provides support to teachers to help each child to achieve the learning for oral language, reading and writing. This policy is in keeping with the 20 year Strategy for the Irish Language (2010).

http://www.curriculumonline.ie/primary
Progression Criteria
The Progression Criteria of the Primary Language Curriculum provide teachers with a framework to help them make informed decisions to support the language learning of pupils and to identify the next steps in language learning.

Special Educational Needs: A Continuum of Support
The Department of Education and Skills has set out the Continuum of Support framework to assist schools in identifying and responding to pupils’ needs. This framework recognises that special educational needs occur along a continuum, ranging from mild to severe, and from transient to long term, and that pupils require different levels of support depending on their identified educational needs.
https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/Resources-Publications.html

Special Education Teacher Allocation
Under the revised model, the Department provides special education teaching supports directly to schools based on their educational profiles (including a baseline component). It offers schools greater autonomy to allocate teaching resources flexibly, based on pupils’ needs, without the requirement for a diagnosis of disability. A key principle underpinning this model is that all pupils, irrespective of special educational needs, are welcomed and enabled to enrol in their local schools.

Student Support File
A Student Support File has been developed to enable schools to plan interventions and to track a pupil’s pathway through the Continuum of Support. It facilitates teachers in documenting progress and needs over time and assists them in providing an appropriate level of support to pupils, in line with their level of need. The Student Support File keeps together all the information about the support of the pupil: information gathered, plans, interventions and review, informed by consultations with other professionals where relevant.

Student Support Plan
Provision for pupils with special educational needs is enhanced through clear identification processes and careful planning of interventions to address academic and/or personal and social development needs. Identification of needs, planning, target-setting and monitoring of outcomes are essential elements of an integrated and collaborative problem-solving process. Details are recorded in the Student Support Plan.

Persistent
Significant and persistent difficulties with reading despite access to learning opportunities that are effective and appropriate for most other children, whatever the reason.
APPENDIX 2: APPLICATION FOR EXEMPTION FROM THE STUDY OF IRISH

Application for Exemption from the Study of Irish
Primary Schools
For completion by the parent(s)/guardian(s)

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I/We wish to apply for an exemption from the study of Irish on behalf of ___________________

Please indicate (✓) the ground for applying for an exemption from the study of Irish in accordance with Circular 0052/2019.

2.2a: pupils whose education up to 12 years of age (or up to and including the final year of primary education) was received outside the state and where they did not have opportunity to engage in the study of Irish.  

2.2b: pupils who were previously enrolled as recognised pupils in primary schools who are being re-enrolled after a period spent abroad, provided that at least three consecutive years have elapsed since the previous enrolment in the state and are at least 12 years of age on re-enrolment.

2.2c: pupils who have at least reached second class and present with significant and persistent learning difficulties and present with a Standardised Score in a discrete test at/below the 10th percentile in either Word Reading, Reading Comprehension or Spelling.

2.2d: children of foreigners who are diplomatic or consular representatives in Ireland.

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

1. __________________________________________________________________________

2. __________________________________________________________________________

3. __________________________________________________________________________

4. __________________________________________________________________________

I/we the undersigned understand that documentation provided may be reviewed for the purpose of processing this application by relevant school personnel and other professionals where necessary.

Signed _______________________________ Date: __________________________

Signed _______________________________ Date: __________________________

For the school:

Date of receipt of application:

Principal: ___________________ Date: ___________________

School roll number: ________________
APPENDIX 3: A QUICK GUIDE TO PROCESSING APPLICATIONS

**Written application for Exemption from the study of Irish to the school**
(Process application within 21 school days)

- Confirm application is in line with Circular sub-paragraph 2.2a or 2.2b or 2.2d
- Consultation with the parent(s)/guardian(s)/student/pupil
  - Advise of process and possible implications of being exempt from Irish
- Review evidence of age and stage in primary education (2.2a)
  - Review evidence of age, time spent outside of the state, and periods of previous enrolments in the state as a recognised pupil/student (2.2b)
- Review evidence of the diplomatic status of parent/guardian (2.2d)

- Confirm application is in line with Circular sub-paragraph 2.2c
- Consultation with the parent(s)/guardian(s)/student/pupil
  - Advise of process and possible implications of being exempt from Irish
- Consult class teacher and SET team
- Confirm pupil/student has at least reached second class
- Review evidence of response to targeted intervention as recorded in Student Support File
- Review literacy attainment scores at time of application

**Complete Checklist**

**Meets Criteria –**
Issue Certificate of Exemption
Record decision on POD

- Advise of option not to exercise the exemption granted, without any loss of the right to exercise it at a future time.

**Does not meet criteria –**
Confirm decision in writing

- Advise of option to appeal the school’s decision to the Irish Exemptions Appeal Committee
APPENDIX 4: CHECKLISTS FOR PROCESSING APPLICATIONS

Checklist for processing applications for exemption from the study of Irish in accordance with Circular 0052/2019 **Subsection 2.2a:** ................................................................. **Page 14**

*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*

Checklist for processing applications for exemption from the study of Irish in accordance with Circular 0052/2019 **Subsection 2.2b:** ................................................................. **Page 16**

*Pupils who are re-enrolling following a period spent abroad, provided that at least three consecutive years have elapsed since the previous enrolment in the state and are at least 12 years of age on re-enrolment*

Checklist for processing applications for exemption from the study of Irish in accordance with Circular 0052/2019 **Subsection 2.2c** ................................................................. **Page 18**

*Pupils who have at least reached second class and present with significant and persistent learning difficulties and present with a Standardised Score in a discrete test at/below the 10th percentile in either Word Reading, Reading Comprehension or Spelling*

Checklist for processing applications for exemption from the study of Irish in accordance with Circular 0052/2019 **Subsection 2.2d** ................................................................. **Page 20**

*Children of foreigners who are diplomatic or consular representatives in Ireland*
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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

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<td>Name of pupil</td>
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1. RECEIVING THE APPLICATION
   a) The date on which the school received the application is recorded on the form. [Yes | No]
   b) Receipt of the application has been acknowledged in writing and the parent(s)/guardian(s) has/have been informed that the application will be processed within 21 school days of date of receipt. [Yes | No]

2. CONSIDERING THE APPLICATION
   a) The written application and supporting documentation have been discussed with parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupil. [Yes | No]
   b) The parent(s)/guardian(s) has/have been advised of the next steps in processing the application. [Yes | No]
   c) The parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupil have been informed of any implications of an exemption from the study of Irish now and into the future. [Yes | No]
   d) The parent(s)/guardian(s) has/have been informed that a signed Certificate of Exemption will issue where a decision is reached that an exemption is being granted. [Yes | No]
   e) Where an application is refused, the parent(s)/guardian(s) has/have been informed of the reason(s) as to why it was refused and that the school’s decision may be appealed to the Irish Exemptions Appeal Committee within 30 days from the date the decision of the school is notified in writing. [Yes | No]
   f) The arrangements (as per section 6 of the Guidelines), in the case of an exemption being granted, have been explained to the parent(s)/guardian(s)/pupil. [Yes | No]
   g) Evidence of the pupil's attendance at a school(s) outside the state up to 12 years of age (or up to and including the final year of his/her primary education) and where he/she did not have opportunity to engage in the study of Irish has been examined. [Yes | No]
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<td>h) The pupil’s educational experience and/or progress has been considered.</td>
<td>Yes ☐ No ☐</td>
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3. **CONFIRMING A DECISION**

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<td>a) The above named pupil received his/her education up to 12 years of age (or up to and including the final year of his/her primary education) where he/she did not have opportunity to engage in the study of Irish.</td>
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<td>b) An exemption from the study of Irish is granted ☐ or An exemption from the study of Irish is not granted ☐</td>
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Where an application for exemption is refused, please note reason(s).

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</table>

**COMMUNICATING AND RECORDING THE DECISION**

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<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. The outcome of the application has been confirmed in writing to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the reason(s) for not granting an exemption where relevant.</td>
<td>Yes ☐ No ☐</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Arrangements have been made for the retention of the application form and all supporting documentation, including a Copy of the Certificate of Exemption where applicable, and this Checklist, in accordance with data protection law.</td>
<td>Yes ☐ No ☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Principal: ___________________
Date: ___________________
# Checklist for Processing Applications for Exemption from the Study of Irish

Pupils who are re-enrolling following a period spent abroad, provided that at least three consecutive years have elapsed since the previous enrolment in the state and are at least 12 years of age on re-enrolment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of school</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School roll number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of pupil</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of birth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil PPSN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 1. Receiving the Application

a) The date on which the school received the application is recorded on the form.  
   - Yes ☑ | No ☐

b) Receipt of the application has been acknowledged in writing and the parent(s)/guardian(s) have been informed that the application will be processed within 21 school days of date of receipt.  
   - Yes ☑ | No ☐

## 2. Considering the Application

a) The written application and supporting documentation have been discussed with parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupil.  
   - Yes ☑ | No ☐

b) The parent(s)/guardian(s)/ pupil have been advised of the next steps in processing the application.  
   - Yes ☑ | No ☐

c) The parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupil have been informed of any implications of an exemption from the study of Irish now and into the future.  
   - Yes ☑ | No ☐

d) The parent(s)/guardian(s) has/have been informed that a signed Certificate of Exemption will issue where a decision is reached that an exemption may be granted.  
   - Yes ☑ | No ☐

e) The parent(s)/guardian(s) has/have been informed that where an application is refused that the school’s decision may be appealed to the Irish Exemptions Appeal Committee within 30 days from the date the decision of the school is notified in writing.  
   - Yes ☑ | No ☐

f) The arrangements (as per section 6 of the Guidelines), in the case of an exemption being granted, have been explained to the parent(s)/guardian(s)/pupil.  
   - Yes ☑ | No ☐

g) Relevant evidence about the pupil’s previous enrolment (including dates) and attendance at a school(s) outside the state has been examined.  
   - Yes ☑ | No ☐

h) The pupil’s educational experience and/or progress has been considered.  
   - Yes ☑ | No ☐
### 3. CONFIRMING A DECISION

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. The above named pupil has reached 12 years of age.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. At least three consecutive years have elapsed since the above named pupil was last enrolled in a school in this state.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**An exemption from the study of Irish is granted**

**or**

**An exemption from the study of Irish is not granted**

Where an application for exemption is refused, please note reason(s).

### COMMUNICATING AND RECORDING THE DECISION

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<tr>
<td>4. The outcome of the application has been confirmed in writing to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the reason(s) for not granting an exemption where relevant.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Arrangements have been made for the retention of the application form and all supporting documentation, including a Copy of the Certificate of Exemption where applicable, and this checklist, in accordance with data protection law.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Principal: ___________________

Date: ___________________
**CHECKLIST FOR PROCESSING APPLICATIONS FOR EXEMPTION FROM THE STUDY OF IRISH IN ACCORDANCE WITH CIRCULAR 0052/2019 2.2c**

*Pupils who have at least reached second class and present with significant and persistent learning difficulties and present with a Standardised Score in a discrete test at/below the 10th percentile in either Word Reading, Reading Comprehension or Spelling*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of school</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School roll number</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Name of pupil</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Date of birth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil PPSN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1. RECEIVING THE APPLICATION

- **a)** The date on which the school received the application is recorded on the form.  
  - Yes
  - No

- **b)** Receipt of the application has been acknowledged in writing and the parent(s)/guardian(s)/pupil have been informed that the application will be processed within 21 school days of date of receipt.  
  - Yes
  - No

### 2. CONSIDERING THE APPLICATION

- **a)** The written application and supporting documentation have been discussed with parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupil.  
  - Yes
  - No

- **b)** The parent(s)/guardian(s) has/have been advised of the next steps in processing the application.  
  - Yes
  - No

- **c)** The parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupil have been informed of any implications of an exemption from the study of Irish now and into the future.  
  - Yes
  - No

- **d)** The parent(s)/guardian(s) have been informed that a signed Certificate of Exemption will issue where a decision is reached that an exemption may be granted.  
  - Yes
  - No

- **e)** The parent(s)/guardian(s) has/have been informed that where an application is refused that the school’s decision may be appealed to the Irish Exemptions Appeal Committee within 30 days from the date the decision of the school is notified in writing.  
  - Yes
  - No

- **f)** The arrangements (as per section 6 of the Guidelines), in the case of an exemption being granted, have been explained to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the pupil.  
  - Yes
  - No

- **g)** The pupil’s Student Support File has been reviewed.  
  - Yes
  - No
### 3. CONFIRMING A DECISION

**a)** The above named pupil

i. has at least reached second class

And

ii. presents with significant learning difficulties that are persistent despite having had access to a differentiated approach to language and literacy in both Irish and English over time as evidenced in the Student Support File including

- 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. At the time of application for exemption, the above named pupil presents with a Standardised Score on a discrete test in either Word Reading or Reading Comprehension or Spelling at/below the 10\(^{th}\) percentile

**b)** An exemption from the study of Irish is granted

**or**

An exemption from the study of Irish is **not granted**

Where an application for exemption is refused, please note reason(s).

### COMMUNICATING AND RECORDING THE DECISION

**4.** The outcome of the application has been confirmed in writing to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the reason(s) for not granting an exemption where relevant.

**5.** Arrangements have been made for the retention of the application form and all supporting documentation, including a Copy of the Certificate of Exemption where applicable, and this checklist, in accordance with data protection law.

Principal: ___________________

Date: ___________________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHECKLIST FOR PROCESSING APPLICATIONS FOR EXEMPTION FROM THE STUDY OF IRISH IN ACCORDANCE WITH CIRCULAR 0052/2019 2.2d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children of foreigners who are diplomatic or consular representatives in Ireland</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of school</th>
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<th>Date of birth</th>
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</table>

1. RECEIVING THE APPLICATION

   a. The date on which the school received the application is recorded on the form.  
      - Yes □ No □

   b. Receipt of the application has been acknowledged in writing and the parent(s)/guardian(s) has/have been informed that the application will be processed within 21 school days of date of receipt.  
      - Yes □ No □

2. CONSIDERING THE APPLICATION

   a. The written application and supporting documentation have been discussed with parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupil.  
      - Yes □ No □

   b. The parent(s)/guardian(s) has/have been advised of the next steps in processing the application.  
      - Yes □ No □

   c. The parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupil have been informed of any implications of an exemption from the study of Irish now and into the future.  
      - Yes □ No □

   d. The parent(s)/guardian(s) has/have been informed that a signed Certificate of Exemption will issue where a decision is reached that an exemption may be granted.  
      - Yes □ No □

   e. The parent(s)/guardian(s) have been informed that where an application is refused that the school’s decision may be appealed to the Irish Exemptions Appeal Committee within 30 days from the date the decision of the school is notified in writing.  
      - Yes □ No □

   f. The arrangements (as per section 6 of the Guidelines), in the case of an exemption being granted, have been explained to the parent(s)/guardian(s)/pupil.  
      - Yes □ No □
### CONFIRM A DECISION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The above named pupil is a child of a foreign diplomatic and/or consular representative in Ireland.</th>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>An exemption from the study of Irish is <strong>granted</strong></th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>An exemption from the study of Irish is <strong>not granted</strong></th>
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Where an application for exemption is refused, please note reason(s).

### COMMUNICATING AND RECORDING THE DECISION

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<tr>
<th>4.</th>
<th>The outcome of the application has been confirmed in writing to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the reason(s) for not granting an exemption where relevant.</th>
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Principal: ___________________

Date: ___________________
CERTIFICATE OF EXEMPTION FROM THE STUDY OF IRISH
Circular 0052/2019

Name of pupil: ____________________________
Date of birth: _____________

Name of school: ____________________________ Roll Number: __________
School Address: ______________________________________________________

The above-named pupil has been granted an exemption from the study of Irish in accordance with the terms of Circular 0052/2019 and on the grounds of the following exceptional circumstance (please ✓ as appropriate):

1.2 The pupil was enrolled in a recognised Special School or Special Class in a mainstream school* ✓

2.2 a. The pupil received his/her education up to 12 years of age (or up to and including the final year of primary education outside the state and where he/she did not have opportunity to engage in the study of Irish). ✓

2.2 b. The pupil was previously enrolled as a recognised pupil in primary school and is being re-enrolled after a period of not less than three consecutive years spent abroad and is 12 years of age on re-enrolment. ✓

2.2 c. The pupil has at least reached second class and presents with significant learning difficulties that are persistent despite having had access to targeted intervention to support language and literacy learning in both Irish and English 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 d. The pupil is the child of a foreigner(s) who is/are diplomatic or consular representatives in Ireland. ✓

Possible implications of exemption from the study of Irish for my son/daughter have been explained to me.

Signed: ____________________________  Signed: ____________________________
Parent/Guardian                  Parent/Guardian
Date: ____________________________  Date: ____________________________

Signed: ____________________________
School principal
Date: ____________________________

(* See Section 8 of these guidelines)