



cetb
Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Chorcaí
*Cork Education and
Training Board*

Policy for spoken Irish

1. General

1.1 Scope

This policy applies to all students, parents and staff of Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí Leighin and is in place during school, school activities, school trips and state examinations. This policy was drawn up in consultation with all the school's stakeholders.

1.2 Connection with the school's characteristic spirit

Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí Leighin is a community of learning excellence in an all Irish-speaking environment, which supports and challenges each pupil to reach their potential academically, personally, socially and morally, and is underpinned by core values of respect, fairness and integrity.

The importance of parental/guardian participation is central as we strive towards the realisation of the school's aims.

The cornerstone of the school's expectation of the highest standards of communication are the use of the Irish language in all forms of communication.

We believe that support and encouragement are necessary for the growth and development of the Irish language. Students are praised and recognised for high standards of effort with their Irish. Emphasis is placed on the value of positive rather than negative reinforcement.

1.3 Context

This policy was developed in consultation with all stakeholders of the school, in agreement with the school's characteristic spirit and with students' Wellbeing as core. The policy should be read in the context of the School Tours Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Acceptable Usage of Technology Policy, Code of Behaviour, Wellbeing Policy and Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí Leighin's Suspension and Expulsion Policy. Special emphasis is placed on the importance of Irish in the growth and development of our students. The highest standards of excellence in every task are strongly encouraged. The use of the Irish language amongst the students is a very important representation of those standards.

1.4 Rationale

Practice makes perfection, and a central part of the ethos of the school is that Irish is the language of communication in the school.

These important school values foster and support the highest standards of teaching and learning.

1.5 Goals

The goals of this policy are:

- a) To enhance the wellbeing of each member of the school community, and to strengthen the ethos and characteristic spirit of the school.
- b) To increase student responsibility in terms of their learning;
- c) To implement effective processes in order for the school to function effectively;
- d) To foster and preserve independent learners;
- e) To nurture responsible citizens;
- f) To clarify for parents, students, teachers and school management the high standards of communication that are expected;
- g) To share with the school community the strategies that may be used in the school to encourage use of the Irish language;
- h) To summarise the sanctions that may be used to address use of English.

2. Policy Content

- a) Gaeilge is the language of communication and learning in Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí Leighin.
- b) We are very proud of our extremely rich cultural heritage, and we aim to instil that pride and love for all aspects of our unique culture in our pupils.
- c) Gaeilge is the spoken language of the school, both inside and outside our classrooms, of our social interactions, and of all school events. The only exception to this is the language classes which are conducted through their own medium.
- d) The business of our school partners (with the exception of Coiste na dTuistí) is conducted through the medium of Irish.

- e) A system of praise and encouragement is used to encourage pupils, and to acknowledge their efforts to improve their spoken Irish. We believe that praise and encouragement are paramount to success. Additional support is given to students who find spoken Irish challenging.
- f) Priority is given to our native Irish culture in our curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. School activities which support the school's ethos, the school community, and the Irish language are encouraged.
- g) Visitors to Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí Leighin are encouraged to conduct their business through the medium of Irish.
- h) In the interests of the promotion of the school and to share expertise, positive relations shall be fostered between the school community, the media, Gaeltacht schools, all-Irish media and social media both print and electronic (including Tg4, Feasta, Comhar, RnaG, Tuairisc.ie, Comhar, Gael-linn) , all-Irish speaking schools and organizations which promote the Irish language.
- i) Attention shall be paid to the most up to date and forward-thinking research in the areas of bilingualism, teaching and learning of Irish, the integration of teaching the language and the subjects, and in the revival of the spoken language.
- j) Our journey of learning is shared by all members of the school community. Reviews will be carried out on an on-going basis as to how best to promote the language in the school community, and how best to raise the standard and accuracy of spoken Irish in keeping with the ethos of Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí Leighin and its School Improvement Plan.
- k) A support network exists between teachers who recognise a need to improve their spoken Irish and the stakeholders of the school.
- l) Irish is a core part of the School Improvement Plan every year.
- m) School signs are in Irish and will be given priority placing in the case of bilingualism.
- n) It is imperative that parents/guardians have a genuine interest in the Irish language. Parents/Guardians are informed of this defining characteristic of the school prior to registration. It is expected that parents/guardians will support the school in the application of this defining characteristic.
- o) Parents/Guardians must sign a contract accepting the Spoken Irish Policy prior to registering in the school.

- p) Parents/Guardians can support their child and the work of the school by improving their own Irish by attending Irish classes, by speaking Irish in the school environment, by encouraging their child to speak Irish outside of school, and to speak with their child regularly as to why they chose an All-Irish school.
- q) The Irish Rule is broken when a full sentence, or most of a sentence is spoken in English.
- r) In the context of the State Exams, it is imperative that students can speak Irish, write in Irish, read in Irish and understand Irish. Every student should use the opportunities afforded to them in an all-Irish environment such as this school to their full advantage. These skills will not develop without practicing them. Practice makes perfect.
- s) Being able to communicate our thoughts, opinions and feelings effectively contributes greatly to student's wellbeing. When students speak Irish socially, the ability to communicate improves greatly, and as a result, students experience greater enjoyment of their second-level experience.

3.Sanctions for Speaking English

The Irish language is one of the foundation stones of this school and it is important to encourage students to communicate in Irish. On the other hand, it is necessary to have a process and steps in place for those who are not willing to communicate in the language of the school. The following steps will be taken this year for those speaking in English;

- Step 1 Note on VS Ware
- Step 2 Note on VS Ware and one Support Class at Lunch Break
- Step 3 Note on VS Ware and two Support Classes at Lunch Break, with flexibility.
- Step 4 Note on VS Ware and two Support Classes at Lunch Break, with no flexibility.
- Step 5 Note on VS Ware, a Reflection Period after school, and a letter sent home.
- Step 6 Note on VS Ware, a Reflection Period after school and a meeting between the pupil and the Principal.
- Step 7 Note on VS Ware, a Reflection Period after school and a meeting between the student and their parents/guardians.
- Step 8 Remove permission for that student to attend their next school trip.
- Step 9 The student's future in the school to be discussed.

* Students will be afforded the opportunity to receive notes for being Gaeilgeoirí galánta also. Should a student receive a note for being a Gaeilgeoir Galánta, they will move back a step on the ladder above, should they have received notes for speaking English.

Signed:

Chairperson of Board: _____

Principal: _____

Date: _____

The policy is available to all school partners. It is published in Student Journals and on the school website. It will be reviewed on an on-going basis.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of the school on March 9th, 2016.

It was reviewed on September 26th, 2023.