

# St Fergal's College Rathdowney, Exemption from the Study of Irish Policy

## **Aims and Objectives:**

1. To allow for students of differing abilities, interests, and circumstances.
2. To enhance inclusion within the school and to streamline the full integration of all
3. To comply with guidelines given in Circular Letter 53/19

## **Categories of students eligible:**

The grounds for making an application for exemption from the study of Irish are listed in Section 2.2 of Circular 0053/2019 which sets out the exceptional circumstances in which consideration may be given to granting a student an exemption from the study of Irish. These are:

- a. students whose education up to 12 years of age (or up to 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,
- b. students who were previously enrolled as recognised students in a primary or post- primary school 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,
- c.
  - i. students who 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
    1. regular reviews of learning needs as part of an ongoing cycle of assessment
    2. target-setting
    3. evidence-informed intervention and review, including test scores (word reading, reading comprehension, spelling, other scores of language/literacy) at key points of review. and
  - ii. 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**.

## **Granting an exemption from the study of Irish**

A written application for an exemption is made by the parent or guardian to the school principal on behalf of their child or the student themselves if they are over 18. The application should state the reasons why the exemption is being sought and a form is provided for this (Appendix 1). The student must meet one of the criteria mentioned above.

In deciding whether to grant or refuse an exemption, the Principal will, as relevant, consult with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student on whose behalf the application is being made, or the student where he/she is the applicant, and relevant school personnel in order to satisfy himself/herself that all key evidence has been assessed.

A meeting will take place with the Principal, SENCO or relevant Special Education Teacher (SET), parents and students. The consequences of an exemption from Irish will be explained to parents and student. Parents will be given a copy of all relevant documentation.

### **Processing the 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 after they have been reviewed by the Special Educational Needs Coordinator or relevant SET. The formal written application submitted by the parent(s)/guardian(s)/student must indicate the exceptional circumstance that forms the basis for the application in accordance with criteria explained above.

In considering the application, the principal will:

1. Ensure that the date of receipt of the application by the school is recorded on the form.
2. Acknowledge receipt of the application for exemption from the study of Irish in writing.
3. Discuss the written application with the parent(s)/guardian(s)/student and confirm the criteria on which the application is based as soon as practicable following receipt of a written application.
4. Advise the parent(s)/guardian(s)/student of the next steps in processing the application.
5. Inform the parent(s)/guardian(s)/student regarding any implication of an exemption from the study of Irish for the student while in post-primary education and into the future.
6. Inform the parent(s)/guardian(s)/student that the application will be processed and the outcome confirmed in writing within 21 school days of receipt of the application.
7. Explain to the parent(s)/guardian(s)/student that a signed Certificate of Exemption will issue where a decision is reached that an exemption from the study of Irish may be granted.
8. Inform the parent(s)/guardian(s)/student that, where an application is refused, the reason(s) as to why it was refused; and 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)/student.
9. Explain to the parent(s)/guardian(s)/student, and the student on whose behalf the application has been made, the arrangements for the student's learning in the case of an exemption being granted.
10. Use the provided Quick Guide and Checklists (Appendix 2 and Appendix 3) to guide the processing of applications in the case of the relevant sub-paragraph in Section 2.2 of the Circular.
11. Convey the outcome of the application in writing to the parent(s)/guardian(s)/student.
12. Make arrangements for the retention of the application form and all supporting documentation, including a copy of the Certificate of Exemption (Appendix 4) where applicable, and the Checklist in accordance with data protection law.

### **Record keeping / Reporting**

All documentation concerning the application and processing process will be maintained in the

Principal's Exemption File as relevant and be available for review by authorised Department of Education and Skills officials. The Principal will report relevant information concerning Irish exemptions to the Department of Education and Skills.

#### **Arrangements for students who are exempt from the study of Irish**

Where a student has been granted an exemption from Irish due to learning needs they shall attend support classes to address their learning needs. If a student is granted an exemption on other grounds they also attend the support class and study independently.

#### **Sharing information of student's Certificate of Exemption between schools**

It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) or the student (where he/she is the applicant) to ensure that a copy of the student's Certificate of Exemption is made available to St Fergal's College on enrolment into the school.

#### **Further Information and Guidance:**

Further information including Application Forms, Guidance Information, and Appeals Form can be found on the Department of Education & Skills website at this link:

<https://www.education.ie/en/Parents/Information/Irish-Exemption/>

**APPENDIX 1: APPLICATION FORM FOR EXEMPTION FROM THE STUDY OF IRISH**  
**Application for Exemption from the Study of Irish Post-Primary Schools**

For completion by the parent(s)/guardian(s) on behalf of a student or a student who has reached 18 years of age

**Name of student:**

---

**Date of birth:**

---

**Year:**

---

**Name of school:**

---

I/We wish to apply for an exemption from the study of Irish on behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ or I \_\_\_\_\_ (student who has reached 18 years) wish to apply for an exemption from the study of Irish. Please indicate the grounds for applying for an exemption from the study of Irish in accordance with Circular 0053/2019

2.2a: Students 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: Students who were previously enrolled as a recognised student in a primary or post primary school 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: Students who 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.

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.


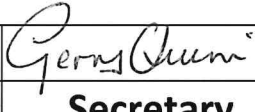
Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**For the school:**

Date of receipt of application: \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
School roll number: \_\_\_\_\_

Adopted by Board of Management : 16<sup>th</sup> February 2022

<b>Signed:</b>			16 <sup>th</sup> Feb. 2022
	<b>Chairperson</b>	<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Date</b>



## **St Fergal's College**

### **Remote Teaching and Learning Policy/Distance Learning Policy**

This Remote Teaching and Learning Policy reflects the changed circumstances brought about by Covid-19 and the significant increase in the use of technology to continue teaching and learning. This policy outlines procedures for the delivery of online classes remotely. It is a "living document", which can be amended as knowledge and skills develop in this area of teaching and learning. The creation of this policy involved research and consultation with the local education partners.

#### **Introduction**

This document sets out the policy of the school in respect of use of technology for distance or remote teaching and learning.

#### **Scope of this Policy**

This policy covers significant aspects of student distance learning as used by teachers in St Fergal's College.

In all cases, students and teachers must login in with their **stfc.ie** account to communicate. Students are not to use any other account under any circumstances for the purposes of Distance eLearning within the College.

The main platform for communication will be Office 365. The list of applications that used for distance learning are:

- Microsoft Outlook (e-mail)
- Microsoft Teams
- Microsoft OneNote
- Microsoft Forms

Teachers may use additional applications. The teacher will provide the student with the information required to access them. They must, in all cases, use a stfc.ie account as the login.

#### **Remote Teaching and Learning**

Teachers may use different methods and learning activities. For example:

- Teachers may use regular live classes with Teams.
- Teachers may also organise other student learning tasks and activities, but structured appropriately for timetable classes.

Students should follow their school timetable to structure their daily work. The evening should be for "homework" and/or study. It is recommended that students maintain journals as normal.

In all cases, the primary aim is to cover the required curriculum areas for their specific subject. The teacher will decide the most effective methods to use to achieve this aim. Students should get in touch with their teacher right away if they are having difficulty with any aspect of their subject or if they are finding the workload unmanageable.

## **Everyone's Responsibilities while partaking in eLearning**

For staff and teachers:

- Teachers have primary management of the online interaction of their class.
- Disruptive students may be reported to the Year Head if a teacher's intervention is unsuccessful.
- Teachers will do their utmost to be available at the identified time on their timetable – this may be via Teams video, through Teams chat or by e-mail.

For students

- It is a student's responsibility to ensure they engage in online learning and highlight any issue that arises to their teacher/Year Head.
- Connectivity and device access issues should be communicated to the Year Head from a parent/guardians' email address
- Issues with connectivity/devices can be communicated to a Year Head through parent/guardian. Issues with passwords must be addressed in the first instance by using the reset password facility.
- Good online etiquette is always expected. Students must always be civil and respectful in all communication and online interactions
- Students are to communicate through their stfc.ie account only. The use of any other account or e-mail address is expressly prohibited.
- Do not engage in communications with any account other than a stfc.ie account and report any such activity to your teacher or Year Head at their stfc.ie e-mail account.
- Students are not to record or forward any content obtained in a Teams group – such as worksheets, exam papers, answers, solutions, videos, notes – to anyone else without the permission of the creator of that content
- Disruptive, uncooperative or non-compliant students will be removed from the eLearning platform in order to allow those who wish to partake have a fair chance to do so. Repeatedly disruptive students may receive a sanction including a temporary or complete ban from all online access
- Students may contact a teacher through stfc email or teams direct chat facility. Teachers may not be always available to respond after school hours.

For parents:

- You should ensure that your son or daughter, the student, is checking in regularly for assigned work
- Where live classes are occurring parents/guardians should ensure the student is in an area of the house that is quiet and free from distractions. If the video is switched on then the Teams option to blur the background should be used.
- Only the St Fergal's College registered student should view live online classes.
- Any issues with connectivity/devices should be communicated as soon as possible to the Year Head from the parent /guardian.

## **Live Online Classes**

Teachers may deliver some of the course “live” using Teams. This includes varying combinations of audio, video, virtual whiteboards and screencasts.

Expectations in the use of Teams:

- Students must always follow the direction of their teacher just as in the classroom.
- Students are not to turn on their microphone unless the teacher invites them to speak to avoid distracting background noise being broadcast to everyone.
- A Teams link is intended for the student only. The teacher will decide who should receive the link. Do not forward any link to anyone else.
- Only the teacher is allowed to record a session. No-one else is permitted to record.
- Students are expressly forbidden from organising any activity on our applications e.g. meetings unless organised and managed by a teacher.

Our Remote Teaching and Learning/Distance eLearning Policy operates with our Internet Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP) and School Code of Behaviour. The school will monitor the behaviour of students and keep appropriate records for the implementation of our policies.

With a view to achieving the best possible engagement from students with remote teaching and learning teachers will take roll calls for live online classes. In addition, teachers will monitor student engagement with other learning activities, using both their professional observations and technological mechanisms available with Microsoft applications. St Fergal’s College will also seek to support, in whatever ways we can, students and families, which may require support with the various challenges presented by this form of teaching and learning.

**Adopted in principle by the Board of Management 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020 to allow for amendments by the Students’ Council which are incorporated.**

**Amendments adopted by the Board of Management 25<sup>th</sup> March 2021.**

Chairperson.......... Secretary.......... 25<sup>th</sup> March 2021