

EXEMPTION FROM THE STUDY OF IRISH (other than those not attending primary school in Ireland)

Primary Level

A pupil is not allowed to be exempt from the study of Irish simply because he or she is dyslexic, or because they find the subject difficult.

Children may be exempted from studying Irish in Primary School if their reading and spelling levels in English are in the bottom ten percent of their age group. To secure an exemption, parents must make a written request to the School Principal and must provide a copy of an assessment report from a Psychologist. This report must be less than two years old and the Psychologist must recommend the granting of an exemption. If the school authorities grant the exemption, then a certificate is given. This should be kept safely as it will be required when the student transfers to second level school. Once the exemption has been granted it follows the student right through school.

Relevant departmental circular is 12/96

Second Level

The following is taken from the Guidelines for Psychologists on Assessment and Reporting in relation to exemption from studying Irish in second level schools:

"a school may grant an exemption from the study of Irish only to pupils who function intellectually at average or above average level but have a Specific Learning Disability of such a degree of severity that they fail to achieve expected levels of attainment in basic language skills in the mother tongue.....the criterion for marked failure is taken as a test score at, or below, the 10th percentile....

The application procedure is similar for both secondary and primary schools.