

# Linguistic Rights in Compulsory Education: Country Report: Ireland

Dympna Glendenning\*

## 1. Introduction

Language is one of the central elements of a minority's identity and is at the core of the European Union's (EU) "United in Diversity" principle. Although the EU lacks express competences in this sphere, it has pledged itself to the preservation of linguistic diversity in the Charter of Fundamental Rights and elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the European Court of Justice (ECJ) has contributed significantly to the jurisprudence of the language rights of minorities in Europe in the context of the free movement of persons and the freedom to provide services in the community.

In addition international human rights law plays an important role in setting standards for linguistic rights and for the promotion and protection of the identity of linguistic minority groups and it provides the normative framework for developing principles of democratic governance for multicultural policies aimed at many ethno-linguistic conflicts.<sup>2</sup> The right of everyone to take part in cultural life is stated in Art 15 (1)(a) of the International Covenant on the Economic, Social and Cultural (CESCR) Rights and one of the elements of that right is the right to use one's own language in public or in private as the General Comment No 21 on the CESCR of the 21 Nov 2009 of the United Nations Committee (UNC) points out.<sup>3</sup> The right to express oneself in the language of one's choice<sup>4</sup> is a significant right for minorities, who have the right to preserve, promote and develop their own culture, including their language, which is intrinsically linked to education.<sup>5</sup> This article considers aspects of linguistic rights in compulsory education (6-16 years generally)<sup>6</sup> in Ireland in the light of national, international and EU law.

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## 2. Linguistic Rights in Ireland

In Ireland, with its long and troubled history of colonisation, language issues have always been sensitive nationally, culturally and politically. Long before the concept of EU citizenship was enshrined in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),<sup>7</sup> Thomas Davis, Irish poet, journalist and

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\* Dr Dympna Glendenning is a barrister with a special interest in education law. She was a primary teacher for many years and served as a school principal for 16 years. Dympna is author of *Religion, Education and the Law* (2009) and *Education and the Law* (2012).

1 See Art 22 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, and the European Commission Com, *A New Framework for Multiculturalism*, COM (2005) 596 final, and European Parliament Resolution on Regional and Lesser-Used European Languages (2001), para B. see further A. Van Bossuyt "Fit for Purpose or Faulty Design? Analysis of the Jurisprudence of the ECHR and the ECJ on the Legal Protection of Minorities."

2 UNESCO, MOST programme. With a view to assisting Governments, Parliaments and civil society in this sphere UNESCO has provided its MOST programme including the most germane conventions, declarations and multilateral treaties which pertain to linguistic rights, see [www.unesco.org/most/In2nt.htm](http://www.unesco.org/most/In2nt.htm).

3 At paragraph 1.3. See further B (16)(a) and para 5.32 and paragraph and C (Core Obligations).

4 Paragraph 1.3 of the General Comment No 21 of the UNC.

5 General Comment, No 21, paragraph 1.2 of the UNC.

6 Pursuant to the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 as amended.

7 By Art 20 of TFEU which adds to and does not replace national citizenship.

cultural nationalist (1814-1841), contended that “a people without a language is only half a nation”<sup>8</sup> but many countries, although lacking a language of their own, still manage to retain a strong cultural and national identity. In modern Ireland the Irish language continues to be an important part of national identity although, it appears, many perceive it as being of symbolic importance only.<sup>9</sup> Nonetheless, the survival and evolution of the Irish language, with its literary tradition dating from the late 6th century, has been remarkable. Having been proscribed by English legislation in 1537,<sup>10</sup> it rose Phoenix-like to achieve a higher status nationally under the Official Languages Act 2003,<sup>11</sup> to acquire official recognition as a minority language in Northern Ireland, and to achieve official status as a working language of the European Union (EU) in 2005.<sup>12</sup>

Although the Constitution of Ireland 1937 (the Constitution)<sup>13</sup> was drafted in English and later translated into Irish, Article 8.1 confers the status of “*national language and first official language*” on the Irish language. The following subsection (8.2) recognises the English language as “*a second official language*”. Article 8.3 provides:

“Provision may, however, be made by law for the exclusive use of either of the said languages for any one or more official purposes, either throughout the State or any part thereof.”

Notably, the Constitution did not include any express national policy, aim or objective in respect to the restoration of the Irish language and Articles 42 (Education) and 44 (Religion) are silent on the Irish language issue in schools/education. Accordingly, the compulsory teaching of the Irish language in all primary schools is not an express constitutional principle although this was considered in early constitutional drafts.<sup>14</sup> However, the courts have established that the State has obligations relating to the Irish language.<sup>15</sup>

In *O’Shiel v Minister for Education & Ors*<sup>16</sup> parents and pupils in a Steiner school failed in their constitutional action against the State seeking public funding for the school in accordance with parental choice. The school had been refused recognition, inter alia, on the grounds of the inadequacy of the teaching of Irish in the school. Laffoy J held that a duty to provide for the education of the children of the State, at their first stage of formal teaching and instruction, must involve an obligation to provide for education in the constitutionally recognised first official language of the State. She concluded that the informal regulatory requirement of the *Rules for National Schools* (1965), that teachers who teach in recognised primary schools should have proficiency in Irish, is constitutionally valid. Moreover, Laffoy

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- 8 Griffith, A. and Davis, T. (ed.) (1914), *the thinker and teacher: the essence of his writings in prose and poetry* Gill, Dublin.; Writings, Biography, & Studies, T.S. Rolleston (ed.) online at [www.celt.ie](http://www.celt.ie) Davis, inter alia, sought the revival of the Irish language, contending that it was vital to reverse the anglicisation of Irish culture.
- 9 Watson, I. essay, ‘The Irish Language Identity’ [www.beo.ie/alt](http://www.beo.ie/alt) cited in Phaidin, C. N. and O’ Cearnaigh, S. (2008), *A new View of the Irish Language*, Cois Life.
- 10 An Act for the English Order, Habite and Language 1537.
- 11 The Official Languages Act 2003 provides for the use of the Irish language for official purposes in the State and for the use of both official languages for all official purposes in the State, in Parliamentary proceedings, in Acts of the Oireachtas (Parliament), in communicating with or providing to the public information by public bodies and in the administration of justice: see also *O’Beolain v Fahy* [2001] 2 IR 279.
- 12 When regulation 1 of 15 April 1958 was amended when this came into effect in 2007. See further S. O’Riain [www.seanoraiain.net](http://www.seanoraiain.net): See further S. O’Riain, “*www.seanoraiain.net*: D. Glendenning, Education and the Law, 2nd ed., (2012), chapter 2. Advocate General Darmon recognised that Irish was a minority language in Case 379/87, Groener, judgment of 16 May 1989 ECR 3967 (paragraph 18). See further L. Piccolo, “The European Union and Minority Languages: Evolution, Achievements and Contradictions in the Light of the Treaty of Lisbon, Interdisciplinary Studies vol 1, Feb 2011. See T. Schilling, “Language Rights in the European Union”, Part 1/11, 9 German Law Journal 1219-1242 (2008) available at <http://www.germanlawjournal.com/index.php?page10=11&artD=1014> and see further I. Urrutia & I. Lasagabaster, Language Rights as a General Principle of Community Law” 8 German Law Journal 479(2007).
- 13 Bunreacht na hEireann 1937.
- 14 The De Valera Papers (DVP), Archives in University College, Dublin, Document No 4, *Summary of Draft Heads of the Constitution*, Part IX 2.
- 15 But the State must act lawfully when promoting the Irish language. See *Leyden v A.G.* [1926] IR 334: In re Art 26 and the School Attendance Bill 1942 and *Maunsell v Minister for Education* [1940] IR 213.
- 16 *O’Shiel & Cooleenbridge Ltd v Minister for Education & Ors* [1999] 2 IR 321 (Laffoy J): *O’Foghlotha v McClean* [1934] IR 469: *O’Murchu v Registrar of Companies & Minister for Industry & Commerce* (20 June 1988), unreported, HC.

J noted that such a requirement is also a valid requirement under EU law and in application to the facts and applying the test laid down by the ECJ in *Groener v Minister for Education*,<sup>17</sup> such requirement is neither disproportionate nor discriminatory, she stated.

The *Groener* and *Angonese*<sup>18</sup> decisions are informative because they indicate how far Member States may go when requiring knowledge of a minority language as a condition of access to employment in the host Member State. In *Groener*<sup>19</sup> the ECJ was called upon to balance Ireland's 'special linguistic situation' with the Community's aim of freedom of movement for workers. The applicant, a national of the Netherlands, who had been a part-time teacher of art for two years at the Vocational College of Marketing and Design in Dublin, applied for a permanent post in 1984. While successful in the competition, Ms. Groener failed the proficiency test in oral Irish (the *Ceard Teastas*). On a referral from the Irish High Court, the ECJ held that:

'The EEC Treaty does not prohibit the adoption of a policy for the protection and promotion of a language of a Member State which is both the national language and the first official language. However, the implementation of such a policy must not encroach upon a fundamental freedom such as the free movement of workers. Therefore, the requirements deriving from measures intended to implement such a policy must not in any circumstances be disproportionate in relation to the aim pursued and the manner in which they are applied must not bring about discrimination against nationals of other Member States.'

The ECJ noted the Irish State's long-standing policy for promoting the Irish language through education as a means of expressing national identity and culture and in particular its constitutional status as the national language and the first official language.<sup>20</sup> Consequently the Court interpreted the phrase 'conditions relating to linguistic knowledge required by reason of the nature of the post to be filled' in Art 3 of Regulation 1612/68 in a manner sympathetic to Ireland's cultural and national values and concluded that the nature of the post justified a linguistic requirement. The Court stated:

'The importance of education for the implementation of such a policy must be recognised. Teachers have an essential role to play, not only through the teaching which they provide but also by their participation in the daily life of the school and the privileged relationship which they have with their pupils. In those circumstances it is not unreasonable to require them to have some knowledge of the first national language.'<sup>21</sup>

However, the Court carefully qualified the scope of its decision in *Groener* stating that the level of linguistic knowledge required of the candidate must not be disproportionate in relation to the objective pursued within the meaning of the final paragraph of Art 3(1) of Regulation 1612/68. The Court further required that nationals of other Member States, where they have failed the oral examination, should have an opportunity to re-take such examination when re-applying for a post.<sup>22</sup> While the *Groener* judgment seems ideal from a national standpoint, it was not satisfactory from a Community perspective for in validating the exemption for the protection of the Irish language, it doubly advantaged teachers who were Irish nationals in that they could avail of teacher mobility in all other Member States without the full duty of reciprocation in the host Member State.

17 *Groener v Minister for Education* [1990] IRLM 335.

18 *Angonese v Casa di Risparmio di Bolzano Sp A*, Case C-281/98 [2000] ECR I-04139, Judgment of 6 June 2000. Reference for Preliminary Hearing from Italy. Freedom of movement of persons and access to employment for non-nationals. Certificate of bi-lingualism issued by Local Authority in Italy only, put non-nationals at a disadvantage which constituted discrimination under Art 48 of the Treaty.

19 *Groener v Minister for Education* [1990] IRLM 335: [1989] ECR 3967. p. 9. See earlier case, *Ministere Public v Mutsch*, ECJ, Case 1374/84, Judgment of 11 July 1985.

20 Under Art 8 of the Constitution.

21 *Groener v Minister for Education* [1990] IRLM 335.

22 *Groener v Minister for Education* [1990] IRLM 335: [1989] ECR 39677 at 9, para 23; this requirement was taken into account in *Circular 19/96* governing arrangements for nationals of other Member States who wished to take the Irish qualifying examination.

The application of the *Groener* case is now largely historical due to a change in national linguistic policy. With regard to Irish language requirements for second level teachers, a change to existing practice was effected at the beginning of the school year 1999-2000.<sup>23</sup> From that date forward there is no Irish language requirement for the majority of post-primary teachers who do not need to use Irish to discharge their daily duties.<sup>24</sup> However, the Irish language requirement is retained for the following categories of second level teachers:

- (a) teachers employed in Gaeltacht schools (schools situated in Irish speaking areas i.e. where Irish is the first language);
- (b) teachers where the daily teaching medium is Irish (e.g. Gaelscoileanna) in the case of subjects other than Irish in any school and
- (c) teachers who teach any subject (except Irish) through the medium of Irish in any school.<sup>25</sup>

Irish linguistic requirements are still in place for primary school teachers in Ireland with some limited exceptions.<sup>26</sup>

### 3. The Current Situation: Language Provision

Recent census figures indicate that although English is the mother tongue of the vast majority of the population, approximately 41% declared themselves capable of speaking Irish.<sup>27</sup> This figure, being self-declared, seems highly optimistic but it is difficult to find reliable statistics on this topic. More realistic estimates indicate that approximately 10% of the population are fluent speakers of Irish which is the first language of approximately 2 or 3% of the total population.<sup>28</sup>

As an integral part of the EU and the wider global community, Ireland has become increasingly multicultural in latter decades. Research indicates that in 2005 there were speakers of at least 60 different languages enrolled in Irish schools<sup>29</sup> so the language entitlements of these new communities adds a new challenge to education policy and practice. Language difficulties may arise when new immigrant communities come to reside in Gaeltacht areas (the few remaining areas where the Irish language is commonly spoken in daily communication as the first language). In such communities the competing rights of those who assert the right to be educated through the medium of Irish in recognised<sup>30</sup> publicly funded schools (Irish medium schools) need to be weighed against the rights of immigrant children who have the right to education under the Constitution, under statute law and under international human rights law. Such competing rights arose in a community school (2nd level) situated in the Kerry Gaeltacht in *Geaney & Ors v Pobalscoil Chorca Dhuibhne, the Minister for Education & Science & Ors*.<sup>31</sup> In this collective action 71 minors and their parents or guardians sought no less than 30 remedies against the school. Essentially, the minor plaintiffs, many of whom were children of immigrant families, claimed that they did not understand the subjects they were taught in the State

23 Press release of Minister for Education and Skills, 24 June 1999.

24 Website of State Examinations Board at [http:// www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie).

25 Website of State Examinations Board at [http:// www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie). See *O'Shiel v Minister for Education* [1999] 2 IR 321.

26 For further information see [www.teachincouncil.ie](http://www.teachincouncil.ie) and [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie). The Teaching Council [Registration] Regulations 2009 indicate that there are two main entry routes into primary education in Ireland: (1) a recognised three year full-time programme (now changing to 4) leading to a Bachelor of Education degree, or (2) a recognised Graduate/Higher Diploma in Education (Primary) degree at level 8 or a qualification at level 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications. Whichever route is taken, the applicant must have achieved prescribed examination results in the Leaving Certificate or in Northern Ireland's General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) or the General Certificate of Education (GCE) A level examinations

27 Census Figures (2011), Central Statistics Office, Dublin.

28 Official website of Tourism Ireland.ie.

29 Department of Education and Skills (DES) 2005, p.28.

30 Schools recognised by the Minister for Education and Skills pursuant to s. 10 of the Education Act 1998 and are publicly funded under s. 12 of that Act.

31 *Geaney & Ors v Pobalscoil Chorca Dhuibhne* [2009] IEHC 267 discussed in Glendenning, *Education Law*, 2nd ed., 3.131 et seq.

curriculum in the school which was teaching mainly, it appears, through Irish. The publicly funded community school had evolved from the merger of two existing voluntary schools in which education, it appears, was provided to the plaintiffs bilingually (through Irish and English) and there was no other appropriate second level school in the locality. This case, which was part heard in the High Court,<sup>32</sup> had an unsuccessful 3-day mediation period, and was finally settled between the parties. It should be noted that this was not a State school although it was built and fully indemnified by the State which also paid the teachers and carried virtually the full financial burden. However, the Trustees in whom the school was vested, and the board of management strenuously supported an all-Irish linguistic policy to a degree that allegedly impacted adversely on the applicants' rights to education. Apart from alleged constitutional and statutory breaches, this would also appear to have violated Article 2 of Protocol 1 of the ECHR being a denial of the substance of the right of access to existing educational establishments as the ECtHR held in *Cyprus v Turkey*.<sup>33</sup>

It will be recalled that, although the applicants in *Cyprus v Turkey*<sup>34</sup> were Greek Cypriots residing in Northern Cyprus, the manifold matters complained of fell under Turkish control including language rights. Prior to the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, secondary schools in Northern Cyprus included Greek language facilities for students, which were abolished by the Turkish authorities. This presented Greek Cypriot students, living in Northern Cyprus, with a dilemma as their education up to that point was delivered through the Greek language. The applicants alleged breach of their rights under Art 2 of Protocol 1. The Court held that since these Greek students had received their education in Greek up to that point, the actions of the Turkish authorities constituted a denial of the substance of the right of access to existing educational establishments. In so far as no appropriate secondary school facilities were available to these children, the Court found this to be a violation of Art 2 of Protocol 1 of the ECHR. The setting and planning of the curriculum is a matter for the Member States.<sup>35</sup> Accordingly, language policy and practice in Ireland is a matter for the Irish State.

#### 4. Language Policy and Practice in Ireland

In compulsory education there is still a considerable focus on the Irish language<sup>36</sup> and a striking lack of emphasis on the teaching of foreign languages in Ireland's small, open economy which is heavily dependent on foreign investment. Among the key findings of a recent national longitudinal study of 9 year-olds, (*Growing up in Ireland, 2009*),<sup>37</sup> was that the typical number of hours per week spend learning English in mainstream schools was 4 hours while the typical number of hours spent learning Irish was 3.5 hours. The Eurostat Report (2010)<sup>38</sup> found that Ireland had the lowest level of foreign language tuition in Europe and that only a tiny proportion of primary school students in Ireland were exposed to foreign languages in any meaningful way. Sadly, such miniscule provision as then existed (mainly pilot programmes) has since been abolished in recent budgets. Thus Ireland remains one of the few remaining EU Member States<sup>39</sup> in which it is not mandatory to learn a foreign language during the period of compulsory education or at any stage of education. Moreover, the Eurostat Report also found that by the time students reach the senior cycle in second level schools, 19% have discontinued the foreign language and only 8.4% are learning more than one language. This remarkable lack of emphasis on foreign languages in compulsory education is further reflected in primary teacher colleges of education, where such teachers receive their training/education. Qualification in a foreign language

32 *Geaney & Ors v Pobalscoil Chorca Dhuibhne* [2009] IEHC 267.

33 *Cyprus v Turkey* (2002) 35 EHRR30.

34 *Cyprus v Turkey* (2002) 35 EHRR30.

35 *Kjeldsen v Denmark* (1976) 1 EHRR 711; *Lautsi v Italy* [GC] App No 30814/06 (3 Nov 2009).

36 The time allotted for teaching English and Irish in the language curriculum in mainstream schools, which was revised in November 2011, is 4 hours weekly in mainstream schools is to be spent on the Irish language while 3 and a half hours is to be spent on the Irish language, see [http: www.ncca.ie/en/curriculum and assessment/early childhood education/primary](http://www.ncca.ie/en/curriculum_and_assessment/early_childhood_education/primary)

37 Conducted by the Economic, Social, Research Institute (ESRI), [www.esri.ie](http://www.esri.ie).

38 Eurostat is the statistical arm of the EU Commission.

39 Scotland and England being the others. However, England has plans to introduce the teaching of foreign languages in compulsory education.

is not a prerequisite in the State examination (Leaving Certificate) which determines entry to these colleges. In effect Ireland's insular language policy and practice disadvantages many of its own citizens who must emigrate to find employment further afield because they generally lack the required language skills to work in the EU.

Ireland has not yet formulated an appropriate response to the EU's policy on pluri-lingualism, namely that all European citizens should achieve proficiency in at least two languages, apart from their mother tongue. (Barcelona, European Council 2002: 119).<sup>40</sup> With the recent swinging cut-backs, inter alia, in education,<sup>41</sup> many of which sit uneasily with human rights norms and standards,<sup>42</sup> Ireland is unlikely to present an appropriate response to the Barcelona European Council in the foreseeable future.

## A. Home Education

Currently 730 children are receiving their education in the home which is constitutionally permissible.<sup>43</sup> When considering, among other matters, whether Irish had to be included in any curriculum or system of home education in *Director of Public Prosecutions v Best*,<sup>44</sup> the Supreme Court (Keane J) stated that it would be going too far to hold that its absence would, of itself, mean that the constitutional standard would not be reached. However, Keane J continued he was also of the view that the absence of Irish from the curriculum could be taken into account in view of its constitutional status as the first official language and that a knowledge of Irish is a precondition of at least some forms of employment.<sup>45</sup> Currently Irish is an obligatory subject in all mainstream, recognised primary and second level schools<sup>46</sup> and is a requirement for entry to all constituent colleges of the National University of Ireland.<sup>47</sup> Bonus marks are generally available on a phased basis to students who sit the State Examination (Leaving Certificate) in the Irish language.<sup>48</sup>

It will be recalled that in the *Belgian Linguistic* cases<sup>49</sup> the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) rejected the applicant's contention that the right to receive education in the language of one's choice was within the protection of Article 2 of Protocol 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).<sup>50</sup> However, the Court made one exception, where the language of one's choice is also the national language or one of the national languages, it held that even in the absence of an express provision in Art 2, the right to education necessarily implied that its beneficiaries be afforded the right to be educated in the national language or one of the national languages.<sup>51</sup> Since Irish is the "*national language and first official language*", arguably Irish parents have both a human right and a constitutional right to have their children educated through the medium of Irish and State provision has been made for this in the past few decades in the Gaelscoileanna (schools built and owned by the State in which Irish is the language of instruction). It has been alleged that these schools, which generally have high achievements academically, are elitist since they are attended mainly by the children of the middle classes but the schools point to the fact that they are open to all children.

40 OJ C/119/2009, Annex 1.

41 Discussed in Glendenning, *Education and the Law* (2012).

42 See further Glendenning, "The Irish Constitution: Education and Human Rights in Recognised Schools", at [www.ihrc.ie](http://www.ihrc.ie) under "Events".

43 These children are registered with the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) pursuant to the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 as amended.

44 [2000] 2 IR 17 at 59.

45 See further Glendenning, *Education and the Law*, 2nd ed., Bloomsbury Publications, 2012, [3.117] et seq.

46 In second level schools it is mandatory to study Irish for the Leaving Certificate but it is not mandatory to sit the Irish language as a subject in the Leaving Certificate in order to pass the examination as it was formerly.

47 But not for entrance to Trinity College, Dublin or the University of Limerick.

48 State Examinations Commission (SEC), see [www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie)

49 *Belgian Linguistic Case* (No 1) 1 EHRR 241; *Belgian Linguistic Case* (No 2) 1 EHRR 252.

50 The ECtHR held against Belgium on one point that the legislative provision that prevented French-speaking schools in the "special status" communes in the Brussels suburbs from accepting pupils outside the area, but permitted Dutch-speaking schools to accept such pupils, was discriminatory treatment based on language (as prohibited by Art 14 read in conjunction with the first sentence of Art 2 of protocol 1) and could not stand.

51 *Belgian Linguistic case* 1 EHRR 252.

## 5. Conclusion

At a time when Ireland's literacy rates in English have fallen in the international league,<sup>52</sup> and its emigration rates are climbing, perhaps the time is opportune for Ireland to make a fresh appraisal of its language policy and practice in compulsory education.<sup>53</sup> In the opinion of this writer, Ireland needs to find a more proportionate, pragmatic and equitable balance in the school curriculum between the protection of the Irish language, the rights of its children to a higher standard in the vernacular and their right, at the very least, to learn one foreign language in the period of compulsory education. If a nation places a focus on nationality and culture to a degree that adversely affects the global opportunities of its citizens, it is high time for re-appraisal, and reform in education policy and practice.

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52 As has its numeracy rates, see Education at a Glance (2010) OECD.

53 This is currently being done by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) Language teaching time – Primary School Introduction p.78 [http://www.curriculumonline.ie/en/Primary\\_School\\_Curriculum/Introduction/Introduction\\_to\\_Primary\\_School\\_Curriculum.html](http://www.curriculumonline.ie/en/Primary_School_Curriculum/Introduction/Introduction_to_Primary_School_Curriculum.html) Language teaching time – revised November 2011– p. 4 section 5.2 [http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum\\_and\\_Assessment/Early\\_Childhood\\_and\\_Primary\\_Education/Primary\\_School\\_Curriculum/Assessment/Standardised\\_Testing/circular\\_0056\\_2011.pdf](http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Early_Childhood_and_Primary_Education/Primary_School_Curriculum/Assessment/Standardised_Testing/circular_0056_2011.pdf) Research underpinning new language curriculum developments – new language curriculum to be launched for infants September 2014 [http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum\\_and\\_Assessment/Early\\_Childhood\\_and\\_Primary\\_Education/Primary\\_School\\_Curriculum/Language\\_Curriculum\\_Research\\_Reports/](http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Early_Childhood_and_Primary_Education/Primary_School_Curriculum/Language_Curriculum_Research_Reports/) Pictorial presentation with regard to time spent on subjects p. 3 [http://www.esri.ie/Childrens\\_Longitudinal\\_Study/news\\_publications/No3\\_The\\_Education\\_of\\_9-Year-Olds.pdf](http://www.esri.ie/Childrens_Longitudinal_Study/news_publications/No3_The_Education_of_9-Year-Olds.pdf). Information with regard to capitation [http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/education/primary\\_and\\_post\\_primary\\_education/going\\_to\\_primary\\_school/ownership\\_of\\_primary\\_schools.html](http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/education/primary_and_post_primary_education/going_to_primary_school/ownership_of_primary_schools.html). Information with regard to sitting exams through the medium of Irish <http://www.examinations.ie/index.php?l=en&mc=ca&sc=im>