

## Steering Committee

### Policy on Irish-medium Education outside of the Gaeltacht

#### Minutes of Meeting 1

**Date:** Wednesday, 13 April 2022

**Medium:** Online Webex meeting

**Time of Meeting:** 11.00 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

#### Attendance

Department of Education

Gavan O'Leary (Chair) – **Assistant Secretary**

Muireann Tóibín, Finín Ó Murchú – **Gaeltacht Education Unit (GEU)**

Treasa Kirk, Martin Whyte – **Inspectorate**

Toby Wolfe – **Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY)**

Aodán Mac an Mhíle - **Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport & Media (DTCAGSM)**

Deirdre McCarthy – **Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS)**

Jacqueline Ní Fhearghusa – **COGG**

Edel Ní Chorráin – **Foras na Gaeilge**

Phil Fox – **The Teaching Council**

Arlene Forster – **NCCA**

Suzanne McCanney – **NCSE**

#### Apologies

Stella Ní Shé – **NEPS**

#### 1. Fáilteú/Welcome

The Chair welcomed members to the first meeting of the Steering Committee. It was agreed that the meeting would be conducted bilingually. GO'L invited those present to introduce themselves to the Committee.

#### 2. Draft Terms of Reference of the Steering Committee

Draft Terms of Reference (ToR) had been circulated before the meeting. The Chair invited any feedback on the draft.

TW stated that the Minister for Children would need to be given a signing off role on the Early Learning and Care (ELC) element of the Policy and noted that the term "Early Years Educators" should be used when referring to ELC staff.

JNÍF suggested that the development of Irish language materials and resources for schools should be included in the ToR.

GO'L thanked members for their input, and asked that any further suggested amendments be sent via email. A finalised version of the ToR will be circulated in due course.

### **3. Update on the work of the Intradepartmental Working Group**

TK, who served as Head of the Gaeltacht Education Unit up to 1/3/22, gave the Committee some background information on the development of the Policy. She stated that *20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030* is the lead document for the development of this Policy. The development of this Policy will be based on the research-informed and consultative approach used for the development of the *Policy on Gaeltacht Education (PGE)*. TK noted that, with the support of inspectors, two composite research reports were published on the quality of education in [49 Gaelscoileanna](#) (33%) and [24 Gaelcholáistí](#) (83%) outside the Gaeltacht to inform the development of the policy. MT outlined the various sections within DE who are represented on the intradepartmental working group chaired by GEU, which was established in September 2021, and updated the group on the work that has been undertaken to date.

#### **Report on current Irish-medium education provision**

MT outlined the work carried out to date on mapping current Irish-medium education provision and highlighted some further data to be included. She noted that reliable data on ELCs is difficult to come by. TW stated that DECDIY are currently working on a provision mapping exercise and that more reliable data on Irish medium ELCs will be available in due course.

It was confirmed that the introductory information in the report would discuss Irish-medium education in all areas but that the body of the report would focus on areas outside the Gaeltacht.

#### **Review of national and international research**

A review of national and international research and literature on minority language teaching and learning is being commissioned. A Request for Tender has been published on the e-Tenders website. The successful tenderer will also analyse the responses to a public consultation process which will take place Oct-Nov 2022. It is anticipated that tenders will be received from universities/third level research sections or from independent teams of researchers. A copy of the RFT is to be circulated to the steering committee.

#### **Research on Aonaid/Sruthanna**

MT discussed the research being carried out on Aonaid/Sruthanna by Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. The challenges in obtaining reliable data on Aonaid/Sruthanna were discussed, as was the inconsistency of provision in different Aonaid/Sruthanna.

### **4. Actions and next steps**

GO'L thanked MT and TK for their presentations. Committee members were asked to inform GEU of any work being done in the Irish language space in their own organisations. The location and date for the next meeting are to be confirmed in due course.

*Gaeltacht Education Unit  
Department of Education  
April 2022*