

Naíscoil an tSraitha Báin
Eastát Bhaile Cholmáin
An Srath Bán
Co. Thír Eoghain
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Aighneacht maidir leis an pháipéar pléite a mholann reachtaíocht ar son na Gaeilge

Thursday 11 January 2007

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Cúlra na heagraíochta

Naíscoil an tSraitha Báin was founded in 1994 to facilitate the local demand of parents wishing to have their children educated through the medium of the Irish language. Although we are an independent organization with charitable status, our staff are fully qualified in NVQ childcare and all other necessary and relevant nursery provision. Whilst independent we have an excellent working relationship and work hand in hand on an ongoing basis with the WELB and all statutory Welfare, Health & Safety and Educational bodies.

The demand for nursery provision has continued to increase since our foundation. This year our intake of children is 23 and all but a very few go on to the Irish language Primary school, Gaelscoil Uí Dhochartaigh, adjacent to our nursery to continue their education through Irish.

Réamhfhocal

We welcome the publication of the consultation paper and endorse Marie Eagle's Foreword where it states that the consultation will last until March 2nd and that it is the "Aim to ensure that legislation can be taken forward quickly thereafter in line with the St Andrews Agreement".

We also welcome the fact that Minister Eagle's Foreword notes that "the government supports the need for legislation to underpin the Irish Language in Northern Ireland." and further notes that "The enhancement and protection of the development of the Irish language is an important and significant matter."

Réamhrá

In light of the above and given our support for the Irish Language community and their publicly expressed position we believe that for the consultation paper to meet its stated objective of underpinning the Irish Language as outlined by Marie Eagle in her foreword of December 13th 2006 then the government should simply accede to the four basic demands as outlined by the pressure group ACHT and should:

- 1) Keep the St Andrews commitment
- 2) Place Irish speakers Rights at the heart of the Act
- 3) Make available adequate resources to implement the Act and
- 4) Appoint an Irish Language Commissioner for the North



EU Programme
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Ábhair ár mbuarthaí

- We are anxious that the legislation be put through Westminster and should not become a political football in any new Assembly. This would be a disservice to the language and to all citizens for whom the language can become a fully shared heritage and a potential resource.
- We are very concerned to ensure that the proposed legislation be wide enough in its scope to cover areas such as broadcasting and taxation as well as all other matters which are currently designated as reserved matters.
- We are also alarmed at the limiting clause in Paragraph 2 of the introduction of the Consultation Paper which seeks to limit legislation to the "use of Irish in public services" and seeks not to deal with "the use of Irish in business or in private life" such limitation runs counter to commitments already given, most particularly in the Good Friday Agreement.
- It is also a matter of concern that the Consultation paper departs from the commitment given in the Saint Andrews Agreement and seeks to propose models or approaches based on the Scottish model and/or on the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages both of which are much weaker than the Welsh and the Irish models which the government said it would reflect on.

Conclúid

We welcome this opportunity to assist in fostering good relations through promoting an Irish Language Act which will underpin the rights of Irish speakers, will facilitate those who wish to use Irish whilst allowing those who wish to use English to continue to do so and will make Irish more accessible to all sections of the community.

Is mise le meas

Michelle Ní Dhuinnín
Cathaoirleach
Coiste Náiscoil an tSraitha Báin

