

***We understand that choosing what type of school you send your child to is one of the biggest decisions a parent will have to make. We believe that choosing Gaelscolaíocht is the best decision to make, and the facts support that perspective!***

**What is a Gaelscoil, really?**

*More than simply a school that operates through the medium of Irish, Gaelscoileanna pride themselves on their child-centred and co-educational nature. They are community-based, democratic, and inclusive. We teach the full Primary School Curriculum, and operate entirely through Irish. This is particularly important in the infant classes, where English is not taught for the first year-and-a-half. This is called 'immersion education'.*

**Does immersion education mean pupils are slower to pick up English reading/writing when it is introduced?**

*Quite the opposite; Immersion education helps rather than hinders children in learning languages, including English. Research has proven that children in Irish-medium primary schools are well above the national average for reading in English. Children whose home language is not Irish or English also benefit from immersion education and it helps their fluency in English.*

**I spent 14 years in school and came out without a word of Irish; how will I be able to help my child if they're in a Gaelscoil?**

*You can do loads to encourage your child to become fluent in Irish without being able to speak the language yourself! The majority of children in Irish-medium schools do not have Irish as one of their home languages.*

*The best way to help your child when they start in school is to show them that you are excited and positive about them going to school and becoming fluent in Irish. Letting your child know that you are proud of them, that you're interested in what they're doing in school and that you're excited to learn along with them will be a big help to them. If you can, learn some Irish yourself to show them how interested you are.*

**Are Gaelscoileanna really that popular?**

*Gaelscoileanna are the fastest-growing sector in Irish education. The growth is a direct response to the demand from parents, resulting from the excellent education provided and the considerable added benefits they provide.*

**What benefits?**

*A fair question. Irish and international research indicate that children who experience immersion education become more creative thinkers, with better memory, attention, and concentration. They also develop more effective listening & communication skills, being better able to express themselves and understand others. The skills learned for one language can be transferred easily to other languages, and they develop a deeper understanding of the foundations of language such as grammar, word formation, and sentence structure. Pupils in Gaelscoileanna also perform above the national average in maths. Being bilingual can even delay the onset of Alzheimer's disease.*

**My child has special needs - how will they get on in a Gaelscoil?**

*We cater for children with a wide range of special needs, and have dedicated and highly skilled Special Education Teachers and Special Needs Assistants. We offer the same support for children with special needs as English-medium schools do. A report published by the National Council for Special Education in 2011 recognised that bilingual education contributes to children's social, emotional and interpersonal growth.*