

Aighneacht ó Chumann Múinteoirí Éireann

Polasaí don Oideachas Lán-
Ghaeilge Lasmuigh de na
Ceantair Ghaeltachta

30 Eanáir 2023

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Réamhrá / Introduction

Is é Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann an cheardchumann is sine agus is mó do mhúinteoirí in Éirinn. Tá sé ionadaíoch ar breis is 50,000 múinteoirí ag an mbunleibhéal i bPoblacht na hÉireann agus ag an mbunleibhéal agus an iarbhunleibhéal i dTuaisceart Éireann. Táimid thar a bheith buíoch an deis a bheith againn ár nguth a thabhairt mar chuid de chéim chomhairliúcháin don pholasáí nua don oideachas lán-Ghaeilge lasmuigh de na ceantair Ghaeltachta.

The benefits of bilingual and plurilingual education are well known across the Irish education sector. The Irish education system is in a position to expose pupils to both English and Irish language learning from an early age and throughout their school lives. This affords pupils in Ireland the opportunity to reap the cultural, social, and academic benefits associated with bilingual and plurilingual education methodologies.

The INTO notes the concerns regarding Irish education in English-medium schools as outlined in the Department of Education's (DE) most recent *Chief Inspector's Report* (2022). The report indicates that there is scope to improve the level of Irish language learning in English-medium schools by 28-33% (based on inspection type; announced and unannounced).

The INTO also notes the anticipated decline in pupil numbers as highlighted in the DE's *An Overview of Provision for Irish-Medium Education outside of the Gaeltacht* (2022). This decline means significantly fewer new English-medium schools and Gaelscoileanna will be established in the coming years. Any policy created to progress Irish language learning outside of Gaeltacht areas will have to develop recommendations that are implementable by existing school stock.

The INTO would also like to draw attention to the latest CSO (2016) data regarding the number and location of daily Irish speakers. The largest numbers of daily Irish speakers are now found in the cities of Dublin, Cork, Galway & Limerick. The focus of supports for Gaeilge must now extend beyond the traditional Gaeltacht regions to take account of and recognise the needs of the Irish speaking population across the Island.

Tacaímid go hiomlán le forbairt polasaí ina bhfuil sé mar aidhm Gaelscoileanna agus oideachas lán-Ghaeilge a fhás lasmuigh de na ceantair Ghaeltachta. Má tá an polasaí seo bunaithe ar dhea-chleachtas, nach gcuireann le hualach oibre ár mbaill agus a bhfuil maoinithe i gceart ag gach leibhéal táimid sásta oibriú leis na páirtithe leasmhara ar fad chun an polasaí a chur i bhfeidhm.

Teanga sa Bhunscoileanna / Language in Irish Primary Schools

The Irish primary school curriculum has the capacity to provide a fully balanced bilingual education to all pupils. *The Primary Language Curriculum* (2019) integrates the learning of Irish and English and draws on the language knowledge of all pupils. It highlights the importance of language acquisition skills and seeks to create connections across and within languages and support the transfer of skills between languages.

The capacity to provide a balanced bilingual education to all pupils is a strength of the Irish education system. Studies show that bilingual learners present with greater advantages for executive functioning, metalinguistic awareness, phonetic perception, cognitive flexibility, creative thinking and even delay in the onset of symptoms of dementia (Antoniou, 2019). These advantages should be accessible by all pupils in Ireland and any policy that seeks to strengthen bilingualism/plurilingualism across the education sector is welcome.

Oideachas lán-Ghaeilge in Gaeltacht schools is currently thriving due to the supports provided by the 'Scéim Aitheantais Scoileanna Gaeltachta'. This scheme leaned on supports from An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG) and the Aonaid um Oideachas Gaeltachta (a



dedicated section of the DE inspectorate). The success of this scheme in Gaeltacht schools shows that appropriate levels of focused support, guidance and training needs to be provided to schools and teachers in immersion education pedagogy to ensure the success of any proposed policy.

It is critical that the wider public be made aware that exposure to and engagement with the Irish language in school daily - both formally and informally - serves to deepen pupils' cultural awareness and contributes to their sense of national identity. Through shared integration experiences, Gaeilge could be used to introduce/share this national identity with the diverse range of pupils currently in Irish classrooms. This also promotes increased opportunities for social engagement, consistent with the key principles underpinning the effective teaching, learning and assessment of language and literacy as set out in our national curricula and reinforced in the NCCA Draft Primary Curriculum Framework.

Language is the primary tool of all education. Through language children learn to explore the world around them and express their own feelings on it. Language connects us to others and provides pathways to relationships. The tools and resources to learn Gaeilge and provide oideachas lán-Ghaeilge should be accessible by all communities in Ireland. This policy should pave the way to a fully integrated and balanced bilingual/plurilingual education system for all pupils.

Provision

At present, outside of the Gaeltacht areas, Gaeilge is predominantly viewed as a subject. The language is spoken daily by a decreasing minority of people within the Gaeltacht. With that in mind, it is interesting to note the increasing appetite of English-speaking families to send their children to scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge. The waiting lists for Gaelscoileanna, in the areas where they are available, are substantial. The appetite for scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge should be nurtured, and guidance should be provided to communities that choose to transition their schools to Irish-medium instruction.

For this transition to be successful oideachas lán-Ghaeilge at ELC, primary and post-primary level must be made available in every county. The provision of scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge at primary level should be increased and a scheme, similar to the 'Scéim Aitheantais Scoileanna Gaeltachta', should be introduced to guide school communities. The established supports and experience of COGG and the DE's Aonad um Oideachas Gaeltachta should be extended to schools outside of the Gaeltacht regions.

The INTO calls for the number of meán-scoileanna neamhspleácha to be significantly increased. Currently there are 13 counties without a dedicated Irish-medium post primary option for pupils and parents. Students who are unable to continue in oideachas lán-Ghaeilge after primary school are likely to see a decline in their use and acquisition of Gaeilge. While Aonads are in place in some of these counties, the INTO would not see them as a good replacement for meán-scoileanna neamhspleácha, unless they form part of a school's transition from English-medium to Irish-medium instruction.

While the INTO recognises and fully understands the important role schools play in safeguarding and improving Gaeilge it would be short sighted to believe that schools alone can revive the language in our communities. A partnership between the Department of Education and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht should be explored. This partnership should focus on extending Limistéir Phleanála Teanga (LPT) into our cities and other regions outside of the Gaeltachtaí.

Trasdulta a Neartú / Strengthening Transitions

The INTO notes the forethought given to transitions between ELC, primary and post-primary schools in the DE document *An Overview of Provision for Irish-Medium Education outside of the Gaeltacht (2022)*.

Regarding the transition from ELC to primary education the document highlights the vital importance of strengthening the process between these school levels. The document also points to key objectives



of the *First 5* (2019) strategy and states that actions have been agreed for Irish-medium education. The INTO recognises that the relationship between ELC and primary schools should be nurtured and respected to best meet the needs of pupils and teachers but also demands that junior infant teachers and other relevant staff members be afforded the necessary time and resources to engage with any transitional arrangements. The INTO would also require assurances that any actions agreed upon would not create an unequal workload for junior infant teachers in comparison to their peers.

Regarding the transition from primary to post-primary the document presents data on the transition of pupils from 6th class in Gaelscoileanna to first year post-primary, by post-primary medium of education. While the INTO understands the importance of such data it does not appear any concrete strategy or action plan for this transition period has been explored. The NCCA report cards and the end-of-year 6th class education passports provide sixth class teachers with an opportunity to share information in writing about children's progress and achievement in learning. The merits of sharing such information with post-primary schools to facilitate a smooth transition for sixth-class pupils are acknowledged, but it is important that teachers are not overburdened with extra paperwork during the implementation of this policy.

It is extremely important that a comprehensive strategy be put in place to ensure that 6th class pupils in scoileanna lán-Gaeilge have access to meán-scoileanna to ensure their continued development as bilingual learners. The lack of Irish-medium post-primary options for pupils, is, in the eyes of the INTO, one of the major issues that must be tackled by any policy if a true full stream oideachas lán-Ghaeilge is to be achieved.

Liúntais 'Múineadh trí Ghaeilge' a Athbhunú / Restoration of 'Teaching Through Irish' Allowance

A number of role-based allowances were abolished for all new beneficiaries (those teachers who were accruing a new entitlement to an allowance) from 1 February 2012. These cuts also affected teachers currently in receipt of a specified allowance who subsequently moved from their school. The INTO has fought for the restoration of these allowances since their abolishment and continues to strive for their delivery through sectoral bargaining.

It would be imperative to the successful implementation of any Polasaí don Oideachas Lán-Ghaeilge Lasmuigh de na Ceantair Ghaeltachta to ensure that schools and teachers are incentivised to promote and work towards the stated outcomes. With that in mind, the INTO calls for the restoration of the Múineadh trí Ghaeilge allowance to support the rollout of this policy.

Ualach-oibre & Tacaíocht do Mhúinteoirí / Teacher Workload & Supports

The INTO has highlighted the issues surrounding teacher workload for several years. Workload can have negative consequences on the well-being and job satisfaction of teachers, as well as the quality of education they are able to provide to their students. The INTO has called for the implementation of policies to reduce workload and increase the efficacy of the teaching profession.

In the INTO survey *Workload, Stress and Resilience of Primary Teachers* (2015), Morgan and Nic Craith identify in-school policies, workplace conditions, and classroom experiences, among others, as being causes of teacher stress. An INTO congress motion on teacher workload was adopted which identified an ever-increasing number of initiatives as another major contributor to teacher workload.

The development of this policy must include effective supports, training and in-school collaborative time to ensure its success and to minimise workload on schools.



Morgan and Nic Craith also identified the effect on morale of the demands on schools and teachers to solve societal problems. The INTO emphasises that any policy seeking to strengthen Gaeilge outside of the Gaeltacht regions cannot solely depend on schools and teachers. A community wide policy that drives the awareness of and incentivises the use of Gaeilge in society must be developed and adequately resourced.

As this policy is developed it is important to ensure the correct supports are put in place for schools and teachers. The Scéim Aitheantais Scoileanna Gaeltachta has been in progress since April 2017 overseen by the DE's An tAonad um Oideachas Gaeltachta. The supports provided by this scheme include Irish Language Support Hours, Grant Allocation, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) co-ordinated by COGG, Good-Practice Guidelines on Immersion Education for Primary Schools and Inspectorate Support. These supports must be made available to all schools to ensure the success of any proposed policy.

Another effective support for Irish language learners and their schools is to draw on community links to offer all learners the chance to speak and use Irish outside of the school environment. Family language use and the amount of exposure to a language is what impacts vocabulary development for pre-school and primary pupils. Community events or language plans should focus on inviting whole families to participate in Irish-medium events. This would help scaffold learning taking place in schools while also giving young language learners the experience of using and hearing Gaeilge being spoken by people of all ages outside the classroom.

These supports rely heavily on increasing the funding and extending the remit of the already established support services for oideachas lán-Ghaeilge. An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta, Comhar Naíonraí na Gaeltachta, Gaeloideachas and An Foras Pátrúnachta have developed many strategies and built large banks of resources that are focused on improving Gaeilge use. Their efforts have been very successful in our Gaeltachtaí and the INTO cannot see this policy being successful without these services being expanded and fully resourced in all regions.

Mar Fhocal Scor / In Conclusion

The INTO supports the development of a policy that provides for a new Irish immersion model that ensures families have access to, and support for, Irish-medium education at all school levels.

The INTO recommends

- A widespread national awareness campaign that raises the profile of Irish immersion education highlighting the benefits of bilingualism/plurilingualism and research into the concept of exemptions from the study of Irish
- The development of 'Scoileanna Comhpháirtíochta' which would partner scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge with English-medium schools and incentivise the free movement of teachers between these schools offering a period of teaching through Irish.
- The establishment of 'Eispéireas Scoileanna Lán-Ghaeilge' by initial teacher training colleges to facilitate exposure by student teachers to scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge.
- The raising of awareness of the resources of An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG) and Comhar Naíonraí na Gaeltachta. This recommendation also extends to a review of their provisions to include supporting English-medium schools.



- Funding and incentivisation of ‘Forbairt Ghairmiúil i Gaeilge’ for teachers, sna’s and support staff who wish to work in scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge.
- Funding be increased for the purposes of language support, including differentiated support to assist with the language enrichment of native and non-native speakers.
- The restoration of all allowances including the ‘Múineadh trí Ghaeilge’ allowance.
- Comprehensive guidance and professional development for teachers and schools to support the implementation of any policy and adequate funding for CPD and concrete/digital resources.
- Extra in-school leadership and management time, deputy principal release days and secretarial support to ensure that schools have sufficient resources and time to undertake any additional administrative work required.
- The promotion of equality, diversity, and the inclusion of all pupils in any policy relating to Oideachas lán-Ghaeilge.

Gabhann an INTO buíochas leis an Roinn Oideachais as an deis ár aighneacht scríofa a chur isteach agus táimid ag tnúth obair libh ar an mbeartas seo.

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Tá eolas maith ar fud na hearnála oideachais in Éirinn ar na buntáistí a bhaineann leis an oideachas dátheangach agus ilteangach. Sa chóras oideachais in Éirinn, tá deis ag daltaí teagmháil a bheith acu leis an mBéarla agus an Ghaeilge agus iad araon a fhoghlaim ó aois an-óg fad a bheidh siad ar scoil. Dá thairbhe sin, tá daltaí in Éirinn in ann leas a bhaint as na buntáistí cultúrtha, sóisialta agus acadúla a bhaineann le modheolaíochtaí oideachais dátheangacha agus ilteangacha.

Tugann Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann (INTO) dá aire na cúiseanna imní i dtaca leis an oideachas Gaeilge i scoileanna Béarla mar atá curtha in iúl sa tuarascáil is déanaí ón Roinn Oideachais, *Tuarascáil an Phríomhchigire* (2022). Tugtar le fios sa tuarascáil go bhféadfaí feabhas 28-33% a bhaint amach ar an leibhéal foghlama Gaeilge i scoileanna Béarla (bunaithe ar chigireachtaí a fógraíodh agus nár fógraíodh roimh ré).

Tugann INTO dá aire chomh maith go meastar go mbeidh laghdú ar an líon daltaí, mar atá luaithe sa tuarascáil *Léargas ar Sholáthar don Oideachas Lán-Ghaeilge lasmuigh den Ghaeltacht* ón Roinn Oideachais (2022). Is é a chiallaíonn an laghdú sin go mbeidh i bhfad níos lú scoileanna nua Béarla agus Gaelscoileanna nua á gcur ar bun sna blianta atá le teacht. Má táthar chun aon bheartas a fhorbairt le dul chun cinn a dhéanamh ar fhoghlaim na Gaeilge lasmuigh den Ghaeltacht, caithfear moltaí a fhorbairt a bhféadfaidh na scoileanna atá ann cheana iad a bhaint amach.

Ba mhian leis an gCumann freisin aird a tharraingt ar na sonraí is déanaí ón bPríomh-Oifig Staidrimh (2016) maidir le líon na gcainteoirí laethúla Gaeilge agus na háiteanna ina bhfuil siad. Tá an líon is mó de chainteoirí laethúla Gaeilge ag cur fúthu faoi láthair i gcathracha Bhaile Átha Cliath, Chorcaí, na Gaillimhe agus Luimnigh. Is ar na réigiúin lasmuigh de na ceantair Ghaeltachta thraidisiúnta nach mór an tacaíocht don Ghaeilge a dhíriú anois, chun go dtabharfaí aitheantas do riachtanais phobal labhartha na Gaeilge ar fud an oileáin agus chun go gcuirfí san áireamh iad.

Tacaímid go hiomlán le forbairt polasaí ina bhfuil sé mar aidhm Gaelscoileanna agus oideachas lán-Ghaeilge a fhás lasmuigh de na ceantair Ghaeltachta. Má tá an polasaí seo bunaithe ar dhea-chleachtas, nach gcuireann le hualach oibre ár mbaill agus a bhfuil maoinithe i gceart ag gach leibhéal táimid sásta oibriú leis na páirtithe leasmhara ar fad chun an polasaí a chur i bhfeidhm.

Teanga sa Bhunscoileanna / Language in Irish Primary Schools

Tá d'acmhainneacht ag curaclam bunscoile na hÉireann oideachas dátheangach a mbeidh cothromaíocht iomlán ann a chur ar gach dalta. Déantar foghlaim na Gaeilge agus an Bhéarla a chomhtháthú i gCuraclam *Teanga na Bunscoile* (2019), curaclam ina bhféachtar le tarraingt ar shaineolas teanga gach dalta. Leagtar béim ann ar an tábhacht a bhaineann le scileanna sealbhaithe teanga agus féachtar le naisc a fhorbairt idir teangacha agus laistigh de theangacha, mar aon le tacaíocht a thabhairt maidir le haistriú scileanna ó theanga go teanga.

Láidrecht de chuid chóras oideachais na hÉireann is ea an acmhainneacht a bheith ann oideachas dátheangach cothrom a chur ar gach dalta. Tá sé léirithe i staidéir go mbíonn an lámh in uachtar ag foghlaimeoirí dátheangacha maidir le feidhmiú feidhmiúcháin, feasacht mheititheangeolaíoch, aireachtáil foghraíochta, solúbthacht chognaíoch, smaointeoireacht chruthaitheach agus fiú go mbíonn



moill ann i gcás comharthaí an néaltraithe a theacht orthu (Antoniou, 2019). Ba chóir go mbeadh teacht ag gach dalta in Éirinn ar na buntáistí sin agus cuirfimid fáilte roimh aon bheartas ina bhféachfar leis an dátheangachas/ilteangachas a láidriú san earnáil oideachais trí chéile.

Tá borradh faoin oideachas lán-Ghaeilge i scoileanna Gaeltachta i láthair na huaire mar gheall ar na cineálacha tacaíochta atá á gcur ar fáil faoin 'Scéim Aitheantais Scoileanna Gaeltachta'. Bhí an scéim sin ag brath ar thacaíocht a thug An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG) agus an tAonad um Oideachas Gaeltachta (rannóg thiomnaithe de chigireacht na Roinne Oideachais). Is léir ó rath na scéime sin i scoileanna Gaeltachta gur gá na leibhéil chúí tacaíochta, treorach agus oiliúna spriocdhírthe a sholáthar do scoileanna agus do mhúinteoirí san oideolaíocht tumoideachais le go n-éireoidh le haon bheartas atá beartaithe.

Tá sé millteanach tábhachtach go gcuirfí an pobal trí chéile ar an eolas gur cuidiú atá sa taithí ar an nGaeilge agus sa teagmháil laethúil léi - go foirmiúil agus go neamhfhoirmiúil - le feacht chultúrtha na ndaltaí a neartú, rud a chuirfidh lena dtuiscint ar a bhféiniúlacht náisiúnta. Trí eispéiris chomhroinnte maidir le comhtháthú, d'fhéadfaí leas a bhaint as an nGaeilge chun an fhéiniúlacht náisiúnta sin a chur i láthair/a chur in iúl don réimse daltaí éagsúla atá i seomraí ranga na hÉireann sa lá atá inniu ann. D'fhágfadh sé sin go mbeadh tuilleadh deiseanna ann don rannpháirtíocht shóisialta, a bheadh ag teacht leis na heochairphrionsabail atá mar bhonn faoi theagasc, foghlaim agus measúnú éifeachtach na teanga agus na litearthachta, mar atá leagtha amach sna curaclaim náisiúnta againn agus mar atá neartaithe sa Dréacht-Chreat Curaclaim Bunscoile ón gComhairle Náisiúnta Curaclaim agus Measúnachta.

Príomhuirlis an oideachais trí chéile is ea teanga. Is trí mheán na teanga a fhoghlaimíonn leanaí an dóigh leis an saol thart orthu a fhiosrú agus na mothúcháin a bhíonn acu féin faoin saol a chur in iúl. Is nasc í teanga idir muid féin agus daoine eile, bealach le cumann agus comhar a spreagadh idir daoine. Ba chóir go mbeadh teacht ag gach pobal in Éirinn ar na huirlisí agus ar na hacmhainní chun an Ghaeilge a fhoghlaim agus chun oideachas lán-Ghaeilge a fháil. Ba cheart go ndéanadh an beartas seo an bealach a réiteach i dtreo córas dátheangach/ilteangach oideachais do gach dalta, córas a bheidh iomlán cothrom agus comhtháite.

Soláthar

Faoi láthair, i gceantair seachas an Ghaeltacht, is mar ábhar scoile a chaitear leis an nGaeilge. Bíonn Gaeilge á labhairt ag mionlach sa Ghaeltacht, mionlach a bhfuil laghdú ag teacht air de réir a chéile. Agus an méid sin á chur san áireamh, díol spéise is ea é go bhfuil méadú ag teacht ar líon na dteaghlach a labhraíonn Béarla agus atá ag iarraidh a leanaí a chur i scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge. Sna ceantair ina bhfuil fáil orthu, is fada na liostaí feithimh le haghaidh Gaelscoileanna. Ba chóir an díograis seo i leith scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge a chothú agus ba chóir comhairle a chur ar phobail a dhéanann an rogha na scoileanna atá acu a aistriú go teagasc trí mheán na Gaeilge.

Má tá an t-aistriú sin le bheith rathúil, ní mór oideachas lán-Ghaeilge a chur ar fáil ar leibhéal foghlaim agus chúram na luath-óige agus ar leibhéal na bunscoile agus na hiar-bhunscoile i ngach aon chontae. Ba chóir an soláthar scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge ar leibhéal na bunscoile a mhéadú agus scéim, ar aon dul leis an 'Scéim Aitheantais Scoileanna Gaeltachta' a thabhairt isteach le treoir a chur ar fáil do phobail na scoileanna. Ba chóir tacaíocht agus taithí sheanbhunaithe COGG agus Aonad um Oideachas Gaeltachta na Roinne Oideachais a shíneadh chuig scoileanna lasmuigh de na réigiúin Ghaeltachta.

Tá Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann ag éileamh go dtiocfadh méadú suntasach ar líon na meánscoileanna neamhspleácha lán-Ghaeilge. Tá 13 chontae ann faoi láthair gan aon rogha thiomnaithe iar-bhunscolaíochta trí mheán na Gaeilge iontu do dhaltaí agus tuismitheoirí. Daltaí nach bhfuil faill acu leanúint den oideachas lán-Ghaeilge i ndiaidh na bunscoile, is é is dóichí go dtiocfaidh meath ar a



sealbhú Gaeilge agus ar an úsáid a bhainfidh siad aisti. Cé go bhfuil Aonaid Ghaeilge i bhfeidhm i gcuid de na contaetha sin, ní chreideann Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann go bhféadfaidh na hAonaid sin ról na meánscoileanna neamhspleácha a chomhlíonadh, ach amháin má bhíonn siad mar chuid d'aistriú scoile ó theagasc trí mheán an Bhéarla go teagasc trí mheán na Gaeilge.

Cé go n-aithnítear agus go dtuigtear sa Chumann an cion a dhéanann na scoileanna ar mhaithe leis an nGaeilge a chosaint agus úsáid na teanga a fheabhsú, ní bheadh sé réalaíoch a mhaíomh go bhféadfadh na scoileanna iad féin an teanga a athbheochan inár bpobail. Ba cheart comhpháirtíocht a d'fhéadfadh a bheith ann idir an Roinn Oideachais agus an Roinn Ealaíon, Oidhreacht agus Gaeltachta a fhiosrú. San obair sin i gcomhpháirtíocht a chéile, ba cheart díriú ar na Limistéir Pleanála Teanga a leathnú go mbeidh siad sna cathracha agus i réigiúin eile lasmuigh de na Gaeltachtaí.

Trasdulta a Nearthú / Strengthening Transitions

Tugann Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann dá aire an plé atá déanta ar an aistriú idir foghlaim agus cúram na luath-óige, bunscoileanna agus iar-bhunscoileanna sa doiciméad ón Roinn Oideachais *Léargas ar Sholáthar don Oideachas Lán-Ghaeilge lasmuigh den Ghaeltacht* (2022).

I dtaca leis an aistriú ó fhoghlaim agus cúram na luath-óige go dtí an bunoidéachas, tá béim leagtha sa doiciméad ar an tábhacht as cuimse a bhaineann leis an bpróiseas idir an dá leibhéal scoile sin a láidriú. Luaitear sa doiciméad freisin na cuspóirí is tábhachtaí sa straitéis *Na Chéad 5* (2019) agus dearbhaítear ann go bhfuiltear tar éis gníomhartha a chomhaontú maidir leis an oideachas trí mheán na Gaeilge. Aithníonn Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann gur chóir an ceangal idir foghlaim agus cúram na luath-óige agus na bunscoileanna a chothú agus meas a léiriú air ar an mbealach is fearr a fhreastalóidh ar riachtanais daltaí agus múinteoirí. Lena chois sin, áfach, éilíonn an Cumann go dtabharfaí an t-am agus na hacmhainní do mhúinteoirí na naíonán sóisearach agus do bhaill foirne ábhartha eile le go mbeidís in ann tabhairt faoi shocruithe idirthréimhseacha ar bith a dhéantar. Tá dearbhú á lorg ag Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann freisin nach mbeadh ualach míchothrom oibre ag múinteoirí na naíonán sóisearach i gcomparáid lena gcomhghleacaithe mar gheall ar aon ghníomhartha a chomhaontófar.

Tá sonraí sa doiciméad maidir le daltaí a bheith ag aistriú ó rang a sé i nGaelscoileanna go dtí bliain a haon in iar-bhunscoileanna de réir mheán an oideachais san iar-bhunscoil. Cé go dtuigeann Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann an tábhacht a bhaineann le sonraí den chineál sin, ní léir go bhfuiltear tar éis aon straitéis phraiticiúil ná plean gníomhaíochta a fhiosrú don idirthréimhse sin. Bíonn deis ag múinteoirí rang a sé eolas i scríbhinn a thabhairt faoin dul chun cinn atá déanta agus faoin méid atá bainte amach ag leanaí san fhoghlaim ar chártaí tuairisce na Comhairle Náisiúnta Curaclaim agus Measúnachta agus ar phasanna oideachais deireadh bliana rang a sé. Aithnítear go bhfuil fiúntas ag baint le heolas mar sin a thabhairt d'iar-bhunscoileanna le go mbeidh aistriú gan stró ag daltaí rang a sé, ach is tábhachtach, áfach, nach mbeadh páipéarachas breise ag múinteoirí agus an beartas seo á chur i bhfeidhm.

Tá sé fíorthábhachtach go gcuirfí straitéis chuimsitheach i bhfeidhm lena chinntiú go mbeidh teacht ag daltaí rang a sé i scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge ar mheánscoileanna lán-Ghaeilge chun a bhforbairt leanúnach mar fhoghlaiméoirí dátheangacha a chinntiú. Creideann Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann go bhfuil an easpa roghanna iar-bhunscolaíochta trí mheán na Gaeilge ar cheann de na fadhbanna is mó ar gá dul i ngleic leis in aon bheartas má tá oideachas príomhshrutha trí mheán na Gaeilge le baint amach.

Liúntais 'Múineadh trí Ghaeilge' a Athbhunú / Restoration of 'Teaching Through Irish' Allowance

Cuireadh deireadh le roinnt mhaith liúntas rólbhunaithe i gcás gach tairbhí nua (na múinteoirí sin a bhí ag fabhrú teidlíocht nua ar liúntas) ón 1 Feabhra 2012 ar aghaidh. Chomh maith leis sin, bhain na



ciorruihte le múinteoirí atá ag fáil liúntas sonraithe agus a bhog óna scoil ina dhiaidh sin. Tá Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann i ndiaidh an fód a sheasamh ó cuireadh deireadh leis na liúntais sin le go dtabharfaí ar ais iad, agus tá margáil earnála ar bun aige le gach iarracht a dhéanamh iad a athsholáthar.

Má tá rath le bheith ar aon Bheartas don Oideachas Lán-Ghaeilge Lasmuigh de na Ceantair Ghaeltachta, bheadh sé riachtanach a chinntiú go ndéanfaí scoileanna agus múinteoirí a dhreasú leis na torthaí atá luaite a chur chun cinn agus a bhaint amach. Agus an méid sin á chur san áireamh, tá Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann ag éileamh go dtabharfaí an liúntas don Mhúineadh trí Mheán na Gaeilge ar ais mar bhealach chun tacú leis an mbeartas seo a chur i bhfeidhm.

Ualach-oibre & Tacaíocht do Mhúinteoirí / Teacher Workload & Supports

Tá Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann i ndiaidh aird a tharraingt ar na fadhbanna a bhaineann leis an ualach oibre ar mhúinteoirí le blianta anuas. Bíonn drochthionchar ag an ualach oibre ar fholláine agus ar shástacht oibre múinteoirí in amanna, agus ar chaighdeán an oideachais atá siad in ann a chur ar fáil do na daltaí faoina gcúram. Tá éileamh déanta ag Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann go gcuirfí beartais i bhfeidhm chun an ualach oibre a laghdú agus chun cur le héifeachtúlacht ghairm na múinteoireachta.

Sa suirbhé a rinne Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann, *Workload, Stress and Resilience of Primary Teachers* (2015), tá beartais i scoileanna, coinníollacha san áit oibre agus eispéiris i seomraí ranga, i measc nithe eile, sonraithe ag Morgan agus Nic Craith mar chúiseanna le strus i measc múinteoirí. Glacadh le rún le linn chomhdháil INTO faoi ualach múinteoirí, rún inar aithníodh go bhfuil an síormhéadú ar thionscnaimh ag cur go mór le hualach oibre múinteoirí.

Agus an beartas seo á fhorbairt, caithfear cineálacha éifeachtacha tacaíochta, oiliúna agus am comhoibríoch ionscoile a chur san áireamh le go n-éireoidh leis agus le go laghdófar an t-ualach oibre ar scoileanna a oiread agus is féidir.

Chomh maith leis sin, d'aithin Morgan agus Nic Craith go n-imríonn an t-éileamh ar scoileanna agus ar mhúinteoirí fadhbanna na sochaí a leigheas tionchar ar sprid daoine. Cuireann Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann in iúl go láidir nach féidir brath ar scoileanna agus ar mhúinteoirí amháin in aon bheartas ina bhféachfar leis an nGaeilge a láidriú lasmuigh de na ceantair Ghaeltachta. Is gá beartas pobail a fhorbairt chun cur leis an ardú feasachta ar úsáid na Gaeilge sa tsochaí agus leis an úsáid sin a dhreasú, agus is gá na hacmhainní cuí a chur a fáil chuige sin.

Agus an beartas seo á fhorbairt, is tábhachtach a dheimhniú go gcuirfear an tacaíocht cheart i bhfeidhm faoi choinne scoileanna agus múinteoirí. Tá an Scéim Aitheantais Scoileanna Gaeltachta ar bun ó bhí Aibreán 2017 ann, agus í faoi mhaoirsiú an Aonaid um Oideachas Gaeltachta sa Roinn Oideachais. I measc na gcineálacha tacaíochta a chuirtear ar fáil leis an scéim tá Uaireanta Tacaíochta Gaeilge, Leithdháileadh Deontas, Forbairt Ghairmiúil Leanúnach á comhordú ag COGG, Treoirínte Dea-Chleachtais do Bhunscoileanna ar an Tumoideachas agus Tacaíocht ón bhFoireann Cigireachta. Caithfear na cineálacha tacaíochta sin a chur ar fáil do gach scoil lena chinntiú go n-éireoidh le haon bheartas atá beartaithe.

Tacaíocht éifeachtach eile atá ann d'fhoghlaimoirí Gaeilge agus dá scoileanna is ea leas a bhaint as naisc leis an bpobal le go mbeidh faill ag gach foghlaimoir an Ghaeilge a labhairt agus a úsáid in áiteanna taobh amuigh den scoil. I gcás daltaí réamhscoile agus bunscoile, úsáid teanga sa teaghlach agus teagmháil leis an teanga is mó a imríonn tionchar ar fhorbairt an léacsacain. Ba chóir díriú in imeachtaí pobail nó pleananna teanga ar an teaghlach iomlán a thabhairt isteach le páirt a ghlacadh in imeachtaí trí mheán na Gaeilge. Bealach a bheadh ansin le scafláil a thabhairt don fhoghlaim atá ar bun



sna scoileanna agus, san am céanna, bheadh deis ag foghlaimoirí óga teangacha an Ghaeilge a úsáid agus í a chluinstin á labhairt ag daoine ar gach aois taobh amuigh den seomra ranga.

Dá mbeadh na cineálacha tacaíochta sin le bheith ann, bheadh sé riachtanach cur leis an gcistiú agus le sainchúram na seirbhísí tacaíochta don oideachas lán-Ghaeilge atá curtha ar bun cheana féin. Tá lear mór straitéisí agus bailiúcháin mhóra acmhainní atá dírithe ar úsáid na Gaeilge a fheabhsú, agus iad forbartha ag an gComhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta, ag Comhar Naíonraí na Gaeltachta, ag Gaeloideachas agus ag an bhForas Pátrúnachta. Tá an-rath ar a n-iarrachtaí siúd sna Gaeltachtaí agus creideann Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann nach n-éireoidh leis an mbeartas seo gan cur leis na seirbhísí sin agus na hacmhainní riachtanacha a chur ar fáil dóibh i ngach réigiún.

Mar Fhocal Scor / In Conclusion

Tá Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann ag tacú le beartas a fhorbairt ina ndéanfar foráil maidir le samhail nua tumoideachais Gaeilge lena gcinnteofar go mbeidh teacht ag teaghlaigh ar oideachas trí mheán na Gaeilge ar gach leibhéal scoile agus go mbeidh tacaíocht acu ina leith sin.

Moltaí Chumann Múinteoirí Éireann

- Feachtas feasachta náisiúnta chun cur leis an tuiscint ar an tumoideachas trí mheán na Gaeilge agus chun aird a tharraingt ar na buntáistí a bhaineann leis an dátheangachas/ilteangachas, chomh maith le taighde ar choincheap na ndíolúintí ón staidéar ar an nGaeilge
- ‘Scoileanna Comhpháirtíochta’ a fhorbairt lena mbeadh scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge ina gcomhpháirtithe ag scoileanna Béarla agus a dhéanfadh saorghluaiseacht múinteoirí idir na scoileanna sin a dhreasú le go mbeadh tréimhse acu ag múineadh trí Ghaeilge.
- Chuirfeadh na coláistí oiliúna tosaigh ‘Eispéireas Scoileanna Lán-Ghaeilge’ ar bun ionas go mbeadh taithí ag ábhar múinteoirí ar scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge.
- Níos mó daoine a chur ar an eolas faoi na hacmhainní atá ag an gComhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG) agus ag Comhar Naíonraí na Gaeltachta. Mar chuid den mholadh seo dhéanfaí athbhreithniú ar an méid a chuireann siad ar fáil le go dtabharfaidís tacaíocht do scoileanna a bhíonn ag feidhmiú trí mheán an Bhéarla.
- ‘Forbairt Ghairmiúil i nGaeilge’ do mhúinteoirí, cúntóirí riachtanas speisialta agus baill foirne tacaíochta ar mian leo a bheith ag obair i scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge a chistiú agus a dhreasú.
- An cistiú don tacaíocht teanga a mhéadú, lena n-áirítear tacaíocht dhifreáilte chun cuidiú leis an saibhriú teanga i gcás cainteoirí dúchais agus cainteoirí eile.
- Gach liúntas a thabhairt ar ais, an liúntas ‘Múineadh trí Ghaeilge’ san áireamh.
- Treoir chuimsitheach agus forbairt ghairmiúil do mhúinteoirí agus scoileanna chun tacú le haon bheartas a chur i bhfeidhm, mar aon le cistiú dóthanach don fhorbairt ghairmiúil leanúnach agus d’acmhainní praiticiúla/digiteacha.



- Am breise don cheannaireacht agus bainistíocht ionscoile, laethanta scaoilte ón scoil le haghaidh leas-phríomhoidí agus tacaíocht rúnaíochta lena dheimhniú go mbeidh go leor acmhainní agus ama ag scoileanna chun tabhairt faoi aon obair bhreise riaracháin a bheadh ag teastáil.
- Comhionannas, éagsúlacht agus ionchuimsitheacht gach dalta a chur chun cinn in aon bheartas a bhainfeadh leis an Oideachas lán-Ghaeilge.

Gabhann an INTO buíochas leis an Roinn Oideachais as an deis ár aighneacht scríofa a chur isteach agus táimid ag tnúth obair libh ar an mbeartas seo.

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