

St Brendan's College, Belmullet, School Improvement plan
Recognition as a Second level school in the Gaeltacht 2018-2021

**Summary of the
whole school action Plan**

School Context: St Brendan's College is a mixed vocational school teaching through the medium of English presently. The school is located in the North West of Mayo in the Gaeltacht Of Erris. It is very evident in the area that the amount of daily speakers of the language is declining rapidly.

Table 1- Language profile of students and their parents

Language spoken	2017/2018
Mostly Irish	16.7%
Mostly English	61.1%
English Only	22.2%

The school is under the directorship of Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB. The school provides a high standard of second level education for its students. It is a DEIS school with an open entrance policy where students with various needs and abilities are accepted and welcomed.

Table 2 Projected Improvements in Literacy and Numeracy in Students

School Year	Reading Age	Spelling Age	Maths Age
2016/17	11 Yrs 5 Mths	12 Yrs	11 Yrs
2017/18	11 Yrs 8 Mths	12 Yrs 2 Mths	12 Yrs 6 Mths
2018/19	11 Yrs 11 Mths	12 Yrs 6 Mths	13 Yrs
2019/20	12 Yrs 1 Mth	13 Yrs	13 Yrs 5 Mths
2020/21	12 Yrs 2 Mths	13 Yrs 2 Mths	13 Yrs 9 Mths

It is the aim of the school's management and staff that the literacy and numeracy standard of our students would improve at the same level in both English and Irish. In 2017, 51 students sat the leaving Certificate examination in Irish and 28 of them sat the higher level paper while 2 students had exemptions. 44 students sat the Junior Certificate examination at higher level while 14 took the ordinary level exam.

Table 3-Analysis of Junior Cert Maths results and a projection of future Maths results

Grade	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
A	0%	1%	5%	8%	12%	15%
B	19%	24%	25%	28%	30%	31%
C	44%	46%	55%	57%	55%	48%
D	33%	29%	15%	7%	3%	6%
E	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
F	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Table 5-Projection of School Population

Academic Year	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Student Population	378	400	410	420	422

The school has accommodated 70% of the student population in the catchment area in the past 4 years and the student numbers are increasing annually.

**Table 6- Projection of the incoming students from Primary schools who will have a desire to study their
Subjects through Gaeilge**

School	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	School Status
Corclough N.S	2	4	7	8	6	Within the Scheme
Aughleam N.S	4	5	4	3	4	Within the Scheme
Doohoma N.S.	2	2	1	2	1	Within the Scheme.
Pullathomas N.S	0	1	1	1	1	Within the Scheme
Killmore N.S	0	1	1	2	2	Outside the Scheme
Aughlasheen N.S	0	1	2	2	2	Outside the Scheme
Belmullet N.S	0	4	6	8	10	Outside the Scheme
Glencastle N.S	0	1	2	2	2	Outside the Scheme
Sraigh N.S	0	1	1	1	1	Outside the Scheme
Geesala N.S	0	1	2	2	3	Outside the Scheme

Inver N.S	0	1	1	1	2	Outside the Scheme
Barnatra N.S	0	1	1	2	2	Outside the Scheme
Bangor N.S	0	2	3	4	4	Outside Gaeltacht
Ballycroy N.S	0	0	1	1	1	Outside Gaeltacht
Drumgallagh N.S	0	0	1	1	1	Outside Gaeltacht
Total	8	25	36	43	45	
Cumulative	8	33	69	112	157	

There are 27 teachers presently teaching in the school in the academic year 2017/18, each with varying standards and competencies in Irish.

Table 7- Teachers competency regarding teaching of their subjects through Irish.

Teachers qualified and willing to teach through Irish	Teachers willing to get CPD in order to improve their competency in Irish	Teachers who have concerns about teaching through Irish
5	19	2

There are 4 Irish teachers in the school. There are already many teachers in the school who are capable of teaching their subjects through Irish

Name	Subject	Employment Status
Mary Gaughan	Irish, English, Wellbeing	Permanent
Anne Coyle	Irish, Geography, History	CID
Ciara Noone	Irish, Maths, History, Geography	CID
Laura Staunton	English, Irish, History, Wellbeing, Geography	CID
Éanna Kilbane	Technical Graphics, Woodwork	CID
Mary Reilly	Business Studies, Wellbeing	Permanent
Barbara Padden	English, History, Careers, Wellbeing	CID
Michelle Carolan	French, Irish, HSCL, Wellbeing	CID

Chairperson of St Brendan's College Board Of Management; Theresa McGuire is a fluent Irish speaker as is our parent's rep Michael Hurst. Theresa Deane who is a member of our Parent's Council is also fluent in Irish. The HCSL officer and the school secretary both have diplomas in Irish. The Board of Management of Brendan's College has informed Mayo Sligo and Leitrim ETB that precedence be given to applicants with Irish in the recruitment of staff for St Brendan's College. The school has a strong tradition regarding Irish, where students take part in Gael-linn Debates on an annual basis and have reached regional finals on many occasions. Events such as Seachtain na Gaeilge and Gaeilge 24, traditional music sessions, table quizzes, and treasure hunts are also organised on an annual basis. The school has built strong links with our local summer College Coláiste UISCE and scholarships are provided for students each Easter and Summer. The aim of St Brendan's College is that we would further enhance the teaching and learning of Irish and that the results of this best practice would be apparent in the future.

General Targets

1. To commence the introduction of an Irish stream in 2018 where students will be given the option to study their subjects through the medium of Irish for their Junior Certificate (Criteria 1, 2,3A) with us looking towards total emersion in the future. To provide for specifications T1 for the Junior Certificate (Criteria 5). We would be enhancing the teaching and learning of Irish as well as the various subjects of our students. To provide a high standard of education for our learners as well as our native Irish speakers and to fulfil each of their needs in the school curriculum (Criteria 1,2,3a,5)

Table 9- projection of school's supply of subjects through Irish

Academic Year	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Subjects taught through Irish	Maths, Irish L1, Wellbeing	Maths, Irish, Wellbeing, English, History, Geography	Maths, Irish, wellbeing, English, History, Geography, woodwork, Technical Graphics.
Amount of Students	7	10	12
Cumulative	7	17	29

It is the school's intentions that the uptake on studying through Irish would grow by 3% each year as a direct result of encouragement and enticement through the various activities through Irish. This practice would further enhance and develop the teaching and learning of our students through Irish.

2. Broaden the Irish atmosphere in the school and to further develop and nurture the Native Irish speakers whom the school has the fortune of educating. (Criteria 7, 8, 9). That the amount of Native Irish speakers would increase from 12 in 2018 to 60 in 2023.
3. To use the school's self- evaluation process to review and evaluate the provision of Irish in the school. Link with the local Community's language planning process to share and clarify information on the language requirements of the local community and the school population.

Actions to be taken						
Specific Targets	Actions based on targets	Success Criteria	Who is responsible	Lead Role	When	Resources
<p>GT1, A (Criteria 1,2,3a, 5) Parents, students and the whole school community are made aware of the advantages of studying subjects through Irish. To Prepare students for the working environment in 21st century.</p> <p>Inform about the school's intentions to provide Maths and Wellbeing as subjects available to study through Irish for academic year 2018/19</p> <p>Provide students with the opportunity to study Irish as First or second language (T1/T2).</p> <p>The school timetable offers more opportunities to students through Irish as outlined above.</p>	<p>1. Jan 2018 onwards School Principal visits sixth class pupils in Primary schools and will inform them of the school's intentions regarding provision of subjects through Irish.</p> <p>2. Feb 2018 onwards Information evening for parents and community on the importance and the advantages of studying subjects through Irish from a professional and employment perspective. Guest speakers from organisations such as COGG, Gaeloideachais and Gaeilge Iorrais will attend.</p> <p>3. Sept 2018-2021 Mentoring programme between 1st year students and Transition year students. Fluent speakers in Ty will ough Irish.mentor first year students who have expressed an interest in studying their subjects through Irish.</p>	<p>1. Parents and students will be informed of the learning opportunities through Irish.</p> <p>2. Parents and students will be informed of the advantages of studying through Irish.</p> <p>3. Level of interest in studying subjects through Irish will increase as illustrated in Table 7.</p>	<p>1.Sixth class pupils, their parents and the wider community.</p> <p>2.Parents, past-pupils, link –teacher, teachers of subjects through Irish.</p> <p>3. Students, Ty students inparticular, 1st yrs and Irish speakers especially.</p>	<p>1. Principal, Link - Teacher and B.O.M.</p> <p>2. Principal, Link-teacher and B.O.M.</p> <p>3. Principal, Ty teachers and 1st year teachers.</p>	<p>Jan 2018-2021 and onwards.</p> <p>Feb 2018-21 and onwards.</p> <p>Sept 2018-21 and onwards.</p>	<p>Funding for information packs for students and parents. Time to put packages together and visit schools.</p> <p>Guest speakers from COGG, Gaeloideachais, Gaeilge Iorrais. People to translate packages.</p> <p>Time to enforce plan.</p> <p>Language assistant.</p> <p>Teaching hours to provide for Maths and SPHE through Irish and other subjects going forward.</p>
<p>GT1 (B) 1. School staff be aware about CPD in Irish and the teaching of their subject through Irish.</p> <p>Preference be given to teachers who are teaching their subjects through Irish in 18/19: Teachers of Maths and wellbeing and is necessary there after.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Meetings • Guest speakers to inform staff. • Funding from Udarás and Gaeilge Iorrais to enforce plan. • Guest speakers from COGG to explain the importance of Irish and the Gaeltacht Plan. • Provide CPD for teachers teaching their subjects through Irish and Irish teachers. • Create a link with Coláiste Cholmáin who are already teaching completely through the medium of Irish. • CPD to be sourced for teachers of maths and wellbeing and is necessary there after. • Sourcing of resources for tecahers of Maths and wellbeing. 	<p>School staff aware of the advantages of Irish and that they be willing to teach their subjects through Irish.</p> <p>Teacher's competence and confidence in the teaching of their subjects in Irish will improve. They will see that there are many supports, resources available to them in Irish.</p>	<p>School staff and any new recruitments.</p> <p>Teachers of Maths, Wellbeing and Irish.</p>	<p>Principal, Link-teacher, B.O.M. and Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim E.T.B.</p> <p>Principal, link-teacher and E.T.B.</p>	<p>Academic year 2017/18 and onwards.</p> <p>April 2018 and onwards.</p>	<p>Guest speakers, representatives from Údarás na Gaeltachta, E.T.B, Gaeilge Iorrais.</p> <p>Resource Centre in Belfast (ÁIS-Aonad). Project Maths through Irish, Education Centre, Funding.</p>

<p>Provide opportunities and time to whole school staff for CPD in their subjects through Irish in Irish itself.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for teachers to trial teach their subjects through Irish with a module for transition years using team teaching.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Irish Morning, conversational circle, pop up Gaeltacht in the staff room and throughout the school Organise classes for teachers during their weekly planning time slot. Arrangements be made to timetable for team-teaching. Module with TYs through Irish (Geography, Maths, history or woodwork) 	<p>There will be more of an awareness of Irish throughout the school and the staffroom. Teacher's confidence in Irish will improve and they will be encouraged.</p> <p>Teacher's confidence in Irish will improve and they will be inspired regarding the teaching of their subject through Irish and the various teaching methodologies.</p>	<p>School staff and students.</p> <p>TY students and their teachers.</p>	<p>Principal, link-teacher and teachers willing to teach their subjects through Irish.</p> <p>ETB, Principal, link-teacher and TY co-ordinator</p>	<p>Sept 2018-2021 and onwards.</p> <p>Sept 2018-21 and onwards</p>	<p>Guidance from Conradh na Gaeilge, Gaeloideachais. Funding from Gaeilge Iorrais, Údarás na Gaeltachta and Dept Of Education and Skills. Information from Mayo Education Centre.</p> <p>18-19 teaching hours, Language assistant in Irish.</p>
<p>GT2 (Criteria 7,8,9) (a) Provide extra curricular opportunities for students through the medium of Irish.</p>	<p>Academic Years 2018-2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-school debating competition, school to host county competition. Inter schools soccer competition between schools where subjects are taught through Irish. <p>September 2018-2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students to be encouraged to take part in class debates. Irish speller of the week. Irish proverb of the week. Irish student of the month. Irish student of the year. <p>October 2018-2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise an inschool debating competition. Participate in Gael-Linn Debates. Gaeilge 24. 	<p>Students will be willing to take part in these competitions where their awareness of and confidence in Irish will increase.</p> <p>Awareness of Irish outside of the classroom is increased and student's confidence increased.</p> <p>That the level of students studying their subjects through the medium of Irish will increase by 5% annually from 2018-2021.</p> <p>That there be an increase in the use, awareness of Irish in the school and the area due to school activities.</p>	<p>All students within the school.</p> <p>Students who are interested in Irish and soccer. Students who are interested in developing their Irish, students in other Irish speaking schools.</p> <p>Whole school community.</p>	<p>Link-teacher and all Irish teachers.</p> <p>Link-teacher and teachers responsible for soccer in the school.</p> <p>Principal, link-teacher, E.T.B and B.O.M.</p>	<p>Sept 2018-2021 and there after.</p> <p>September 2018-2021 and onwards.</p> <p>September 2018-2021</p>	<p>Teaching hours to prepare students for debates, funding for prizes and refreshments. Language assistant to help.</p> <p>Funding for travel to games, prizes and refreshments. Language assistant to help.</p> <p>Funding for prizes, books, participation fees, travel and books from Údarás na Gaeltachta, COGG, Siopa Leabhair, Cló-Iar-Chonnachta, An Gúm, Language assistant.</p>

	<p>February 2018-2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drop everything and Read time in Irish for second years. <p>March 2018-2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drop everything and Talk for all students. Seachtain na Gaeilge. <p>Lunchtime every Tuesday and Thursday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boardgames through Irish. <p>Once a week</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project between senior students in 5th year and first and second year students to encourage the use of Irish in the school. <p>September 2018-December 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project with TY students and Irish speakers of the area. <p>December 2018-2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross-curricular activity with music class to conduct some of Christmas variety concert through the medium of Irish. 					
<p>GT2 (B) To develop an environment where Irish is the natural language spoken within the school.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bilingual notices on school website. All correspondence with parents to be bilingual from Sept 2018. Bilingual school diary for all students and staff. Bilingual texts to parents. Bilingual school internal announcements. Bilingual School website. 	<p>Students, teachers, parents and all visitors to then school will see a strong Irish ethos in the school, that the school is proud of the Irish language.</p> <p>There will be an awareness of Irish among the whole school community.</p> <p>Parents will see that there is an emphasis on bilingualism.</p> <p>Awareness of Irish will grow.</p> <p>The emphasis on Irish will be clearly visible.</p>	<p>Whole school community.</p> <p>All students and teachers.</p> <p>School Secretary.</p> <p>Designer and maintainer of school website with the assistance of Irish teachers.</p>	<p>B.O.M and school principal, Link-teacher.</p> <p>Teachers responsible for school diaries.</p> <p>Principal</p> <p>Link-teacher</p> <p>Principal and link-teacher.</p>	<p>September 2018-2021 and onwards.</p> <p>September 2018-2021 and onwards.</p> <p>September 2018-2021 and onwards.</p> <p>September 2018 onwards.</p> <p>September 2018 onwards.</p>	<p>Information and posters from COGG. Guidance from Gaeilge Iorrais. Funding from Gaeloideachais, Údarás na Gaeltachta.</p> <p>Funding, Folens, Educational Company, COGG.</p> <p>Time and funding to translate current website.</p>

<p>GT2 (C) Improve student's awareness of the benefits of Irish, Create an understanding and pride in the language and encourage our younger students to speak Irish.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School newsletter and prospectus will be bilingual. 	The importance of Irish will be evident. There will be an increasing awareness of Irish. Pride and respect for the language will increase.	School PRO	Principal and link-teacher.	September 2018 onwards.	Time and funding for translation.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School reports will be bilingual. 	Awareness of Irish will grow.	Secretary and Principal	Principal	September 2018 onwards.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bilingual staff-meetings. 	Awareness of Irish and confidence of staff in speaking the language will improve.	Principal and link-teacher	Principal	September 2018 onwards.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bilingual B.O.M meetings 	Importance of Irish will be evident.	Principal and Chairperson of B.O.M.	Principal and Link-teacher	September 2018 onwards.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reps from the Sruth Gaeilge on the student's council and parent's council. 	Importance of Irish will be further emphasised.	Parent's council and student's council	Principal	September 2018 onwards	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bilingual annual report from B.O.M. 	Awareness of Irish will increase.	Secretary of Bord of Management	Principal	September 2018 onwards	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fluent speakers from first year to help sixth class students on the induction day. 	Through the school profile in social media, school advertising, school correspondence it will be apparent that there is a strong emphasis on Irish in then school and that there is a pride in Irish.	Whole school community	Link-teacher and principal	September 2018 Onwards.	Funding, teaching time, language assistant.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities at lunchtime : music session, quiz, school radio, Ceol 2018 and Fáinne Óir 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gaeltacht scholarships 	Students will see Irish spoken outside of the school and their Irish will improve.	All students, Coláiste UISCE	Link-teacher and Irish teachers.	September 2018 and onwards.	Sponsorship of scholarships from Colaiste UISCE, Shell scholarships.
	<p>GT 2 (D) CPD for secretary and non-teaching staff to enhance their Irish as they are the staff who public meet first when visiting the school.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for non-teaching staff to speak and practice their Irish in social activities in the school.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representatives from local Irish Summer Colleges (UISCE) will come to the school to advertise their courses. 	Students will attend these Irish summer schools and their Irish will improve.	Students, Reps from Coláiste UISCE. Coláiste Mhuigheo and Gael-linn.	Link-teacher, Irish teachers and principal.	September 2018 onwards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide Irish classes and time to attend CPD. 		Parents and local community will be able to come in to the school and do their business through Irish if they so wish. Awareness of Irish and confidence of non- teaching staff will improve.	Secretary, cleaner, caretaker, SNAs	Principal, link-teacher	April 2018 and onwards.	Funding from E.T.B., Údarás na Gaeltachta, Gaeilge Iorrais.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School secretary operating through Irish as much as possible. 						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directions from school care taker in Irish. 						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SNAs operating through Irish where possible. 					

<p>GT 3 Criteria 3,4 School self-evaluation process used to improve and develop the use of Irish in the school. Encourage students to study their subjects through Irish. Encourage and support in the teaching of their subjects through Irish.</p>	<p>Using the 6 step process we will gather data and information, analyse the data and decide on new targets ahead.</p> <p>Parents will be surveyed on their attitudes, opinions and competence regarding Irish using baseline data and this will be compared to data from table 1.</p>	<p>Publish school improvement plan to the school community with step 4 of self-evaluation and step 6 of monitoring and self-monitoring.</p>	<p>Whole school community</p>	<p>Principal and link-teacher.</p>	<p>Continuously from September 2017-June 2021</p>	<p>Time, funding to analyse the data compiled. Time to inform people of the benefits of education through Irish.</p>
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Monitoring and Evaluation:

Short-Term

- Sub-committee for school recognition as a Gaeltacht school set up, comprising of: Principal, deputy principal, link-teacher, Irish teachers and teachers teaching their subjects through Irish. There will be formal and informal meetings where minutes will be documented. Meetings to be held on a monthly basis to assess how successful we are at achieving our targets.
- All minutes of meetings to be filed in folder where language plan is filed.
- Minutes of staff meetings will also be filed in plan folder.
- Progress to be discussed with representatives from student's council, parent's council and B.O.M.
- Develop language plan at each staff meeting.
- Reports given of progression of plan.

Medium-Term

- Staff meeting twice a year to discuss the current challenges to the Irish language.
- Representatives from Gaeilge Iorrais, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Gaeloideachais and COGG will be invited to discuss progression and to provide advice and guidance on difficulties and obstacles encountered.

Long-Term

- 2020 (year 3) September –December 2020 there will be a major investigation on progression of Irish language in the school.
- Re-evaluate the school context regarding the Irish language in comparison to 2018.
- Re-evaluate the school state exam results in Maths and Irish in comparison to 2018.
- Looking at baseline data from 2018, compile questionnaires, surveys on focus groups of parents, students, teachers etc.
- Education plan 2021-2024 to be completed by spring 2022 based on an evaluation of autumn 2020.
- New general and specific targets.
- To have 50-70 students educated through total immersion in Irish and that figure increasing annually.