

globe All IPIP Information Pack

ALL IRELAND PROGRAMME
FOR IMMIGRANT PARENTS



ROI
English





ALL IRELAND PROGRAMME FOR IMMIGRANT PARENTS

THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS INFORMATION PACK IS ACCURATE AT THE TIME OF GOING TO PRINT (JUNE 2010).
THE VIEWS CONTAINED WITHIN THIS DOCUMENT DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THOSE OF THE PROJECT
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS OR THE PROJECT FUNDERS.

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Fiona Dwyer

(All IPIP Project Coordinator, ISPCC)

Mary Nicholson

(All IPIP Project Manager and Advocacy Manager, ISPCC)

INTRODUCTION

The Globe: The All Ireland Programme for Immigrant Parents is a time defined project aimed at helping immigrant parents with living and parenting in Ireland.

The information pack is one of three products from the project.

The information pack has been designed as a handbook for parents on aspects of living in Ireland. It contains up-to-date information (correct at time of print in June 2010) on 6 different topics and links to other resources that you can access for further information.

The Information Pack has been designed after extensive consultation with practitioners, young people and immigrant parents themselves. We have tried to incorporate as much as possible of what people have said they need information on.

Each section is separated for easy access so if there is a topic which is particularly important for you, you can skip straight to it.

SECTION 1:

Living in Ireland - A Brief Introduction

SECTION 2:

Living in Ireland - Practical Information

SECTION 3:

Legal Information

SECTION 4:

The Health and Social Services System

SECTION 5:

The Education System

SECTION 6:

Recreational and Social Activities

The sections are further divided into either questions and answers or information on a topic. This makes it easier to locate a particular section or get the answer to a particular question.

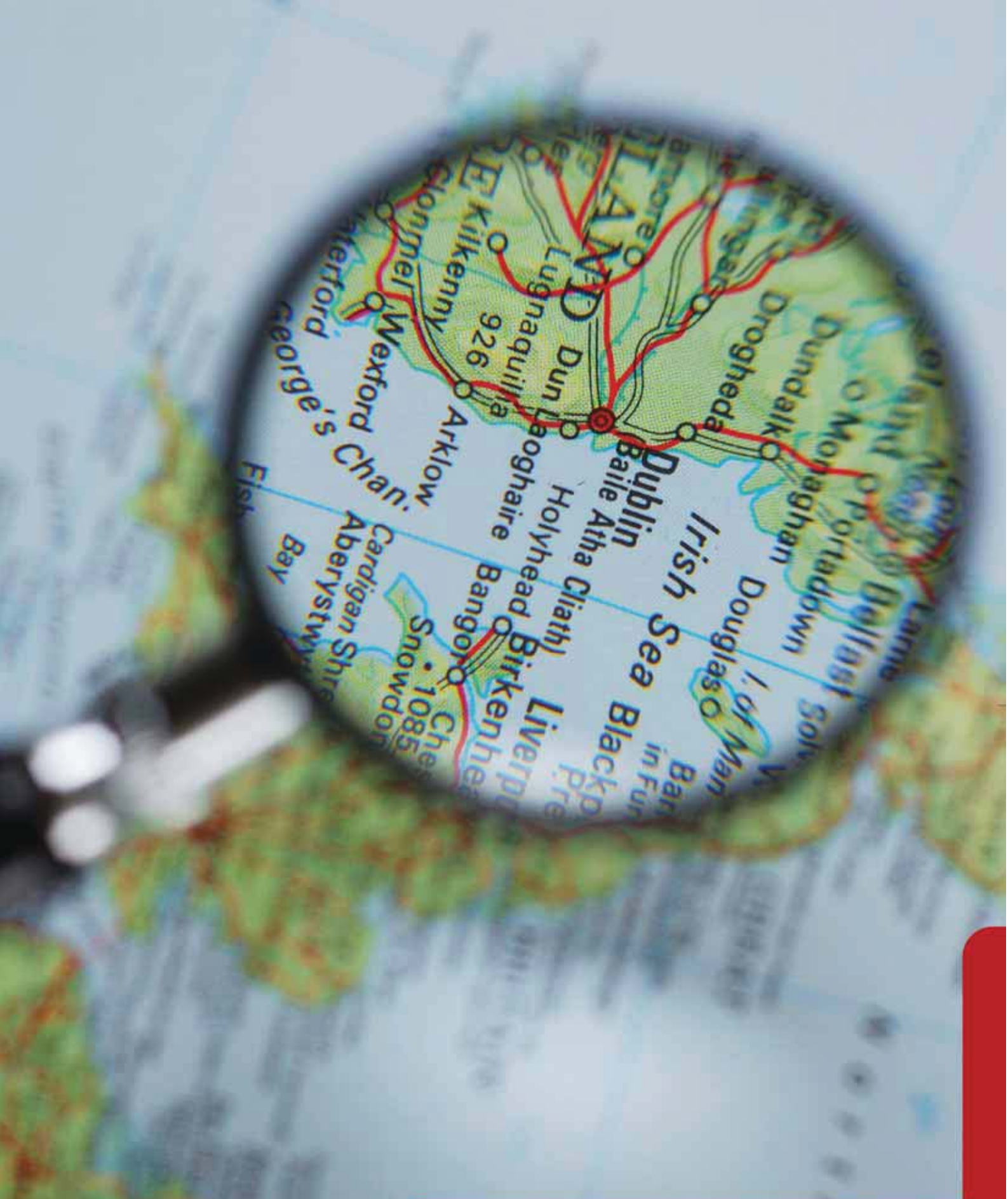
At the end of the six sections there is a list of commonly used abbreviations and acronyms, a glossary of words and also a section on the use of the Irish language in Ireland.

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SECTION ONE:

LIVING IN IRELAND A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

(The All Ireland Programme for Immigrant Parents)



SECTION ONE:

LIVING IN IRELAND A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

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FAST FACTS

Ireland is also called Éire and you will see this written in various places, like on stamps for example. This is the Irish language version of the name Ireland.

Ireland is a Constitutional republic and the Constitution was adopted in 1937.

The population of Ireland is just over 4 million (2006 census figures).

The capital city of Ireland is Dublin, which is called Baile Átha Cliath in Irish.

The official currency of Ireland is the Euro, written as € before prices. Ireland adopted the Euro in 2002.

The official languages of Ireland are English and Irish (also called Gaeilge and Gaelic).

All place names in Ireland are written in both Irish and English.

GEOGRAPHY OF IRELAND

Where is Ireland located?

Ireland is an island located in North Western Europe. To the east of Ireland, the closest neighbour is the United Kingdom which is separated from Ireland by the Irish Sea.

The Republic of Ireland covers five-sixths of the island and Northern Ireland (which is part of Great Britain) covers the remaining sixth of the island.

How is Ireland divided up?

The Republic of Ireland is separated into 26 counties which are contained within the 4 provinces of Ireland.



The Provinces of Ireland

- 1 -Leinster
- 2 -Munster
- 3 -Connaught
- 4 -Ulster



LEINSTER

The province of Leinster lies in the east of the country and is comprised of the counties of Carlow, Dublin, Kildare, Kilkenny, Laois, Longford, Louth, Meath, Offaly, Westmeath, Wexford and Wicklow.

NAME	IRISH NAME	COUNTY TOWN
Carlow	Ceatharlach	Carlow
Dublin	Baile Átha Cliath	Dublin
Kildare	Cill Dara	Naas
Kilkenny	Cill Chainnigh	Kilkenny
Laois	Laois	Portlaoise
Longford	Longfort	Longford
Louth	Lú	Dundalk
Meath	Mí	Trim
Offaly	Ua Fáilghe	Tullamore
Westmeath	Iarmhí	Mullingar
Wexford	Loch Garman	Wexford
Wicklow	Cill Mhantáin	Wicklow

MUNSTER

The province of Munster lies in the south of the country and is comprised of the counties of Clare, Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Tipperary and Waterford.

NAME	IRISH NAME	COUNTY TOWN
Clare	Clár	Ennis
Cork	Corcaigh	Cork
Kerry	Ciarraí	Tralee
Limerick	Luimneach	Limerick
Tipperary	Tiobraid Arainn	Clonmel
Waterford	Port Lairge	Waterford

CONNAUGHT

The province of Connaught lies to the west of the island and is comprised of the counties of Galway, Leitrim, Mayo, Roscommon and Sligo.

NAME	IRISH NAME	COUNTY TOWN
Galway	Gaillimh	Galway
Leitrim	Liatroim	Carrick-on-Shannon
Mayo	Maigh Eo	Castlebar
Roscommon	Ros Comán	Roscommon
Sligo	Sligeach	Sligo

ULSTER

The province of Ulster lies to the north of the island. The majority of Ulster is part of Northern Ireland. The Republic of Ireland counties in Ulster are the counties of Cavan, Donegal and Monaghan.

NAME	IRISH NAME	COUNTY TOWN
Cavan	Cabhán	Cavan
Donegal	Dún na nGall	Lifford
Monaghan	Muineacháin	Monaghan

A VERY BRIEF HISTORY OF IRELAND

What is the history of Ireland?

Ireland has a very long history which is believed to date from about 7,000 B.C. and the first people are thought to have migrated from Scotland in Great Britain.

Ireland was invaded by many different groups including the Celts, Vikings, Normans and the English.

England ruled Ireland for nearly 800 years until the Easter Rising in 1916 when nationalists declared that Ireland was an independent republic.

In 1921 the Anglo-Irish Treaty was signed and Northern Ireland remained part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

In 1922 W.T. Cosgrave became the first head of the Irish Free State.

In 1937 the new Constitution abolished the Irish Free State and proclaimed Ireland (Éire) as a sovereign independent democratic state totally free from British Control.

In 1959 Ireland joined the United Nations.

In 1973 Ireland joined the European Economic Community (now the European Union).

In 2002 Ireland started using the Euro.

THE GOVERNMENT

Who is in charge in Ireland?

The Head of State is the President (Uachtaráin in Irish).

The Head of the Government in Ireland is the Taoiseach.

The Deputy Taoiseach is called the Tánaiste.

How is the Taoiseach appointed?

The Taoiseach is appointed by the President after they have been nominated by Dáil Éireann and they must retain the support of the representatives while they are in power.

What is the Parliament called?

The Parliament in Ireland is called the Oireachtas and is made up of two houses. The first is the House of Representatives or Dáil Éireann and the second is the Senate or Seanad Éireann.

What are the main political parties?

The main political parties in Ireland are Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael, Labour, Sinn Féin, the Green Party and the Socialist Party.

What are the representatives to the parliament called?

Members of Dáil Éireann, the House of Representatives are voted in during the general elections and hold their seats for up to five years. They are called Teachta Dála (Deputy to the Dáil in English) and this is shortened to the letters TD after their name – for example Brian Lenihan TD who is the Minister for Finance.

Dáil Éireann currently has 166 representatives or TDs. Seanad Éireann has 60 representatives.

Can I vote in Elections?

Irish citizens can vote in all elections. If you are from the UK then you can vote in Dáil elections.

European elections and local elections, EU citizens can vote in European and local elections and non-EU citizens can vote in local elections only.

POPULATION PROFILE

How many people live in Ireland?

There are currently 4,239,848 people living in Ireland (2006 figures). Of the 4,239,848 people, 2,121,171 are male and 2,118,677 are female.

In total:

- 864, 449 are aged 0-14 years
- 632, 732 are aged 15-24 years
- 1,345,873 are aged 25-44 years
- 928, 868 are aged 45-64 years
- 467,926 are aged 65 and over.

What is the biggest city?

Dublin is the biggest city in Ireland and also has the largest population. 1,187,176 people live in Dublin and many more live in commuter towns in neighbouring counties.

What is the city with the second largest population in Ireland?

According to 2006 figures from the Central Statistics Office (CSO), the city with second largest population in Ireland is Cork with 481,295 people.

MONEY

What is the currency used in Ireland?

Ireland is part of the Eurozone and started using the Euro as the official currency on January 1st 2002.

What do the Euro banknotes look like?

There are 7 different denominations of notes in Ireland.

€500, €200, €100, €50, €20, €10 and €5



What do the coins look like?

There are 8 different Euro coins.



€2, €1, 50c, 20c, 10c, 5c, 2c and 1c

The smaller coins are written with a c after them. The c stands for cent and there are 100 cent in a euro.



USEFUL CONTACTS

For more information on the geography of Ireland

Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government

Telephone: 1890 20 20 21
Website: www.environ.ie

For more information on the history of Ireland

Irish History Online

Website: www.irishhistoryonline.ie

For more information on the Government of Ireland

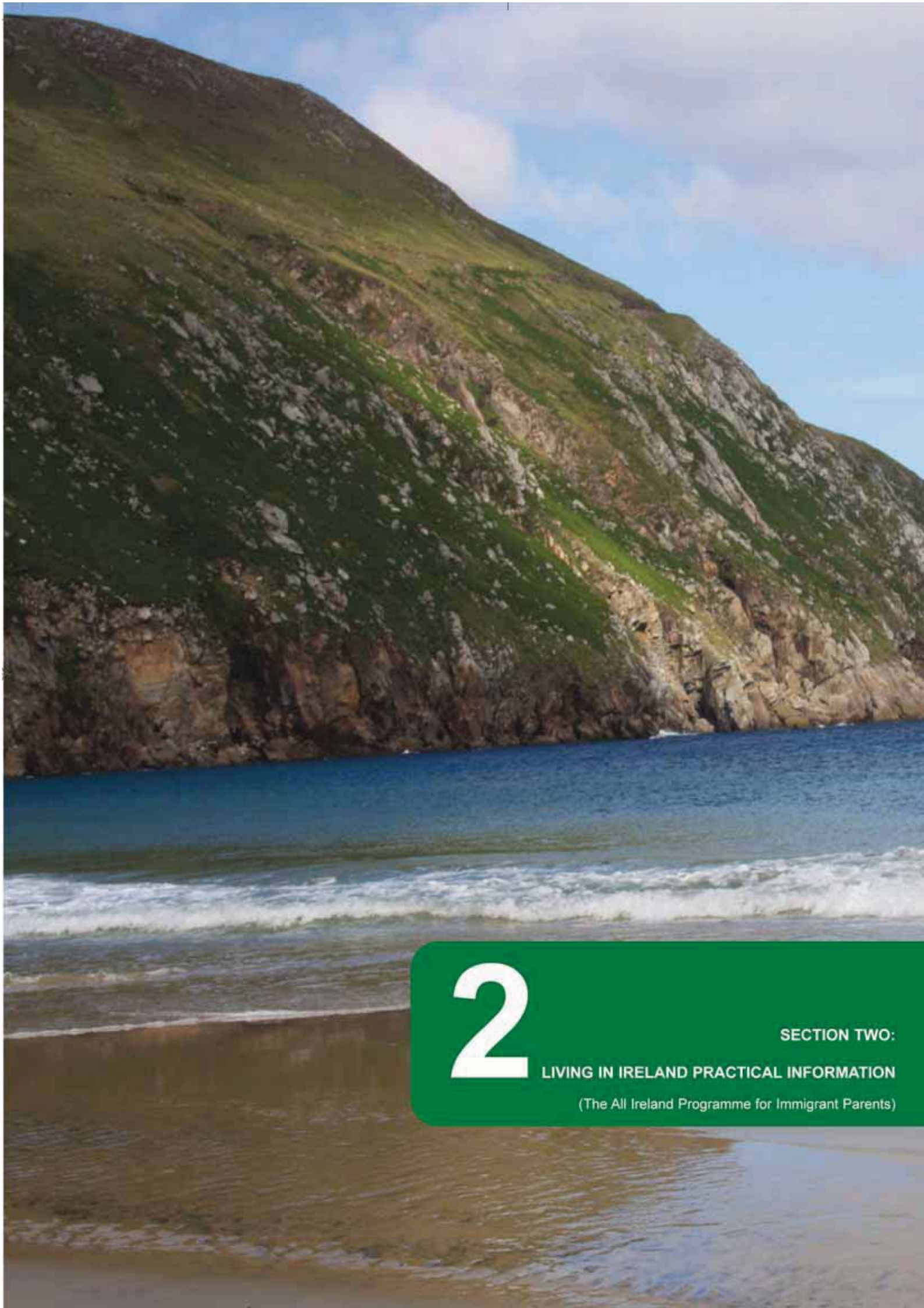
Government of Ireland Website

Website: www.gov.ie
The Oireachtas (Parliament)
Address: Leinster House, Dublin 2
Telephone: (01) 618 3000
Email: info@oireachtas.ie
Website: www.oireachtas.ie

For more information on the population of Ireland

Central Statistics Office

Website: www.cso.ie



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SECTION TWO:
LIVING IN IRELAND PRACTICAL INFORMATION
(The All Ireland Programme for Immigrant Parents)



**SECTION TWO:
LIVING IN IRELAND PRACTICAL INFORMATION**

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ACCOMMODATION

What are the main types of accommodation available in Ireland?

If you need information about housing in Ireland you can contact Threshold, the national housing organization.

Address: 21 Stoneybatter, Dublin 7.

Tel: 1890 929 777

Tel: (01) 678 6096

Fax: (01) 677 2407

Email: advice@threshold.ie

Website: www.threshold.ie

You can also contact your local authority at www.environ.ie/en/LocalGovernment/LocalGovernmentAdministration/LocalAuthorities/

You can find your nearest housing association at www.icsh.ie/eng/list_of_members

For rented accommodation you can look online at www.daft.ie and www.myhome.ie

BANK ACCOUNTS

Why should I open a bank account?

It is a good idea to open a bank account if you are working and living in Ireland. Many people get paid directly into their bank accounts and it also allows you to save money and pay bills directly.

What different types of banks are there?

Financial institutions in Ireland are divided into banks, building societies and credit unions.

All banks and building societies are regulated by the financial regulator. The Financial Regulator has information on their website on what you should look for in your bank or building society www.itsyourmoney.ie

What do I need to know about opening a bank account?

When you open a current account you should be aware of what services you get with your account and you should know what fees and charges you should pay. Many banks offer mostly free banking with some conditions and you should ask about this in the bank or building society.

What is a current account?

A current account allows you to make day-to-day transactions (i.e. paying a bill, receiving your salary straight to the account, making transactions etc.). These are offered only by banks and building societies.

What is a deposit account?

A deposit account allows you to build up savings and you may earn interest on this money. These are offered by most financial services firms – banks, building societies and credit unions.

How do I open a bank account?

To open a bank account you will need to go to your local bank and fill in a form. You will need to bring proof of your address and proof of your identification (see below).

Why do I need to prove my identification and my address?

This requirement is set down in anti-money laundering legislation the Criminal Justice Act 1994.

What can I use to prove my identification?

The following is a list of forms of identification that provide evidence of your name and date of birth:

- A valid passport
- Current Driving licence
- Current identity card with a photograph from a known employer
- Current Student identity card with a photograph issued by a known third level college
- Identification card with photograph issued by An Garda Síochána.

What can I use to prove my address?

The following is a list of documents that provide evidence of your address:

- Recent original utility (for example electricity, gas or telephone) bill in your name
- Current Driving licence
- Identification card with photograph issued by an Garda Síochána
- Pension/benefit book issued by the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs
- Recent original bank statement issued in your name.

What do I do if I have a complaint?

There are a number of things you can do if you have a problem opening a bank account.

Step 1: Ask to speak to a manager or the branch manager. If you are still not happy you can complain to the Financial Services Ombudsman.

Step 2: You can contact the Financial Services Ombudsman at www.financialombudsman.ie

You can also write to the Ombudsman

Address: 3rd Floor, Lincoln House, Lincoln Place, Dublin 2

Phone: 1890 88 20 90

Email: enquiries@financialombudsman.ie

UTILITIES

What are utilities?

Utilities are public services such as electricity, gas, water and so on which are provided by the government but you usually have to pay for them.

ELECTRICITY

Who controls electricity in Ireland?

Electricity services in the Republic of Ireland are provided by the Electricity Supply Board (ESB). The ESB is owned and controlled by the Government. ESB owns and manages the electricity network however there are a number of domestic providers in the market, namely ESB, Airtricity and Bord Gais Energy.

How do I get the electricity bill in my name?

To get the electricity bill in your name you need to firstly have the Meter Point Reference Number (MPRN). To get this number you can ask your estate agent, landlord or builder. You can then contact the service provider for new connections customer service.

ESB: 1850 37 27 57

Airtricity: 1850 40 40 70

Bord Gais Energy: 1850 22 22 55

How often will I get an electricity bill?

Electricity bills are issued every two months and are based on meter readings or estimations of electricity used.

How soon must I pay my bill?

You must pay your electricity bill within 14 days to ensure that your supply stays constant.

What do you mean by a meter reading?

The electricity meter is a machine in your house that measures how much electricity you use. In order to calculate your bill a meter reader will call to your house. The meter reader will call to your house four times a year.

What do you mean by estimations of electricity used?

The meter reader calls to your house for four of your six yearly bills. For the other two bills, the ESB will estimate how much electricity you have used based on previous bills.

How can I pay my electricity bill?

There are a number of different ways to pay your electricity bill. You can pay your electricity bills through:

- Direct debit (where the money comes directly from your bank account)
- Online at www.billpay.ie (a free service from the Post Office - see Postal Services page 15) or in the Post Office. (ESB & Bord Gáis Energy only)
- Shops that display the PayPoint (in cash only) (ESB & Bord Gáis Energy only)

ESB: 1850 37 23 72 (8a.m. – 8p.m. Monday – Friday)

Airtricity: 1850 40 40 70 (8a.m. – 7p.m. Monday – Friday)

Bord Gais Energy: 1850 22 22 55 (8a.m. – 8p.m. Monday – Friday, 9a.m. – 5.30p.m. Saturday)

What happens if I am not home when the electricity meter reader calls to my house?

If you are not at home you can enter your exact meter reading by telephone: 1850 33 77 77 regardless of your electricity provider.

www.esb.ie

<http://www.airtricity.com/roi-domestic/>

There is no service online for Bord Gáis.

How do I read the meter?

Reading the electricity meter is like reading the mileage on a car. You can also get more information from:

www.esb.ie/esbnetworks/domestic/customers/metering/read_meter_reading.isp

What do I do if there is an emergency (or a loss of supply) in my electricity?

If you have lost your electricity supply or there is an emergency you can telephone 1850 37 29 99 to speak to a customer service operator. This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This number is regardless of who your electricity supplier is.

How do I make a complaint?

Step 1: Telephone the ESB customer service on 1850 37 23 72 or email them at service@esb.ie

Step 2: If this is not resolved you can write to: ESB Customer Supply, Complaints Facilitator, PO Box 6, Henry Street, Limerick or email complaintfacilitator@esb.ie

Step 3: If you are still not happy you can contact:
The Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) at CER,
The Exchange, Belgard Square North, Tallaght, Dublin 24
Phone: (01) 400 08 00
Email: info@cer.ie

Airtricity:

Step 1: Telephone the Airtricity customer service on 1850 40 40 70 or email them at complaints@airtricity.com

Step 2: If this is not resolved you can write to:
Customer Service Manager, Airtricity House, Ravenscourt
Office Park, Sandyford, Dublin 18

Step 3: If you are still not happy you can contact:
The Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) at CER, The
Exchange, Belgard Square North, Tallaght, Dublin 24
Phone: (01) 400 0800
Email: info@cer.ie

Bord Gáis Energy:

Step 1: Telephone the Bord Gáis Energy customer service
on 1850 22 22 55 or email them at elecinfo@bordgais.ie

Step 2: If this is not resolved you can write to:
Customer Service Manager (Residential Electricity), Bord
Gais Energy Supply, PO Box 10943, Foley Street, Dublin 1

Step 3: If you are still not happy you can contact:
The Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) at CER, The
Exchange, Belgard Square North, Tallaght, Dublin 24
Phone: (01) 400 0800
Email: info@cer.ie

GAS

Who controls gas supply in Ireland?

The main supplier of gas (mains and bottled) is Bord Gáis which is state owned and Flógas is another supplier for people who do not have mains gas lines.

How do I get the gas bill in my name?

To get the gas bill in your name you can telephone a special number 1850 63 26 32 (in English) or 1850 63 36 33 (in Russian, Polish and Mandarin).

How often will I get a gas bill?

Gas bills are issued every two months and are based on meter readings or estimations of gas used.

How soon do I have to pay my bill?

You must pay your gas bill within 14 days to make sure that your supply stays on.

What do you mean by a meter reading?

The gas meter is a machine in your house that measures how much gas you use. In order to calculate your bill a meter reader will call to your house. The meter reader will call to your house three times a year.

What do you mean by estimations of gas used?

The meter reader calls to your house for three of your six yearly bills. For the other three bills, Bord Gáis will estimate how much gas you have used based on previous bills.

How can I pay my gas bill?

There are a number of different ways to pay your gas bill.

You can pay your gas bills through:

- Direct debit (where the money comes directly from your bank account) at: www.bordgais.ie
- Online at www.billpay.ie (a free service from the Post Office) or in the post office
- Shops that display the PayPoint (in cash only)
- By telephone on 1850 63 26 32 (for English) and 1850 63 36 33 (for Russian, Polish and Mandarin).

What happens if I am not home when the gas meter reader calls to my house?

If you are not at home you can enter your exact meter reading online at: www.bordgais.ie/networks/index.jsp?1nID=102&2nID=115&3nID=348&4nID=348&pID=348&nID=197 or by telephone at: 1850 42 77 32.

What do I do if I smell gas?

If you smell gas immediately telephone 1850 20 50 50 to report it. There is also a safety leaflet in English, Irish, Polish, Russian and Chinese available at: www.bordgais.ie

How do I make a complaint?

Step 1: Telephone the Bord Gáis customer service on 1850 63 26 32 or email them at info@bordgais.ie

Step 2: If this is not resolved you can write to:
The Customer Service Manager,
Bord Gáis Energy Supply,
PO Box 10943,
Dublin 1.

Step 3: If you are still not happy you can contact:
The Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) at CER,
The Exchange, Belgard Square North, Tallaght, Dublin 24
Phone: (01) 400 08 00
Email: info@cer.ie

WATER CHARGES

Currently mains water for use in the home (for drinking, washing and sanitation) is free.

There are plans to bring in metered water charges but there is no set date for this.

For tips on how to save water in your home, please see: www.taptips.ie. This website contains useful information on saving water and not wasting it by leaving taps running and so on. It also shows how you can save electricity at the same time.

REFUSE COLLECTIONS AND RECYCLING

Do I have to pay for my rubbish to be collected?

Yes, refuse (or rubbish) collection is not free in Ireland. Each household must pay a fee for collection.

Who is in charge of collecting rubbish?

Refuse collection is locally managed and charges therefore vary from county to county. To find out more about where you live, ask in your local county council for more information or go online at www.epa.ie

How is rubbish collected?

Rubbish is collected either by the county council or by a private collector. Your provider will give you a wheelie bin, which is a large bin that you place your rubbish in (in black sacks) or in other areas you pay for a tag that you put on your bin when you place it outside.

Your rubbish is collected on a specific day of the week and your private collector or your county council will let you know what day your rubbish is collected. You can see a list of providers and where to register at: www.enfo.ie

How about recycling?

In many areas, households will also be given a separate bin to put recycling products in. This is included in your bin charges. You can save on your rubbish collection by recycling as much as possible.

What can I recycle?

What you can recycle in your green bin depends on your collector but generally you can recycle: paper, glass, wood, cardboard and some plastics.

You can find more information on recycling at: www.repak.ie or from your provider.

What other ways can I recycle?

Another way that you can recycle is to bring items to a 'bring bank' which is an area with different containers for different items including glass, cardboard and some have a container for old clothes. You can find your local 'bring bank' here: www.repak.ie/bring_banks.html or you will probably see one in a large supermarket.

GETTING AROUND

DRIVING IN IRELAND

What do I need to do to drive my own car in Ireland?

If you are moving to Ireland or are already living here and you are importing a car or other vehicle, you will need to do four things before you can drive your vehicle in Ireland:

- Have a valid driving licence
- Pay Vehicle Registration Tax (VRT) (unless you are exempt)
- Have motor insurance
- Pay motor tax.

Can I use my existing driving licence?

It is possible to exchange a driving licence issued by an EU or EEA Member State for a full Irish driving licence. Ireland has agreements with all EU/EEA States and some other countries (Australia, Japan, South Africa, South Korea and Switzerland).

What if my driving licence is not from one of the recognised countries?

If your stay in Ireland will be more than 12 months and you are not from one of the listed countries/states, you can apply for a driving licence in Ireland if you want to continue driving in Ireland.

How do I get a driving licence in Ireland?

You must first complete a driver theory test, apply for a learner driving permit and complete your driving test in Ireland. If you pass your driving test, you will be issued with a full driving licence for use in Ireland.

Can I drive by myself on a provisional licence?

No, you must be accompanied by a person who has held a full driving licence for at least 2 years.

What is the NCT test?

The National Car Test (NCT) is a test that your car must take if you want to drive in Ireland and your car is over 4 years old. There are 43 test centres around Ireland and you can get more details from: www.ncts.ie

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Who controls public transport in Ireland?

Public transport in Ireland is controlled by the CIE group. CIE is responsible for public buses, intercity buses and the train system.

There are also some private operators who operate public transport, especially in the Dublin area.

What do I need to know about Dublin Bus?

Dublin Bus is responsible for buses in the Greater Dublin area. There are many different bus routes. You can get a timetable online at www.dublinbus.ie or from the Dublin Bus office.

Address: 59, Upper O'Connell Street, Dublin 1

Phone: 01 873 4222

The opening hours are:

-Monday 9.00 a.m. - 5.30 p.m.

-Saturday from 9.00 - 2.00 p.m.

How much is the fare?

The fares for the bus depend on how far you are going and whether you have a pre-paid or cash fare ticket.

If you pay on the bus you must have exact change (if you pay more you will get a receipt ticket which you can take to the Dublin Bus office on O'Connell street).

For children (under 16) the fares range between 80c and € 1. For adults the fares range between €1.15 and €4.50.

There are also schoolchild fares, student fares and a range of daily, weekly, month and annual tickets.

Is it possible to get bus timetables sent to my mobile phone?

Yes, on Dublin Bus if you know what bus route you need you can send a text with the words Bus followed by the route number to 53503. This costs 30c. (Network operator charges may apply) <http://www.dublinbus.ie/en/Your-Journey1/Bustxt>

How can I get a bus to another city?

Bus Éireann is responsible for buses that run outside the Dublin area and buses that run in other cities and between cities in Ireland. You can buy your tickets online at www.buseireann.ie or from the local bus station in your nearest city or town.

How can I get a train to another city?

Iarnród Éireann is responsible for trains in Ireland. There are many different train routes available.

You can buy tickets online at www.irishrail.ie or from your local train station.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

What are telecommunications?

Telecommunications are different ways to communicate with people at a distance. The best examples are TV, internet and telephones.

TELEVISION

How many television channels are there in Ireland?

Ireland has three partly public television channels – RTE One, RTE two (also known as Network 2) and TG4 (whose programmes are mainly in Irish). There are also two other Irish channels – TV3 and 3E.

Do I have to pay for these channels?

Any household that has a TV must pay an annual licence charge even if you do not watch the public TV channels.

Where can I get my TV licence?

The current licence fee is €160 for the year. You can buy this from the post office or online at: www.tvlicence.ie or by telephone on 1890 22 85 28.

What happens if I don't pay my TV licence?

There are licence inspectors who call to peoples' houses to check if they have a licence and if you are caught without one you will be fined and/or imprisoned.

How can I get extra channels?

Many people in Ireland also pay for extra channels through cable, digital or satellite and there are different providers of these channels.

- SKY
- NTL/Chorus (UPC)

Further information is available from:

www.sky.com/portal/site/ireland?CMP=KNC-ROIsearch
or from www.upc.ie

TELEPHONES

What is the international dialling code for Ireland?

The international dialling code for Ireland is **00353**. This means that if you are abroad and you need to dial an Irish number, you need to dial **00353** before the rest of the phone number to get through to Ireland.

How do I find area codes within Ireland?

There are area codes for each different area in Ireland. From a landline phone you only need to dial the areacode if you call an area which you are not in yourself. From a mobile phone you will have to dial the full number including the area code.

The area codes will normally be listed in phone books, which are given out free to registered households once a year. You can also get a full list of area codes from www.eircomphonebook.ie or for business or services information www.goldenpages.ie.

How do I get a landline phone?

To get a landline phone you will need to contact a company that provides a landline service. Like opening a bank account you will need to have proof of address and proof of identification.

You can get more information including comparisons of different services at:

www.askcomreg.ie/home_phone/Telephone_Ireland.LE.asp

EMERGENCY SERVICE NUMBERS

Emergency number (free): 999/112

The emergency number will bring you through to an operator who will ask you if you need police, ambulance or fire services.

Directory enquiries: 11811/11890/11850

Directory enquiries is a service where you can ask for the phone numbers of people or businesses. This is not a free service and calls from mobiles can be very expensive.

For UK and international directory enquiries, call 11818.

Note: In the front of your phonebook, there is a list of information, emergency and helpline numbers.

MOBILE PHONES

What mobile phone companies are there in Ireland?

There are the main companies in Ireland:

- O2 – 086 (www.o2online.ie)
- Meteor – 085 (www.meteor.ie)
- Vodafone – 087 (www.vodafone.ie)
- 3 Mobile – 083 (www.tree.ie)
- Tesco mobile – 089 (www.tescomobile.ie) – pay as you go only

All the companies offer different packages and you can have a 'pay as you go' or a 'pay monthly' phone depending on how much you spend on your phone and how much you plan to use it.

Can I change company but keep my mobile phone number?

Yes, you can switch to a different company and keep your phone number. If you want to do this, you should ask the company you are switching to how you would do this.

How do I know which company I should choose?

You can compare mobile phone companies and find out more information at: www.askcomreg.ie

What does 'ready to go' mean?

A 'ready to go' phone is a pre-pay phone. This means that you will not receive any bills but that you buy 'top-ups' which allow you to have credit on your phone to make phone calls.

What does 'pay monthly' mean?

A pay monthly phone is a bill phone. You will be billed for all calls that you make each month.

PUBLIC TELEPHONES

Are there public telephones in Ireland?

There are public phones in Ireland, though the number is declining due to an increased use of mobile phones. Some public phones accept coins or credit cards, the rest use phone cards, known as callcards. Callcards can be bought in shops, post offices and newsagents.

Can I make a reverse telephone call where the other person pays for the call?

International Reverse Charge calls can be made using free phone access codes available on www.eircom.ie/bveircom/pdf/AccessCodesForInternationalReverseCharges.pdf. This is expensive and the other person must accept the call before you are connected.

INTERNET

How can I find out about getting the internet?

As with telephone companies, there are a wide range of internet companies that you can use in your home or there are also many cyber or internet cafes in big towns across Ireland.

How much does it cost?

The cost and different types of connection depend on your provider. You can compare companies and find out more information at: www.askcomreg.ie

MAKING COMPLAINTS

How do I make a complaint about a telephone, mobile phone or internet company?

To make a complaint against a telecommunications company or postal service, you can contact the Commission for Communication Regulation (COMREG) who regulate this area.

Phone: 1890 22 96 68

E-mail: Consumerline@comreg.ie

Website: www.askcomreg.ie/about_us/contact_us.26.LE.asp

POSTAL SERVICES

Who is responsible for post in Ireland?

The main service provider for postal services in Ireland is the State owned An Post (the Irish word for The Post Office).

What are the opening hours for post offices?

Post offices are usually open from 9:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. (from Monday – Friday) and some are open for a half day on Saturdays (depending on the office). You can find your local post office at www.anpost.ie. You can also buy stamps in some other shops.

How often is post delivered?

Post is delivered to offices and homes once a day from Monday to Friday. Post is not delivered at the weekend and post boxes are not emptied at the weekend.

How can I find out how much it costs to post something?

The cost of sending letters, parcels or packages depends on how quickly you want your letter to arrive and where it is going to.

There are leaflets available from all post offices which details how much it costs to post a letter, parcel or package depending on where it is going to and how quickly you want it to arrive. You can also work out the postage at www.anpost.ie

How do I find a post box?

You will find post boxes in every town. They are often in front of or near the local post office. Post boxes are green in colour.

How do I know when post is collected from a post box?

The times that the post is collected from the post box are written on the front of the box. If they are not, ask in your local post office stating where the box is located.

SHOPPING

What times are shops open in Ireland?

The general shopping hours in Ireland are:

Monday - Wednesday:	9.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m.
Thursday:	9.00 a.m. - 9.00 p.m.
Friday:	9.00 a.m. - 7.00 p.m.
Saturday:	9.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m.
Sunday:	12.00 p.m. - 6.00 p.m.

Many shops, especially supermarkets in urban areas are open longer hours up to 24 hours a day.

Where can I find shops?

In cities and large towns shops are usually found in the middle of the town on the main street and streets off the main street.

There are also shopping centres which are buildings with lots of different types of shops and there are also department stores which contain small areas that sell different products.

What are the main types of food shops?

There are four main types of food shops.

- **Supermarkets** - large shops that have a wide variety of different foods.
- **Convenience Stores** - are smaller shops, also called 'local shops' or 'corner shops'. These are generally open late and are generally more expensive than supermarkets.
- **Specialist Shops** - These are shops which sell food from a particular country or specially prepared meats (such as kosher and halal).
- **Single Food Shops** - These are shops that only sell one type of food, for example bakeries which sell only bread and cakes or a greengrocers which sell only fruits and vegetables.

What other information might be useful?

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) has produced leaflets on Safe Food to Go which tells people how to cook and store food safely. This leaflet is translated into lots of different languages and is available at: www.fsai.ie/resources_and_publications/leaflets.html#Directory1

The National Consumer Agency has information about how to make a complaint when you have bought something. You can contact them at:

4, Harcourt Road, Dublin 2.

Phone: 1890 43 24 32

Website: www.consumerconnect.ie

BUDGETING AND MANAGING BILLS

What is a household budget?

A budget is a plan of money you expect to receive and how you expect to spend it. A household budget includes spending on bills, rent, food, school books and so on.

Why would I need a budget?

A budget helps you to spread the cost of your bills and to manage your money so that you are not stuck with large bills you cannot pay.

How do I make a budget?

There are different ways to make a budget. For an easy-to-use version you can get a weekly spending diary from the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (Ireland), also known as MABS.

Their website is www.mabs.ie and contains many useful leaflets on budgeting.

What do you mean by prioritising?

Prioritising in terms of budgeting is simply deciding what is most important. For example rent, electricity, gas, food, school books, clothes and the TV licence should be paid before expensive items such as a car or a big TV are bought.

I need help with my bills, what can I do?

If you need help with your bills, the MABS service will be able to help you to sort out your money and your bills. You can call them at 1890 28 34 38 or visit their website www.mabs.ie

Another useful site is www.itsyourmoney.ie which is the website of the financial regulator. They also have lots of information on budgeting and spreading the cost of your bills. You can also call them on 1890 77 77 77.

The Billpay service offered by An Post (see above, Postal Services), help you to spread the cost of many of your household bills including: telephone, electricity, gas, TV licence and local authority rents. You can ask in your local post office or visit www.billpay.ie

How can I reduce my bills?

A simple way to reduce your utility bills (see above, Utilities) is to reduce the amount of electricity or gas you use. You can get information on how to do this from Sustainable Energy Ireland's website, www.sei.ie

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SECTION THREE:

LEGAL INFORMATION IN IRELAND

(The All Ireland Programme for Immigrant Parents)

SECTION THREE:

LEGAL INFORMATION IN IRELAND

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FAST FACTS

Children and young people throughout the world have rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which Ireland has ratified.

Children in Ireland have rights governing many aspects of their lives including employment, the age they can marry and the age of consent.

There are also many provisions on punishment and youth justice.

Domestic abuse is prohibited in Ireland and there are many places people can go to for help if they are a victim of domestic violence (both women and men).

Ireland has very strong employment rights and discrimination under any grounds is prohibited.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

What is the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child?

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an international human rights treaty that grants all children and young people comprehensive set of rights. Ireland ratified the UNCRC in 1992.

By ratifying the Convention, Ireland became a 'State Party' to it and made a formal commitment to safeguard the rights of children set out in the Convention.

The convention gives children and young people over 40 substantive rights.

These include the right to:

- Special protection measures and assistance
- Access to services such as education and health care
- Develop their personalities,abilities and talents to the fullest potential
- Grow up in an environment of happiness, love and understanding
- Be informed about and participate in achieving their rights in an accessible and active manner

All of the rights in the convention apply to all children and young people without discrimination.

LEGAL AGE OF MAJORITY (ADULTHOOD)

What is the legal age of majority (adulthood) in Ireland?

Anyone under the age of 18 is considered to be a child in Ireland. The legal age of majority (the age at which a child becomes an adult) is 18.

LEGAL AGE FOR WORKING

What is the legal age for working in Ireland?

In Ireland the working hours for young people are regulated by the Protection of Young Persons (Employment) Act 1996. The Act sets maximum working hours, breaks and does not allow children under 18 to work late.

The Act defines children as being aged under 16 and young persons refers to those aged 16 and 17.

What hours can children under 16 work?

Children under the age of 16 cannot have full-time jobs. Children aged 14 and 15 can only work:

- Doing light work during the school holidays – they must have at least 21 days off work during this time
- As part of an approved work experience or educational programme
- In film, cultural, advertising work or sport

Can a young person work overnight?

No, young persons (aged 16 and 17) are only permitted to work between 6am and 10pm.

What are the maximum hours a child under 16 can work per week?

Age	14 years of age	15 years of age
School term-time	0	8 hours
Holidays	35 hours	35 hours
Work experience	40 hours	40 hours

What breaks do under 16s get?

30 minutes	after 4 hours work
Daily	14 consecutive hours off
Weekly	2 days off, to be consecutive as far as is practicable

What are the working hours, time off and breaks for young people aged 16 and 17?

Maximum working day	8 hours
Maximum working week	40 hours
Half hour rest break	after 4.5 hours work
Daily rest break	12 hours off in a row
Weekly rest break	2 days off in a row

What is the minimum wage rate for young people?

The minimum wage for young people under 18 is €6.06 per hour.

AGE OF CONSENT

What is the age of consent?

The age of consent is the age at which people can have sexual relationships is 17 years, regardless of sexual orientation and/or gender.

At what age can people get married in Ireland?

The age at which people can marry in Ireland is 18. If a person is under 18, they must obtain a Court Exemption Order in advance of their marriage. If either party is under 18 (and doesn't have a Court Exemption Order) the marriage will not be recognised under Irish law. Parental consent is not required.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Will my child be physically punished at school?

No, corporal punishment in the education system is prohibited.

The following forms of discipline are not allowed (prohibited):

- Any form of physical violence
- Not giving children food or drink
- Cruel or degrading punishment

PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT

Can I physically punish my child?

While there is no law in place which expressly bans physical punishment of children, slapping has become less acceptable as a form of discipline and increasingly few parents now support its usage. Parents can be prosecuted if the physical discipline is excessive.

What are the positive alternatives?

Alternative positive methods are suggested including 'time outs' and reward charts for young children. For more information on positive parenting tips check www.ispcc.ie or www.barnardos.ie

YOUTH JUSTICE

What legislation deals with children and youth justice?

Legislation that deals with children who break the law is contained in the Children Act, 2001 and the Criminal Justice Act, 2006.

What is the age of criminal responsibility in Ireland?

The age of criminal responsibility is 12 years of age. This means that children who have not reached the age of 12 years cannot be charged with an offence. There is an exception however for children aged 10 or 11 who can be charged with murder, manslaughter, rape or aggravated sexual assault.

What about children under 12 who break the law?

Although children under 12 cannot be charged or convicted of a criminal offence the Gardaí must take a child to his/her parents or guardians where they have a belief that the child has committed an offence. Where this is not possible, the Gardaí will take the child to the HSE in the area where the child lives.

Where can I get more information on youth justice?

For more information on the area of youth justice contact the Irish Youth Justice Service on (01) 476 8673 or iyjs@justice.ie.

You can also visit their website on www.iyjs.ie

DOMESTIC INFORMATION

DOMESTIC ABUSE

What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse refers to the use of physical or emotional force or threat of physical force, including sexual violence in close adult relationships. It can also involve:

- Emotional abuse
- The destruction of property
- Isolation from friends, family and other potential sources of support
- Threats to others including children
- Stalking
- Control over access to money, personal items, food, transportation and the telephone.

How can I get help for domestic violence?

You can look in the local phone book or in a community services directory for the phone number of a refuge and counselling service closest to you.

There is also a list of helplines and organisations on pages 20 and 21 that will help with domestic violence.

What about in an emergency?

In an emergency you should contact your local Garda Station for help or telephone **999** or **112** (from a mobile).

FREE LEGAL AID

Can I get free legal aid in Ireland?

Free legal aid in Ireland is available from the Free Legal Advice Centre (FLAC) which is based in Dublin at 13 Lower Dorset Street.

FLAC provides an information and referral line that individuals may call to receive guidance on their legal needs.

The office takes calls on Monday to Friday, from 9:30 a.m. to 1pm, and 2p.m. to 5p.m. and the telephone number is 1890 35 02 50.

Is everyone entitled to free legal aid?

The Legal Aid Board is also available to give legal aid.

Free legal aid depends on:

- A merit test (This means that your case must be serious enough and your situation)
- A means test (This means that they will look at how much money you earn).

Where can I get further information?

Further information on the Legal Aid Board is available from 1890 61 52 00 or www.legalaidboard.ie

EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

What rights do I have as an employee in Ireland?

Workers who are from the EU/EEA and Switzerland or those who have fully valid work permits have all the same employment rights as people from Ireland.

What about discrimination?

Discrimination against employees on grounds of age, gender, marital status, family status, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability and membership of the Travelling Community is prohibited under the Employment Equality Acts 1998 and 2004. This prohibition of discrimination refers to:

- Direct and indirect discrimination
- Discrimination in access to employment, conditions of employment, promotion, training and classification of posts.

PARENTAL LEAVE

What is parental leave?

People who have had at least one year's continuous employment and who are the parents of children (natural or adopted) may take up to a total of 14 weeks unpaid leave (for each child) to take care of their children who are no older than eight years old. In the case of a child with a disability leave may be taken up to 16 years of age.

Will I be paid when I am on parental leave?

You are not entitled to pay from your employer, social welfare payment or maternity/adoptive benefit. Taking parental leave does not affect other employment rights.

When should I tell my employer I'm going on parental leave?

You should inform your employer at least 6 weeks before you plan on taking parental leave. It is best to give as much notice as possible.

PATERNITY LEAVE

Paternity leave is not recognised under Irish law. Some fathers may be granted time off following the birth of their child but this depends on their employer.

Fathers can take parental leave if they wish following the birth of their child or for a child up to 8 years of age.

MATERNITY LEAVE

What is maternity leave?

Maternity leave is time off work given to pregnant women just before they give birth and for a certain period after.

How long is maternity leave?

A pregnant employee is entitled to maternity leave from employment for a period of at least 26 weeks regardless of how long they have been working for the employer or the number of hours worked per week. Employees have the right to additional unpaid maternity leave of 16 weeks.

When can I take maternity leave?

At least two weeks have to be taken before the end of the week of the due date and at least 4 weeks after.

Will I still get paid when I am on maternity leave?

Employers are not obliged to pay their employees during maternity leave but people may qualify for Maternity Benefit depending on how long they have been working in Ireland.

How do I tell my employer I need to go on maternity leave?

An employee must notify her employer and produce a medical certificate confirming the pregnancy and expected delivery date. The notice must be given at least 4 weeks before the commencement of maternity leave and must be in writing.

What about my job?

The employee has the right to return to the same working conditions when the maternity leave is over.

This means the;

- Same employer
- To the same job held immediately before they went on leave
- Same conditions and contract.

USEFUL CONTACTS

For more information on children's rights, the following organisations have very useful information.

Ombudsman for Children

Address: Millennium House
52-56 Great Strand Street, Dublin 1
Telephone: 1800 20 20 40
Email: oco@oco.ie
Website: www.oco.ie

Children's Rights Alliance

Address: 4 Upper Mount Street, Dublin 2
Telephone: (01) 662 9400
Email: info@childrensrights.ie
Website: www.childrensrights.ie

Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs

Address: Hawkins House, Dublin 2
Telephone: (01) 635 4000
Email: omc@health.gov.ie
Website: www.omc.gov.ie

The following organisations provide useful information and help on domestic issues

Women's Aid

Address: Everton House
47 Old Cabra Road, Dublin 7
Telephone: 1800 34 19 00
Email: helpline@womensaid.ie
Website: www.womensaid.ie

MOVE Ireland

(for violent men who need help to stop)

Address: Unit 2, First Floor, Clare Road Business Mall,
Clare Road, Ennis, Co. Clare
Telephone: (065) 684 8689
Email: moveireland@eircom.net
Website: www.moveireland.ie

MOVE National Offices

MOVE Athlone
Telephone: (090) 647 2174

MOVE Cork
Telephone: (086) 069 1834

MOVE Dublin
Telephone: (01) 8724357

MOVE Galway
Telephone: (091) 536 400

MOVE Kildare
Telephone: (086) 172 1938

MOVE Limerick
Telephone: (061) 367 881

MOVE Nth Tipperary
Telephone: (067) 27 882

MOVE Wicklow
Telephone: (086) 821 7253

Donegal Domestic Violence Service

Helpline Number: 1800 26 26 77

Free Legal Aid Centre

Address: 13 Lower Dorset, Dublin 1
Telephone: 1890 35 02 50
Website: www.flac.ie

Legal Aid Board

Address: Quay Street, Cahirciveen, Co. Kerry
Telephone: 1890 61 52 00
Email: info@legalaidboard.ie
Website: www.legalaidboard.ie

Legal Aid Board (Dublin)

Address: 47 Upper Mount Street, Dublin 2
Telephone: (01) 644 1900

The following organisations are useful contacts for further information on employment rights.

The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation

Address: 23 Kildare Street, Dublin 2
Telephone: 1890 22 02 22
Email: info@entemp.ie
Website: www.entemp.ie

Information for EEA/EU and international workers
www.entemp.ie/sitemap/internationalworkers.htm

Migrant Rights Centre Ireland

Address: 55 Parnell Square West, Dublin 1
Telephone: (01) 889 7570
Email: info@mrci.ie
Website: www.mrci.ie

Citizen's Information Board

Address: Ground Floor, Georges Quay House
43 Townsend Street, Dublin 2
Telephone: (01) 605 9000
Website: www.citizensinformation.ie
The area dedicated to employment rights is available at: www.citizensinformation.ie/categories/employment

National Employment Rights Authority

Telephone: 1890 80 80 90
Email: info@employmentrights.ie
Website: www.employmentrights.ie

HEALTH BENEFITS

LEGAL

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SECTION FOUR:

HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES SYSTEM

(The All Ireland Programme for Immigrant Parents)

SECTION FOUR:

HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES SYSTEM

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DOCUMENTS

HEALTH BENEFITS

RE

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KEY WORDS

General Practitioner
Health Nurse
Hospital
Health Centre
Medical Cards

FAST FACTS

The Health Service Executive (HSE) is responsible for providing healthcare for people living in Ireland. Everyone is entitled to healthcare in Ireland but not everyone is entitled to free or public healthcare. Your access is based on 'residency' and 'means'. A person living in Ireland for at least one year is considered to be 'ordinarily resident' and falls into one of two categories:

- People with medical cards
- People without medical cards

In an emergency phone 999 or 112 from a mobile



You can dial 999 from both but you can dial 112 even if the key lock on your phone is on.

HEALTHCARE

Who is eligible for healthcare in Ireland?

If you are 'ordinarily resident' in Ireland you are entitled to a range of health services which are free or subsidised by the Government.

What does 'ordinarily resident' mean?

Ordinarily resident means that you have lived in Ireland for one year and plan to continue living in Ireland.

If I have lived in Ireland for less than one year am I entitled to healthcare?

People who have not been resident in Ireland for at least one year must satisfy the HSE that it is their intention to remain for a minimum of one year in order to be eligible for health services. Dependants of such individuals must also contact the HSE to confirm their eligibility.

If I am sick do I go to the hospital?

No, you should only go straight to hospital if it is an emergency. If it is not too serious you should visit a GP first.

GENERAL PRACTITIONER

What is a GP?

A General Practitioner (GP) is the official term in Ireland for a doctor who gives services to people in his/her surgery or in their own home.

What is a family doctor?

A family doctor is simply another name for a GP.

Is it free to visit the GP?

No, unless you have a Medical Card or a GP Visit Card, visits to a GP are not free.

MEDICAL CARD HOLDERS

What is medical card?

A Medical card is a card issued by the Health Service Executive (HSE) that gives people certain health services free of charge.

Who can get a medical card?

Medical cards are means tested - not everyone is entitled to them.

Asylum seekers and refugees are provided with medical cards for as long as they are in the asylum process.

Once asylum seekers have been granted status to remain they are still eligible for medical cards unless their income levels are too high.

Migrant workers are eligible for medical cards as long as they do not exceed the medical cards income levels and can prove they will be ordinarily resident in Ireland for 12 months.

Am I eligible for a medical card?

An easy way to find out if you are eligible is to use the calculator on <http://www.medicalcard.ie>

You can also contact your local health centre or local Citizens Information Board for advice.

If you are over 70 and ordinarily resident in Ireland, the Medical Card and GP card are means tested.

If you are eligible, your children (up to 16) are also covered.

How do I apply for a Medical Card?

You can apply online at <http://www.medicalcard.ie> or get a MC1 Form and a list of doctors who participate from your local health centre or community care office. You can also download the form from: http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/Find_a_Service/entitlements/Medical_Cards/Forms_and_Guidelines.html

If I have a medical card what services am I entitled to?

- GP Services
- Prescribed drugs and medicines (subject to a small charge)
- Dental services
- Optical services
- Aural services
- Maternity and infant care services

GP VISIT CARD

What is a GP visit card?

A GP visit card is for people who are not eligible for a medical card but who still meet income guidelines.

How do I apply for a GP card?

The application form for a GP card is the same as for a medical card.

NON-MEDICAL CARD HOLDERS

If I don't have a medical card can I still get free health services?

If you are not entitled to a medical card and are 'ordinarily resident' you are entitled to free public hospital services but you may have to pay in-patient and out-patient hospital charges. You will still have to pay for visits to the GP.

What other services are available?

There are some health services that are available to all people whether they have a medical card or not:

- People suffering from certain illnesses may qualify for free prescribed drugs and medicines regardless of their medical card status
- Child health services are available to all children
- Health promotion is aimed at everybody.

What is the drugs payment scheme?

It is a scheme where an individual or family does not have to pay more than €120 each month for approved prescription medicines.

It is for people who do not have medical cards and normally have to pay for all medicines.

HOSPITAL CARE

Can I get free hospital care?

Every person who lives in the Republic of Ireland is entitled to free hospital care in public hospital beds.

However there might be certain hospital charges e.g. in-/out- patient fee (see page below). You are also entitled to free out-patient services.

Are there different types of hospitals?

There are currently three different types of hospitals in Ireland:

- Health Service Executive Hospital
- Voluntary Public Hospitals
- Private Hospitals

Hospitals in Ireland exist to diagnose, treat and care for ill and/or injured patients.

Can I go to the hospital instead of a GP?

Unless you have an emergency, you should visit your GP first. Generally you must be referred by a GP in order to avail of services in public hospitals (except accident and emergency services). There is no charge for out-patients services/accident & emergency if referred by your GP.

Most public and private hospitals have an accident and emergency department. You can go to the emergency service without a referral from the GP but you will be charged a fee.

HOSPITAL CHARGES

What charges do I have to pay in hospital?

Everyone 'ordinarily resident' in Ireland is entitled to free hospital care. However there might be some charges.

In - patient charge: 75 Euro/day

Note: The maximum charge is 10 days per year

Out - patient charge: 100 Euro initial charge

Emergency & accident charge: 100 Euro initial charge

Who does not have to pay hospital charges?

Medical card holders, pregnant women, children (up to 6 weeks old) or children with long-term illness do not have to pay these charges. Patients with a referral from the GP do not have to pay the out-patient service charge.

What are the fees for private hospitals?

The charges for private hospitals differ and depend on what kind of hospital it is and where it is.

The charges in 2009 are:

	Private	Semi-private	Day care
Regional:	910 Euro	713 Euro	655 Euro
County:	607 Euro	488 Euro	434 Euro
District:	260 Euro	222 Euro	193 Euro

Where can I find details of my local hospital?

There are 51 public hospitals in Ireland. A full list of hospitals is available from: www.hse.ie/services/Find_a_Service/HospsCancer

FAMILY PLANNING

Where can I get family planning advice in Ireland?

The Health Service Executive (HSE) must provide a full and impartial family planning service.

GP's, hospitals and voluntary organisations usually provide a family planning service, which includes information, advice and prescriptions for contraceptive drugs.

Can I get fertility treatment in Ireland?

Fertility treatment is generally only available from private specialists. Pregnancy counselling is available from a number of volunteer services and your GP.

What do I do if I have an unwanted pregnancy?

The 'Crisis Pregnancy Agency' was set up in 2001 to address the increasing number of unwanted pregnancies. They offer advice and information in cases of unwanted pregnancies. (It is legal, however, to travel to another country to seek an abortion). <http://www.positiveoptions.ie>

Can I get an abortion in Ireland?

Abortion is illegal in Ireland except in exceptional cases, mainly where there is a risk to the life of the mother.

MATERNITY CARE AND INFANT SERVICES

MATERNITY SERVICES

What services can I access when I am pregnant?

If you are pregnant you are entitled to care from the GP of your choice and a hospital obstetrician. You do not need a medical card to receive this care.

What does the maternity service offer?

The service offers at least 7 examinations from the GP or/and the hospital obstetrician before the birth and two examinations after birth, one for the baby two weeks after birth and one for both mother and baby after six weeks.

Do I have to pay for maternity services?

You are entitled to free in-/out- patient services at the hospital during your pregnancy and you will not be charged with any hospital charges.

INFANT SERVICES

Will my child receive free healthcare?

Whether your child is entitled to free medical care depends on whether you have a medical card-apart from the services described on Page 23.

What services will my baby receive?

Your baby will, if born at a hospital, usually be screened for metabolic disorders. This does not require parental consent.

Will my baby get vaccinated?

At birth (or within the first month of life) the BCG Vaccine is recommended for your baby. The BCG protects your baby against TB (Tuberculosis). A doctor will give this vaccination to your child in the maternity hospital or at a HSE clinic.

When are they given their next vaccinations?

Other vaccinations are given to your baby in the first thirteen months after birth. These are provided for free by your GP and you will be sent a letter at the address you gave when your baby was born, from the HSE telling you when to go.

- Your child will be given the '6-in-1' vaccination which will protect your baby against 6 diseases: Diphtheria, Tetanus, Whooping Cough, Hib (Haemophilus Influenzae B), Polio and Hepatitis B. Three doses are needed, so the injection is given at two months, four months and again at six months old. In addition, they will also receive a vaccination of PCV (Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine) at 2 months, Meningitis C at 4 months and Meningitis C and PCV at 6 months.
- When your child is 12 months old, they receive another vaccination called MMR. This vaccination protects your child against another 3 diseases (Measles, Mumps and Rubella). They also receive another dose of PCV at the same time. At 13 months, they receive a Hib booster and another dose of Meningitis C at the same time.

Why is my child given vaccinations?

The vaccinations are given to your child because each of the diseases can kill a child because they are weaker than adults.

What vaccinations will my school-age child receive?

Most children will already have received vaccinations as babies and infants but there are also additional free vaccinations when children reach school age.

- When your child is aged 4 to 5, they will be given a '4-in-1' booster (that protects against Diphtheria,

Tetanus, Whooping Cough and Polio) and a second dose of the MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) vaccine in your child's primary school. If your child misses the vaccination in school then the HSE will arrange for your child to go to a clinic or ask you to go to your GP.

- When your child is in 5th or 6th class a HSE doctor may give the BCG vaccine and a second dose of MMR to children who have not already got these vaccines. This applies especially to children who were born in other countries.
- When your child is aged 11 to 14 years they will get another tetanus and low-dose diphtheria vaccine in school.

BIRTH CERTIFICATES

What sort of birth certificate do I need for my child?

There are two forms of a birth certificate – a short form and a long form. The short birth certificate is used for things like enrolling a child in school. For legal and other purposes a long birth certificate is needed.

How much does a birth certificate cost?

A full long birth certificate costs €10 and is available from the Civil Registration Office.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH & SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

Will my child receive any other health services?

Generally children have the same entitlements as their parents. This means that if their parents are entitled to free services, so are the children. Children do, however, also have some free entitlements such as school health service, infant services and vaccinations and immunisations.

SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

What health services does my child receive in school?

The Health Service Executive provides a school screening programme and a school immunisation programme for children attending public primary schools.

Who carries out the school health services?

School health screenings are carried out by public health nurses and area medical officers.

Where are the screenings carried out?

The screenings are carried out in schools and the parents will be told and are allowed to be there when their child is screened if they wish.

What will they do?

Children's hearing and vision are examined and when it is asked for by a parent or when the public health nurse or medical officers think they need it, a physical exam may be carried out.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

What does child development mean?

A child's development from baby to toddler, from child to teenager and from teenager to adult usually follows an expected pattern.

Sometimes this pattern of development is delayed. The delay may be mild or severe.

What do I do if I have concerns about my child's development?

If you have any concerns about your child you can discuss them with your GP or public health nurse.

SUPERVISION

Most parents have to spend some time away from their children, whether it's for longer periods like going to work or shorter periods like social activities.

It can be hard to look after your child, and it can sometimes be expensive.

Children rely on adults to protect them and parents are responsible for making sure that their children are happy and well looked after.

There is no set age at which it is legal to leave children home alone. It depends on whether the child is mature enough to cope.

Children mature at different ages but the following is a rough guide to when children can stay home alone.

Can I leave my baby home alone?

It is never ok to leave a baby home alone, not even for a few minutes.

Can I leave my young child home alone?

Young children should never be left home alone, not even for a short time. An hour without you or another adult can be lonely and pose safety risks.

Can I leave my older child home alone?

Children under the age of 14 should never be left home alone for more than a very short time.

Can I leave my teenager home alone?

Teenagers over the age of 16 can be left home alone.

What age does my babysitter need to be?

If you need to use a babysitter you should always make sure they are over 16 and you should ask them for two references to check they are responsible enough to be left with your children.

CHILD PROTECTION

What do I do if I have a concern about a child's welfare?

If you are concerned about emotional, physical or sexual abuse or neglect of a child you can:

- Contact a HSE Social Worker (Monday – Friday from 9.00am - 5.00pm) at your local health centre.
- Outside of these hours if you have an immediate concern you can contact your local Garda station or phone 999 or 112 (from a mobile).

MALE & FEMALE CIRCUMCISION

MALE CIRCUMCISION

Can I get my son circumcised?

Male circumcision is not routinely performed on males born in Ireland. However, many people from Jewish, Islamic and African communities seek to ensure that their male children are circumcised.

Male circumcision is not illegal in Ireland but it must be carried out by a trained doctor.

If you would like your male children to be circumcised, it is important that you seek medical advice from your GP who will be able to refer you to a medical service that can carry out the circumcision.

Your doctor should advise you about:

- Routine infant male circumcision not being a recommended procedure.
- The ethical consideration of infant and child rights.
- The risk of complications and potential harm. The doctor may consider your request if it is religious or cultural.

FEMALE CIRCUMCISION

Can I get my daughter circumcised?

Female circumcision is not an accepted practice in Ireland and anyone found to have performed or arranged for their female child to be circumcised in Ireland will be prosecuted.

SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES

For parents who satisfy the Habitual Residency Condition there are welfare services that every parent is entitled to.

HABITUAL RESIDENCY CONDITION

What is the habitual residency condition?

The Habitual Residency Condition (HRC) is a condition which you must satisfy in order to qualify for certain social welfare assistance payments and Child Benefit. This condition took effect from 1st May 2004 and affects all applicants regardless of nationality.

How do I prove that I am 'habitually resident'?

"Habitual residence" means you have a proven close link to Ireland or other parts of the Common Travel Area (Great Britain and the Channel Islands). For example, if you have lived in Ireland or other parts of the Common Travel Area all of your life, you will likely satisfy the Habitual Residence Condition.

You are likely to satisfy the Habitual Residence Condition if you:

- Have spent all of your life in the Common Travel Area, or
- Have lived in the Common Travel area for the last 2 years or more, have worked in the Common Travel Area and now live in the Republic of Ireland, or
- Have lived in other parts of the Common Travel Area for 2 years or more and then move to the Republic of Ireland and intend to make it your permanent home.

BENEFITS AUTOMATICALLY AVAILABLE FOR THOSE SATISFYING THE HABITUAL RESIDENCY CONDITION

CHILD BENEFIT

What is child benefit?

Child Benefit is a monthly payment for each qualified child normally living with you and being supported by you. A qualified child is:

- A child under the age 16 or
- A child under the age of 18:
 - Is in full-time education, or
 - Attends a FÁS Youthreach course, or
 - Is physically or mentally disabled, and depends on you.

When does child benefit stop?

Child Benefit stops when your child reaches the age 16 or 18 (if they are in full-time education).

When should I apply for child benefit?

You should apply for Child Benefit within 12 months of:

- The month in which your child was born, or
- The month the child became a member of your family, or
- The month your family came to live in the Republic of Ireland.

When do I get child benefit?

You can get Child Benefit from the first day of the month after the child is born, becomes a member of your family or your family begins living in the Republic of Ireland.

EARLY CHILDCARE SUPPLEMENT

From January 2010 the Early Childhood Supplement has been replaced with a free pre-school year of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) for all children between the ages of 3 years 3 months and 4 years 6 months. See page 31 for further details.

USEFUL CONTACTS & FURTHER INFORMATION

Department of Health & Children

Address: Hawkins House, Hawkins Street
Dublin 2
Phone: (01) 635 4000
Website: www.dohc.ie

Health Service Executive

Address: Oak House, Millennium Park
Naas, Co. Kildare
Phone: (1850) 24 18 50
Email: info@hse.ie
Website: www.hse.ie

Department of Social & Family Affairs

Address: Áras Mhic Dhiarmada
Store Street, Dublin 1
Phone: (1890) 66 22 44
Website: www.welfare.ie

Mental Health Commission

Address: St. Martin's House, Waterloo Road
Dublin 4
Phone: (01) 636 2400
Email: info@mhcirl.ie
Website: www.mhcirl.ie

Mental Health Ireland

Address: Mensana House, 6 Adelaide Street,
Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin
Phone: (01) 284 1166
Website: www.mentalhealthireland.ie

The Psychological Society of Ireland

Address: CX House, 2A Corn Exchange Place,
Poolberg Street, Dublin 2
Phone: (01) 474 9160
Email: info@psihq.ie
Website: www.psihq.ie

National Counselling Service

Phone: (1800) 47 74 77
Website: www.hse-ncs.ie

Details of your local freephone number for the HSE National Counselling Service

AREA	FREEPHONE
North Dublin	1800 23 41 10
South Dublin/Dun Laoghaire/ East Wicklow	1800 23 41 11
Dublin City Centre/ South West Kildare/ West Wicklow	1800 23 41 12
Midlands	1800 23 41 13
West	1800 23 41 14
Mid-West	1800 23 41 15
Kerry & Cork	1800 23 41 16
North East	1800 23 41 17
South East	1800 23 41 18
North West	1800 23 41 19

Crisis Pregnancy Agency

Address: 4th Floor, 89-94 Capel St, Dublin 1
 Phone: (01) 814 6292
 Email: info@crisispregnancy.ie
 Website: www.crisispregnancy.ie

National Youth Health Programme (NYCI)

Address: 3 Montague Street, Dublin 2
 Phone: (01) 478 4122
 Email: nyhp@nyci.ie
 Website: www.youthhealth.ie

HSE MEDICAL CARD OFFICES

OFFICE	TELEPHONE
Dublin Central	(01) 857 5402
Dublin North	(01) 866 1413/14 or (01) 866 1407/8/9/10/11
Dublin North West	(01) 882 5000
Dublin South City	(01) 648 6500 or (01) 648 6599
Dublin South East	(01) 268 0313 or (01) 268 0311
Dublin South West	(01) 415 4715 or (01) 415 4731
Dublin West	(01) 620 6462
Dun Laoghaire	(01) 236 5216 or (01) 236 5217
Kildare/West Wicklow	(045) 876 001
East Wicklow	(0404) 68 400
Laois/Offaly	(044) 938 4448 or (044) 938 4437
Longford/Westmeath	(044) 938 4448 or (044) 938 4437
Cavan/Monaghan	(047) 30 410 or (047) 30 411
Drogheda	(041) 980 0494 or (041) 980 1085
Louth	(042) 938 1240 or (042) 938 5448
Meath	(046) 907 8833 or (046) 907 8893
Galway	(091) 546 266
Mayo	(094) 902 2333
Roscommon	(0906) 637 509 or (0906) 637 510
Donegal	(074) 918 9006 or (074) 913 1391
Sligo/Leitrim and West Cavan	(071) 915 5141 or (071) 962 0308
Clare	(065) 686 8075
East Limerick/North Tipperary	(067) 46 600
Limerick	(061) 483 703 or (061) 483 756
Carlow	(059) 913 6533 or (059) 913 6539
Kilkenny	(056) 778 4733 or (056) 778 4619
South Tipperary	(052) 77 249 or (052) 77 250
Waterford	(051) 842 800
Wexford	(053) 23 522
Cork City	(021) 492 3900
Kerry	(066) 718 4543

The Samaritans

To contact your nearest branch simply select a region on the map available on

Website: www.samaritans.org
 Helpline 1850 60 90 90

The Samaritans (Dublin Branch)

Address: 112 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1
 Phone: (01) 872 7700
 Helpline 1850 60 90 90
 Email: jo@samaritans.org
 Website: www.dublinsamaritans.ie

PPD The Psychological Centre

Address: Chelmsford House, Chelmsford Road, Ranelagh, Dublin 6
 Phone: 01 443 3961
 Email: info@theppd.org
 Website: www.theppd.eu

Dublin Aids Alliance

Address: 53 Parnell Square West, Dublin 1
 Phone: (01) 873 3799
 Email: info@dublinaidalliance.com
 Website: www.dublinaidalliance.com

CCST (Centre for the Care of Survivors of Torture)

Address: 213 North Circular Road, Phibsboro, Dublin 7
 Phone: (01) 838 9664
 Email: clientservices@ccst.ie
 Website: www.ccst.ie

AWARE

Address: 72 Lower Leeson, Street, Dublin 2
 Phone: (01) 661 7211
 Helpline: 1890 303 302
 Email: info@aware.ie
 Website: www.aware.ie

GROW

Address: Apt. 6 Forrest Mews, Forest Road, Swords, Co. Dublin
 Phone: (01) 840 8236
 Information line: 1890 47 44 74
 Email: info@grow.ie
 Website: www.grow.ie

Shine (Schizophrenia Ireland)

Address: 38 Blessington Street, Dublin 7
 Phone: (01) 860 1620
 Helpline: (1890) 621 631
 Email: info@shineonline.ie
 Website: www.shineonline.ie

There are 31 support groups of parents and relatives around the country which meet on a monthly basis to discuss issues around schizophrenia and provide information and support for all.

Alcoholics Anonymous

Address: General Service Office, Unit 2, Block C, Santry Business Park, Swords Road, Dublin 9
 Phone: (01) 842 0700
 Helpline: (1890) 412 412
 Email: gso@alcoholicsanonymous.ie
 Website: www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie

Cork Mental Health

Address: Nore House, Bessboro Road, Blackrock, Cork
 Phone: (021) 451 1100
 Email: cmhealth@eircom.net
 Website: www.corkmentalhealth.com

The Sexual Health Centre

Address: 16 Peters Street, Cork
 Phone: (021) 427 5837
 Email: info@sexualhealthcentre.com
 Website: www.sexualhealthcentre.com

Barnardos

Address: Christchurch Square, Dublin 8
 Phone: (01) 453 0355
 Email: info@barnardos.ie
 Website: www.barnardos.ie

ISPCC

The Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC) works throughout Ireland to help children.

Head Office
 Address: 29 Lower Baggot Street, Dublin 2
 Email: ispcc@ispcc.ie
 Phone: (01) 676 7960
 Website: www.ispcc.ie
 Childline 1800 66 66 66
 (A 24 hour helpline for children run by the ISPCC)

USEFUL LETTERS FOR HEALTH CARE

Letter to GP about Interpreter

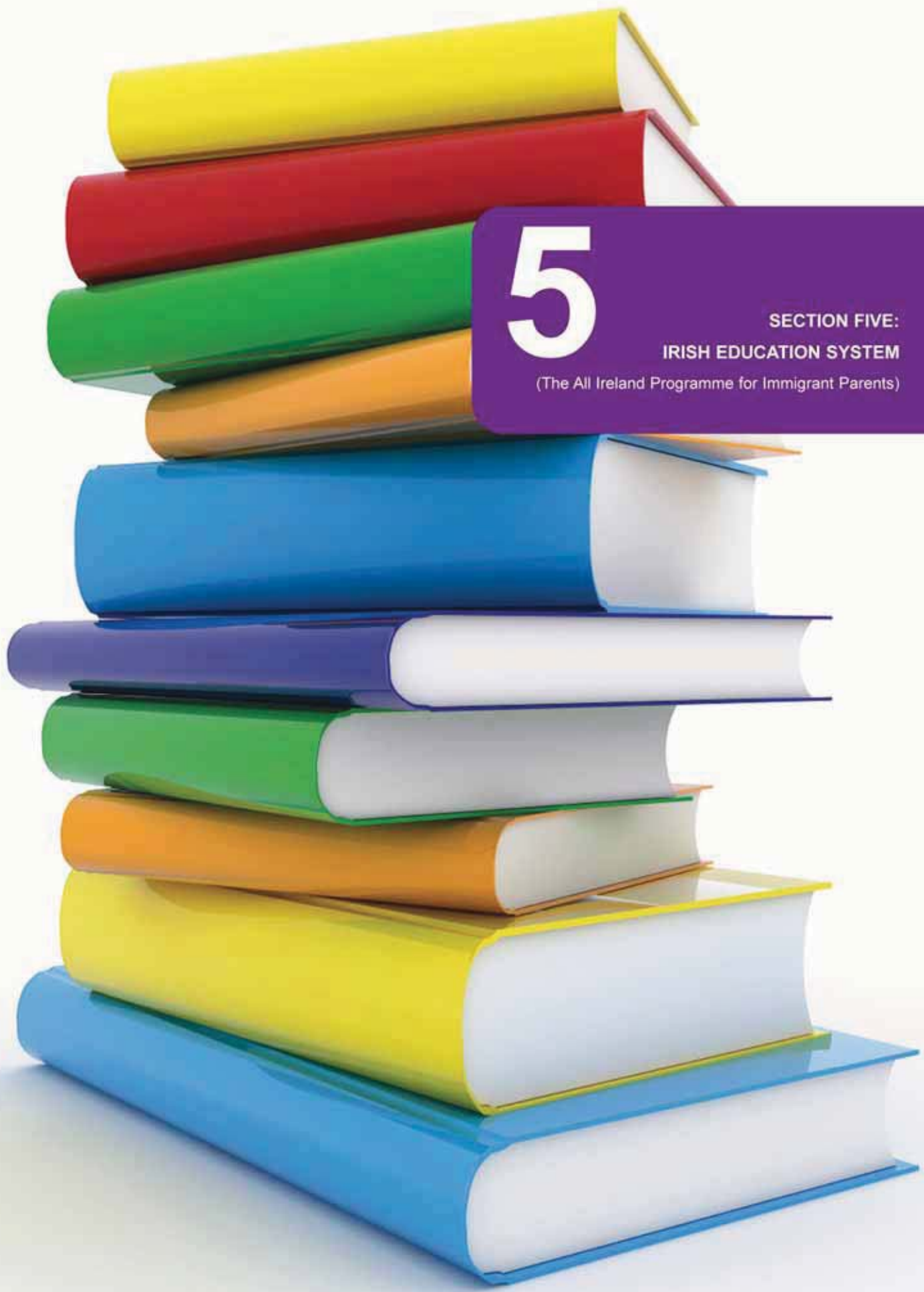
Date: _____

Dear GP,

I have an appointment on _____ at ____ a.m/p.m.

Could you please let me know if you can arrange for an interpreter in _____ to be present.

Signed:
 (parent/guardian)



5

**SECTION FIVE:
IRISH EDUCATION SYSTEM**

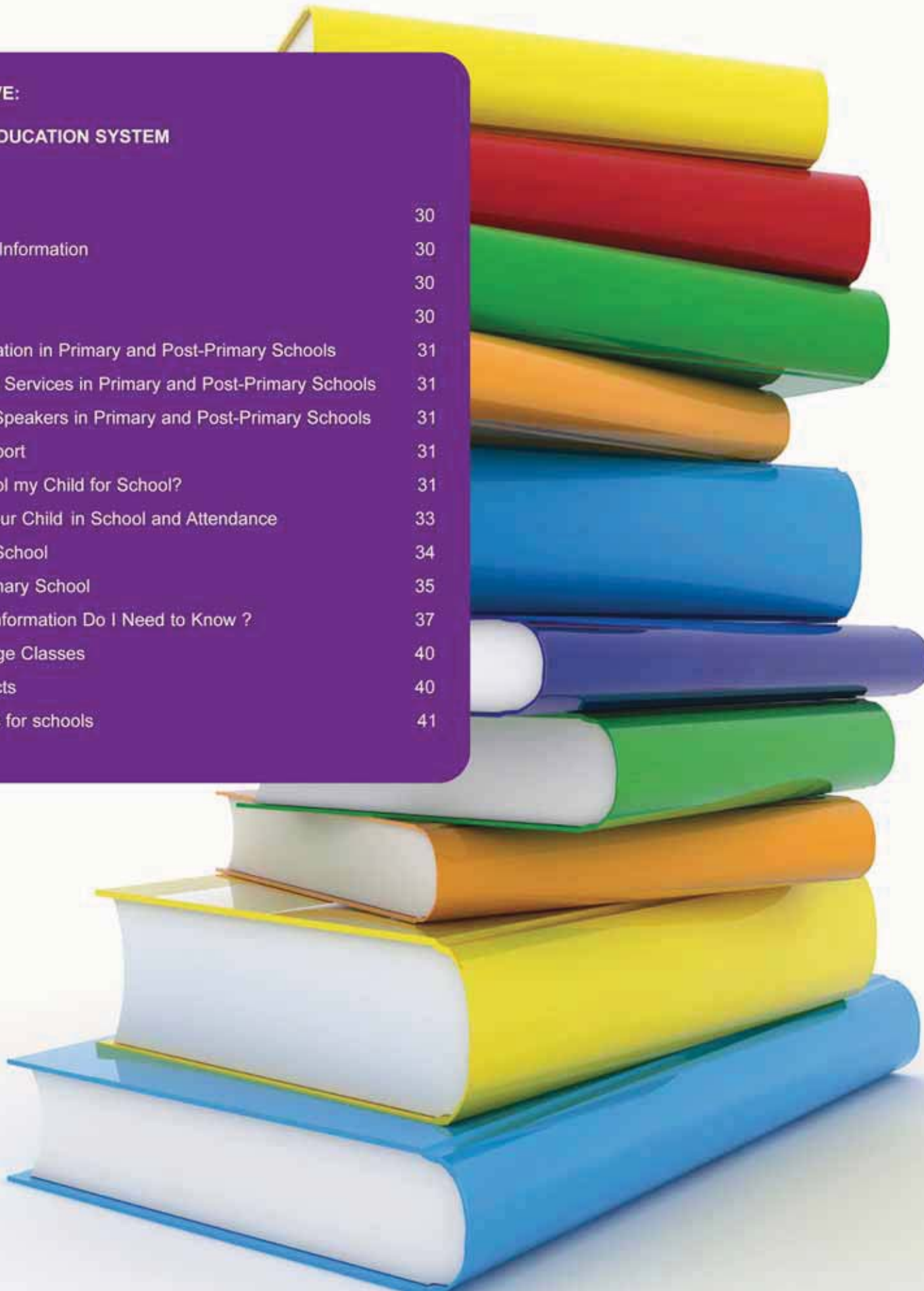
(The All Ireland Programme for Immigrant Parents)

SECTION FIVE:

THE IRISH EDUCATION SYSTEM

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KEY WORDS

School
 Schoolbag
 Teacher
 School calendar
 Class
 Principal
 Enrol

WHERE TO GET INFORMATION

Information on the education system in Ireland can be obtained from:

- The Department of Education and Skills, which has published information on education on its website, some of which is specifically targeted at parents, including newcomer parents, in six languages. See www.education.ie
- The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), which has produced an information DVD for parents in five languages, on the primary school curriculum called “The What, Why and How of Children’s Learning in Primary School”. This is also available on Broadband Video. The Council’s website address is : www.ncca.ie. This website contains a lot of information for parents on primary education in Ireland.
- The Jesuit Refugee Service has produced an information booklet in eight languages advising parents about the primary and post- primary school system in Ireland. Further information is available on www.jrs.ie. The Service has translated “standard” letters into a number of languages, with a view to assisting on school related matters.
- The National Education Welfare Board has published an information booklet for parents called “Don’t let your child miss out” in 18 languages. This can be downloaded from the Board’s website www.newb.ie
- The Reception and Integration Agency (RIA), has produced information leaflets in question and information format in nine languages that give information on primary and post- primary information. See: www.ria.gov.ie

The information contained below is a summary of the information contained on the Department’s website. Please note that this information represents the current position at the time of publication.

FAST FACTS

The law says that every child from the age of 6 must attend school. Most children start school in the

September after they have reached 4 or 5 years of age. Children must attend school from the age of 6 to 16 (or until students have completed 3 years of post-primary education, whichever is later).

The formal education system is made up of primary level, post-primary level, third level and further education. The main second level examinations in Ireland are the Junior Certificate (taken normally at the age of 15/16) and the Leaving Certificate (taken normally at the age of 17/18). In Ireland all children are entitled to free primary and post-primary education unless they attend a fee-paying school.

CHILD PROTECTION

Character Clearance

All staff (teaching and ancillary) in primary and post-primary schools are subject to character clearance by the Garda Síochána (police force). This means that the Gardaí do a check to make sure that a person has no criminal convictions which may prevent them from working with children.

Child Protection Guidelines

The Department has issued guidelines for use in both primary and post- primary schools to help school management and staff in dealing with allegations or suspicions of child abuse. The most important consideration of the guidelines is the protection and well-being of the child.

PRE-SCHOOL

What is pre-school?

Pre-school can be one of: schools, nurseries, play groups, crèches or other day care facilities. From January 2010, the Early Childhood Supplement ECS has been replaced with a free pre-school year of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) for all children between the ages of 3 years 3 months and 4 years 6months. Primary schools accept children on or after their fourth birthday.

Who runs pre-schools?

Pre-schools are normally community or privately run and are financed by the parents. A small number, such as the “Early Start” programme, are free of charge. Children in the ECCE Scheme have a certain number of hours paid for per week. http://www.omc.gov.ie/documents/childcare/ecce_scheme_pack/guide_for_parents_final_240909.pdf

What is the free Pre-School Year in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)?

The ECCE is a new scheme designed to give children access to a free Pre-School Year of appropriate programme-based activities in the year before they start primary school. Participation in a pre-school programme provides children with their first formal experience of early learning, the starting-point of their educational and social development outside the home. Children who avail of pre-school are more likely to be ready for school and a formal learning and social environment.

What is the aim of pre-school?

Pre-schools have the aim of supporting the education and development of your child.

How long does my child go to pre-school for?

Pre-schools normally offer planned programmes of up to 3 hours per day but you can also apply for your child to go to a full daycare. The length of the programme varies from pre-school to pre-school.

Where can I find my local pre-school service?

To find a pre-school service near you, use the following link from the Health Service Executive:

http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/Find_a_Service/Children_and_Family_Services/Pre-school_Services/Pre-school_inspection_services/Pre_school_inspection_services_.html

You should also check in your local community centre, Citizen's Information Centre, library and primary school.

Where can I find out more information about pre-school services?

You can read more about pre-school services at:

http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/Find_a_Service/Children_and_Family_Services/Pre-school_Services/Pre-school_inspection_services/Pre_school_inspection_services_.html

SPECIAL EDUCATION IN PRIMARY AND POST- PRIMARY SCHOOLS

What arrangements are made for children with special needs in education?

In Ireland, children with special educational needs are taught in an inclusive environment as much as possible. The Department allocates additional resource teaching support for special educational needs to primary schools and the school determines how the resources will be used. Some children with more significant needs may qualify for more intensive resources and this is approved through consultations with the National Council for Special Education. Each child's needs are dealt with on an individual educational basis.

Resources

Resources for special needs pupils are allocated on the basis of the individual child's special educational need. Some children may require more intensive support than others, and this is looked at by the school and the Department. These resources include learning support teachers and assistants.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES IN PRIMARY AND POST - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

What services are provided to pupils?

The Department funds the National Educational Psychological Service Agency. This service works with both primary and post-primary schools and deals with learning, behaviour, social and emotional development.

Resources

A psychologist is assigned to a group of schools. They work in partnership with teachers, parents and children in identifying educational needs. Translators are used, where required.

NON- ENGLISH SPEAKERS IN PRIMARY AND POST - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

What will the school do first?

When a child who does not speak English enrolls in a school, the school will conduct an initial assessment of the child's language needs. They will use the results of this assessment to plan the support that they give to the child in developing their English language skills.

Resources

Resources have been provided to schools to enable them to supply this additional support. These include language support teachers, who assist children in improving their English language proficiency, when English is an additional language for them.

SCHOOL TRANSPORT

Is there free transport to schools?

The Department provides free transport to students, based on eligibility criteria, such as distance. For further information, please contact the local school.

HOW DO I ENROL MY CHILD FOR SCHOOL?

How do I find a primary school for my child?

You can send your child to the local school of your choice, as long as there is a place for them. While most primary schools can enrol all the children who apply, there is no guarantee of a place in the local school. To enrol your child, you should first check the list of schools in your area. This is available from:

- The Department of Education and Skills- www.education.ie
- Your local citizen's information office, or
- The National Educational Welfare Board www.newb.ie

What is the process for enrolling my child for primary school?

The first step in enrolling your child is to write to the local school. You are encouraged to write as you will usually get their decision in writing.

Most schools will ask you to fill in an enrolment form which will ask you for details about your child.

When should I enrol my child for primary school?

Children start school in the September following their 4th or 5th birthday if school places are available locally.

To enrol your child you should contact your school no later than March of the year in which you want your child to start.

What if I am not in Ireland before March?

If you arrive in the middle of a school year, you should apply to the school as soon as possible, especially if your child is over 6.

How do I find a post-primary school for my child?

You can find a list of post-primary schools on the same websites listed for finding primary schools (www.education.ie).

What is the process for enrolling my child in a post-primary school?

The process for enrolling your son or daughter in a post-primary school is slightly different depending on whether they:

- Are in sixth class of primary school and due to transfer to post-primary the following September or
- Have not previously attended school in Ireland (you have recently arrived in Ireland).

In the first case, it is usual for primary schools to act as feeder schools for the post-primary schools in their locality. Once a young person is attending a primary school, her/his transition to post-primary should occur without difficulty, subject to the availability of school places in the locality. Parents should ask the Principal in the Primary school for advice.

In the second case, you should apply to the school in the same way as you would for primary school – that is to write to the school to ask about a place and arrange for an interview with the Principal.

What details will I need?

You will need to have details about your son/ daughter. These could include name, proof of age, nationality, your contact details, details of any medical conditions such as asthma or diabetes, details of prior formal education, details of English language competency and you should indicate whether you want your child to participate in religious education classes, and/or any other requirements.

What happens if the school is full?

You should contact the school of your choice to see if there is a place available. If a school is full, it may not be able to enrol your son/ daughter. The school may place them on a waiting list or suggest another school in the area.

What is an admissions policy?

All schools have an admissions policy. If a school does not have enough places, it will give priority according to the policy. For example, it may give priority to brothers and sisters of current pupils or to children living in the local area.

The policy is decided by the board of management of the school. The school can give you a copy of the policy if you ask for it.

Does choosing a primary school have implications on their second-level education?

When choosing a primary school, you may also need to know about the admissions policies of post-primary schools. Some post-primary schools give priority to students from certain primary schools.

WHAT CLASS WILL MY CHILD BE PUT IN?

Children starting school for the first time will usually be put in Junior Infants (the first year of primary school). If your child has attended school before, for example in another country, the school will take their age and previous education into account. In this case, the principal will decide on the class with you and the class teacher.

What can I do if the school refuses to accept my child?

If a school refuses to enrol a student, you have the right to appeal the decision. You must first appeal to the school's board of management. The reason might simply be that the school is full. In this instance, they will tell you where to find another school or place your child on a waiting list.

If you are not successful, you can appeal the decision to the Department of Education and Skills, under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998. You can do this by filling in an Appeals Form which should be available on request from the school (or VEC) or can be downloaded from the Department of Education and Skills website - www.education.ie

You can also seek advice on the appeals process by contacting the Department of Education and Skills at the following address:

Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit
c/o Department of Education and Skills
Cornamaddy
Co. Westmeath
Phone: (0906) 483 600
Email: info@education.ie

Further information can also be found on the website of the National Education Welfare Board - www.newb.ie

I have just moved to Ireland. Can my child still go to school for free?

Yes, children who are new to Ireland (sometimes called newcomers), whether asylum seekers, refugees or children of migrant workers, have the same right to education as other Irish children. They must attend school between the ages of 6 and 16.

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD IN SCHOOL AND ATTENDANCE

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD

What is the role of parents in their child's education in Ireland?

Ireland's constitution states that parents (or guardians) are the child's primary educator. Support from home is vital for your child's development during school.

How can I support my child?

To support your child, you can:

- Show interest in what your child is doing in school,
- Consult with the school on your child's progress
- Attend parent / teacher meetings
- Talk with the class teacher about any concerns you may have
- Praise your child's efforts at every opportunity. Your encouragement means a lot and will motivate your child to continue trying.

What is a parent teacher meeting?

A parent teacher meeting is a meeting with the teacher to discuss your child's progress in school.

Parents are encouraged to get involved in their child's school. The Education Act, 1998, provides for the establishment of boards of management for schools, so that there is a spirit of partnership in school management. Parents are encouraged to be involved with or join the Board of Management.

The Education Act, 1998, also provides for the establishment of parents' associations for recognised schools. The associations are to promote the interests of the students and membership is open to all parents of students of the school, irrespective of nationality.

Further information on the role of parents in the child's schooling can be found from

- The National Parents Council Primary (NPC). The Council has published information on its website in several languages: www.npc.ie
- The National Parents Council Post Primary. The address of the Council's website is www.npcpp.ie

ATTENDANCE

What is my role regarding attendance?

As a parent you should make sure that your child attends school every day that school is on. They should not go to school though if they are not fit to attend (i.e. if they are sick).

If your child cannot attend school you should make sure that you let the school know by either sending a note/letter or contacting the school directly, explaining why your child is not in school.

Can I take my child on holidays during term time?

Taking a holiday during term time means that children miss important school time. It will be difficult for them to catch up on work later on. As a result, they may fall behind with school work and lose confidence in their abilities.

What will the school do if my child misses a lot of school?

The school must tell the National Educational Welfare Board if your child has missed 20 days or more in the school year or if it is concerned that your child is missing too much school.

Further information is available on the Board's website, in a number of languages www.newb.ie

THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

What different types of schools are there?

There are three different categories of primary schools: State-funded; special schools and private primary schools.

In recent years, there has been greater provision for diversity and more choice in the type of school available. There is a recent increase in the numbers of multi-denominational and inter-denominational primary schools, so that parents can now choose from:

- Denominational or religious schools (such as Catholic, Church of Ireland or Muslim)
- Non-Denominational or non-religious schools
- Multi-denominational or different religions and
- Gaelscoileanna, which are schools that teach through Irish.

Do boys and girls go to the same school?

Single sex schools teach boys and girls separately. Co-educational schools teach boys and girls together. In some schools, boys and girls are initially taught together, usually for infant classes, before being separated.

Who runs the school?

The principal teacher (who is the head teacher) is responsible for running the school. The principal answers to the patron (who is the person or group who represents the owner of the school) and to the school's board of management. The principal can be male or female.

Who will teach my child?

Each class has a class teacher. In some smaller schools the teacher has more than one class. The class teacher teaches all subjects to their class. There may be other teachers in the school who will help the class teacher. For example your child may have a language support teacher or a learning support teacher to help if they are having difficulty with parts of the curriculum.

Please see **"SPECIAL EDUCATION IN PRIMARY AND POST- PRIMARY SCHOOLS"** and **"NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS IN PRIMARY AND POST PRIMARY SCHOOLS"**.

Do all schools have the same rules?

No, each school has their own set of policies on all aspects of school life including admission and enrolment, uniforms, healthy eating, codes of conduct and behaviour.

You will be asked to sign a form saying that you agree to these policies when you enrol your child.

WHAT IS PRIMARY SCHOOL?

How long is primary school?

Primary Education consists of an 8 year cycle - a two-year infant cycle followed by six years from first to sixth class. Children move to the next class at the end of each school year (in June).

What will my child learn in primary school?

The Primary School curriculum currently in use was first implemented in 1999. It aims to instil a love of learning that will last a lifetime. Literacy, numeracy and language (reading, writing, maths and English) are very important.

Children also learn about science and technology, music, drama, history, geography, art, physical education, citizenship, and social, personal and health education. This education also helps children to develop their social skills. The curriculum is designed to nurture the child in all aspects of their lives.

How is my child's learning assessed?

Assessment involves the teacher checking, from time to time, what a child knows. This is done so that the teacher can see how the child is progressing, developing a skill or understanding a particular topic.

In the early years, assessment is informal, based on observation by the child's teacher.

In primary school the teacher uses many different ways to gather information about your child's learning, ranging from child-led methods, such as self-assessment, to teacher-led methods such as teacher-designed tasks and tests, and standardised testing.

What are standardised tests?

Standardised tests are used to see how children are progressing compared to other children in the country of the same age or stage of education. The results of these tests inform parents about their child's progress and help the school to identify children that may need additional support.

All children take standardised tests in literacy and mathematics at the end of first class or the beginning of second class, and at the end of fourth class or the beginning of fifth class.

Where can I get more information on standardised testing?

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) has published two leaflets for parents, explaining the standardised testing in school. You can get the leaflets here: www.ncca.ie

http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Early_Childhood_and_Primary_Education/Primary_School_Curriculum/Assessment/Standardised_Testing/

Where can I get more information on the curriculum of the primary school?

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment have also published a video called 'What, Why and How of Children's Learning in Primary School', you can download the video from: www.ncca.ie. This website contains a lot of information for parents on primary education in Ireland.

THE POST-PRIMARY SCHOOL

What different types of schools are there?

Post-primary (also called second level) comprises secondary, vocational, community and comprehensive schools. Most post-primary schools are denominational and the majority are Catholic, while vocational, community and comprehensive schools are multi-denominational.

All post-primary schools teach the same curriculum. The selection of subjects available varies from school to school.

Do boys and girls go to the same school?

Single sex schools teach boys and girls separately. Co-educational schools teach boys and girls together. Denominational schools are generally single sex schools.

Who runs the school?

The principal teacher (who is the head teacher) is responsible for running the school. The principal answers to the patron (who is the person or group who represents the owner of the school) and to the school's board of management. The principal can be male or female.

Who will teach my child?

Each subject has a specialist teacher. One teacher may teach more than one subject.

There may also be other resource teachers including career guidance teachers and education learning resource teachers.

Further information on career guidance teachers can be found at: www.ncge.ie

Please also see "SPECIAL EDUCATION IN PRIMARY AND POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS".

Do all schools have the same rules?

No, each school has its own set of policies on all aspects of school life including admission and enrolment, uniforms, health eating, codes of conduct and behaviour. You will be asked to sign saying that you agree to these policies when you enrol your son / daughter.

How is post-primary education organised?

- A 3 year Junior Cycle
- A 2 or 3 year Senior Cycle

The duration of the Senior Cycle depends on whether or not a student completes the Transition Year Programme. For further information, please see "TRANSITION YEAR" next page.

JUNIOR CYCLE

What is the Junior Cycle?

The Junior Cycle is the first stage of post-primary education and lies within the compulsory period of education. Students start the Junior Cycle at age 12/13 and complete it at age 15/16. It consists of 3 years (first, second and third year).

What subjects do students study?

There are 20 subjects possible in the Junior Cycle but the most common subjects are:

- English;
- Mathematics;
- Irish;
- Science;
- Geography;
- History;
- French;
- Business Studies;
- Art;
- Home Economics, and
- Civil, Social and Political Education.

Are there any exams during the Junior Cycle?

Yes, there will be exams during the Junior Cycle as part of your child's assessment, most commonly in December and May. There will also be projects, homework etc., throughout the year.

At the end of the Junior Cycle students sit their first State Examination which is called the Junior Certificate. Most students present in approximately 7-8 subjects for the Junior Certificate.

Can my child change schools during the Junior Cycle?

Not all schools offer the same subjects so it is advisable to avoid changing schools until a student has completed the Junior Cycle.

TRANSITION YEAR

What is transition year?

Transition is a year that students can do in between the Junior and the Senior Cycle. It is focussed on personal development more than academic learning.

In some schools, the year is optional, and in others, it is compulsory. The school can advise you on this.

What do students do during transition year?

Students do projects and learn life skills. Many students also do work experience which helps them to decide what they want to do after they have finished school.

There is normally a bit of variety in the programme offered.

SENIOR CYCLE

What is the Senior Cycle?

The Senior Cycle is the second stage of post-primary education. Students start the Senior Cycle either immediately after the Junior Cycle or a year later after Transition Year (See above).

The Cycle is two years.

During this cycle students choose one of 3 programmes:

- Leaving Certificate (Established)
- Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme
- Leaving Certificate Applied

which lead to students sitting their second State Examinations.

What is the Leaving Certificate Established?

The Leaving Certificate (Established) is the most widely taken programme. Students take at least 5 subjects including Irish (unless exempt). Most students take 6-8 subjects.

For further information, please see:

<http://www.ncca.ie/index.asp?docID=80>

The results of the Leaving Certificate (Established) are used to allocate places in higher education. Please see "HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING" Page 39.

What is the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme?

This was a programme introduced in 1994. It is similar to the Leaving Certificate (Established) but there is an added vocational element and the focus is on technical subjects.

Students choosing this option take 5 leaving certificate subjects (including 2 vocational subjects); a modern European language and 3 link modules on enterprise education, preparation for work and work experience.

You can find out more information about the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme at:

http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Post-Primary_Education/Senior_Cycle/Leaving_Certificate_Vocational_Programme/

The results of the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme are used to allocate places in higher education. Please see "HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING" Page 39.

What is the Leaving Certificate Applied?

The main focus of this programme is to prepare students for adult and working life.

The programme consists of a number of modules, grouped under 3 general headings: General Education; Vocation Education; and Vocational Preparation.

You can find out more information about the Leaving Certificate Applied at:

http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Post-Primary_Education/Senior_Cycle/Leaving_Certificate_Applied/

Can my child use results from the Leaving Certificate Applied to go to third level?

The LCA is not recognised for direct entry to third level courses. Students who successfully complete the programme can proceed to Post Leaving Certificate courses and thereby continue their education. On successful completion of the Post Leaving Certificate course, they can apply to third level education.

Is there a fee for sitting the State Examinations?

Yes, the State Examinations Commission determines the rate of fee to be charged to students sitting the Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate Examinations.

Medical card holders (please see the Health Section) or those who are dependent on a parent or guardian who holds a medical card are exempt from paying examination fees. Applicants who are claiming exemption from fees on this basis must provide Medical Card details to the Commission.

You can find out what the current fee is at: www.examinations.ie

WHAT OTHER INFORMATION DO I NEED TO KNOW?

THE SCHOOL YEAR

What is the structure of the school year?

A primary school has 3 terms. The first term is from the beginning of September to Mid December (Christmas).

The second term is from January to March or April (Easter).

The third is from after Easter until the end of June.

A post-primary school also has 3 terms. The first two are the same as primary school but the third term finishes at the end of May. The written parts of the State Examinations take place in June. Timetables for the exams are published on the agency's website: www.examinations.ie

There are also breaks in the middle of terms called mid-term breaks where the children are on holidays for a few days to a week.

How do I know when my child is not be required to attend school?

At the start of the school year (or when you enrol your child) the school will give you a calendar which will give details of when the school will be closed during the year. Any other days will be notified to you during the year.

THE SCHOOL DAY

How long is the school day?

The school day in primary school lasts between 5 and 6 hours depending on the age of your child. Infants and first class children may finish up to an hour earlier than other children in primary school.

The school day lasts longer in post-primary school. You should ask the school for more details on the length of the school day as it varies from school to school.

Schools are usually open from Monday - Friday.

What time does class start?

Classes start between 8:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m., depending on the school. It is very important that your child is on time for school so make sure to ask the school what time classes start. It is also important not to bring your child to school too early.

What breaks does my child get?

There are two breaks during the day. There is a break in the morning (around 11 a.m.) and a lunch break (around 12.30 p.m.).

HOMEWORK

Will my child have to do homework in primary school?

Schools set their own policy in relation to homework. For example, in some schools children from first to sixth class are given homework each week night. Other schools give a small amount of reading or maths to infant classes.

Schools give guidelines on the amount of time children should spend on completing their homework.

Will my child have to do homework in post-primary school?

Yes, in post-primary school students have significantly more homework than in primary school. They will also have to study for examinations.

Students in post-primary schools should allow approximately 2-3 hours for homework and studying. Schools give guidelines on the amount of time students should spend on completing their homework.

How can I help my child with their homework?

If your child does get homework, you should give them space and encouragement to do it. If they need it, offer your help.

Take time to talk with your child about what they do in school each day. Set aside a quiet time where your child is sitting comfortably at a table and will not be distracted by television or other noise.

Homework time should include time for oral as well as written work. Oral work (speaking and repeating what they have learned) is particularly helpful in the early years.

Encourage your child to keep their books and copies clean and tidy. If your child is working on their own, be available to help and show an interest in what they're doing.

Praise your child's efforts whenever you can.

Try to be patient with your child.

What if my child is having problems with their homework?

If your child is having on-going problems with homework discuss this with the teacher. If your child can't do their homework for any reason, let the teacher know. Write a short note explaining why.

What do I do if my child has a problem with school?

You should first talk to your child. A problem could be with learning or it could be a personal or social one. If you cannot sort out the problem at home, you should

make an appointment to speak to the class teacher. If this doesn't resolve the problem you may need to make an appointment to speak with the principal.

If your child is in post-primary school you should make an appointment to speak to the principal or the form teacher, if your child has one.

What is supervised study?

Some schools offer supervised study for students in post-primary school, after the normal school day, for a fee.

This is a structured study time where children can do their homework and study after school. The children are supervised by a qualified teacher or responsible adult. Ask in your school whether they have supervised study available.

SCHOOL RULES AND POLICIES

What do you mean by school rules and policies?

As mentioned previously, all schools have their own rules and policies in a number of areas including:

- Enrolment or Admission
- Uniform
- Healthy Eating
- Codes of Conduct and Behaviour
- Bullying

ENROLMENT OR ADMISSION POLICY

What is the enrolment or admission policy?

The enrolment or admission policy is the rules governing enrolment of children into the school. Schools must have an admission policy, which is set by the Board of Management of the school. This policy must comply with Ireland's Equal Status Act which means that your child cannot be discriminated against.

UNIFORM

What is the uniform policy?

The majority of schools in Ireland have a uniform policy. This means that all the pupils or students must wear a uniform to school. The school will give you details of what your child must wear to school.

Can I get help to pay for the school uniform?

You may be able to get help from the Department of Social Protection. The Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance helps towards the cost of uniforms and shoes for school children.

See www.welfare.ie/publications/sw75 for more details.

What happens if I don't want my child to wear the uniform for cultural/ religious reasons?

If you have a problem with your child wearing the school uniform for cultural/ religious reasons, you should discuss this with the principal before you enrol your son/ daughter.

HEALTHY EATING

What is a healthy eating policy?

Many schools have a healthy eating policy. This means that they will have a list of foods that children are allowed to bring to school for their lunch and for their break. Generally sweets, junk foods and fizzy drinks are not allowed.

CODES OF CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOUR

How do schools discipline children?

Teachers praise children when they work hard and produce good work and homework. Praise helps to motivate children.

Each school has to have a code of discipline and parents are given a copy of this. You are responsible for accepting the school code and making sure your children understand and keep to it. You will be asked to sign this when you enrol your child. The teacher or principal will inform you if your child continually breaks the rules.

The Department has published information on how to deal with bullying. It also details what constitutes unacceptable behaviour. For further information, please see:

<http://www.education.ie/robots/view.jsp?pcategory=10856&language=EN&ecategory=41358&link=link001&doc=37558>

What should I do if my child is being bullied?

Do not confront the other child's parents. Each school has an anti-bullying policy. Talk with the class teacher or the principal about what is happening and try to resolve the problem this way.

If you cannot resolve it at school, you may ask the Department of Education and Skills to investigate. You can also contact the Ombudsman for Children.

What should I do if my child is a bully?

If your child is a bully, it is important to recognise this and help them to deal with it. One of the biggest problems faced by schools in tackling bullying is getting the parents to admit that their child is involved in this behaviour, or is a victim of such behaviour.

You can also:

- Try to find out if this is a temporary response to a change in the child's
- life (for example a new baby, a bereavement or stress at home)
- Talk to your child and try to get them to see how the other child feels
- Stay calm and avoid being aggressive yourself
- Talk to the class teacher. You will find that the teacher wants to help.

It is important that you and the teacher take the same approach. It's worth considering these longer-term steps as well. Bullies often suffer from a lack of confidence. Don't compare your child's achievement with others. Praise them whenever they do something helpful or kind

SCHOOL BOOKS

Do I have to buy school books for my child?

Yes, you will have to buy school books for your child. The school will give you a list of books that your child will need.

Can I get help with paying for school books?

Yes, there is a grant scheme to help with the cost of school books. Not everybody is eligible for this. The scheme is mainly aimed at pupils from low-income families and families experiencing financial hardship. Funding for this scheme comes from the Department of Education and Skills and the scheme is administered in each school by the School Principal.

For more information you should ask the school principal if your child can receive this grant.

Some schools also operate "book rental schemes". For a fee, parents rent books from the school for their son/daughter. It costs less than the cost of purchasing the books. Details can be obtained from the school.

THIRD LEVEL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

How is third level education organised?

Third level education is divided into two sections:

- Further Education
- Higher Education

Access to free higher and further education is dependent on a number of criteria, such as immigration status. Please check the criteria with the Access officer of the institution you or your son/ daughter wish(es) to attend.

FURTHER EDUCATION

What is further education?

This is education and training which happens after second level but is not part of the third level system.

This sort of education includes education, training schemes and apprenticeships.

The Post-Leaving Certificate Programme is full time and was introduced in 1985 to provide appropriate vocational training for young people to bridge the gap between school and work. The programme offers a combination of "hands-on" practical work, academic work and work experience. They are designed as a step towards skilled employment and, as such, they are closely linked to industry and its needs.

<http://www.education.ie/home/home.jsp?pcategory=11397&ecategory=14957&language=EN>

The National Training and Employment Authority (FÁS) runs a wide range of training schemes and is responsible for apprenticeship training in Ireland. For more information on FÁS visit www.fas.ie

Vocational Education Committees (VECs) also run a huge number of accredited further education courses throughout the country. The Irish Vocational Education Association www.ivea.ie or your local VEC will be able to give you more information on what courses are run.

There are also privately run Further Education institutions, which provide courses.

Certification is normally FETAC accredited.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

What is higher education?

Higher education comprises all courses run by universities, institutes of technology and colleges of education, which are substantially funded by the State.

There are also privately run Higher Education colleges.

How can a student get to higher education?

Access to Higher Education is based on the results of the Leaving Certificate (Established and Vocational) Examination at the end of post-primary school.

The Central Applications Office is the national organisation which allocates places. Please see its website for further information: www.cao.ie

Students who successfully complete a PLC course can also apply for a Higher Education course, based on their PLC.

Where can I get more information on higher education?

You can get more information on higher education from the Higher Education Authority (www.heai.ie), the Department of Education and Skills (www.education.ie), and the individual institutions.

ADULT LANGUAGE CLASSES

How can I find English Classes?

There are many English language classes for adults throughout Ireland. Classes are provided by VECs, by NGOs and by private providers.

To find information on English Language classes contact your local VEC, your local library or Citizens Information Centre or community centre.

The Advisory Council for English Language Schools (ACELS) oversees and regulates private English language schools. Further information can be found at: www.acels.ie. The organisation MEI Relsa also provides information on private English language colleges. For further information, please see: www.mei.ie

USEFUL CONTACTS

Department of Education and Skills

Address: Marlborough Street, Dublin 1
 Phone: (01) 889 6400
 Email: info@education.gov.ie
 Website: www.education.ie

Department of Social Protection

Address: Áras Mhic Dhiarmada
 Store Street, Dublin 1
 Phone: (01) 704 3000
 Website: www.welfare.ie

Citizens Information Board

Address: Ground Floor, George's Quay House,
 43 Townsend Street, Dublin 2
 Phone: 1890 77 71 21
 Email: info@ciboard.ie
 Website: www.citizensinformationboard.ie

National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE)

Address: 1st Floor, 42/43 Prussia St, Dublin 7
 Phone: (01) 869 0715/6
 Email: ncgeinfo@ncge.ie
 Website: www.ncge.ie

National Qualifications Authority of Ireland

Address: 5th Floor, Jervis House, Jervis Street,
 Dublin 1
 Phone: (01) 887 1500
 Email: info@nqai.ie
 Website: www.nqai.ie

Irish National Teachers' Organisation

Address: 35 Parnell Square, Dublin 1
 Phone: (01) 804 7700
 Email: info@into.ie
 Website: www.into.ie

Teachers' Union of Ireland

Address: 73 Orwell Road, Rathgar, Dublin 6
 Phone: (01) 492 2588
 Email: tui@tui.ie
 Website: www.tui.ie

Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland

Address: Thomas McDonagh House,
 Winetavern Street, Dublin 8
 Phone: (01) 604 0160
 Email: info@asti.ie
 Website: www.asti.ie

National Parents Council Primary

Address: 12 Marlborough Court, Dublin 1
 Phone: (01) 887 4034
 Email: info@npc.ie
 Website: www.npc.ie

National Parents Council Post- Primary

Address: Unit 5 Glasnevin Business Centre,
 Ballyboggan Road, Dublin 11
 Phone: (01) 830 2740
 Email: npcpp@eircom.net
 Website: www.npcpp.ie

National Educational Psychological Service

Address: Frederick Court, 24-27 North Frederick Street,
 Dublin 1
 Phone: (01) 8892700
 Email: neps@neps.gov.ie
 Website: www.education.ie/home/home.jsp?pcategory=33437&ecategory=33437&language=EN

National Council for Special Education

Address: 1-2 Mill Street, Trim, Co. Meath
 Phone: (046) 948 6400
 Email: info@ncse.ie
 Website: www.ncse.ie

Irish Vocational Education Association

Address: McCann House, 99 Marlborough Road,
Donnybrook, Dublin 4.
Phone: (01) 496 6033/ 496 6248
Email: info@ivea.ie
Website: www.ivea.ie

HETAC

Address: 26 - 27 Denzille Lane, Dublin 2
Phone: (01) 631 4567
Email: info@hetac.ie
Website: www.hetac.ie

National Education Welfare Board

Address: 16-22 Green Street, Dublin 7
Phone: (01) 873 8700
Email: info@newb.ie
Website: www.newb.ie

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

Address: 24 Merrion Square, Dublin 2
Phone: (01) 661 7177
Email: info@ncca.ie
Website: www.ncca.ie

Jesuit Refugee Service Ireland

Address: Ground Floor, 13 Gardiner Place,
Dublin 1
Phone: (01) 814 8644
Website: www.jrs.ie

Qualifax

Phone: 059 914 7022
Email: awalshe@qualifax.ie
Website: www.qualifax.ie

FETAC

Address: East Point Plaza, East Point Business
Park, Dublin 3
Phone: (01) 865 9500
Email: information@fetac.ie
Website: www.fetac.ie

USEFUL LETTERS FOR SCHOOL

1) Letter from parent/guardian to the teacher about an absence from school.

Date:

Dear Teacher, My child will not be in school on _____ as they have to attend

The GP _____ The Dentist _____ The Health Nurse _____ Other _____

Signed: _____ (parent/guardian)

2.) Letter from parent/guardian to the teacher about early departure from/ late arrival to school.

Date:

Dear Teacher, My child will need to leave At _____ On _____

My child will not be in school until _____ On _____

Signed: _____ (parent/guardian)

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SECTION SIX: RECREATIONAL & SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

(The All Ireland Programme for Immigrant Parents)



**SECTION SIX:
RECREATIONAL & SOCIAL ACTIVITIES**

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FAST FACTS

There are a wide range of activities for families to enjoy in Ireland.

Ireland has a range of cultural, social and sporting activities available.

Ireland has many places to enjoy outdoor activities (weather permitting!)

It is very important for children to play as it facilitates their emotional, mental and physical development.

MAKING TIME FOR YOUR FAMILY

How is a person's day divided?

In broad terms, a person's day can be divided into 5 different 'times':

- **Work time** – This is time spent at work (paid or voluntary), studying or childcare.
- **Home time** – This is time spent doing house work and washing and eating.
- **Family and Friend Time** – This is time spent with your friends and family.
- **Me Time** – This is time you make for yourself and included time spent relaxing, exercising and sleeping.
- **Quiet Time** – This is the time you have for yourself to think about things.

What about parents?

As parents, having only a few hours a day free time means that you have very little time for yourself, especially after you have looked after your children's needs.

All parents experience stress about not having enough time to spend with their children but there are some easy ways to spend quality time which might include: spending 10 minutes talking to your child about their day; going for a walk; eating together; doing the washing up together and so on.

It is very important, therefore, that you take time to relax and enjoy some kind of recreational activity, either by yourself, with your family or with your friends.

What about children?

Children spend their time a little differently from their parents as they do not have to provide for themselves. Children need more sleep than an adult and how much sleep depends on their age.

How do activities help my family?

Enjoying activities as a family is a good opportunity to maintain close relationships with your children and to enjoy being a parent. It also helps your child's emotional, physical and mental development.

Are there any social and recreational activities in Ireland?

Yes, Ireland has many social and recreational activities for people to enjoy. Many of the activities available are either free or do not cost a lot of money.

THE LIBRARY

What services do public libraries offer?

Public libraries in Ireland offer many different services. If you become a member you will be able to get access to:

- Information, books, music, DVDs and more
- Free Internet
- Local events or classes

How do I join the library?

To access the services at the library you must become a member. It is very easy and free to join a library. In order to join you:

- Fill out an application form in your local library. When you fill out an application form in the library you must have proof of your identity and your address with you.

Where can I get more information?

You can get more information from:

www.library.ie/weblog/public-libraries/ or from your local library.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

What cultural activities are there to do in Ireland?

There are many cultural activities available to do throughout Ireland. Ireland has a long cultural history including music, dancing, literature and theatre.

MUSEUMS

Why should I go to a museum with my child?

Museums are a good way to spend time with your children but also to educate them. Many museums in Ireland are free and often have special information for children which makes them accessible to both adults and children.

How many museums are there in Ireland?

There are more than 100 museums in Ireland. More information about museums in Ireland is available from:

www.goireland.com

MUSIC

Is music popular in Ireland?

Yes, music has a very important tradition in Ireland and traditional music is still performed throughout Ireland as well as more modern music by world famous bands such as U2 and Westlife.

Are there performances in my area?

Yes, many local pubs around Ireland have special evenings or afternoons where traditional bands play. Often these performances or 'gigs' are free. You must check with the venue whether you can bring your children with you but generally children are welcome until 9.00 p.m. in the evening.

Are there any concerts in Ireland?

Ireland is also a popular venue for concerts and most famous singers and bands include dates in Ireland on their world tours. Concerts can be expensive especially if they are in a big venue and are a well-known band. Concerts are usually advertised in national newspapers and online for a few months before the concert.

I like classical music, where can I find performances?

For people who enjoy classical music or opera, the National Concert Hall in Dublin and other Concert Halls in the other cities have concerts and performances also. These can be quite expensive but often performances earlier in the day are cheaper.

What about music festivals?

There are also many music festivals run throughout Ireland. They welcome families but do not recommend bringing children under 5 as there are no facilities.

THEATRE

Are there any theatres in Ireland?

Yes, Ireland also has many theatres which cater for a range of performances for different age groups. Many have plays for children and musicals which are family oriented. A good website to check what is on near where you live is www.entertainment.ie/theatre/

FILM

Are there any cinemas in Ireland?

Yes, Ireland has many cinemas and most areas now have access to a cinema that shows films quite quickly after they are released in America or other countries. There are also cinemas that show more art cinema and they will often show films in their original language with subtitles in English.

SPORT AND LEISURE

What sports and leisure activities are there to do?

There are many sporting facilities for children and also for families to enjoy. Ireland has a wealth of sporting activities and a long history of sports and competing at world level in a wide range of sports.

SWIMMING

Swimming has increased in popularity in Ireland in recent years. Although Ireland is an island and the water is very clean, there is little opportunity to swim in the sea (unless you are very brave!) apart from the summer months.

Where can I find my local swimming pool?

Most county councils have at least one public swimming pool and is often a cheap option for family fun. Children are often free and for adults there is a small charge.

For a list of swimming pools in your area:

www.swimmerguide.com

is a good guide as it shows all available pools in most countries including Ireland.

More information is also available from

www.swimireland.ie

SOCCER (FOOTBALL)

Soccer is a very popular sport. Nearly every town throughout Ireland has a local team and a children's team. A lot of people in Ireland support both their local and national clubs but also world teams and teams from the English football championships.

Where can I find my local football club?

The best way to find out what soccer teams are available to play with, would be through your local sports centre which should have a list of teams and people to contact. You can find where your local club is by logging on to: www.fai.ie Children can also often get access to a club in or through their school.

GAA

The Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) is the body responsible for four sports – two of which are exclusively Irish sports – football and hurling. Both football and hurling are very popular and most towns will have a local team and children's team.

What is Gaelic football?

Gaelic football is not the same as soccer and has very different rules. It has been compared to a mixture of other sports including rugby, soccer and Australian rules. It is a very fast and a very popular sport in Ireland.

What is hurling?

Hurling is the fastest field game in the world and is a very dynamic game which again is very popular throughout Ireland. There is also a game similar to hurling called camogie, which is played by women and girls.

Where can I find my local club?

You can find out where your local club is by logging on to:

www.gaa.ie/page/provinces

WALKING AND HIKING

Walking and hiking are very popular activities in Ireland. Many walking routes are mapped out.

Where can I find a walking route?

The Irish Sports Council are responsible for providing walking routes in Ireland. There are over 30 marked paths. See www.walkireland.ie for more details.

The Irish Heart Foundation has also established the Slí na Sláinte walking routes.

These are marked with a yellow sign at one kilometre intervals. The routes can be found at www.irishheart.ie

PARKS AND FORESTS

Where can I find my local park or green area?

There are green areas or a park in almost every Irish city and town. The parks offer a safe environment for families to relax and enjoy themselves. They often have playgrounds and picnic or barbecue areas.

There are also a good many forests in Ireland and having a walk or a picnic in the forests is a nice way to spend your recreational time.

OTHER SPORTS

What other sports are there in Ireland?

There are many other sports available for families, adults and children throughout Ireland.

Land Sports - other land sports played in Ireland include rugby, basketball, handball, tennis, boxing, martial arts and rounders.

Water Sports - other water sports played in Ireland include surfing, windsurfing, kite surfing, sailing and fishing.

YOUTH CLUBS

What do youth clubs do?

In many areas throughout Ireland there are youth clubs. The youth clubs run activities with an education or recreational element including supervised homework clubs, after schools clubs and games and sports.

Who runs the youth club?

There are adult volunteers or staff who supervise the clubs but often the young people have a say in how they are run.

Who can join a youth club?

The clubs are usually for children aged between 12 and 18. There is a fee to join a club but usually this is low.

Where can I find more information?

Foróige is a national organisation who run youth clubs. For more details see www.foroige.ie

GLOSSARY

The glossary contains words that are used in the text and may require explaining.

SECTION 2

Accessories - In a house are all the additional furniture in a rented house including kettles, fridges, cutlery etc.

Area Code - Are the codes or 2-4 digits that you dial before a number. For example the area code for Dublin is (01) so if you dial a number you dial 01-plus number.

Bereavement - Means dealing with death.

Breach - Means to break (for example a contract).

Credit - When it is to do with mobile phones, credit means that you pre-pay for calls you make by adding money to your credit account on your phone.

Eligible - Means that you meet all the different needs to be able to qualify for something.

Estate Agents - A service that deals with the buying, selling and rental of properties.

Fee - Fees are the money that you pay someone for providing a service. For example the GP might cost €50 to visit each time if you do not qualify for either the medical card or the GP visit card.

Landline - A landline phone is a phone that is not mobile. It is fixed in your home.

Landlord - Is the person who owns rented accommodation.

Means Test - Your income and everything you spend will be examined.

Online - On the internet.

SECTION 3

Garda Station - The police in Ireland are called the Gardaí Síochána which means keeper of the peace. A garda station is where the police work.

Refuge - A refuge is a safe house where you can live free from violence. You can also bring your children with you.

SECTION 4

Abortion - Means ending a pregnancy.

Accident and Emergency - is the section of the hospital that treats people in an emergency.

Aural - To do with ears.



Birth Certificate - is a document which lists the name of the child, where and when they were born and who their parents are. This is an important document and must be kept safe.

Booster - A repeat vaccine given to strengthen your child's defence against a disease.

Charge - Is the money you have to pay at the hospital.

Contraceptive - Are drugs designed to stop women from getting pregnant.

Dental - To do with teeth.



Diagnose - Is to find out what is wrong with someone.

In-Patient Service - Is where you have to stay over night.

Miscarriage - When a pregnancy ends by itself.

Optical - To do with eyes.



Out - Patient Service - is where you have to come back to the hospital for checks but not stay overnight.

Physical exam - Is where the doctor or nurse looks at the body of your child to see if there is anything wrong with them.

Referral - A referral is where your doctor contacts another specialist, such as a psychologist or psychiatrist, and tells them that you need to see them.

Screening programme - The screening programme is where the public health nurse or area medical officer will examine your child to look for diseases and other problems.

Subsidised - Means that the government pays part of the cost. You don't have to pay all of the costs.

Surgery - This is the office of a doctor or a dentist.

Treat - Is to fix the problem or illness.

Time Out - Is an area where you send your child to sit for a certain amount of time if they have misbehaved. This includes a corner or on the stairs. They sit for the same number of minutes as their age. For example if they are 5 then they sit for 5 minutes.

Vaccinations and Immunisations - Are injections given to children to stop them from developing certain childhood illnesses. Vaccines are made from the same germs that cause disease but they are safe to give to your child because the germs are killed or weakened first.

SECTION 5

Community run - This means that the pre-school is controlled by the local community.

Compulsory - Means that children are required by law to attend school.

Education System - Includes all of the levels of education including primary school, post-primary school, third level education, adult and further education.

Junior Certificate - Is a state exam sat in June when students have completed 3rd year of post-primary education. Students are generally aged 15/16 when they sit this exam.

Leaving Certificate - Is a state exam sat in June when students have completed 6th year of post primary education. The results of the Leaving Certificate are used to gain access to third level education.

Second Level Education - The majority of students transfer to second level at age 12/13 i.e. when they have finished primary school. This level is also known as post-primary.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

BCG	Bacillus Calmette-Guérin
CER	Commission for Energy Regulation
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DES	Department of Education and Skills
DSP	Department of Social Protection
ESB	Electricity Supply Board
EU	European Union
EEA	European Economic Area
FLAC	Free Legal Advice Centre
FSA	Food Safety Authority
GAA	Gaelic Athletic Association
GP	General Practitioner
HiB	Haemophilus influenzae Type B
HRC	Habitual Residency Condition
HSE	Health Service Executive
LCVP	Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme
LCA	Leaving Certificate Applied
MABS	Money, Advice and Budgeting Service
MMR	Measles, Mumps and Rubella Vaccine
NEWB	National Education Welfare Board
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum & Assessment
NCT	National Car Test
TB	Tuberculosis (BCG Vaccination)
TV	Television
VEC	Vocational Education College
VRT	Vehicle Registration Tax

THE USE OF THE IRISH LANGUAGE IN IRELAND

In Ireland you will notice that many words are written in the Irish language. Below are some very common examples that you will see.

Place names and Road Signs

All place names and road signs in Ireland are written in both Irish and English.



Bus destinations

Many buses will also have their destinations written in both Irish and English.

The Police

The Police force in Ireland is called An Garda Síochána which means keeper of the peace.



The Post Office

The Post Office is called An Post.

The Government

Many of the words to do with the government are in Irish

- **Dáil Éireann** - The Parliament of Ireland
- **Seanad Éireann** - The Senate of Ireland
- **Teachta Dála** - T.D. (representatives to the parliament)
- **Uachtaráin** - President
- **Áras an Uachtaráin** - The President's residence

globe

ALL IRELAND PROGRAMME FOR IMMIGRANT PARENTS



Family Support Agency



Féilmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive



AN ROINN OIDEACHAIS | DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION AND SCIENCE
AN BAINN OIDEACHAIS |



Department of
Health, Social Services
and Public Safety
www.hss.gov.ie



The
ATLANTIC
Philanthropies



Barnardo's



Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
An Roinn Dlí agus Cúir, Comhionannas agus Athchóiriú Dlí