



January 2016

To
BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT, PRINCIPAL TEACHERS AND TEACHING STAFF OF
PRIMARY AND POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND CEOs OF ETBs

Your School's Proclamation Day, March 15th

March 15th 2016 has been designated 'Proclamation Day' for schools in Ireland.

As part of the Ireland 2016 commemorative programme, the Department of Education and Skills has provided time for schools to commemorate and reflect upon the events of 100 years ago. The following is an outline of what might be considered. This outline is not intended to be prescriptive or exhaustive. The approach taken by any school to Proclamation Day is for its senior management and teachers to decide, ideally in consultation with students.

By March, all primary and post-primary schools will have received National Flags and copies of the original Proclamation, either from the Defence Forces or the Thomas Francis Meagher Foundation. An ideal start to the events in a school on Proclamation Day would be a flag-raising ceremony, playing or singing the National Anthem and perhaps a reading of the Proclamation by teachers and/or students. Use could also be made of the comprehensive National Flag resource now on Scoilnet, at www.scoilnet.ie/irishflag. For example, there could be a short presentation on the history and origins of the flag, again by teachers and/or students prior to or on Proclamation Day.

Some of the events on Proclamation Day could include performances of historical or contemporary music, poetry, song, art displays or short drama productions by students. Most of these cultural genres have already been highlighted through national or all-island competitions, or by touring shows supported by the Department. It is likely that many schools will have a number of display and performance items which they may wish to use in this event. There is no compulsion on a school to adopt any of these approaches, but an emphasis on variety and age-appropriate themes and elements is recommended for any Proclamation Day activities.

As Proclamation Day falls within Seachtain na Gaeilge, schools could also consider involvement in Féile na Físe, organised by Conradh na Gaeilge. Seachtain na Gaeilge (www.snag.ie or snag@cnag.ie) will provide song lyrics, dance steps, drama, music and other resources in hard and soft copy.

A major focus on Proclamation Day should be the unveiling and reading of each school's own 'Proclamation for a New Generation'. Using the 1916 Proclamation as a foundation, primary and post-primary schools are invited to write a new Proclamation for 2016. There are several ideas on Scoilnet for schools to use, if they wish, in supporting students to reflect and re-interpret the Proclamation (www.scoilnet.ie/proclamationtemplate). The aim is that our young people will come up with new

Proclamations which reflects their vision for a modern Ireland, which embraces people from many nations and cultures.

Schools may choose to write one Proclamation for the whole school or have each class create its own. Schools are invited to add ONE Proclamation per school to the Scoilnet website through a special proclamation form. All proclamations submitted will be publicly available to view on the Scoilnet website in due course. The form is now also available at www.scoilnet.ie/proclamationtemplate.

Each school submitting a proclamation will need to nominate a teacher who will log onto a secure section of Scoilnet with their Scoilnet account. Once logged on, a link to add the proclamation will be obvious on their Scoilnet Dashboard. The teacher will cut and paste text into a form, which will generate the schools' proclamation. Each new Proclamation should be of a maximum length of 600 words. It can be written in Gaeilge, English, or in any other language spoken or studied in the school. A copy of the schools' proclamation will be available to download in PDF format.

As a unique part of the overall Ireland 2016 Centenary Programme, young people are invited to record a video of their Proclamation, which will be showcased on the Ireland 2016 You Tube channel. Children will also have the opportunity to showcase their creative talents by designing a special Doodle 4 Google to mark the centenary of 1916, on the theme of "Ireland is". Schools may, of course, also decide to include work done by students on these projects in their own Proclamation Day activities.

Students have been invited to work on competitions focused on 1916 themes in the All-Island Schools History competition. A display of the work done on this project could include visuals and text. Full details about this competition, which has a closing date of 4th March and can be done on a wide range of topics, can be found on www.scoilnet.ie/ireland2016. Similarly, the education centres have encouraged local history projects focused on 1916. Schools could avail of the opportunity of Proclamation Day to display these, perhaps on an open morning for parents and families too.

Many students will have worked on non-competitive projects, such as a 1916 ancestry project. An ancestry project like this (primary and post-primary) allows students to research and report on the experiences of an ancestor who was alive in 1916 (within Ireland or abroad, 1916 was a very important year in many countries). Further detail on how to do these projects can be obtained on www.scoilnet.ie/ireland2016 and, again, the work being done by students could be displayed on Proclamation Day in their school.

Schools ought to reflect carefully about the amount of tuition time they wish to allocate to Proclamation Day events. Much of what has been suggested above could be done very well in a portion of the day, morning or afternoon. Where exhibitions of students' work are being displayed, they may, of course, be displayed both before and after Proclamation Day itself. In special circumstances, a school may feel it wishes to allocate more or less tuition time to its Proclamation Day programme, and this is also acceptable. However, students must attend school for the full duration of a normal school day, regardless of the duration of the 'Proclamation Day' programme in the school.

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