



Independent Schools Information Leaflet for Parents/Guardians

Choosing to educate my child at an Independent School

The Irish Constitution acknowledges the role of parents/guardians as the primary educator of the child. The constitution states that *parents/guardians shall be free or to provide education in their home, to have their child educated in schools recognised or established by the state or in privately run independent schools*. It is established in legislation under section 14 of the Education Welfare Act, 2000 that parents/guardians may choose to send their child to a non-recognised/Independent School.

What is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian?

If you choose to educate your child at an Independent School, you must apply for their name to be included on the state register, under section 14 the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000. This is the official state record of your child's education. You only need to apply for registration once. Your child's name will be retained on the register for each academic year that the principal confirms they are attending the school. You will find all the information you need to apply on the Alternative Education Assessment and Registration Service website [here](https://www.tusla.ie/services/family-community-support/alternative-education-assessment-and-registration-service/independent-schools/)

What is an Independent School?

An Independent School is a school that is **not recognised** under Section 10 of the Education Act 1998, which provides a definition of a *recognised school*. Recognised schools are funded by the state and must adhere to a curriculum and policies as prescribed by the Minister for Education and Youth. A non-recognised or Independent School is not funded by the Department of Education and Youth (DEY), Independent Schools are not overseen by the DEY inspectorate and are not subject to requirements such as curriculum, calendar year, and policies specific to the Department of Education.

What is the role of the Alternative Education Assessment and Registration Service (AEARS) Tusla - Child and Family Agency

The Alternative Education Assessment and Registration Service (AEARS), Tusla – the Child and Family Agency support the right of parents/guardians to choose to educate their child in an Independent School. AEARS is responsible for the regulation of educational provision and maintenance of the state register for children receiving an education in a place other than a recognised school, including at an independent school. AEARS function is to carry out an assessment of the provision at the school, to determine if children attending can be

placed on the statutory register. AEARS also provides information and support to independent schools and parents regarding requirements under the relevant legislation.

What is the role of the Independent School as the educational provider

Independent Schools are required to operate under all relevant legislation, including legislation relating to child safeguarding. The Alternative Education Assessment and Registration Service support Independent Schools to meet their legal obligations. You will find further information on the Alternative Education Assessment and Registration Service Independent School webpage [here https://www.tusla.ie/services/family-community-support/alternative-education-assessment-and-registration-service/independent-schools/](https://www.tusla.ie/services/family-community-support/alternative-education-assessment-and-registration-service/independent-schools/)

Under the Education Welfare Act, 2000 principals/managers of Independent Schools are

1. obliged to inform the Alternative Education Assessment and Registration Service of the children enrolled at their school
2. required to inform parents of children attending of their obligations to apply for registration under Section 14 of the Education Welfare Act, 2000
3. obliged to assist an authorised person on behalf of the parents to carry out an assessment of the educational provision

I have some questions, who can I contact?

If you cannot find the answers to your queries on our website, the Independent School team at the Alternative Education Assessment and Registration Service are here to help. You can contact us by email at Independent.Schools@tusla.ie or by phone on +353 (0)1 771 8649.