



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

<b>Reference Code:</b>	2018/68/53
<b>Creation Dates:</b>	21 February 1988
<b>Extent and medium:</b>	2 pages
<b>Creator(s):</b>	Department of the Taoiseach
<b>Accession Conditions:</b>	Open
<b>Copyright:</b>	National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.



## Social Democratic & Labour Party

3 Bristol Avenue, Belfast. BT15 4AJ.  
Telephone 771497

**CLLR. BRIAN FEENEY**

21/2/88

An Taoiseach

Mr C.J. Haughey T.D.

Dear Mr Haughey,

I am writing to you to express my concern at the intention of Dr Brian Mawhinney to introduce what is in effect, the British National Curriculum into all schools in the north of Ireland.

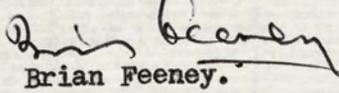
It is expected Dr Mawhinney will make his announcement within a fortnight. It will have fundamental and radical effects in all age groups. Apart from the nomenclature 'National' curriculum which is deeply resented, I want to express the anxiety of many people about the proposed content of this curriculum. As I have communicated to the appropriate official in Foreign Affairs, the (only) Irish inspector Mr McCrory, has told me privately that 'Irish is going to be hammered'. There is going to be a core curriculum and Irish will not be part of that. What therefore is the point of training Irish teachers? What student can be advised to aspire to be an Irish teacher?

I am equally concerned about what History and Literature will be required, not to mention Geography. Scotland has managed to escape the trammels of this latest scheme and we had hoped to be treated in the same way. But Mawhinney is determined to be as integrationist as possible and much play is made of the fact that in Wales under the new proposals Welsh is only part of the core curriculum where it is the spoken language. Surely in the north here is a key area where both traditions must be fully acknowledged and indeed an opportunity to undo the attempts of decades to obliterate Irish language and Literature must be taken rather than another effort to impose a solely British view of the world.

I understand Fr Colm McCaughan, Director of the Maintained Schools Council will be including in their response to Mawhinney's proposals that the Maintained Schools insist on fostering the Irish heritage in language, literature and History in their schools.

I am drawing this to your attention because so far the British side have misled the Irish officials about education proposals in points raised in the last month.

Yours sincerely,

  
Brian Feeney.