



**Fiona Diggins** (Secretary)  
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Dear Head Teacher

**The World Irish Dancing Championships 2014**

I am writing to you in my capacity as Chairman of the Southern England Regional Council, responsible for Irish Dance in the Southern Counties of England.

It is my pleasure to inform you that \_\_\_\_\_, a pupil at your school, has been entered into the Southern England Regional Qualifying Championships, by his / her Dance Teacher, having attained the standard to compete for a place as a competitor, at the 2014 World Championships. The Qualifying Championships will take place from Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> to Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2013 inclusive, in Broxbourne Hertfordshire.

These Qualifying Championships are an annual event, and obviously as young children develop their skills, each year we see new faces, as they are ready to compete at the very top in this activity. It is doubly exciting for the dancers this year, as 2014 will see the World Championships held in this country, and in our capital city, for the very first time in the history of An Coimisiún le Rincí Gaelacha (The Irish Dancing Commission).

You will no doubt be aware that as in any sporting or like activities, much is gained, in particular, by the young competitors, by way of skills, fitness, attitude, cultural awareness of the history and music of Ireland and the ability to develop their social skills, often with others from countries around the world. These dancers work extremely hard in these areas, as well as maintaining their academic work and commitment in school, not easy, you may agree.

**Registered with An Coimisiún le Rincí Gaelacha, Dublin Ireland**



At the World Championships the organisers, the Irish Dancing Commission, as well as Irish dancing teachers, encourage dancers to share their experiences with their school community and I know would be more than happy to provide photographs or other information, should you wish to mention your pupil(s) in a newsletter or during school assembly, when we would like to think, the school could celebrate their achievement in reaching this very high standard, and who knows what place they may gain, in the competitions, next year!

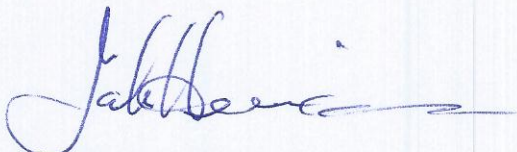
I understand that time off school for extra-curricular activities is a sensitive area, but we are of a belief that there are benefits for both the children and your school, as I have mentioned. With this in mind, I would be grateful if you can formally excuse \_\_\_\_\_ from school to allow him / her to travel and compete, to their full potential, in this prestigious and important event.

We have heard from parents that some schools include their competitive Irish Dancers on their Gifted & Talented Registers, for the purposes of sharing and celebrating their achievements with the school community and can also be mentioned as part of your OFSTED inspections.

In the year following the London Olympics and Paralympics, and the legacy that exists because of it, we believe that it is important to support all dancers who strive to be the best that they can be in this, their chosen cultural activity, and they too can leave a legacy for all in this country, after the World Championships are over.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Council Secretary, Fiona Diggins, or myself, through the details shown at the head of this letter.

Yours faithfully,



**John Hennigan MBE**  
**Chairman**

**On behalf of the Southern England Regional Council**