

Statement Regarding the Leinster Fleadh 2026 Schedule

The schedule structure for Leinster Fleadh 2026 was issued to all counties in late March/early April and was agreed by all County Delegates at a full Leinster Council meeting. This scheduling arrangement follows the unanimous decision taken approximately 12 months ago to move the 2026 Leinster Fleadh from its traditional July date to the last weekend of June as a trial for 2026. **It should be noted that Leinster Fleadh will return to a July date in 2027.**

Leinster Council appreciates that some competitors will be attending school on the Friday. However, some competitions have traditionally been scheduled on a Friday for all age groups and, in practical terms, there is no viable alternative available. The volume of entries and competitions at Leinster level is too great to accommodate all competitions over two days. By comparison, the All-Ireland Fleadh, which has up to 50% fewer competitors in some competition categories, is spread across three days. Given the scale of participation at Leinster Fleadh, a Friday programme remains necessary to ensure the event can be delivered effectively.

In preparing the schedule, consultation took place with a number of groups regarding competitor numbers in the U12 and 12–15 age categories. Feedback indicated that there was little difference between the two, with approximately equal numbers of 6th class students represented across both age groups.

An option was presented and discussed with County Delegates at the March meeting which would have involved running the U12 and 12–15 competitions simultaneously across two venues. However, delegates felt that the proposed second venue was too far away and that such an arrangement would create significant difficulties and clashes for competitors, teachers, families and supporters moving between competitions. As a result, this option was not supported.

A key consideration in the scheduling process was the welfare of younger competitors. It was felt that younger children should not be required to leave competitions at 9.00pm, travel home for journeys of up to two hours, and then return again the following morning for a 10.00am start. The agreed schedule sought to strike the best balance possible between competitor welfare, venue availability and the overall running of the Fleadh as well as to avoid clashes between the various competitions in each age group.

To assist teachers, parents and competitors with planning, running orders for all Friday competitions will be made available by the end of the week. This will provide groups with a much clearer indication of likely competition times. As always, timings remain subject to change depending on participation levels and whether all entered groups attend as scheduled.

If any group does not intend to participate, Leinster Council would appreciate being notified as soon as possible, as this will assist greatly with the finalisation of running orders and scheduling arrangements.

Finally, Leinster Council would like to thank all competitors, teachers, parents, volunteers and supporters for their continued cooperation and understanding. Organising an event of this scale, involving approximately 4,000 competitors from across the province, requires significant planning and coordination. While we appreciate that not every scheduling decision will suit everyone, all decisions have been made following consultation with County

Delegates and with the best interests of competitors and the overall running of the Fleadh in mind.

We respectfully ask everyone to work with us during this trial year and help ensure a successful Leinster Fleadh for all involved.

We would also ask you to note that queries regarding the schedule are noted. As Leinster Council is run entirely by volunteers and is managing an event involving thousands of competitors, it is simply not possible to respond individually to every personal email received. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in this regard.