

20th March 2014

Deputy Ruairi Quinn, TD
Minister for Education and Skills
Office of the Minister for Education and Skills
Department of Education and Skills
Marlborough Street
Dublin 1

Our Ref: 39317

RE: Clonalkin Area Committee Meeting of South Dublin County
Council held on 19th March 2014

Dear Minister,

At the meeting of the Clondalkin Area Committee held on 19th March 2014 the following motion was passed by the Members:

“That this Area Committee writes to the Department of Education highlighting the shortage of Gaelscoil places for younger children in Clondalkin.”

I would be obliged for your comment and response as soon as possible to enable me to revert to the Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Edel Colgan
Senior Staff Officer



Oifig an Aire Oideachais agus Scileanna
Office of the Minister for Education and Skills

Ms. Edel Colgan
Senior Staff Officer
Land Use, Planning and Transportation Department
South Dublin County Council
County Hall, Tallaght
Dublin 24

EC-
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

25 MAR 2014

PLEASE QUOTE REF NUMBER ON ALL CORRESPONDENCE
Our Ref: 1401849 AK

24 March 2014

Dear Ms. Colgan,

Thank you for your recent letter to the Minister for Education and Skills, Mr. Ruairi Quinn T.D., regarding the shortage of Gaelscoil places for children in Clondalkin.

The selection and enrolment of pupils in schools is the responsibility of the authorities of the individual school. The Department's main responsibility is to ensure that schools in an area can, between them, cater for all pupils seeking school places in an area. However, this may result in some pupils not obtaining a place in the school of their first choice. As schools may not have a place for every applicant, a selection process may be necessary. This selection process and the enrolment policy on which it is based must be non-discriminatory and must be applied fairly in respect of all applicants.

Under section 15 (2) (d) of the Education Act, 1998, each school is legally obliged to disclose its enrolment policy and to ensure that as regards that policy that principles of equality and the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parents choice are respected.

Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998 provides for an appeal by a parent or guardian to the Secretary General of the Department, or in the case of an Education and Training Board (ETB) school to the ETB in the first instance, where a Board of Management of a school, or a person acting on behalf of the Board, refuses to enrol a student in a school, expels a student or suspends a student for 20 or more days in any school year. The Department has no authority to compel a school to admit a pupil, except in the case of an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act, 1998 being upheld.

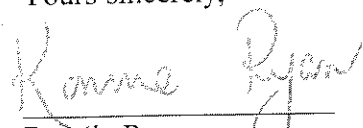
Parents may contact the Section 29 Appeals Unit at the following address Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit, Friar's Mill Road, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, phone 044 9337008, or email at section29@education.gov.ie if they wish to take an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act, 1998.

Appeal forms are available on the Department's website at the following link
<http://www.education.ie/en/Parents/Services/Appeal-against-Permanent-Exclusion-Suspension-or-Refusal-to-Enrol/Section-29-Appeals-Application-Form.doc>

The Child and Family Agency, Educational Welfare Services, is the statutory agency which can assist parents who are experiencing difficulty in securing a school place for their child. The Child and Family Agency, Educational Welfare Services may be able to offer assistance and advice on securing a school placement within the pupil's area. The contact details for this agency is Child and Family Agency, 16-22 Green Street Dublin 7, phone number 01-8738700.

I hope this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,



Ronnie Ryan
Private Secretary