

## Barbara Reilly

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**From:** Ministers Office <minister@dcya.gov.ie>  
**Sent:** Thursday 9 January 2020 15:06  
**To:** Barbara Reilly  
**Subject:** DCYA-MO-00616-2019

9th January 2020

Ms. Barbara Reilly,  
breilly@SDUBLINCOCO.ie

Dear Ms. Reilly,

On behalf of Dr Katherine Zappone TD, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, I wish to thank you for your email concerning the Get Ahead Club.

Tusla Education Support Services (TESS) allocates an annual budget to 124 Local Management Committees (LMCs) to provide agreed interventions and programmes to children and young people most at risk of leaving school early as identified by the local stakeholders. This funding rationale has not changed since the programme transferred into Tusla in 2014.

I am advised by officials in TESS that extensive engagement has taken place with the North Clondalkin School Completion Programme (SCP) projects and the Get Ahead Club in relation to the SCP funding. A total of €559,765 is allocated to the North Clondalkin SCP projects, Collinstown SCP and Quarryvale/Balgaddy SCP, on an annual basis. This funding has not been cut by TESS.

I understand TESS, at the request of local stakeholders, including Quarryvale/Balgaddy SCP Local Management Committee (LMC), Collinstown SCP LMC and the Get Ahead Club, has participated in and supported a process to ensure that the total available budget of €559,765 is used effectively to meet the needs of those most vulnerable of leaving school early and not achieving their potential in the communities of North Clondalkin.

Officials in TESSs have advised the Department that a total of €137,593 of SCP annual funding was channelled by SCP projects to the Get Ahead Club as a third party not under SLA with Tess. Tess have confirmed that they have no SLA with the Get Ahead Club. Furthermore the SCP projects do not have a current SLA or local memorandum of understanding in place with the Get Ahead Club despite providing significant funding to the Get Ahead Club annually.

I understand TESSs officials met with the SCP LMCs and the Get Ahead Club separately and then with the Get Ahead Club and an independent facilitator to support the Get Ahead Club.

Furthermore a series of meetings were then attended by the EWS National Manger with the SCP LMCs in relation to future planning. I am advised that all three of these local groups agreed on a plan to resolve the local concerns which allow the SCP funding to continue to meet the needs to those children and young people locally to attend, participate in and complete their education.

It is important to note that TESS has no funding responsibility or operational responsibility for CE Schemes. The Get Ahead Club and all local stakeholders should engage with the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and South Dublin County Council in relation to the operation of CE Schemes.

I can confirm that Minister Zappone met with officials from the Get Ahead Club and officials from TESS on December 4<sup>th</sup> 2019. This meeting was productive and all parties have agreed to work together to find an agreeable solution to the issues on hand.

Yours sincerely,

Lisa Hughes  
Private Secretary to Minister Katherine Zappone TD