

M74578 16th March 2022

PLEASE QUOTE REF NUMBER ON ALL CORRESPONDENCE.

Our Ref: DES-CU-01446-2022

Dear Ms. Conroy,

The Minister for Education, Ms. Norma Foley TD has asked me to reply to your letter in relation to school places in the Clondalkin School Planning Area(SPA).

In order to plan for school provision, the Department divides the country into 314 school planning areas and utilises a Geographical Information System to anticipate school place demand. Information from a range of sources, including Child Benefit data, school enrolment data and information on residential development activity is used for this purpose. Additionally, Project Ireland 2040 population and housing targets inform the Department's projections of school place requirements. Projections of post primary school place requirements are informed by multiple factors, including primary school enrolments in the area and primary to post primary transfer patterns.

The Department's projections of post primary school place requirements in Clondalkin show some continued growth in overall enrolments in the short- to medium-term. However, despite projected overall growth, first year place requirements are anticipated to remain generally stable, or slightly decline.

While the Department is aware of increasing pressures and demand for additional school places in Clondalkin, it is important to note that where enrolment pressures arise, it may not be as a result of lack of accommodation but may be driven by the following factors:

- Duplication of applications – pupils have applied for a place to a number of schools in the area
- School of choice – pupils can't get a place in their preferred school while there are places in other schools in the town/area
- Some towns/areas have single sex schools and while places are available in the school they are not available to all pupils
- External draw – pupils coming from outside the local area

The Department is working to establish the true extent of any capacity issues across school planning areas through ongoing discussions with the relevant school patrons and authorities.

This close engagement will allow the Department to identify at an early stage particular capacity requirements for the forthcoming years which may necessitate further action to that already in train including, where required, the provision of modular accommodation solutions.

Yours sincerely,

Derek Newcombe
Private Secretary

