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1. This week in the Oireachtas (28 October to 01 November 2013)

<http://www.oireachtas.ie/viewdoc.asp?DocID=24534&&CatID=60>

2. Oireachtas Questions and Debate (21 October - 25 October 2013)

Education: including special needs, ECCE, minorities, disadvantage, literacy and numeracy, school staffing, school buildings, school patronage, curriculum

Topical Issue Debate: School Staffing (24 Oct 2013)
<http://www.kildarestreet.com/debates/?id=2013-10-24a.272>

Written Answers — Department of Education and Skills: Special Educational Needs Staffing (22 Oct 2013)

Clare Daly (Dublin North, Socialist Party) To ask the Minister for Education and Skills the reason a benchmark of 32 hours exists for special needs assistants when the school working week is 28 hours 20 minutes. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-22a.353>

Written Answers — Department of Education and Skills: Special Educational Needs Policy (22 Oct 2013)

Nicky McFadden (Longford-Westmeath, Fine Gael) To ask the Minister for Education and Skills if a clear definition exists to describe the role and responsibilities of special needs assistants; if this definition is clearly articulated to principals, teachers, parents and SNAs; how SNA support is managed within schools in order to ensure the best possible support and outcomes for students; and if he will make a statement on the matter. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-22a.357>

Written Answers — Department of Education and Skills: Special Educational Needs Data (22 Oct 2013)

Maureen O'Sullivan (Dublin Central, Independent) To ask the Minister for Education and Skills the number of deaf children at a primary and post-primary level, who are participating in mainstream integrated education; the number of deaf children who are attending specialist schools for the deaf at a primary and secondary level; and if he will make a statement on the matter. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-22a.404>

Written Answers — Department of Education and Skills: Bus Éireann Services (24 Oct 2013)
<http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-24a.263>

Written Answers — Department of Education and Skills: School Transport Provision (22 Oct 2013)

Stephen Donnelly (Wicklow, Independent) To ask the Minister for Education and Skills further to Parliamentary Questions Nos. 1695, 1696 and 1697 of 18 September 2013 regarding the school transport scheme, the reason for the statement that the scheme operates on a cost recovery basis and Bus Éireann does not make a profit in the scheme in any commercial sense; if he is implying that Bus Éireann makes non-commercial profits of some kind on the scheme; and if he will make a statement on the matter. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-22a.313>

Written Answers — Department of Education and Skills: School Transport Inspections (22 Oct 2013)

Patrick O'Donovan (Limerick, Fine Gael) To ask the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide details by county of the number of on-site inspections of private bus operators participating in the school transport scheme by officials of his Department and officials of Bus Éireann in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013 on buses used to transport children to and from school; and if he will make a statement on the matter. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-22a.384>

Written Answers — Department of Education and Skills: School Transport Provision (22 Oct 2013)

John McGuinness (Carlow-Kilkenny, Fianna Fail) To ask the Minister for Education and Skills the information or annual reports that are made to him relative to the funds allocated to Bus Éireann to operate the school transport system; if he will confirm the amounts allocated in each of the past four years; if his Department have ever carried out a value for money audit on the scheme; if he will confirm the sums paid to Bus Éireann for management services relative to this scheme; if the Bus Éireann auditors have made any comment on the profitability or otherwise of the scheme; if he is satisfied that there is sufficient transparency around the scheme relative to its operation and costs and cross subsidisation of Bus Éireann. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-22a.411>

Written Answers — Department of Children and Youth Affairs: Preschool Services (22 Oct 2013)

Peadar Tóibín (Meath West, Sinn Fein) To ask the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the number of additional preschool inspectors that will be employed State wide and in each county up to December 2014 as a result of the €4.5 million budget increase; and the proportion of that investment that will be spent on preschool mentoring and support staff training in that period <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-22a.1158>

Asylum/Immigration

Seanad: Asylum Support Services: Motion (23 Oct 2013)

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/sendebates/?id=2013-10-23a.178>

Child Services/ Children in Care: including foster care and social work services, HSE staffing, youth services

Written Answers — Department of Children and Youth Affairs: Departmental Expenditure (24 Oct 2013)

Seán Fleming (Laois-Offaly, Fianna Fail) To ask the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the expenditure adjustment that will be made within her Department in 2014; the full-year impact of expenditure measures that will be taken in 2014; and if she will make a statement on the matter. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-24a.609>

Child Abuse/Child Protection: including vetting, child abduction

Topical Issue Debate: Child Protection Issues (24 Oct 2013)
<http://www.kildarestreet.com/debates/?id=2013-10-24a.278>

Seanad: Order of Business (24 Oct 2013)

Paul Bradford (Fine Gael) Almost 12 months ago we had the referendum on children's rights. It was held on 10 November 2012. On that day, following a campaign in which virtually every political party supported the referendum, 42% of the people said "No." We must concede that if the referendum had taken place in the aftermath of what we have seen over the past fortnight, it would have been decisively rejected. Irish people always attempt to strike a balance and they are deeply concerned, and always have been, about children and about families.

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/sendebates/?id=2013-10-24a.5#g49>

Leaders' Questions (24 Oct 2013)

Mary Lou McDonald (Dublin Central, Sinn Fein) The second issue relates to the State's capacity to protect the rights of children. Many people following this story see the marked contrast between, on the one hand, last week's revelation by the children's Ombudsman of the HSE's failure to intervene over several years after a child made multiple allegations of rape or another report of 4,100 children who had been assessed by the HSE as needing intervention but having to wait more than three months for that intervention and, on the other, the heavy arm of the State in these cases.

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/debates/?id=2013-10-24a.5#g16>

Written Answers — Department of Children and Youth Affairs: Child Abuse Issues (24 Oct 2013)

Various questions on child abuse

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-24a.599>

Leaders' Questions (24 Oct 2013)

Mary Lou McDonald (Dublin Central, Sinn Fein) It would be better for the inquiry to be independent and under the auspices of the Ombudsman for Children, Ms Emily Logan, from the outset.

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/debates/?id=2013-10-24a.5#g18>

Written Answers — Department of Justice and Equality: Garda Vetting of Personnel (23 Oct 2013)

Shane Ross (Dublin South, Independent) To ask the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will clarify the requirements for Garda vetting for Irish citizens who have travelled and worked overseas for a number of years; if it is true that if they wish to apply for job for which vetting is a requirement, if they have been abroad for more than two years then they must be back in permanent residence in Ireland for five years before they can even be considered to apply for vetting; and if he will make a statement on the matter. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-23a.511>

Family: including adoption

Seanad: Order of Business (22 Oct 2013)

Ivana Bacik (Independent) . . . Senator Jim D'Arcy called for a debate on the one-parent family credit changes and referred to a potential unintended consequence thereof in the form of discrimination against a particular group. I agree with the Senator's comments, particularly in the context of the recent debate at the Constitutional Convention on the need to re-calibrate the role of women to take account of the increasingly strong caring roles being taken by fathers. I absolutely agree that anything which impedes that progress would be troubling. A debate on these issues is timely in a context where couples, even after separation, are dividing up child care responsibility in a very different way from what was common in the past. . .

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/sendebates/?id=2013-10-22a.7#g181>

Order of Business (23 Oct 2013)

Terence Flanagan (Dublin North East, Independent) Will the Adoption Bill 2010 be amended to address the concerns of Irish parents seeking to adopt Russian children?

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/debates/?id=2013-10-23a.70#g207>

Written Answers — Department of Children and Youth Affairs: Adoption Records Provision (22 Oct 2013)

Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin (Cavan-Monaghan, Sinn Féin) To ask the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the measures she is taking and will take to address the current barriers which prevent adoptees trace their birth parents; if she will meet with advocacy and campaign groups Adoption Rights Alliance and Adoption Rights Now; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-22a.1149>

Health and Wellbeing: including disability, mental health, substance misuse, primary care, health services, hospital services, obesity, sports facilities**Written Answers — Department of Health: Services for People with Disabilities (22 Oct 2013)**

Michael Healy-Rae (Kerry South, Independent) To ask the Minister for Health the reason there are 763 children who still have not received their needs assessment despite waiting six months or more and 65% of them nine months or more; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-22a.1352>

Written Answers — Department of Children and Youth Affairs: Mental Health Services Provision (24 Oct 2013)

Aodhán Ó Ríordáin (Dublin North Central, Labour) To ask the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if public health nursing and the child and adolescent mental health services will be included in the functions of the Child and Family Agency Bill 2013; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-24a.592>

Written Answers — Department of Health: Health Services Staff Data (23 Oct 2013)

Tommy Broughan (Dublin North East, Labour) To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons employed in the Health Service Executive's mental health services in north Dublin in the years 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the number of employees who took up new posts with the Health Service Executive's mental health services in the area during that time; and the number of posts that are currently vacant within these services. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-23a.584>

Written Answers — Department of Health: Mental Health Services Provision (22 Oct 2013)

Billy Kelleher (Cork North Central, Fianna Fáil) To ask the Minister for Health in view of the statement by the national clinical programme director of the Health Service Executive, if the next round of clinical programmes will include evidence-based approaches such as dialectical behaviour therapy for patients with borderline personality disorder, if this will be implemented and all the necessary disciplines will be in place in local communities to provide this therapy; and if he will make a statement on the matter. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-22a.1411>

Written Answers — Department of Health: Mental Health Services Funding (22 Oct 2013)

Colm Keaveney (Galway East, Independent) To ask the Minister for Health regarding the €35 million ring-fenced for mental health in budget 2012 and budget 2013; the amount of the €35 million ring-fenced for 2012 which was spent in that year; the amount carried forward; of the portion carried forward from 2012 into 2013, the amount that remains unspent; the amount of the €35 million ring-fenced for 2013 that has been spent to date; the way the moneys were spent in all cases; if the programme for Government committed the Government to ring-fence €35 million in each and every budget of its term; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-22a.1440>

Written Answers — Department of Health: Alcohol Sales Legislation (24 Oct 2013)

Heather Humphreys (Cavan-Monaghan, Fine Gael) To ask the Minister for Health the present position regarding legislation to tackle the below-cost selling of alcohol; and if he will make a statement on the matter. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-24a.722>

Written Answers — Department of Health: Disability Services Programme Review (24 Oct 2013)

Bernard Durkan (Kildare North, Fine Gael) To ask the Minister for Health the procedures to be followed to facilitate access to funding for persons with special needs under the proposed individualisation process; if structures have been put in place in accordance with policy; if the concept of individualisation is applicable or likely to so become in the short and medium term; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-24a.694>

Written Answers — Department of Health: Universal Health Insurance Provision (24 Oct 2013)

Terence Flanagan (Dublin North East, Independent) To ask the Minister for Health if the prospect of universal health insurance is no longer feasible in view of the fact that the population with health insurance fell from 52% to 45% in recent years, with the real expectation that it will fall to 40%; and if he will make a statement on the matter. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-24a.641>

Written Answers — Department of Health: Primary Care Centres Provision (23 Oct 2013)

Paudie Coffey (Waterford, Fine Gael) To ask the Minister for Health the progress that has been made to date in respect of the promised two primary care centres for County Waterford; and if he will make a statement on the matter. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-23a.605>

Written Answers — Department of Health: Alcohol Pricing (22 Oct 2013)

Patrick O'Donovan (Limerick, Fine Gael) To ask the Minister for Health when he expects to introduce minimum pricing legislation for alcohol products; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-22a.1364>

Written Answers — Department of Health: Community Drug Response Project (22 Oct 2013)

Seán Crowe (Dublin South West, Sinn Féin) To ask the Minister for Health the funding arrangements and amounts per community drug response project in the Tallaght area, Dublin, per year, over the past five years; and the cuts that have been imposed each year on each project.

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-22a.1498>

Written Answers — Department of Environment, Community and Local Government: Traveller Accommodation (23 Oct 2013)

Brian Stanley (Laois-Offaly, Sinn Féin) To ask the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government where he sees the €1million cut in social inclusion funding taking place; and the criteria that will be applied. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-23a.24>

Child Benefit/Social Welfare/Poverty/Housing

Social Welfare and Pensions Bill 2013: Second Stage (Resumed)

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/debates/?id=2013-10-24a.504>

Social Welfare and Pensions Bill 2013: Committee and Remaining Stages (25 Oct 2013)

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/debates/?id=2013-10-25a.10>

Other Questions: Social and Affordable Housing Provision (23 Oct 2013)

Various questions on housing issues from Patrick Nulty (Dublin West, Independent)

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/debates/?id=2013-10-23a.457>

Other Questions: Local Authority Housing Provision (23 Oct 2013)

Richard Boyd Barrett (Dún Laoghaire, People Before Profit Alliance) To ask the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government his plans to deal with the housing crisis which sees 110,000 families and individuals on the housing waiting list and ten new persons presenting to homeless services in Dublin each day; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/debates/?id=2013-10-23a.335>

Ceisteanna - Questions - Priority Questions: Local Authority Housing Provision (23 Oct 2013)

Barry Cowen (Laois-Offaly, Fianna Fail) To ask the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide a breakdown by county of the 4,400 new social housing units due to be operational in 2014 as announced in budget 2014; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/debates/?id=2013-10-23a.314>

Written Answers — Department of Environment, Community and Local Government: Homelessness Strategy (23 Oct 2013)

Patrick Nulty (Dublin West, Independent) To ask the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government if he remains committed to ending long-term homelessness by 2015; and the steps he is taking to achieve this target. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-23a.20>

Written Answers — Department of Environment, Community and Local Government: Homelessness Strategy (23 Oct 2013)

Mary Lou McDonald (Dublin Central, Sinn Fein) To ask the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government if he will confirm that funding cuts to Dublin City Council have resulted in a €4.5 million cut to homelessness services in the city; and the rationale for this in the context of the Government's commitment to ending long-term homelessness.

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-23a.60>

Written Answers — Department of Environment, Community and Local Government: Social and Affordable Housing Provision (23 Oct 2013)

Tommy Broughan (Dublin North East, Labour) To ask the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government his response to the ongoing housing crisis, particularly in Dublin; and if he will be undertaking to recommence investment in building new housing units across the country to address the crisis. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-23a.86>

Written Answers — Department of Environment, Community and Local Government: Homeless Persons Supports (23 Oct 2013)

Sandra McLellan (Cork East, Sinn Fein) To ask the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government if his attention has been drawn to the fact that homelessness charities are not currently funded adequately even to operate at current capacity and that many are experiencing major problems, with volunteers and workers unable to continue working due to increased stress resulting from increased demand and decreased funding. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-23a.155>

Written Answers — Department of Environment, Community and Local Government: Homelessness Strategy (23 Oct 2013)

Alan Farrell (Dublin North, Fine Gael) To ask the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government the preventive measures currently being used to ensure that those who move on from homelessness are able to maintain long-term stable housing; and if he will make a statement on the matter. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-23a.421>

Written Answers — Department of Environment, Community and Local Government: NAMA Social Housing Provision (23 Oct 2013)

Alan Farrell (Dublin North, Fine Gael) To ask the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government if he will ensure that an adequate proportion of National Asset Management Agency units is ring-fenced for persons moving out of homelessness; and if he will make a statement on the matter. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-23a.434>

Written Answers — Department of Environment, Community and Local Government: Homeless Accommodation Provision (22 Oct 2013)

Mattie McGrath (Tipperary South, Independent) To ask the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government if he will commit to ending long-term homelessness by restoring the homeless budget to 2012 allocation levels, with no further cuts; and if he will make a statement on the matter. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-22a.796>

Written Answers — Department of Social Protection: Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance Scheme Payments (22 Oct 2013)

Willie O'Dea (Limerick City, Fianna Fail) To ask the Minister for Social Protection the number of persons aged 19 to 22 years in respect of whom the back to school clothing and footwear allowance is currently paid. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-22a.673>

Written Answers — Department of Social Protection: Youth Guarantee (22 Oct 2013)

Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin (Cavan-Monaghan, Sinn Fein) To ask the Minister for Social Protection if she will provide an update on the youth guarantee implementation plan; and if she will make a statement on the matter. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-22a.597>

Written Answers — Department of Social Protection: Family Income Supplement Application Numbers (24 Oct 2013)

John Halligan (Waterford, Independent) To ask the Minister for Social Protection the number of public service workers who are currently supplementing their income with family income supplement; the number of those public service workers currently with applications awaiting approval; her views on whether, in certain cases, the reduction of public service hours in an effort save money on wages has put an additional burden her Department, specifically in respect of family income supplement; and if she will make a statement on the matter. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-24a.364>

Justice Issues/ Human Rights/Equality

Written Answers — Department of Justice and Equality: Human Trafficking (24 Oct 2013)

Denis Naughten (Roscommon-South Leitrim, Independent) To ask the Minister for Justice and Equality the number of Garda investigations into alleged human trafficking in each year from 2008 and to date in 2013; the number of alleged victims and the number who are children; the number of these investigations that have been completed; the number of alleged victims that have been granted a recovery and reflection period; the number of persons who have been granted a recovery and reflection period since its introduction; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-24a.527>

Written Answers — Department of Justice and Equality: Human Trafficking (22 Oct 2013)

Michael McGrath (Cork South Central, Fianna Fail) To ask the Minister for Justice and Equality his plans to address the issue of forced labour here; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-22a.910>

Written Answers — Department of Justice and Equality: Traveller Community (22 Oct 2013)

Éamon Ó Cuív (Galway West, Fianna Fail) To ask the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will have a lead role in co-ordinating the Government's position in relation to the Traveller community; and if he will make a statement on the matter. <http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2013-10-22a.904>

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