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1. This week in the Oireachtas (04-08 February 2013)

<http://www.oireachtas.ie/viewdoc.asp?DocID=22751&&CatID=60>

2. Oireachtas Questions and Debate (28 January - 01 February 2013)

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

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Written Answers: Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance Scheme Payments

Deputy Charlie McConalogue Information on Charlie McConalogue Zoom on Charlie McConalogue asked the Minister for Social Protection Information Joan Burton the number of children affected by the cuts to the back to school footwear and clothing allowance; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900053?opendocument>

Dáil Éireann 31/01/2013 Written Answers:Child Care Services

Deputy Michael McGrath asked the Minister for Social Protection Joan Burton the number of childcare places provided under community employment schemes; the way this has varied over the past five years; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013100057?opendocument#WRL01350>

Dáil Éireann 31/01/2013 Written Answers:Preschool Services

Deputy Michael McGrath asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald the approximate number of persons employed in the pre-school childcare sector; the way this has varied over the past five years; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013100065?opendocument#WRT01550>

Dáil Éireann 30/01/2013 Written Answers: Home Schooling

Deputy Thomas Pringle asked the Minister for Education and Skills Ruairí Quinn his plans to introduce a system of flexi-schooling for children that are home schooled that would allow them to attend school on a part-time basis that would facilitate a parent who may work part-time but wishes to home school their child; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013000065?opendocument#WRM00550>

Dáil Éireann 30/01/2013 Written Answers: Special Educational Needs

Deputy Michael Creed asked the Minister for Education and Skills Ruairí Quinn if he will clarify the situation regarding the contracts of employment for special needs assistants; the person whose responsibility it is to decide if SNAs are entitled to job sharing opportunities; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013000065?opendocument#WRM00950>

Dáil Éireann 30/01/2013 Written Answers: Schools Building Projects

Deputy John Lyons asked the Minister for Education and Skills Ruairí Quinn if he is considering the use of social clauses in the contracts for the school building programme; and in particular, if he will consider including a quota to employ jobseekers who are long-term unemployed.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013000065?opendocument#WRM01150>

Dáil Éireann 30/01/2013 Written Answers: Schools Playground Spaces

Deputy Regina Doherty asked the Minister for Education and Skills Ruairí Quinn the recommendations for playground space per square metre per child in national schools; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013000065?opendocument#WRM01350>

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Written Answers: School Completion Programme

Deputy Seán Fleming asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald if the reduction in the Budget for the School Completion Programme for 2012 and 2013 which is designed

to retain young people in education and to improve children's participation and attendance in school; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900080?opendocument#WRCC01150>

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Written Answers: Child Care Services

Deputy Michael Creed asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald if she will outline the support available for the establishment of childcare including community childcare and in particular the costs for operators towards renting facilities for this purpose; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900080?opendocument#WRCC01350>

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Written Answers: Special Educational Needs

Deputy Willie O'Dea asked the Minister for Education and Skills Ruairí Quinn if his attention has been drawn to the fact that there are currently no ASD Units in Limerick City; his plans to put same in place; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900065?opendocument#WRN00350>

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Written Answers: School Staffing

Deputy Finian McGrath asked the Minister for Education and Skills Ruairí Quinn if he will provide, in tabular form, the number of posts of responsibility by grade lost in primary schools each year since the imposition of the moratorium on promotion in the public service; the number of applications for alleviation received by his Department in each year and the number of applications upheld by his Department in each year.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900065?opendocument#WRN00550>

Dáil Éireann 30/01/2013 Written Answers: Special Educational Needs Expenditure

Deputy David Stanton asked the Minister for Education and Skills Information on Ruairí Quinn Zoom on Ruairí Quinn the percentage of the education and skills budget which is allocated to special needs education per annum each year respectively since 2010; if the total allocation was spent each year; if he will provide a breakdown of expenditure on home tuition, special needs assistants, special schools; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013000066?opendocument#WRN00350>

Dáil Éireann 30/01/2013 Written Answers: Special Educational Needs Expenditure

Deputy David Stanton asked the Minister for Education and Skills Ruairí Quinn if an independent audit has been carried out of expenditure on special needs education; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013000066?opendocument#WRN00350>

Dáil Éireann 30/01/2013 Written Answers: Special Educational Needs Incidence

Deputy David Stanton asked the Minister for Education and Skills Ruairí Quinn the number of children with special educational needs in primary and secondary schools; the percentage of school children with special educational needs; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013000066?opendocument#WRN00350>

Dáil Éireann 30/01/2013 Written Answers: Special Educational Needs

Deputy David Stanton asked the Minister for Education and Skills Ruairí Quinn his views on whether all children with special educational needs are being adequately accommodated by the current educational options of home tuition, special schools and special needs supports in mainstream schools; if his attention has been drawn to any children who have withdrawn from the education system as a result of their special educational needs not being met; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013000066?opendocument#WRN00950>

Dáil Éireann 30/01/2013 Written Answers: Special Educational Needs

Deputy David Stanton asked the Minister for Education and Skills Ruairí Quinn if he has received proposals from parents of children with special needs or disability organisations or groups regarding possible alternative models of education for children with special needs; if he is considering any alterations to the current special education options as a result which could improve cost effectiveness and meet individual children's needs; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013000066?opendocument#WRN00950>

Dáil Éireann 30/01/2013 Written Answers: Irish Language

Deputy Seán Ó Feargháil asked the Minister for Education and Skills the impact of the amalgamation of An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta with the NCCA on the 20 year strategy for the Irish language; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013000065?opendocument#WRM00150>

Dáil Éireann 30/01/2013 Leaders' Questions

Deputy John Halligan: One of the starkest comments made at the conference of the Irish Primary Principals' Network last week related to the fact that teachers are encountering an increasing number of children who are coming to school hungry. One in five principals surveyed indicated that children are arriving at school without having eaten breakfast. This will come as no surprise to anyone in the House. There is an alarming rate of poverty among children. What is frightening is the figure contained in statistics released by the CSO last week which indicates that a further 35,000 children have fallen into the poverty trap. The increase in poverty has brought the problem of hungry schoolchildren to critical levels. These are not my words; they are the words of many school principals who discussed this problem on the radio last week. Teachers are reporting an increase in the number of children who are unable to concentrate and an exceptional rise in recent years in the number of pupils who have difficulties with literacy and numeracy.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013000005?opendocument>

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Written Answers: School Patronage

Deputy Jerry Buttimer asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will outline the progress being made on the white paper on patronage of schools; when it will be published; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900063?opendocument#WRL00350>

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Written Answers: School Patronage

Deputy Jerry Buttimer asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide details of the method of surveying local communities on the issue of patronage of schools; the way the surveys were conducted; the persons eligible to participate; the way invitations were issued and the level of engagement to date; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900063?opendocument#WRL00550>

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Written Answers: School Enrolments

Deputy Simon Harris asked the Minister for Education and Skills the position regarding a child in sixth class who cannot access a secondary school place in their locality; the advice he will give to parents of such a child; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900063?opendocument#WRL02650>

Dáil Éireann 30/01/2013 Child Care Services

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013000020?opendocument#S00950>

Asylum/Immigration

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Written Answers: Asylum Support Services

Deputy Pádraig Mac Lochlainn asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will ensure that asylum seekers in direct provision are not subjected by their community welfare officers to a five days notice requirement to receive payments for travel to Dublin for legal appointments in view of the short deadlines applying within the asylum process.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900067?opendocument#WRP00950>

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

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Written Answers: Child Care Services

Deputy Mary Lou McDonald asked the Minister for Social Protection Joan Burton the timeframe her interdepartmental group on the provision of Scandinavian childcare system has met since established; when it is likely to report to her; if she will publish the report; if she will abide by her commitment last year, when debating the Social Welfare and Pensions Bill 2012 which reduced the cut off age for qualifying for one parent family payment from 12 to seven, that she would not proceed unless there was a comprehensive system of Scandinavian style childcare system in place.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900053?opendocument>

Dáil Éireann 30/01/2013 Written Answers: Youth Services

Deputy Tom Fleming asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald if she will review the proposed 10% cut to the youth service grant scheme; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013100066?opendocument#WRU00650>

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Written Answers: Child and Family Support Agency

Deputy Dominic Hannigan asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald when the new legislation to move the Family Support Agency into the Child and Family Support Agency will come before the Oireachtas; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900080?opendocument#WRCC01950>

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Written Answers: Public Service Reform Plan Update

Deputy Patrick O'Donovan asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald with reference to the public service reform document published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on 17 November 2011, Appendix IIa, Bodies to be rationalised, Amalgamated or Abolished in 2012, the progress that has been made on those bodies; the changes that require legislation; the expected timeframe for conclusion; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900080?opendocument#WRCC02350>

Family: Including adoption

Dáil Éireann 30/01/2013 Written Answers: Adoption Services

Deputy Éamon Ó Cuív asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald the reason it has taken the Health Service Executive three years to provide information held by the Regional Adoption Services to the birth mothers of children that were adopted in the 1980s; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013100066?opendocument#WRU00150>

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Written Answers: Inter-Country Adoptions

Deputy Charlie McConalogue asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald the position regarding Irish citizens adopting children from Florida, USA; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900080?opendocument#WRCC01350>

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Written Answers: Inter-Country Adoptions

Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald if she will instruct the Health Service Executive to immediately start quick re-assessments of couples in possession of a pre-Hague declaration, Article 63 declarations, in view of the fact that it takes more than eight months in some cases to move from assessment to declaration and some applicants only have 10 months left to the expiration of 370 declaration; if she will instruct the Adoption Authority of Ireland not to stop issuing the Article 17 for adoptions from Thailand in view of the fact that there are still 10 families left on the waiting list for Thailand adoptions; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900080?opendocument#WRCC02550>

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Written Answers: Inter-Country Adoptions

Deputy Martin Heydon asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald if her attention has been drawn to the difficulties being experienced by prospective adoptive parents in the process of adopting from Bulgaria; the measures she and the Adoption Authority of Ireland are taking to remedy these difficulties; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900080?opendocument#WRCC02550>

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Written Answers: Inter-Country Adoptions

Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald if he will provide an update on inter-country adoption arrangements between Ireland and Vietnam; the way this programme will be administered into the future; if funding is guaranteed for the mediation agency Helping Hands; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900080?opendocument#WRCC02950>

Child Abuse/Child Protection: including vetting, child abduction

Dáil Éireann 31/01/2013 Written Answers: Bullying of Children

Deputy Barry Cowen asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources Pat Rabbitte the role he can play in cyberbullying; and if he will make a statement on the matter.<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013100051?opendocument#WRE01050>

Seanad Éireann 30/01/2013 Child Pornography

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/seanad2013013000037?opendocument#LL00250>

Health and Wellbeing: including disability, mental health, substance misuse, primary care, health services, hospital services, obesity, sports facilities

Dáil Éireann 31/01/2013 Written Answers: Traveller Community

Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin asked the Minister for Health Dr. James Reilly the person that is undertaking the review of the National Traveller Health Advisory Committee; the date on which it will be completed; when the next meeting of the National Traveller Health Advisory Committee will take place; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013100068?opendocument#WRW00350>

Dáil Éireann 31/01/2013 Written Answers: Traveller Community

Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin asked the Minister for Health Dr. James Reilly of the €115 million additional demographic moneys allocated to Health Service Executive social inclusion budget in 2012, the amount that was allocated towards traveller health developments; of the indicative additional demographic budget of €114 million allocated to social inclusion in 2013, the amount that will be allocated for traveller health; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013100068?opendocument#WRW00350>

Dáil Éireann 31/01/2013 Written Answers: Traveller Community

Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin asked the Minister for Health Dr. James Reilly in view of the fact that the appalling health profile of travellers evident in the All Ireland Traveller Health Study Report

published in 2010, when he will develop an action plan/update the National Traveller Health Strategy to address traveller health; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013100068?opendocument#WRW00350>

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Written Answers: Primary Care Centres

Deputy Pearse Doherty asked the Minister for Health Dr. James Reilly further to the statement in the Dáil on 20 December 2012 that an internal audit of primary care centres was conducted and a report was produced on 9 October 2012, if he will lay before the Oireachtas a copy of that report.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900080?opendocument#WRCC03350>

Dáil Éireann 30/01/2013 Health Service Executive (Governance) Bill 2012 [Seanad]: Second Stage

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013000022?opendocument#U00300>

Dáil Éireann 30/01/2013 Written Answers: Mental Health Services

Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan asked the Minister for Health when he will re-establish an independent monitoring group to oversee the implementation of A Vision for Change in view of the recent seven year anniversary of the document, published to help develop mental health services; the priorities that are in place to ensure the continued development of mental health services away from institutional style care towards community-centred care; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013000084?opendocument#WRFF00550>

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Written Answers: Substance Abuse Prevention Education

Deputy Regina Doherty asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he plans an assessment of alcohol education in the school curriculum; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900063?opendocument#WRL03250>

Child Benefit/Social Welfare/Poverty/Housing

Dáil Éireann 31/01/2013 Written Answers: Child Benefit

Deputy Michael McGrath asked the Minister for Social Protection Joan Burton if he will set out in tabular form the number of families and total number of beneficiaries of child benefit in each year from 2005 - 2012; the rates of payment that applied and the gross expenditure on child benefit in each year; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013100057?opendocument#WRL00950>

Dáil Éireann 31/01/2013 Written Answers: Child Benefit

Deputy Michael McGrath asked the Minister for Social Protection Joan Burton if he will set out in tabular form the number of families and total number of beneficiaries of payment of increase for qualified child in each year from 2005 - 2012; the rates of payment that applied and the gross expenditure on IQC in each year; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013013100057?opendocument#WRL01150>

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Social Welfare Code

Deputy Willie O'Dea asked the Minister for Social Protection Joan Burton when the Commission on Social Welfare and Taxation will be published; if the Programme for Government commitment on Social Welfare rates still stands; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900008?opendocument>

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Social Welfare Fraud

Deputy Denis Naughten asked the Minister for Social Protection Joan Burton further to Parliamentary Question No. 190 of 8 November 2012, if she will outline the results of the fraud and error survey on the child benefit scheme; when the report will be published; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900071?opendocument#WRT00950>

Justice Issues/ Human Rights/Equality

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Written Answers: Equality Tribunal Cases

Deputy Clare Daly asked the Minister for Justice and Equality Alan Shatter the 2012 figures for the number of complaints lodged with the Equality Tribunal under the Equal Status Acts 2000-2011; the number of complaints withdrawn; the number of complaints referred to mediation; the number of complaints settled at mediation; the number of complaints referred to investigation, hearing and decision; the number of decisions reached.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900077?opendocument#WRZ02950>

Dáil Éireann 29/01/2013 Written Answers: Appeals Court

Deputy Dominic Hannigan asked the Minister for Justice and Equality Alan Shatter his plans for the creation of a permanent appeals court; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2013012900077?opendocument#WRZ00150>

Dáil Éireann 30/01/2013 Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions) Bill 2012: Committee Stage

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/seanad2013013000028?opendocument#BB01200>

Prisoners' Rights: Discussion with Northern Ireland Prisoner Ombudsman

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/committeetakes/GFJ2013013100003?opendocument>

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