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1. This week in the Oireachtas (17-20 December 2012)

<http://www.oireachtas.ie/viewdoc.asp?DocID=22361&&CatID=60>

2. Oireachtas Questions and Debate (10-14 December 2012)

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

Dáil Éireann 12/12/2012 Written Answers: School Completion Programme

Deputy Charlie McConalogue asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald if there have been any cuts or changes to the school completion programme in Budget 2013; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121200086?opendocument#School%20Completion%20Programme>

Dáil Éireann 12/12/2012 Written Answers: Early Childhood Care and Education Programme

Deputy Catherine Murphy asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald the required fields in which a potential pre-school leader must have achieved a level seven major award or equivalent in order to successfully receive the higher rate of capitation under the early childhood education programme; if there is a list of approved qualifications offered by Irish institutions in respect of this; if she will provide this list; if specifically any undergraduate degrees in psychology

with significant modules on early childhood learning do qualify; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121200086?opendocument#Early%20Childhood%20Care%20and%20Education%20Programme>

Dáil Éireann 12/12/2012 Pupil-Teacher Ratio

Deputy Derek Keating asked the Minister for Education and Skills Ruairí Quinn following his Budget announcement of 2013 and his Department's decision in relation to teacher student ratio of 1 to 19 in PLCs and colleges of further education, if his attention has been drawn to the fact that the impact of this decision will result in the loss of five teachers in Inchicore College of Further Education and approximately 50 to 55 teachers in the City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee Colleges and the success rate in institutes of further education with the vocational education committees provide access . . .

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121200077?opendocument>

Dáil Éireann 12/12/2012 Pupil-Teacher Ratio

Deputy Jonathan O'Brien asked the Minister for Education and Skills Ruairí Quinn if he will respond to concerns that up to 40 plus teaching posts have been placed at risk as a result of the decision announced in Budget 2013 to increase the pupil teacher ratio from 19:2, 19:1 in post leaving certificate courses; if he will provide details of any findings by his Department carried out in advance of this decision.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121200078?opendocument#Pupil-Teacher%20Ratio>

Dáil Éireann 12/12/2012 Vocational Education Committees

Deputy Charlie McConalogue asked the Minister for Education and Skills Ruairí Quinn the impact that the budget cuts to the vocational education committee sector will have on the delivery of services and the way the VEC will be able to maintain services at the same level in view of such significant cuts; and if he will make a statement on the matter . . .

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121200078?opendocument#Vocational%20Education%20Committees>

Dáil Éireann 12/12/2012: Back to Education Allowance Payments

Deputy Charlie McConalogue asked the Minister for Education and Skills Ruairí Quinn if he has had any discussions with the Department of Social Protection in relation to cuts to the back to education allowance and to the cost of education allowance and the impact that this would have on young persons accessing further education and training; and if he will make a statement on the matter. . . .

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121200078?opendocument#Back%20to%20Education%20Allowance%20Payments>

Dáil Éireann 12/12/2012: School Staffing

Deputy Charlie McConalogue asked the Minister for Education and Skills Ruairí Quinn if the loss of 75 teachers in small schools in 2013 will result in the closure of any of these schools; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121200078?opendocument#School%20Staffing>

Dáil Éireann 13/12/2012 School Completion Programme

Deputy Robert Troy asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald the funding being allocated for the School Completion Programme in 2013; the way it compares with 2012; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121300071?opendocument>

Dáil Éireann 13/12/2012 Child Care Services

Deputy Seán Ó Fearghail asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald if she is committed to the further development of accessible, affordable and quality childcare, recognising its role in achieving economic and social prosperity; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121300071?opendocument#Child%20Care%20Services>

Dáil Éireann 13/12/2012 Child Care Services

Deputy Robert Troy asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald in view of the fact that childcare funding schemes are presenting more demands on childcare services to avail of particular training or have certain competencies, and that in service training is often carried out by early childhood staff voluntarily on their own time, the solutions she will put forward to address this issue; and if she will make a statement on the matter . . .

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121300071?opendocument#Early%20Childhood%20Education>

Dáil Éireann 13/12/2012 Early Childhood Education

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<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121300071?opendocument#Early%20Childhood%20Education>

Dáil Éireann 13/12/2012 Early Childhood Education

Deputy Robert Troy asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald if resources for a national implementation programme regarding síolta, aistear and the national literacy and numeracy strategy will be a key feature of the forthcoming national early years strategy; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121300071?opendocument#Early%20Childhood%20Education>

Dáil Éireann 13/12/2012 Child care Services

Deputy Robert Troy asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald if discussions have taken place with Health Service Executive regarding the discontinuation of complementary funding supports to county childcare committees as a result of a refocus of role of the Child and Family Support Agency; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121300071?opendocument#Child%20Care%20Services>

Dáil Éireann 13/12/2012 Child care Services

Deputy Robert Troy asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald in view of the proposed discontinuation of Health Service Executive complementary funding used to provide

essential low cost and accessible continuing professional development opportunities and quality compliance supports for childcare staff through county childcare committees, the way in which these valuable supports will be provided at local level if HSE funding is discontinued; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121300071?opendocument#Child%20Care%20Services>

Dáil Éireann 13/12/2012 Child Care Services

Deputy Robert Troy asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald the financial supports she will put in place to assist full-time working parents who pay fees for childcare provision who are outside the bands of the community childcare subvention scheme; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121300071?opendocument#Child%20Care%20Services>

Dáil Éireann 11/12/2012 Teacher Training

Deputy Mattie McGrath asked the Minister for Education and Skills Ruairí Quinn if the teacher refund scheme will be re-opened in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121100085?opendocument#Teacher%20Training>

Dáil Éireann 11/12/2012 Special Educational Needs

Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin asked the Minister for Education and Skills Ruairí Quinn the position regarding disability services north east and disability services south west, both co-funded by the Health Service Executive and FÁS; if it is the case that disability services in these areas are being put out to tender; the reason for same; the consultation that has taken place with service providers across both areas or with REHAB nationally; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121100085?opendocument#Special%20Educational%20Needs>

Dáil Éireann 11/12/2012 School Transport

Deputy Peadar Tóibín asked the Minister for Education and Skills Ruairí Quinn in view of the difficulties that parents with different school aged children face with differing finishing times, if he will consider developing a single fare in addition to the return fare for school transport.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121100085?opendocument>

Asylum/Immigration

Dáil Éireann 11/12/2012 Written Answers: Asylum Seeker Accommodation Deputy Jonathan O'Brien asked the Minister for Justice and Equality Information on Alan Shatter his plans to address the concerns set out in the recent Irish Refugee Council report on conditions in State-funded accommodation for those seeking asylum.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121100080?opendocument>

Dáil Éireann 11/12/2012 Written Answers: Asylum Applications

Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin asked the Minister for Justice and Equality Alan Shatter the average length of time it takes to provide decisions on applications for leave to remain; his plans to ensure that these applications are resolved in a speedy manner; and if he will make a statement on the

matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/debateswebpack.nsf/takes/dail2012121100080?opendocument#Asylum%20Applications>

Dáil Éireann 11/12/2012 Asylum Seeker Accommodation

Deputy Peadar Tóibín asked the Minister for Justice and Equality Alan Shatter if he has met with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs regarding the issue of separated children seeking asylum who are removed from Health Service Executive care at the age of 18 years at which point they enter accommodation funded by his Department; the legal barriers to allowing them to remain with their foster carers; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121100080?opendocument#Asylum%20Seeker%20Accommodation>

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

Dáil Éireann 12/12/2012 Written Answers: Health Service Staff

Deputy Robert Troy asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald the way more social workers will be appointed in 2013 in view of the reduction in the allocation for the Health Service Executive Vote for 2013 in respect of children and family services; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121200087?opendocument#Health%20Service%20Staff>

Seanad Éireann 12/12/2012 Youth Work: Motion

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/seanad2012121200035?opendocument>

Dáil Éireann 12/12/2012 Written Answers: Social Worker Numbers

Deputy Thomas P. Broughan asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Information Frances Fitzgerald the number of additional social workers posts that have been filled in the years 2010, 2011 and to date in 2012; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121200086?opendocument#Social%20Worker%20Numbers>

Dáil Éireann 12/12/2012 Written Answers: Children in Care

Deputy Thomas P. Broughan asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald the number of applications to place a child in special care that have been brought to the National Special Care Admissions and Discharge Committee; the number of such applications which resulted in an admission to a special care unit and the number of applications that were turned down; the number of appeals decided by the National Special Care Appeals Panel and the number of appeals which resulted in a child being admitted to a special care unit.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121200086?opendocument#Children%20in%20Care>

Child Abuse/Child Protection: including vetting, child abduction

Seanad Éireann 12/12/2012 National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Bill 2012: Committee Stage

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/seanad2012121200012?opendocument>

Dáil Éireann 12/12/2012 Written Answers: Child Protection

Deputy Thomas P. Broughan asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Information Frances Fitzgerald when she will sign a commencement order to bring the remainder of the provisions, that is, all provisions excluding parts one, four and six of the Child Care (Amendment) Act 2011 into force.
<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121200086?opendocument>

Dáil Éireann 11/12/2012 Child Protection

Deputy Boyd Barrett Zoom on Richard Boyd Barrett asked the Minister for Justice and Equality Alan Shatter if he will outline the measures in place to ensure the safety and welfare of children in direct provision; and if he will make a statement on the matter.
<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail201211100079?opendocument#Child%20Protection>

Dáil Éireann 12/12/2012 Child Protection

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<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121200086?opendocument#Child%20Protection>

Child Benefit/Social Welfare/Poverty/Housing

Dáil Éireann 11/12/2012 Social Welfare Bill 2012

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail201211100055?opendocument>

Dáil Éireann 13/12/2012 Leaders' Questions: Child Benefit

Deputy Micheál Martin: Micheál Martin As chairman Keaveney tweeted last night, the die has been cast. Labour and Fine Gael Deputies have voted, one and all, for some of the most regressive cuts to child benefit . . .

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail201211300003?opendocument>

Senator Darragh O'Brien: . . . The Leader has outlined the business for this and next week which is crucially important for the future of the country in the sense that it gives the Oireachtas an opportunity to rectify mistakes made in the budget. . . .

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/seanad2012121100004?opendocument>

Dáil Éireann 12/12/2012: Budget 2013

Deputy Robert Troy asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald her views on whether Budget 2013 was a tough and unfair budget on young persons and youth services; and if

she will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121200087?opendocument>

Dáil Éireann 12/12/2012: Budget 2013

Deputy Robert Troy asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald the way her aspirations for childcare will be impacted by the reduction in child benefit.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121200087?opendocument#Child%20Benefit%20Payments>

Dáil Éireann 11/12/2012 Social Welfare Bill 2012: Second Stage

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121100055?opendocument#Social%20Welfare%20Bill%202012:%20Second%20Stage>

Dáil Éireann 12/12/2012 Social Welfare Bill 2012 Committee Stage

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121200068?opendocument>

Justice Issues/ Human Rights/Equality

Dáil Éireann 11/12/2012 Written Answers: Child Detention Centres

Deputy Thomas P. Broughan asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald the reason the capacity of Coovagh House Special Care Unit County Limerick has been capped at two; the exact timeline for when additional special care places will become available in accordance with the Health Service Executive National High Support and Special Care Implementation Plan 2011-2014.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121200086?opendocument&highlight=children%20in%20care#Child%20Detention%20Centres>

Dáil Éireann 13/12/2012 Written Answers: Parental Leave

Deputy Seán Fleming asked the Minister for Justice and Equality Alan Shatter if she will give consideration to reforming the current maternity leave system in order that fathers could take some of the leave; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121300069?opendocument#Parental%20Leave>

Dáil Éireann 11/12/2012 Written Answers: Proposed Legislation

Deputy Terence Flanagan asked the Minister for Justice and Equality Alan Shatter the date on which legislation will be introduced to allow charities to make their financial accounts information public; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121100095?opendocument#Proposed%20Legislation>

Dáil Éireann 11/12/2012 Equality Issues

Deputy Mary Mitchell O'Connor asked the Minister for Justice and Equality Alan Shatter the reason the decision was made prior to the Budget 2012 to scrap the budget for equality proofing; the

ramifications, if any, the lack of funding for equality had in 2012; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121100096?opendocument#Equality%20Issues>

Dáil Éireann 11/12/2012 Human Trafficking

Deputy Bernard J. Durkan asked the Minister for Justice and Equality Alan Shatter the number of instances of trafficking in women or children reported or identified in each of the past five years and to date in 2012; the extent to which punitive and preventative action has been taken in such instances; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121100096?opendocument#Human%20Trafficking>

Dáil Éireann 11/12/2012 Child Detention Centres

Deputy Seán Crowe asked the Minister for Justice and Equality Alan Shatter the number of prisoners under 18 years of age who remain in St. Patrick's Institution; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121100079?opendocument#Child%20Detention%20Centres>

Dáil Éireann 11/12/2012 Youth Services

Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin asked the Minister for Justice and Equality Alan Shatter the date on which the new National Youth Justice Strategy will be published.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121100079?opendocument#Youth%20Services>

Dáil Éireann 11/12/2012 Written Answers

Deputy Michael Colreavy asked the Minister for Justice and Equality Alan Shatter if his attention has been drawn to the decision in the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), in *MM v United Kingdom*, ruled that the indefinite retention and disclosure of minor criminal records infringed Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) which protects private and family life; and his plans to address same in the context of the recently passed National Vetting Bureau Bill.

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/takes/dail2012121100078?opendocument#European%20Court%20of%20Human%20Rights%20Rulings>

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