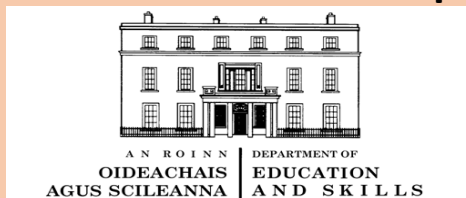


## **Attachment No. 5 to Report**



### **Forward Planning Section Report To The New Schools Establishment Group New Post-Primary Schools 2017-2018**

**Location: Portlaoise, Co. Laois. (map attached)**

**Year Required: 2017**

**School Size required: Long term projected need up to 1,000 pupil places**

## Applications Received

Two applications were received from prospective patrons to operate the new school in the Portlaoise post-primary school planning area. A brief profile of the applicants together with a synopsis of the school type proposed is set out hereunder:

### **Catholic Education an Irish Schools' Trust (Ceist)**

#### **Profile of Applicant**

CEIST was established in 2007 to take over the patronage role for five religious congregations that had been engaged in post-primary education in Ireland for over three and a half centuries. The Daughters of Charity, Presentation Sisters, Sisters of the Christian Retreat, Sisters of Mercy and Missionaries of the Sacred Heart established CEIST. CEIST is patron of in excess of 100 schools throughout the country. All are inclusive schools in the Catholic tradition. CEIST schools cater for Catholic children and children of many other faiths and none and all are included fully in the life of the school.

#### **School type proposed**

Co-educational, Catholic, voluntary secondary school

Preparedness to establish an Irish-medium Aonad, should the demand be present, has been indicated in the application.

### **Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board (LOETB) with An Foras Pátrúnachta as Trustee Partner**

#### **Profile of Applicant**

Laois and Offaly ETB was established on 1 July 2013 as part of the amalgamation of the former Vocational Education Committees of Laois and Offaly, both of which have been in existence since the 1930's. LOETB provides education services and supports for children, young people and adults. It is a registered school patron and has charitable status. LOETB is currently patron of eight Community Schools across Laois and Offaly. It is also responsible for Further Education and Training Services in Laois and Offaly and has statutory role in Youth Services. The application states that the LOETB has applied for patronage of the school, with an Foras Pátrúnachta as a trustee partner. An Foras Pátrúnachta was established to provide Irish-medium education at both primary and post-primary level, and is the largest patron of Irish-medium schools in the country, with 64 primary and five post-primary schools under its patronage, including two multi-denominational Irish-medium schools established in 2014.

#### **School type proposed**

Co-educational, multi-denominational, Community College, where the primary medium of instruction is English, with an Aonad Lán-Ghaelige

## Demographic details

There are three post-primary schools in the Portlaoise school planning area. The total provisional enrolment in post-primary schools in the Portlaoise school planning area for the 2015/16 school year is **2,084** pupils.

Demographic analysis shows that the enrolment figure for the Portlaoise school planning area is projected to grow to approximately **2,959** pupils by the year 2024 based on a **100%** intake in the school planning area. **This is a potential 875 extra pupils requiring school places.** However, the actual intake at post-primary level in the Portlaoise school planning area is currently **94%**. At the current level of intake, enrolment would increase to approximately **2,778** pupils by 2024. **This is a potential 694 extra pupils.** It would be expected that when the new school opens that the average current intake of 94% would increase closer to 100%.

## Assessment of applications

### 1. Requirements

**Has the applicant patron confirmed that it will comply with the requirements as set out?**

	<i>CEIST</i>	<i>Laois and Offaly ETB with An Foras Pátrúnachta as Trustee Partner</i>
Is willing to accept and open special education facilities	√	√
Is willing to enter into the standard lease agreement with the Department of Education & Skills or that the prospective patron will provide their own site	√	√
Is willing to operate by the rules and regulations laid down in various Department of Education & Skills circulars and operating procedures	√	√
Is willing to operate the school within the resourcing and policy parameters established by the Department of Education & Skills	√	√
Is willing to share school buildings with other schools as may be determined by the Department should the school building not be in full use	√	√
Is willing to be part of a campus development with other primary or second-level schools as identified by the Department	√	√
Is willing to prioritise enrolment of children in the area for whom the Department has identified the need for a school	√	√
Is willing to follow the prescribed curriculum	√	√
Is willing to expand/ operate in the size range of 800 to 1,000 pupils (a lower threshold of 400 would apply for Gaelcholáistí having regard to the alternative of establishing an Aonad within a school)	√	√
Is willing to establish an Aonad where there is demand for it (for a school where the primary medium of instruction is to be English)	√	√

## **2. Multiple Provider Areas**

### **Criteria for deciding on patronage where there is currently at least one post-primary school**

**Will the establishment of the proposed school result in greater diversity and plurality of post-primary school patronage and provision in the area (having regard to neighbouring areas) where there is demand for such diversity and plurality? In this context individual patron bodies from the one faith group will be regarded as representing the same school patronage type for assessing plurality.**

There are currently three post-primary schools in the Portlaoise school planning area:

- Two schools have a Catholic ethos, one all-boys school and one all-girls school
- One school has an multi-denominational ethos and is co-educational
- There are no fee-paying schools in the Portlaoise school planning area
- The three schools provide education through the medium of English

#### **CEIST - A co-educational Catholic voluntary secondary school.**

The establishment of a new school under the model proposed by CEIST would increase co-educational provision in the Portlaoise school planning area, given that two of the existing schools are single-sex schools. The school planning area has one post-primary school operating under of the LOETB and two post-primary schools operating under Catholic patronage, one of which is under the patronage of CEIST. The proposed model would not provide for greater diversity and plurality of patronage or provision however, the proposed model providing for denominational, co-educational education, would extend provision in the area and would provide a Catholic, co-educational option, which is not currently available as both existing schools under Catholic patronage are single-sex.

#### **Laois and Offaly ETB with An Foras Pátrúnachta as Trustee Partner - Co-educational, multi-denominational Community College.**

The establishment of a new school under the model proposed by LOETB with An Foras Pátrúnachta as Trustee Partner would increase co-educational provision in the Portlaoise school planning area, given that two of the existing schools are single-sex schools. It is noted that the school planning area has one post-primary school operating under the patronage of LOETB and two under Catholic patronage. The proposed model would increase multi-denominational post-primary provision in the area.

## Details of Current Post-Primary Schools in the Portlaoise School Planning Area

Roll No	School Name	Ethos		Patron	Gender	Medium of Instruction	2015/16 Total Enrolment	% in school of Total Area Enrolment
63430G	St. Mary's C.B.S.	Denominational	Catholic	Edmund Rice Schools Trust	All Boys	English	796	38%
63451O	Scoil Christ Ri	Denominational	Catholic	CEIST	All Girls	English	900	43%
71510A	Portlaoise College	Non Designated Community College	Multi Denominational	Laois & Offaly ETB	Co-education	English	388	19%
<b>Total</b>							<b>2084</b>	<b>100%</b>

Portlaoise School Planning Area										Detailed Enrolment 2015/2016						
Current Transfer Rate 94%																
Roll No	Name	Ethos		06/07 Enr	11/12 Enr	15/16 Enr	Historic 5 Year Trend	Historic 10 Year Trend	1 <sup>st</sup> Yr	2 <sup>nd</sup> Yr	3 <sup>rd</sup> Yr	TY	5 <sup>th</sup> Yr	6 <sup>th</sup> Yr	Total Mainstream	PLC
63430G	St. Mary's C.B.S.	Denominational	Catholic	388	525	796	271	408	170	169	147	73	131	106	796	0
63451O	Scoil Christ Ri	Denominational	Catholic	336	609	900	291	564	202	170	174	100	147	107	900	0
71510A	Portlaoise College	Non Designated Community College	Multi Denominational	126	299	388	89	262	98	64	74	17	73	62	388	361
<b>Total</b>				<b>850</b>	<b>1433</b>	<b>2084</b>	<b>651</b>	<b>1234</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>2084</b>	<b>361</b>

% of Total Enrolment by Patron	
Edmund Rice Schools	38%
CEIST	43%
Laois & Offaly ETB	19%

% of Total Enrolment by Ethos	
Catholic	81%
Multi denominational	19%

## Details of Current Primary Schools in the Portlaoise School Planning Area

There are **13** primary schools in the Portlaoise school planning area. Of these schools, one has a multi-denominational ethos, ten have a Catholic ethos and two have Church of Ireland ethos.

Twelve of the schools are English-medium and one is an Irish-medium Gaelscoil.

The total enrolment of these schools has grown by **1,388** since 2006/2007. Enrolments are projected to continue to grow peaking in 2019/2020 at **4,192** pupils, an increase of **268** pupils on current enrolment of **3,924**.

Primary Schools Portlaoise School Planning Area									Detailed Enrolment 2015/16								
Roll No		Ethos	Medium of Instruction	06/07 Enr	11/12 Enr	15/16 Enr	5 Year Trend	10 Year Trend	Jun Inf	Sen Inf	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	Total
10544W	Cosby N S	Church of Ireland	English	22	33	39	6	17	5	3	5	4	7	5	4	6	39
13386W	S N An Chroi Ro Naofa	Catholic	English	332	372	440	68	108	83	84	80	51	46	36	32	28	440
14838N	Maryboro NS	Church of Ireland	English	57	71	97	26	40	12	15	12	12	17	8	12	9	97
15537E	S N Baile Finn	Catholic	English	147	207	227	20	80	30	30	30	29	26	24	30	28	227
17604D	Raithin An Uisce N S	Catholic	English	156	236	233	-3	77	32	23	28	29	32	28	30	31	233
18150S	Fraoch Mor N S	Catholic	English	145	216	227	11	82	29	30	31	31	28	27	23	28	227
18368W	Mhuire Fatima N S	Catholic	English	94	127	147	20	53	22	14	18	20	18	23	17	15	147
18828H	St. Pauls Primary School	Catholic	English	313	415	446	31	133	26	0	0	97	80	63	70	110	446
19286C	S N Mhuire	Catholic	English	345	412	457	45	112	84	83	84	44	49	28	42	43	457
19747M	Scoil Bhríde Ns	Catholic	English	490	736	756	20	266	105	106	98	95	87	89	90	86	756
20081O	Gaelscoil Phort Laoise	Catholic	Irish	172	209	297	88	125	61	31	60	32	31	30	26	26	297
20347D	Portlaoise Educate Together NS	Multi Denominational	English	0	113	342	229	342	50	55	54	53	55	28	21	26	342
20353V	St Coleman's National School	Catholic	English	302	300	255	-45	-47	28	26	34	22	39	36	35	35	255
<b>Totals</b>				<b>2,575</b>	<b>3,447</b>	<b>3,963</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>1,388</b>	<b>567</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>3,963</b>
<b>First Four Years Enrolments vs Last Four Years Enrolments</b>									<b>2,120</b>			<b>1,843</b>					

## **Details of Post-Primary Schools in the Adjoining School Planning Area(s) to Portlaoise**

### **Are there post-primary schools of the same or similar patronage in neighbouring school planning areas?**

There are five school planning areas adjoining Portlaoise, with six post-primary schools in these adjoining areas:

- *Mountrath (1)*
- *Monasterevin (1)*
- *Athy (2)*
- *Mountmellick (1)*
- *Ballinacill (1)*

All six schools are in the free education scheme. All of the schools are co-educational. Five have a Catholic ethos and one has an multi-denominational ethos. Overall, enrolments across these school planning areas have been increasing in recent years.

**CEIST** - The provision of a co-educational, Catholic, Voluntary Secondary School will extend provision but will not increase diversity at post-primary level in the wider region.

**Laos and Offaly ETB with An Foras Pátrúnachta as Trustee Partner** - The provision of a co-educational, multi-denominational Community College will increase and strengthen diversity of provision at post-primary level in the wider region, given that five of the six schools have a denominational ethos.



Surrounding School Planning Areas														Detailed Enrolment 2015/2016					
Mountmellick School Planning Area																			
Current Transfer Rate 77%																			
Roll No	Name	Ethos		Patron	06/07 Enr	11/12 Enr	15/16 Enr	5 Year Trend	10 Year Trend	1st Yr	2nd Yr	3rd Yr	TY	5th Yr	6th Yr	Total M'stream	PLC	Distance to Portlaoise (approx)	
91426A	Mountmellick Community School	Inter Denominational	Catholic	Laois & Offaly ETB + Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin + Presentation Sisters	515	523	397	-126	-118	95	63	77	47	33	82	397	0	10.9 km	
<b>Total</b>					<b>515</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>-126</b>	<b>-118</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>0</b>		

Surrounding School Planning Areas														Detailed Enrolment 2015/2016					
Mountrath School Planning Area																			
Current Transfer Rate 152%																			
Roll No	Name	Ethos		Patron	06/07 Enr	11/12 Enr	15/16 Enr	5 Year Trend	10 Year Trend	1st Yr	2nd Yr	3rd Yr	TY	5th Yr	6th Yr	Total M'stream	PLC	Distance to Portlaoise (approx)	
91550B	Mountrath Community School	Inter Denominational	Catholic	Laois & Offaly ETB + Patrician Brothers + Brigidine Sisters	839	694	781	87	-58	143	143	138	80	145	132	781	0	13.8 km	
<b>Total</b>					<b>839</b>	<b>694</b>	<b>781</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>-58</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>781</b>	<b>0</b>		

Surrounding School Planning Areas														Detailed Enrolment 2015/2016					
Ballinakill School Planning Area																			
Current Transfer Rate 7%																			
Roll No	Name	Ethos		Patron	06/07 Enr	11/12 Enr	15/16 Enr	5 Year Trend	10 Year Trend	1st Yr	2nd Yr	3rd Yr	TY	5th Yr	6th Yr	Total M'stream	PLC	Distance to Portlaoise (approx)	
91427C	Heywood Community School	Inter Denominational	Catholic	Laois & Offaly ETB + Salesian Fathers of Don Bosco + Presentation Sisters	652	687	685	-2	33	117	123	119	78	129	119	685	0	20.1 km	
<b>Total</b>					<b>652</b>	<b>687</b>	<b>685</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>685</b>	<b>0</b>		

Surrounding School Planning Areas														Detailed Enrolment 2015/2016					
Monasterevin School Planning Area																			
Current Transfer Rate 45%																			
Roll No	Name	Ethos		Patron	06/07 Enr	11/12 Enr	15/16 Enr	5 Year Trend	10 Year Trend	1st Yr	2nd Yr	3rd Yr	TY	5th Yr	6th Yr	Total M'stream	PLC	Distance to Portlaoise (approx)	
61702D	St Pauls Secondary School	Denominational	Catholic	Bishop of Kildare & Leighlin	225	304	325	21	100	71	46	56	50	52	50	325	0	21.7 km	
<b>Total</b>					<b>225</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>0</b>		

Surrounding School Planning Areas														Detailed Enrolment 2015/2016					
Athy School Planning Area																			
Current Transfer Rate 88%																			
Roll No	Name	Ethos		Patron	06/07 Enr	11/12 Enr	15/16 Enr	5 Year Trend	10 Year Trend	1st Yr	2nd Yr	3rd Yr	TY	5th Yr	6th Yr	Total M'stream	PLC	Distance to Portlaoise (approx)	
68077S	Árdscoil na Tríoníde	Denominational	Catholic	CEIST	0	819	832	13	832	161	151	156	83	139	142	832	0	23.8 km	
70650L	Athy Community College	Non Designated Community College	Multi Denominational	Kildare & Wicklow ETB	179	253	398	145	219	87	91	85	0	73	62	398	0		
<b>Total</b>					<b>179</b>	<b>1072</b>	<b>1230</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>1051</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>1230</b>	<b>0</b>		

**Has the patron/prospective patron provided detail on planned mechanisms to ensure that the proposed school will expand to the size range of 800 to 1,000 pupils (or 400 pupils for a Gaelchóláiste), including:**

- possible measures if expansion is not happening as fast as planned?
- collaboration with existing second-level schools in the school planning areas?

**1. CEIST**

CEIST has confirmed its willingness to expand/operate a school in the size range of 800 to 1,000 pupils.

CEIST is patron of an existing post-primary in the town, which has increased student enrolments in response to local demand and is currently at capacity. Its application notes that it expects a new school under CEIST patronage to be popular given that many parents of students attending Catholic primary schools have expressed a preference for a Catholic post-primary school provision and that they are making the application in response to a request from the local Catholic community in Portlaoise.

**2. Laois and Offaly ETB with An Foras Pátrúnachta as Trustee Partner**

LOETB's application for patronage confirms its willingness to expand/operate the school in the size range of 800 to 1,000 pupils.

Its application states that the school would benefit from an extensive support structure which includes education supports, administration, finance, human resources, ICT, quality assurance, buildings and procurement expertise. LOETB's current mechanism for sharing teachers within schools will be extended to the new school if this is under its patronage and will ensure that all general and specialised subjects can be catered for.

### **3. Parental Preferences**

Details of parental demand demonstrated by the applicant patrons are set out below:

#### **CEIST:**

CEIST provided details of **590** prospective pupils in support of its application for patronage of the proposed new post-primary school in the Portlaoise school planning area.

Following analysis of the prospective pupil details provided, the following **73** records have not been included;

- **31** records did not include the child's name
- **4** children were duplicated on the list of parental preferences
- **8** children were listed with no proposed year of entry
- **27** children reside outside of the school planning area
- **3** records had no child details

All of these prospective pupils have been deducted from the demand for the CEIST model of provision. The remaining **517** prospective pupils were considered in terms of valid demand for the model proposed for the purposes of this process.

<b>Portlaoise School Planning Area</b>						
	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Year Intake</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>517</b>

### **Laois and Offaly ETB with An Foras Pátrúnachta as Trustee Partner:**

LOETB provided details of **845** prospective pupils in support of their application for patronage of the proposed new post-primary school in the Portlaoise school planning area.

Following analysis of the prospective pupil details provided, the following **98** records have not been included;

- **1** child was listed with no date of birth
- **20** children were duplicated on the list of parental preferences
- **6** children were listed with no proposed year of entry
- **65** children reside outside of the school planning area
- **6** children on the list were proposed to enrol in a year outside of the five years specified in the patronage invitation for the Portlaoise School which is 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021.

All of these prospective pupils have been deducted from the demand for the LOETB model of provision. The remaining **747** prospective pupils were considered in terms of valid demand for the model proposed for the purposes of this process.

<b>Portlaoise School Planning Area</b>						
	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Year Intake</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>747</b>

## **4. Medium of Instruction**

Following consideration of feedback from patrons on previous patronage processes, the Department has moved to incorporate the medium of instruction of a proposed new school as part of the assessment process. This makes parental preference for Irish-medium instruction an integral part of the patronage assessment and recommendation process. It will serve to inform decisions concerning a school's medium of instruction and will bring greater visibility to consideration of the level of demonstrated demand for education through the medium of Irish.

It is open to all prospective patron applicants to propose provision of Irish-medium education in their application for a new school. Parental preferences for each patron, together with the extent of Irish provision, if any, currently available in the area, are key in relation to the outcome of this process. In this regard, prospective patrons were requested to submit completed parental preferences indicating the language through which parents would prefer their child(ren) to be educated.

The assessment process analyses existing Irish-medium provision in the area and also takes into account existing Irish-medium provision in the adjacent school planning areas. Consideration is given to demonstrated demand and long-term sustainability, including provision of a sufficient range of subjects.

There is one Gaelscoil in Portlaoise town, Gaelscoil Phort Laoise. Of the five school planning areas adjacent to the Portlaoise school planning area, there is one Gaelscoil in Mountrath and one in Athy. While there are no Gaelcholáistí or Aonaid within those feeder areas, there is a Gaelcholáiste in Carlow, a school planning area which adjoins some of those areas.

### **Gaelscoileanna in the Portlaoise Area:**

<b>Roll No</b>	<b>School Name</b>	<b>Total Enrolment 2015/16</b>	<b>Ethos</b>	<b>School Planning Area</b>	<b>Approximate Distance to nearest Gaelcholáiste/Aonad</b>
200810	GAELSCOIL PHORT LAOISE	297	CATHOLIC	CARLOW	Gaelcholáiste Cheartharlach 39 km

**Gaelscoileanna in the adjacent school planning areas:**

Roll No	School Name	Total Enrolment 2015/16	Ethos	Feeder Area	Distance from Portlaoise	Approximate distance to nearest Gaelcholáiste/Aonad
20192A	GAELSCOIL ÁTHA Í	218	INTERDENOMINATIONAL	ATHY	24 km	Gaelcholáiste Cheartharlach 19 km
15446B	TRUMMERA NS	40	CATHOLIC	MOUNTRATH	14.5 km	Gaelcholáiste Cheartharlach 42 km
	Total	258				

There is only the one Gaelscoil in the Portlaoise school planning area. In 2015/16 there were 297 pupils enrolled with 26 pupils in 6<sup>th</sup> class. This compares with 12 English-medium primary schools, with a 2015/16 total enrolment of 3,666 with 439 pupils in 6<sup>th</sup> class. The two Gaelscoileanna in the neighbouring school planning areas are not expected to have a significant impact on potential enrolments as an Irish-medium post-primary provider in Portlaoise would be further away from Gaelscoil Átha Í than Gaelcholáiste Cheartharlach, which is in Carlow town and the enrolments in Trummera National School in the Mountrath school planning area are very small.

- 1. CEIST** proposes a, co-educational, English-medium Voluntary Secondary School. Its' application includes six preferences for the provision of education through the medium of Irish and a further seven which chose both Irish and English. However, as part of its application for patronage of the proposed new school, CEIST has confirmed its willingness to make provision for education through the medium of Irish should it be required.
- 2. Laois and Offaly ETB with An Foras Patrúnachta as Trustee Partner** proposes a co-educational, multi-denominational, English-medium Community College. Its application includes 236 parental preferences for the provision of education through the medium of Irish. The LOETB application includes An Foras Pátrúnachta as a trustee partner. As part of its application for patronage LOETB has confirmed its willingness to establish an Aonad to facilitate educational instruction through the medium of Irish should it be required.

While the broader analysis of potential demand arising from existing Irish-medium provision in both this and adjacent school planning areas shows a relatively low projected outturn, the parental preferences submitted, particularly for the LOETB application with An Foras Pátrúnachta as trustee partner, is relatively high. In the circumstances it is recommended that the proposed new post-primary school for the Portlaoise school planning area should be an English-medium school with an Aonad Lán-Gaeilge.

## **5. Conclusions**

**Based on an assessment of the applications received, confirmation of compliance with the criteria, assessment of existing school provision and how the proposed school would result in greater diversity, and taking into account parental demand make a recommendation on patronage for the proposed new school in the area.**

- **CEIST and Laois and Offaly ETB** have both confirmed that they will satisfy all of the requirements as set out by the Department for the patronage of new schools.
- **CEIST** has demonstrated a viable parental demand for its school type. The demand for the **CEIST** school model is significant. CEIST has a Catholic, all-girls school under its patronage in the school planning area. The establishment of a CEIST post-primary school, providing Catholic, co-educational provision will extend provision but will not increase diversity of patronage in Portlaoise.
- **Laois and Offaly ETB with An Foras Pátrúnachta as Trustee Partner** has also demonstrated a viable parental demand for its school type. The demand for the LOETB school model is significant. **Laois and Offaly ETB** operates a Community College in the school planning area. The establishment of an ETB Community College would strengthen diversity of provision in the area by providing co-educational, multi-denominational education, with the delivery of an Aonad Lán-Gaeilge in partnership with An Foras Pátrúnachta as Trustee Partner contributing to language diversity not currently available in the area.
- The level of parental preference for Irish-medium instruction submitted as part of the patron applications is significant. While the level of potential demand arising from existing Irish-medium provision in this and adjacent school planning areas, compared with that for English-medium provision, is relatively low, the parental preferences submitted as part of the process, suggest an Aonad Lán-Gaeilge should be established within the school.
- The application for co-educational provision from both applicants would provide for greater co-educational provision in the Portlaoise school planning area.



## **6. Recommendation**

The Department is satisfied that the level of parental demand for a new post-primary school for the Portlaoise school planning area received from both patron applicants, CEIST and Laois and Offaly ETB, would support a viable school.

The Department is further satisfied that the level of parental demand for such a school presented by both CEIST and Laois and Offaly ETB is additional demand, which will not displace pupils from existing schools.

Following consideration of the level of parental preferences for Irish-medium instruction submitted as part of the patron applications and consideration of the broader analysis of potential demand arising from existing Irish-medium provision in this, and in adjacent areas, it is recommended that the proposed new school should be an English-medium school, with an Aonad Lán-Gaeilge. The success of the Aonad should input into a decision to be taken at the appropriate time in the future as to whether the Aonad should develop into a stand-alone Gaelcholáiste.

The Department is satisfied that both patron applicants will provide for greater co-education provision and both would extend existing provision in the area. While both applicants already have a post-primary school under their patronage serving the Portlaoise school planning area, the application from LOETB with An Foras Pátrúnachta as Trustee Partner would provide for greater diversity of provision by providing both multi-denominational and Irish-medium education, given that five of the existing six schools are denominational and all are English-medium. Comparing the valid parental preferences, there is a clear majority favouring Laois and Offaly ETB with An Foras Pátrúnachta as Trustee Partner.

In the circumstances, the Department recommends that the patronage of the new post-primary school for Portlaoise should be awarded to Laois and Offaly ETB with An Foras Pátrúnachta as Trustee Partner, which has provided 747 valid parental preferences, which is 230 or some 44% above those for CEIST, which provided 517 valid parental preferences.

**Forward Planning Section**  
**October 2016**

# Proposed post-primary school to serve the Portlaoise school planning area

