

Minister Quinn announces patronage of new Primary schools being established in 2012 and 2013

The Minister for Education & Skills, Ruairí Quinn, TD, today announced his decisions on the patronage of new primary schools to be established in 2012 and 2013.

This is the culmination of the process which began in June 2011 when the Minister announced that 20 new primary schools are to be established up to 2015 across a number of locations to cater for increasing pupil numbers.

At that time the Minister also announced new criteria and arrangements for the recognition of the new schools. The arrangements included the establishment of a New Schools Establishment Group, an independent advisory group, to advise the Minister on the patronage of the new schools following its consideration of a report prepared by Department officials. The New Schools Establishment Group reported to the Minister last week.

Announcing the patronage of the new schools, Minister Quinn said: *“The decisions taken by me on patronage of the new schools place a particular emphasis on providing for demonstrated parental demand for plurality and diversity of patronage. These new schools will optimise parental choice and strengthen diversity of provision in the areas in which they are to be established.”*

Patrons were asked to provide evidence of parental demand when making an application for a new school. In addition, the criteria used in deciding on patronage included how the proposed schools under the respective patrons would provide for extending or strengthening diversity of provision in each area, having regard to the views of parents .

In assessing the applications received in all cases, all of the published criteria as set out were considered, including the extent of diversity in existing schools and the extent of diversity that would be provided by the new school or schools. This was considered in conjunction with the level of parental demand for each of the patron applicants.

The Minister expressed his thanks to the members of the New Schools Establishment Group for their valuable input to the process. Minister Quinn said *“I initiated the revised system for the establishment of new schools and the appointment of the school patron so that it would be an objective and transparent process. The role of the New Schools Establishment Group is critical to achieving these aims and I want to thank them for their work in this area.”*

Department officials will shortly contact each of the patron bodies in regard to the logistics of the establishment of these new schools.

Seven new primary schools will open in September 2012. Of these, five will be under the patronage of Educate Together (ET), one will be under the patronage of An Foras Patrúnachta and the seventh will be a Community National School which will be under VEC patronage when enabling legislation is passed.

Ends.

Notes for Editors:

The report of the New Schools Establishment Group to the Minister is attached for information.

Minister Quinn accepted the recommendations of the Group in all cases with the exception of Kildare and Mallow.

He made a change regarding the patronage proposed for the new schools in Kildare and Mallow where the level of parental demand demonstrated by each of the patrons was practically identical.

Minister Quinn has approved Educate Together as patron of the new school in Kildare and he has approved Co. Cork VEC as patron of the new school in Mallow (rather than the VEC in Kildare and Educate Together in Mallow as had been recommended).

County Kildare already has a community national school under Kildare VEC located in Naas.

This change was made in order to expand the number of counties and VECs having a community national school and to limit the number of community national schools commencing in 2012 ahead of the enactment of new legislation regarding VECs.

The Education and Training Boards Bill, the general scheme of which has been published, will deal with the statutory basis regarding the VEC/ Education and Training Board involvement in community national schools.

The Minister will also be publishing a working group report on the operation to date of Community National Schools in the coming weeks and in this context is considering how this model can be further developed as part of the primary system generally.

New Primary Schools 2012		
Area	Approved Patron	Comment
Ballinteer	Educate Together	
Stepaside	Educate Together	
Tallaght City West/ Fortunestown	Educate Together and County Dublin VEC	2 new schools
Kildare Town	Educate Together	
Already Announced		
Mulhuddart	An Foras Pátrúnachta	
Ashbourne	Educate Together	

New Primary Schools 2013		
Area	Approved Patron	Comment
Tallaght West	County Dublin VEC	
Firhouse/Oldbawn	An Foras Pátrúnachta and Educate Together	2 new schools
Stepaside	An Foras Pátrúnachta	
Mallow	County Cork VEC	
Lucan	County Dublin VEC	
Cork South Suburbs - Douglas Rochestown	Educate Together	
Carpenterstown	Educate Together	The opening date of 2013 for this school will be kept under review pending an analysis of the most up to date Child Benefit data for the area
Galway - Knocknacarra Area		This will be an Irish medium school. However further clarification will now be sought from An Foras Pátrúnachta and City of Galway VEC before a decision can be made on patronage

2014 onwards		
Area		Comment
Kildare Town		Subject to confirmation of demand a second school should be opened in 2014 under the patronage of An Foras Pátrúnachta
Riverstown/ Glanmire		The opening of a new school is being deferred for one or two years and the Department will continue to closely monitor junior infant enrolments in the area