

**EDUCATION AUTHORITY**

**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO 685**

**GAELSCOIL NA DARÓIGE**

Notice is hereby given that a Proposal under Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 has been submitted to the Education Authority by the Board of Governors of Gaelscoil na Daróige, to the effect that:

**A statutory nursery unit will be established at Gaelscoil na Daróige to provide 26 part-time nursery places with effect from 1 September 2023, or as soon as possible thereafter.**

A copy of the Proposal and Case for Change may be inspected at the offices of the Education Authority, 17 Lough Road, Antrim, BT41 4DH, between the hours of 9.00 am and 4.30 pm and [www.eani.org.uk/school-management/area-planning](http://www.eani.org.uk/school-management/area-planning).

Any objections or support to this Proposal should be lodged with the Area Planning Policy Team, Department of Education, Rathgael House, Balloo Road, Bangor, Co Down, BT19 7PR or emailed to [dps@education-ni.gov.uk](mailto:dps@education-ni.gov.uk) within two months of the date of publication of this notice. Any letters of objection or support may be published on the Department of Education's website, with appropriate redactions, if they are included in full in the submission on which the outcome of the proposal is decided.

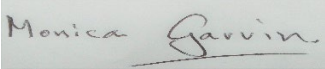
The Department of Education and the Education Authority operate a regime of openness under the Freedom of Information Act. Letters of objection and information supplied to the Department of Education and the Education Authority may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, if requested. (A fee may be charged for supplying this information.)

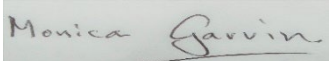
**Sara Long**  
**Chief Executive**




CASE FOR CHANGE – Supporting Information**SUMMARY / OVERVIEW**




|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>AREA PLANNING DISTRICT</b> | Northern Region  |
| <b>DP NUMBER</b>              | DP 685   |
| <b>PROPOSER</b>               | Monica Garvin, Chairperson of Board of Governors<br>02871371414 info@gaelscoilnadaróige.derry.ni.sch.uk  |
| <b>SCHOOL(S) NAME</b>         | Gaelscoil na Daróige   |
| <b>SCHOOL REFERENCE</b>       | 204-6687   |
| <b>TYPE</b>                   | Primary  |
| <b>MANAGEMENT</b>             | Irish-medium   |
| <b>DP PUBLICATION DATE</b>    | Week commencing 19 September 2022  |
| <b>PROPOSAL</b>               | The Board of Governors of GAELSCOIL NA DARÓIGE proposes the establishment of a STATUTORY PART-TIME IRISH-MEDIUM NURSERY UNIT to take effect from 1st September 2023 or as soon as possible thereafter. |

**STATUTORY CONSULTATION**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>PROPOSER</b></p> <p>The Proposer is the chairperson of the Board of Governors Gaelscoil na Daróige</p> | <p><b>Appendices Attached:</b><br/>Internal Consultation:</p> <p><b>Appendix A:</b> Minutes recorded at a Board of Governors' meeting March 2022<br/><b>Appendix B:</b> Letter of Support from Naíscoil na Daróige February 2022.<br/><b>Appendix C:</b> (C1, C2 &amp; C3) Staff/parental/community consultation February/March 2022<br/><b>Appendix D:</b> (D1 &amp; D2): Letters of Support from Bunscoil Colmcille &amp; Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir.<br/><b>Appendix E:</b> Historic Enrolments in IM Pre-school Sector (Prior and Post-Introduction of Statutory Unit, 2008 – 2021).</p> <p>The opinions and views collated during the internal consultation indicated strong support for the proposal. Parents of pupils were consulted via a questionnaire during February and March 2022 and indicated strong and unequivocal support for the proposal and continued development of the school.</p> <p>Governors, teachers, trustees, and parents alike, all feel that this is a necessary step forward for Irish-medium education in Derry City and will bring further long-term stability to the IM provision in the local area.</p> <p>SIGNED:  DATE: 29-4-22</p> |
| <b>CONFIRMATION BY THE PROPOSER</b>  | <p>I confirm that the school's Board of Governors, Staff and Parents of Pupils were consulted on the dates recorded above and Equality Screening of the proposal has been carried out.</p> <p>NAME: Monica Garvin OFFICE HELD: Chair BOG</p>   |

|  |   |               |
|--|---|---------------|
|  | SIGNED:  | DATE: 29-4-22 |
|--|---|---------------|

| <b>Case for Change: Statutory Consultation</b>  |  |       |                |              |                       |         |  |       |                  |
|---|--|-------|----------------|--------------|-----------------------|---------|--|-------|------------------|
| EDUCATION AUTHORITY COMMENTARY ON PRE-PUBLICATION STATUTORY CONSULTATION  |  |       |                |              |                       |         |  |       |                  |
| <i>The following is to be completed and signed off by the EA.</i>   |  |       |                |              |                       |         |  |       |                  |
| <p>The Education Authority (EA)</p>   | <p>I confirm that the schools which the Education Authority consider might be impacted by this proposal were consulted on 25 May 2022 with a return date of 24 June 2022.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%;">Name:</td> <td>Michele Corkey</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Office Held:</td> <td>Director of Education</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Signed:</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Date:</td> <td>6 September 2022</td> </tr> </table>   | Name: | Michele Corkey | Office Held: | Director of Education | Signed: |  | Date: | 6 September 2022 |
| Name:   | Michele Corkey   |       |                |              |                       |         |  |       |                  |
| Office Held:  | Director of Education  |       |                |              |                       |         |  |       |                  |
| Signed:   |    |       |                |              |                       |         |  |       |                  |
| Date:   | 6 September 2022   |       |                |              |                       |         |  |       |                  |
| <p>Provide detail of consultation with schools that may, in the EA's opinion, be affected by the proposal - list of schools, dates of letters issued to schools/meetings.</p> <p>Summary of views received (number of responses, recurring themes, petitions, community support or opposition).</p> <p>Responses/Assurances in respect of issues raised during consultation.</p> <p>Dates of EA meetings e.g. Education Committee/ Board etc.</p> <p><u>Details of issues raised by members of EA Board</u></p> | <p>In accordance with Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986, a copy of the proposal was sent on 25 May 2022 to schools which, in the opinion of the Education Authority, might be affected by the proposal. A total of 60 local schools and pre-school providers which might be affected by the proposal were forwarded correspondence. Comments were invited from Boards of Governors and Trustees, to be returned to the Education Authority by 24 June 2022.</p> <p>Two responses were received from affected schools - Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir and Naíscoil Dhoire. Both support the proposal.</p> <p><b>Support the proposal – summary comments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irish medium education is a growing sector within the city and the provision should be made available in the Ballymagroarty area.</li> <li>• Gaelscoil na Daróige's catchment is within the Ballymagroarty area and it will not have a direct impact on applications to Naíscoil Dhoire &amp; Bunscoil Cholmcille which lies in the Steelstown/Shantallow catchment area.</li> <li>• It would be to the advantage of Irish medium in the city generally if Gaelscoil na Daróige succeed in achieving this status as it will add to the already growing population of children currently attending the three gaelscoileanna in the city. It would also strengthen parents' interest in Irish medium generally.</li> <li>• Having statutory status will provide the best possible environment for children as they will be under the</li> </ul> |       |                |              |                       |         |  |       |                  |

|   |  |                |              |                       |         |   |       |                  |   |
|---|--|----------------|--------------|-----------------------|---------|---|-------|------------------|---|
|   | <p>direction of a qualified teacher for a longer school day. It will undoubtedly have a positive impact on educational outcomes and on language acquisition generally.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children will have access to educational and other support services that children in other gaelscoileanna in the city already have. This is especially important in this day and age when special educational needs is on the increase.</li> <li>• Statutory status will also ensure that free school meals will be available to children who are entitled to it and who live in an area of high social and economic deprivation.</li> <li>• Having a naíscoil with statutory status on site will undoubtedly ease the transition from nursery to Rang 1.</li> </ul> <p>This development proposal was discussed by the Education Authority's Strategic Planning and Policy Committee at its meeting on 6 September 2022.</p> |                |              |                       |         |   |       |                  |   |
| <p><b>EDUCATION AUTHORITY COMMENTS</b><br/>         In the context of planning on an area basis - what is the EA's view of the proposal, taking into account any pre-publication consultation. Does the EA support the proposal?</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="226 1111 651 1330"> <tr> <td>Name:</td> <td>Michele Corkey</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Office Held:</td> <td>Director of Education</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Signed:</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Date:</td> <td>6 September 2022</td> </tr> </table> | Name:  | Michele Corkey | Office Held: | Director of Education | Signed: |  | Date: | 6 September 2022 | <p>In consideration of the information presented in the Case for Change, and the Education Authority's obligation to support the Department of Education in its duty to encourage and facilitate Irish medium education, the Education Authority supports Development Proposal 685 that a statutory nursery unit will be established at Gaelscoil na Daróige to provide 26 part-time nursery places with effect from 1 September 2023, or as soon as possible thereafter.</p> <p>The proposal is in effect a change in management from a voluntary provider to a statutory provider resulting in no change in provision within the area.</p> <p>In keeping with established procedure the Education Authority has requested Pre-school Education Group's (PEG) assessment of the proposal.</p> <p>The proposal to establish a nursery unit for 26 part-time pupils at Gaelscoil na Daróige with effect from 1 September 2023 or as soon as possible thereafter was discussed by the Pre-School Education Group (PEG) at its meeting on 19 May 2022. PEG considered the proposal from Gaelscoil na Daróige for comment in line with guidance provided by the Department of Education regarding pre-school education and the statutory duty to encourage and facilitate Integrated and Irish medium education as follows:</p> <p><i>'It is important the Education Authority and the PEG support the Department in fulfilling its statutory duty by striving to meet demonstrated parental demand in an area for pre-school education at grant-maintained and controlled integrated primary schools, as well as parental demand for Irish-medium pre-school education.'</i></p> |
| Name:   | Michele Corkey   |                |              |                       |         |   |       |                  |   |
| Office Held:  | Director of Education  |                |              |                       |         |   |       |                  |   |
| Signed:   |   |                |              |                       |         |   |       |                  |   |
| Date:   | 6 September 2022   |                |              |                       |         |   |       |                  |   |

*In this context, PEG supports the DP on the basis of demonstrated parental demand as evidenced by the number of 1<sup>st</sup> preference applications (22 for 22 places) and that it is a replacement of the existing funded non-statutory pre-school provision on the school's grounds.*

*However, PEG would have concerns in regard to the potential impact of this additional provision, including:*

- Potential displacement of existing Irish Medium funded non-statutory pre-school provision within 2 mile radius;*
- Potential for increased uptake of younger children into other statutory nursery provision;*
- Potential for uptake of younger children into the statutory nursery unit at Gaelscoil na Daróige should the Development Proposal be approved.'*

In consideration of the above, and the Case for Change, the Education Authority is proposing to publish Development Proposal 685 during the week beginning 19 September 2022.

EDUCATION AUTHORITY

PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION PROGRAMME 2021-22

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A NURSERY UNIT FOR 26 PART-TIME PUPILS AT GAELSCOIL NA DARÓIGE WITH EFFECT FROM 1<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023 OR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THEREAFTER

Date of PEG Meeting: 19<sup>TH</sup> May 2022

PEG Comments

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>School</b>   | Gaelscoil na Daróige   |
| <b>Address</b>  | Gaelscoil na Daróige, Corrán Uí Nualláin, Baile Mhic Rabhartaigh, Doire, BT48 OPD  |
| PEG Comment – overview of rationale for comment.                                    | <p>PEG considered the DP from Gaelscoil na Daróige for comment in line with guidance provided by DE regarding pre-school education and the statutory duty to encourage and facilitate Integrated and Irish-Medium education as follows:</p> <p>"It is important the Education Authority and the PEG support the Department in fulfilling its statutory duty by striving to meet demonstrated parental demand in an area for pre-school education at grant-maintained and controlled integrated primary schools, as well as parental demand for Irish-medium pre-school education"</p> <p>In this context, PEG supports the DP on the basis of demonstrated parental demand as evidenced by the number of 1<sup>st</sup> preference applications (22 for 22 places) and that it is a replacement of the existing funded non-statutory pre-school provision on the school's grounds.</p> <p>However, PEG would have concerns in regard to the potential impact of this additional provision, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential displacement of existing Irish Medium funded non-statutory pre-school provision within 2 mile radius;</li> <li>• Potential for increased uptake of younger children into other statutory nursery provision;</li> <li>• Potential for uptake of younger children into the statutory nursery unit at Gaelscoil na Daróige should the DP be approved.</li> </ul> |
| What is the potential impact if the proposal is/ is not approved? (alternatives for | Naíscoil na Daróige received 22 1st preference applications for 22 places in the 2022-23 academic  |

## Appendix B

|  |   |
|--|---|
| meeting demand/ potential for over provision)  | year. An IM pre-school within 2 mile radius has been withdrawn from PSEP for 2022-23 academic year as they failed to meet the minimum requirement i.e. 6 applications. This new provision has the potential to impact the uptake of places in this setting for subsequent years. Within a 2 mile radius 501 1 <sup>st</sup> preference applications were received for 562 places for the 2022-23 academic year.   |
| What is the PEG assessment of need for pre-school provision for the area? Is this need currently met?  | For the 2022-23 academic year a total of 74 funded places are available in the Ballymagroarty, Sheriff's Mountain and Springtown ward area with a total of 61 1 <sup>st</sup> preference applications being received. The Naiscoil is included within these figures with 22 1 <sup>st</sup> preference applications. The existing figures suggest sufficient capacity exists to meet current demand for pre-school provision within the area.                                   |
| How many 1 <sup>st</sup> preference applications were received by the setting? (usually 2 years figures but this depends on the timing of the development proposal)                | 2022-23 22 applications<br>2021-22 9 applications<br>2020-21 20 applications<br>2019-20 22 applications   |
| Are there current or anticipated pressures in placing pre-school children in the area?   | No pressure within the area.  |
| Have children been unplaced at the end of the process in previous years?   | In the BT48 area:<br>2021-22 2<br>2020-21 5<br>2019-20 1  |
| Has demand been increasing over time but the number of places has not? Is the level of need or provision changing significantly? Eg new housing development, provider leaving PSEP | Projected live births for the new ward cluster area of Ballymagroarty, Sheriff's Mountain and Springtown ward:<br>2020-21 = 144 children<br>2021-22 = 158 children<br>2022-23 = 138 children<br>2023-24 = 134 children<br>Projected live births for settings within 2 mile radius located in Carn Hill, Creggan, Galliagh, Northland, Shantallow East and Skeoge wards:<br>2020-21 = 362 children<br>2021-22 = 339 children<br>2022-23 = 340 children<br>2023-24 = 305 children |
| Can existing non-statutory providers expand to help meet demand? Is there potential for new providers to come on to the programme?   | There is no unmet need in the area. Spare capacity exists within non-statutory pre-school settings to address demand, if necessary. There is one other Irish Medium provider in this area which has been withdrawn from PSEP for the 2022-23 academic year due to a low number of applications below the minimum requirement of 6.  |
| What is the potential impact on existing good quality provision (displacement)?  | Naiscoil na Daróige is already in existence with 14 funded pre-school places in the 2021-22 academic year; the setting has a registration number of 26 places.  |

|   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
|   |                            |
| If there are other development proposals in the area, how might they impact? (eg if proposal A were to be approved, would B still be required?) | None that PEG is aware of. |
| Other comments  |                            |

## DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL FOR GAELSCOIL NA DARÓIGE

### 1. **BACKGROUND**

#### ***1.1 Brief Description of the School***

Gaelscoil na Daróige is a Grant-maintained Irish-medium primary school located in the Ballymagroarty area of Derry city. There are currently 103 pupils in the school, *102 at census date*. Gaelscoil na Daróige was opened in September 2005; the school provides Irish-medium education for children from pre-school to Primary 7. Both Naíscoil and Gaelscoil na Daróige are located on the same site which has recently been expanded because of DE investment in acquiring land beside the school.

Gaelscoil na Daróige welcomes children from all faiths (and those of no faith) and has attracted families from all backgrounds. There is a caring, friendly ethos in the school where each child is valued and difference and diversity are celebrated, be it on a religious, linguistic or academic basis. The school strives to provide an excellent experience for every pupil, every day. The school delivers the curriculum and has fostered professional links with a wide number of other schools within and beyond the Irish-medium sector.

#### ***1.2 Location and Current Accommodation***

Gaelscoil na Daróige is located at Corrán Uí Nualláin, Baile Mhic Rabhartaigh, Doire, BT48 0ND.

#### ***1.3 Date of Implementation***

It is proposed that a 26-Part Time place Nursery Unit is opened on 1st September 2023 or the earliest date possible, thereafter.

#### ***1.4 Existing Capital Proposals/Minor Works Applications***

None.

#### ***1.5 School Enrolment***



Table A (below) shows that total enrolment in the school has increased steadily from 54 pupils in 2011/12 to 103 pupils in the current academic year reflecting growth of approximately 92%.

| Total Enrolments at Gaelscoil na Daróige |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       | Table A |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------|
| Year                                     | 11/12 | 12/13 | 13/14 | 14/15 | 15/16 | 16/17 | 17/18 | 18/19 | 19/20 | 20/21 | 21/22   |
| Enrolment                                | 54    | 55    | 61    | 69    | 69    | 66    | 67    | 76    | 87    | 91    | 102     |

Table B (below) shows that Gaelscoil na Daróige has already surpassed its Approved Enrolment twice within the last three years. As the smaller classes exit the school and the school's enrolment continues to grow (if current admissions are maintained), it is anticipated that the school will realise the sustainability threshold of 140 pupils by 2025/26.

| Enrolments at Gaelscoil na Daróige |                    |                  |                 | Table B |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|---------|
| Year                               | Approved Enrolment | Actual Enrolment | Unfilled Places |         |
| 2017/18                            | 81                 | 67               | 14              |         |
| 2018/19                            | 81                 | 76               | 5               |         |
| 2019/20                            | 81                 | 87               | -6              |         |
| 2020/21                            | 100                | 91               | 9               |         |
| 2021/22                            | 100                | 102              | -2              |         |

### 1.6 School Admissions

Table C (below) shows the Primary 1 admissions over a 3-year period. The Gaelscoil has maintained an average admission of 20+ pupils over this period which is indicative of the increasing and consistent demand for Irish-medium education in the Greater Ballymagroarty area of the city.

| Admissions at Gaelscoil na Daróige |           |         |         | Table C |
|------------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|
| Year                               | 2019/2020 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | Average |
| Primary 1 Enrolment                | 20        | 21      | 22      | 21      |

Naíscoil na Daróige (the feeder pre-school) continues to increase its numbers with an average admissions number of 21.2 pupils as highlighted in Table D (below). The original PAN (21) for this year has already been exceeded by 1<sup>st</sup> preference applications and this has led to an increase to PAN (22). The Naíscoil is currently in the process of applying for additional funded places to cater to demand from additional preferences. This sustained increase in numbers is evidence of the consistent demand for Irish-medium education in the locality despite having to endure, until very recently, cramped, and limited conditions of the school-site in comparison to that of other English-medium schools in the locality. Although some improvements have been made in accommodation it is still not commensurate with what is provided in other schools. This ongoing demand is reflected in increased admissions to the Gaelscoil (Table A).

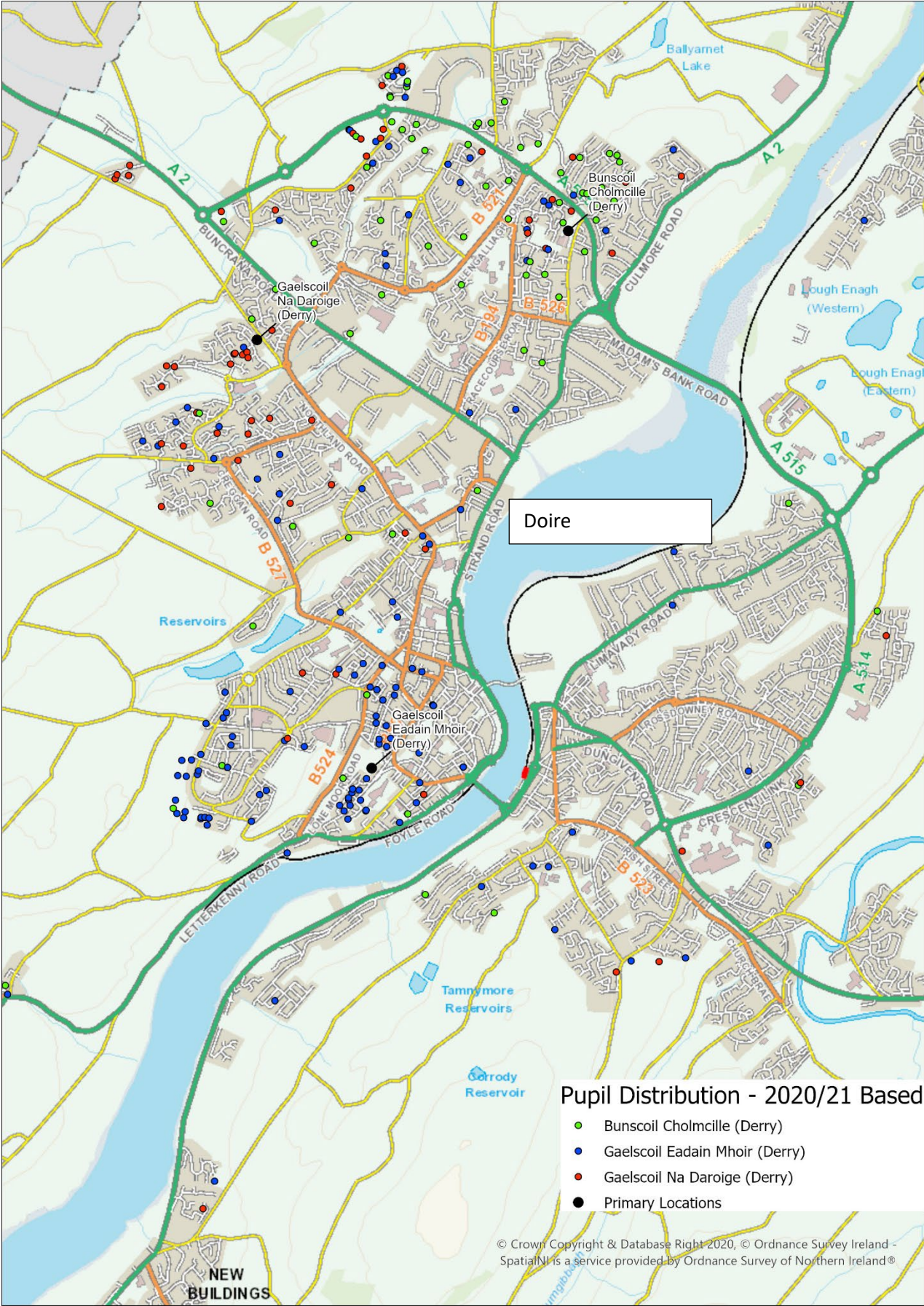
As stated above, it is anticipated that Gaelscoil na Daróige will realise the proposed enrolment figure of 140 by 2025/26. New housing developments (an estimated 5000 homes) are earmarked for the areas bordering the school catchment area in the decade ahead. The current demand for Irish-medium education across the region growing at a rate of 5% per annum, on average, it would not therefore be unreasonable to assume a percentage of new families moving into the housing developments will seek Irish-medium education for their children and thus, adding to the increase in local demand for Irish-medium education. Furthermore, Gaelscoil na Daróige already attracts pupils from the Skeoge housing development which is significantly further away. Based on this precedent, it is safe to assume that the New housing Developments will again lead to an increase in enrolment in both Naíscoil and Gaelscoil na Daróige.

| Number of Pupils at Naíscoil na Daróige |         |         |         |         | Table D |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
|   | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 |
| ADMISSIONS                              | 23      | 22      | 23      | 16*     | 22**    |

\*Impact of Covid19 \*\*1<sup>st</sup> Preferences only

### **1.7 Alternative Schools**

The Pupil Distribution Map (below) for Gaelscoil na Daróige and the other IM schools show distinct clusters around each provider, illustrating the separate catchment areas.



Gaelscoil na Daróige is the only Irish-medium provider to serve the Greater Ballymagroarty area. In relation to the impact upon other Irish-medium provision, the nearest alternative Irish-medium

primary provider is beyond the statutory walking distance – a 2-mile radius of the school. Both Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir and Bunscoil Cholmcille are located several miles from the school and are fully supportive of this proposal (Evidence of support in Appendix D).

Both Bunscoil Cholmcille and Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir already have IM Nursery Units therefore there would be no displacement of IM nursery provision in the City.

Therefore, there would be no adverse impact upon the other IM providers as highlighted in Table E (below).

| Irish-medium Pre-School and Primary 1 Provision |                        |                      | Table E         |                   |
|---|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| REF   | School Name            | Distance by Road (M) | 2020/21 Nursery | 2020/21 Primary 1 |
| 204-6687  | Gaelscoil na Daróige   | -                    | 23              | 21                |
| 204-6646  | Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir | 2.7                  | 26              | 28                |
| 203-6574  | Bunscoil Cholmcille    | 2.5                  | 26              | 19                |
|   |                        |                      |                 |                   |
|   |                        | <b>Total</b>         | <b>75</b>       | <b>68</b>         |

## **2. SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT**

### **2.1 Quality Educational Experience**

Gaelscoil na Daróige was last inspected by ETI in June 2014 and the quality of education provided was found to be good. The quality of teaching observed ranged from good to outstanding, with most of it being very good or outstanding.

The ETI report concludes: “the principal has a clear strategic approach to monitoring and evaluating learning and teaching, including: carrying out planned classroom observations; scrutinising children’s work; and monitoring teachers’ planning.

- The principal and staff effectively use performance data and teacher observations to inform better the planning and to ensure that the needs of the children are more fully met.
- The children with statements of special educational needs are identified early and appropriate and effective strategies are put in place to meet their individual learning and emotional needs.
- The standards of the children’s work and the quality of the teaching observed continue to improve; during this inspection, the quality of teaching observed ranged from good to outstanding, with four-fifths being very good or outstanding.” The Board of Governors and Staff continue to improve upon these standards.

### **2.2 Stable Enrolment Trends**

As highlighted previously, the enrolment number in the school has already exceeded the Approved Enrolment figure in September 2019/20 and again in 2021/22. By comparing P1 – P3 numbers (64 pupils) to those of P5 – P7 (27 pupils) we are seeing a pattern of

steady growth which is consistent with our projected number of 140 by 2025/26 as outlined in Table F (below).

| Current & Anticipated Enrolment at Gaelscoil na Daróige |           |           |           |           |           |           |          | Table F    |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|------------|
|   | 1         | 2         | 3         | 4         | 5         | 6         | 7        | Total      |
| 2017/18   | 10        | 11        | 7         | 11        | 10        | 9         | 9        | 67         |
| 2018/19   | 16        | 11        | 11        | 7         | 11        | 11        | 9        | 76         |
| 2019/20   | 20        | 16        | 10        | 11        | 7         | 12        | 11       | 87         |
| 2020/21   | 21        | 18        | 13        | 10        | 11        | 7         | 11       | 91         |
| <b>2021/22</b>  | <b>22</b> | <b>22</b> | <b>20</b> | <b>12</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>103</b> |
| 2022/23   | 11        | 22        | 22        | 20        | 12        | 10        | 10       | 107        |
| 2023/24   | 20        | 11        | 22        | 22        | 20        | 12        | 10       | 117        |
| 2024/25   | 22        | 20        | 11        | 22        | 22        | 20        | 12       | 129        |
| 2025/26   | 22        | 22        | 20        | 11        | 22        | 22        | 20       | 139        |

### 2.3 Sound Financial Position

Table G (below) demonstrates school spending at Gaelscoil na Daróige.

2018/19 budget spend was outside of +/-5% allowed by the Department with an underspend of 10.2%. LMS have commented however that the principal has an excellent grasp of the budget and that he shows understanding and diligence. The underspend can be attributed to a number of changes in staff. Senior members of staff have been seconded and have taken a career break. Less experienced staff on a lower position on the pay scale have successfully applied for the positions. The principal has also budgeted for staff absence each year and the school has experienced savings due to excellent staff attendance. Over the course of 5 years, the school has transformed from a school in deficit to a category 4 school. The principal will continue to work closely with LMS again to allocate the total resources to the best possible effect. Gaelscoil na Daróige is in a robust financial position, ideally placed to deal with the staffing and budgetary challenges related to growing schools.

| Budget Spending for Gaelscoil na Daróige |   |                       |           |                                |
|--|---|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|
| Year                                     | Total Resources (including previous year's carryover) | Total Net Expenditure | Carryover | % Carryover of Total Resources |
| <b>2018/19</b>                           | <b>£279,228</b>                                       | £250,548              | £28,680   | 10.2%                          |
| <b>2019/20</b>                           | <b>£345,325</b>                                       | £275,858              | £69,467   | 20.1%                          |
| <b>2020/21</b>                           | <b>£471,100</b>                                       | £355,675              | £115,425  | 24.5%                          |

### 2.3 Strong Leadership and Management by Board of Governors and Principals

The ETI Report (as referenced above) noted that the principal had developed a clear strategic approach to monitoring and evaluating learning and teaching and effective use of performance data and teacher observations to better inform planning. Additionally, the Board of Governors and school leadership have worked concertedly to increase

enrolments and campaign for a suitable site to enable the school to develop and expand. Recent investment by DE in the form of accommodation and the acquisition of additional land to expand the school-site is a measure of the commitment and drive by the principal and board of governors of the Gaelscoil. Gaelscoil na Daróige also managed to negotiate the pandemic successfully, the quality of their online learning was recognised and they were named in the EDTECH50 yearbook as an organisation shaping educational technology. The quality of learning was found to be as good online as it was offline. This demonstrates the ability of the school to adapt.

The Board of Governors at Gaelscoil na Daróige consists of a range of professionals with an array of skills and expertise, including curriculum development and setting up and developing new schools.

The principal is a strong effective leader who has collaborated with CCEA, an tÁisaonad and is currently involved with the practitioners' group on the Independent Review of Education.

### **2.4** *Accessibility*

The vast majority of pupils attending the school come from the immediate and neighbouring communities and the school is accessible to all. There are a number of children from outside the immediacy of the school catchment area who travel to the school for practical reasons including childcare arrangements and work commitments.

### **2.6** *Strong Links with the Community*

There are very strong links established with the other local IM providers and with the closest Irish-medium post-primary provider, Gaelcholáiste Dhoire, in Dungiven. The school is actively involved in the wider community and welcomes involvement from local Gaelic sports and cultural groups who would collaborate and assist in the development and support of cultural and educational activities with the school. Likewise, the school had a strong record in Shared Education with Groarty Integrated PS (now closed) and Oakgrove Secondary, in particular. The school has been awarded the Green Flag and also the Sustrans Silver Award for Active travel schools. The school recently featured in the BBC current affairs programme *I Lár an Aonaigh*. The school clusters with other schools in the area to ensure effective delivery of extended schools. The school is well renowned for harnessing links with the community to full effect to ensure positive outcomes for pupils.

The groups with whom the school engages are:

- Local IME schools
- Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta
- CCEA
- Outerwest Education Forum
- BHCP
- Dunluce Family Centre
- Community Library
- Glen community Centre

- Teamworks
- NSPCC
- Gaelchúrsaí
- Cumann an Ghrianáin
- St. Mary's University College
- Derry and Strabane Council
- RSPP< RNLI, Red Cross & Seagate
- Local GAA clubs
- Live here Love here
- SUSTRANS
- SEAGATE
- An tÁisaonad

### 3. AREA PLANNING IMPACT

The enrolment has increased steadily since the school was established rising to 102 pupils in the current census and now 103. If current enrolments are sustained, as expected, the school's enrolment should grow naturally to around 140+ notwithstanding any additional growth as a result of increased Naíscoil enrolments. If admissions and enrolments continue to grow, as anticipated, following a change of status for the Naíscoil, the anticipated enrolments would most likely be in the 7-classroom base bracket. This demonstrates the school's ambition not only to meet but exceed the sustainability threshold.

The long-term benefits of this proposal would be recognised across three levels of provision. An analysis of enrolment trends prior to and directly after the introduction of statutory nursery units in Irish-medium schools in the north clearly demonstrates the positive effect that this change has upon enrolment and admissions (See Appendix D). On average, pre-school admissions have increased by over 60% in the three-year period prior to and following transition to statutory provision, with that figure rising to over 70% of an increase when comparing admissions in the five year period. With regards to the effect upon primary admissions, the pre- and post-transition change lies at over 24% increase in the three year period and higher still, at 27%, for the five year period (See Table H below).

| Pupil Increase following Establishment of Statutory IM Nursery Unit (2008 - 2021) Table H |                   |        |                   |        |
|---|-------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|
|   | 3 Yr Ave Increase |        | 5 Yr Ave Increase |        |
| Effect Upon Pre-school Admissions   | 9.64              | 62.47% | 9.98              | 71.67% |
| Effect Upon Primary Admissions  | 2.65              | 23.73% | 3.61              | 27.24% |
| Effect Upon Primary Enrolment   | 17.56             | 32.24% | 20.89             | 41.40% |

The increase in enrolments is further evidenced upon comparison of pre- and post-transition impact upon total enrolments at effected IM schools – over 30% increase in enrolments in the first 3 years and 42% across the initial 5-year period.

The increase in enrolments of Naíscoil and Gaelscoil na Daróige as highlighted in the above tables is evidence of a sustained and steady pattern of growth. The long-term benefits of this proposal would be recognised not only within Gaelscoil na Daróige but also across multiple levels of Irish-medium provision.

The increased enrolment will contribute to the long-term viability and expansion of Gaelscoil na Daróige but also, to the Irish-medium post-primary provision in Gaelcholáiste Dhoire, Dungiven. An increase in the approved admissions for primary provision would result in greater numbers leaving the Irish-medium sector at the end of Primary 7 and potentially, future-proofing the sector by adding to the pool of pupils for Irish medium post-primary provision.

The success of this proposal would ensure that both levels of provision are facilitated within a single management structure which would lend itself to enhanced co-operation, dialogue and collaboration between Foundation Stage staff at Gaelscoil na Daróige & the Naíscoil with curriculum planning, assessment and learning and teaching structured to ensure continuity, progression towards securing the highest possible educational outcomes for the pupils. It would consolidate IM provision within the locality and furthermore, it would continue to benefit from recent investment (additional land for expansion, a multipurpose hall and classroom accommodation) made by DE.

Gaelscoil na Daróige, as with the other Gaelscoileanna in Derry City, serves a particular catchment area distinct to that of the other IM schools. Consequently, there is no potential impact upon alternative IM providers in the city. This proposal is not linked to any other current Development Proposal.

#### **4. RATIONALE FOR CHANGE**

The desired outcome of the proposal is to provide parents and their children with the optimum start to their education. Through the Department of Education's *Pre-school Expansion Programme*, the Department aims to ensure that at least one year of preschool education is available to every family that wants it. Registered Irish-medium providers can enter the programme even where unfilled English-medium provision is available in the area, providing that sufficient demand for the provision is evidenced. This development proposal also falls in line with:

- The statutory duty to encourage and facilitate Irish medium education (Article 89, Education (NI) Order 1998)
- Recommendation No. 2 from the Review of Irish-medium Education Report (2008),
- The obligations arising from the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

There were two options considered; for Naíscoil na Daróige to remain as a voluntary pre-school education funded (PSEP) setting currently located at the Gaelscoil or to apply to replace it as a statutory nursery unit of the Gaelscoil. There are several reasons that the option to replace the voluntary provision with a statutory nursery unit has been chosen as the way forward. Not only has the committee of the voluntary Naíscoil agreed that the Board of Governors submit a development proposal to that end (as evidenced in Appendix B) but also:



- several added benefits associated with a statutory nursery unit that the voluntary provision does not provide
- genuine area-planning interests

At the heart of the proposal, is the desire to further enhance the preschool provision and continue to build upon the good educational and linguistic standards set by the current voluntary provision and ultimately, to future-proof the provision. Research commissioned by both the Stormont Assembly and the Department of Education have identified several benefits and higher educational outcomes as a result of children attending nursery schools/classes. The *Effective Preschool Provision in Northern Ireland, or EPPNI, (DENI, 2010)* research indicates when considering different types of preschool provision, or none, that:

*“...there is a significant beneficial effect of attending a nursery school/class for Key Stage 2 English attainment, with the nursery school/class group being over 3 times more likely to attain level 5 as the no preschool group. Also playgroup children are about twice as likely to attain level 4 as the no preschool group. There is a significant beneficial effect of attending a nursery school/class or playgroup for attainment in Key Stage 2 mathematics, with the nursery school/class group being almost 3 times as likely to attain level 5, while the playgroup children are over twice as likely to attain level 5, as the no preschool group.”*

Whilst the crux of this point was to identify the benefits of attending preschool, it nonetheless highlights the increased educational outcomes produced by a statutory nursery experience (as opposed to those produced by either a playgroup or none). This was previously highlighted by the EPPNI research from 2006 which notes that *“there are significant differences between preschool settings and their impact on children. Nursery schools/classes have the overall best outcomes”*. As well as the enhanced educational outcomes, there are several practical reasons for endorsing the proposal including, access to additional services not afforded to voluntary groups and of course, the positive implications that the proposal would have for the sustainability, viability and future development of Irish-medium education in the wider area.

As past experience and research has shown, the symbiotic nature of the relationship between preschool and primary provision is essential in maintaining the sustainability of the provision. As a result of this, the strengthening of this relationship has both short- and long-term benefits for the sustainability of IME provision in the locality. The proposal to bring both levels of provision under a single management authority would ensure greater coherence between preschool and foundation stage education and an enhanced continuity for the children. In a study entitled *An Traein: ag aistriú ón Naíonra go dtí an Bhunscoil* (The Train: transferring from Nursery to Primary), conducted in the south of Ireland, found that *“staff in preschool settings on the same site as the primary school felt they were advantaged when managing transitions”* (Mhic Mathúna, 2011). As well as the ease of transition for pupils, historical enrolments have shown that the change of voluntary preschool settings to statutory has led to strong increases in enrolments and admissions in the IME sector (more information under Area Planning Impact). More recently, the Dept.’s 2020 *“Report on the Educational Outcomes of Pre-school Irish-medium Education”*, recommended extending the number of statutory nursery settings as a means of ensuring consistency of experience for all pupils.

## 5. EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

As the overall policy aim of the Learning to Learn (DENI, 2012) strategy states, all children should “have opportunities to achieve their potential through high quality early years education and learning experiences.” We believe that the change to statutory nursery will further raise the standard of education and the educational outcomes for IM preschool education in Ballymagroarty. This is affirmed by the Effective Preschool Provision in Northern Ireland study (DENI, 2006), which states that “at the start of primary school, children from nursery school/classes showed the most benefit for cognitive development”.

The most tangible benefit is the permanent employment of a qualified teacher. Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta advises parents to send their children to a nursery setting for two years (the equivalent to one year full-time) in order to give them the best opportunity to pick up the target language. As noted in the April 2013 NI Assembly Research paper, Early Years Provision, Perry states that there is “strong correlation between higher staff qualification and better outcomes for children. Staff that have undergone more specialised education and training are found to be associated with stable and stimulating interactions in early years settings.”

Also, language acquisition and age are very strongly linked. Therefore, it is vital that children are afforded the best opportunities at the earliest stage and in this regard, a nursery setting which is led by a qualified teacher is the strongest option for the children and their future linguistic development.

In response to past development proposals, the Department has pointed out that voluntary groups can also employ a qualified teacher, however, this is simply not possible on a financial basis for most groups. A starting salary for a teacher at the most basic point, M1, is around £24,000. This employment, plus the statutory employer pension contributions, would amount to over 50% of the monies allocated to a 24-place PEAG-funded pre-school.

The longer hours afforded to statutory provision allows the child greater exposure to the target language. The connection between age and linguistic acquisition are strongly linked together and the additional facet of Irish-medium education, when compared to English-medium, is the introduction of the Irish Language. In research report commissioned in the Republic of Ireland by National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA, 2012), Ó Duibhir and Cummins found that “the more exposure the learners have to the L2 (Irish) the more they will learn and the faster they will learn it”, ((Towards an Integrated Language Curriculum in Early Childhood and Primary Education (3-12 years))).

It is essential that language acquisition is sufficiently catered for by a teacher-led nursery unit which presents the pupils with the best opportunity through which to develop their linguistic skills. Historically, most pupils entering into the Irish-medium sector do not come from Irish speaking families and therefore, language acquisition at the earliest stages gains an even greater importance. As noted by Ó Laoire and Harris in Language and Literacy in Irish-medium Primary Schools (NCCA, 2006), “the more exposure to the language as in

immersion/submersion CLIL programmes and the more opportunities to use the language in a meaningful way, the better the chances of acquisition.”

The permanent employment of a teacher also improves the ability of the provision to identify and cater for children with Special Education Needs (SEN). As noted in the Special Education Teams’ comments in response to Development Proposal 449 (to establish a statutory nursery unit at Gaelscoil Éanna):

“this DP should have beneficial effects on SEN provision as a result of the employment of a qualified teacher which will help improve the educational and linguistic standards and pupil attainment both in the preschool and the primary school; and in terms of Educational Psychology input which will ensure that the specific needs of particular children are identified and met.”

Through ensuring that the specific needs of particular children are identified and met, at the earliest stage, and through the access of outreach supports, which are not currently facilitated under the current voluntary status of Naíscoil na Daróige, the effects of certain SENs can be contained and minimised, as far as is possible. Additionally, if this Development Proposal is approved, children, parents and educators benefitting from EA SEN support will be availing of the same support network with a greater degree of continuity (ie people and processes involved, lines of communication etc.). Given the difficulties faced by young children and families during the Covid pandemic, and reduced access to already stretched services, it is anticipated that the need for sufficient SEN support will be even greater again and reinforces the need to affect this change.

## **6. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

If the proposal is approved, the posts of Nursery Teacher and Assistant would need to be drawn up, advertised and interviews conducted. This process should take no longer than 8 weeks. This is clearly realistic within the timescale and with the intention of opening the new provision in September 2023.

The inclusion of the statutory provision within the primary school would not immediately affect the enrolment of the school. It is envisioned, however, that the statutory provision would further strengthen future Primary 1 enrolment. The Board of Governors will assume responsibility for the management of the naíscoil as an integral part of the school which will provide a continuity and consistency of approach. The statutory nursery provision would come into effect from the beginning of the school year. Therefore, it would have no impact upon the education of the children within the nursery, nor would it impact upon the pupils in the primary school itself.

## **7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

If the Development Proposal is approved the Gaelscoil would need:

### ***7.1 Costs & Staffing***

As the proposal deals with an adjustment to the school's Approved Enrolment and Admissions, there would be minimal impact upon the Aggregated School's Budget. Any additional staffing costs will be paid for through the school's LMS annual budget allocation.

### **7.2 Accommodation**

The current pre-school room meets the minimum requirements for 26-pupils. However, the room which is approximately 20 years old could be utilised in the interim period until a modular-unit has been provided by DE.

### **7.3 Transport**

No additional costs



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## Aguisín / Appendix A

### Mír ón chruinniú gobharnóirí / Item from Board of Governors Meeting 2/3/22

#### 6. Moladh Forbartha na Naíscoile

Mhínigh an PO an comhfhreagras ó CnaG maidir leis an Mholadh Forbartha le haghaidh stadás reachtúil don Ghaelscoil. D'fháiltigh an PO tuairimí na ngobharnóirí ar an ábhar.

Mháigh X nach mbeadh ach buntáistí ag baint leis an mholadh seo don Naíscoil. Mhínigh sí go dtagann uaireanta an tsoláthair go mór i gceist agus áiteanna a roghnú ag tuismitheoirí dá bpáistí. Fágann sé sin Naíscoil na Daróige in áit na leathphingne mar go bhfuil Naíscoil reachtúil ag na Gaelscoileanna eile sa chathair agus ag an scoil Bhéarla sa cheantar.

Mhínigh B go gcuideodh an Moladh Forbartha seo go mór ó thaobh cúrsaí bainistíochta agus riaracháin. Tá príomhoide agus rúnaí le taithí ag an scoil mar aon le Bord Gobharnóirí láidir. Bheadh sé mar chrann taca ag an Naíscoil.

Mhínigh Y chomh maith go gcuirfeadh stadás reachtúil go mór leis an chomhoibriú idir naíscoil agus Gaelscoil agus léiríonn taighde go méadaíonn an stádas an líon daltaí a théann ar aghaidh chuig an Ghaelscolaíocht i rang 1.

D'aontaigh C leis an tuairim agus dúirt go mbeadh buntáistí leis an mholadh ó thaobh áiseanna agus saineolas a roinnt.

Luaigh B chomh maith go maith buntáistí móra leis an mholadh ó thaobh na ndaltaí de agus go dtiocfadh béilte scoile saor in aisce a thabhairt dóibh siúd ag a bhfuil teidlíocht.

Mhínigh D go mbíonn saothar mór ar an Naíscoil múinteoir cáilithe a cheapadh agus a choinnéail sa phost I Naíscoil na Daróige. Mhaolódh an stadás reachtúil an streachailt seo.

Mhínigh E go bhfuil éileamh mór ar na háiteanna i Naíscoil na Daróige agus an PAN líonta ag céad roghanna arís i mbliana. Agus stadás reachtúil ag an naíscoil bheadh sí ina rogha níos tarraingtí arís agus chuirfeadh sé seo le líon na ndaltaí ar an Ghaelscoil fosta.





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Thacaigh F leis an mholadh agus dúirt go gcuirfeadh stadás reachtúil tuilleadh seirbhísí ar fáil agus méadú ar líon na ndaltaí a bheas ag dul ar aghaidh go rang 1.

Le tuairim na ngobharnóirí a dheimhniú d'iarr an PO ar na gobharnóirí má thacaigh siad leis an rún go mbeadh stadás reachtúil ag an Naiscoil nó nár thacaigh.

Chaith 8 gobharnóirí vóta ar son an rúin go láidir. Bhí duine amháin nach raibh ar fáil le vóta a chaitheamh.

6. The Principal explained the correspondence from CnaG regarding the Development Proposal for statutory status for the Gaelscoil. The PO welcomed the governors' views on the matter.

X stated that this proposal would only have benefits for the Naiscoil. She explained that the hours of provision are very important when parents choose places for their children. The status Quo leaves Naiscoil na Daróige instead at a disadvantage as the other Gaelscoileanna in the city have a statutory Naiscoil as does the English school in the area.

B explained that this Development Proposal would be of great assistance in terms of management and administration. The school has an experienced principal and secretary and a strong Board of Governors. This would be of valuable support to the Naiscoil.

Y also explained that statutory status would greatly enhance co - operation between a nursery school and a Gaelscoil and research shows that the status increases the number of pupils who go on to Irish - medium education in Rang 1.

C agreed with this view and added that the proposal would have benefits in terms of sharing facilities and expertise.

B also mentioned the great benefits of the proposal from the point of view of the pupils and that free school meals could be given to those who are entitled.

D explained that appointing and retaining a qualified teacher in Naiscoil na Daróige is a major task for the Naiscoil. The statutory status would alleviate this struggle.

E explained that places at Naiscoil na Daróige and the PAN are in high demand at that the PAN number has been filled with first preference applications. With statutory status at the naiscoil it would be an even more attractive option and this would also increase the number of pupils in the Gaelscoil.





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F supported the proposal and said that statutory status would provide more services and increase the number of pupils progressing to rang 1.

To confirm the opinion of the governors, the principal asked the governors if they supported the resolution that the Naíscóil should have statutory status or not.

8 governors strongly voted in favour of the resolution. There was one person who was not available to vote.





## Appendix B



02871371414, [REDACTED]

A chairde,

27/2/2022

Nestled in the heart of Ballymagroarty on the outskirts of Derry since 2003, Naíscóil na Daróige has provided an excellent service in a disadvantaged area. Much of the area falls into the worst 10% in terms of multiple levels of deprivation. Naíscóil na Daróige strives to break the cycle of intergenerational disadvantage by fostering a love for language and learning.

We, at Naíscóil na Daróige, are immensely proud of the incredible work done over the years. We have successfully encouraged hundreds of children to commence their journey to becoming fluent, confident bilinguals. Naíscóil na Daróige has contributed to the significant growth of Gaelscoil na Daróige and has successfully managed to maintain a high percentage of children enrolling for Irish Medium Education. We are particularly proud this year as a past pupil has taken employment at the school.

We at Naíscóil na Daróige collaborate with all partners to ensure the best linguistic and educational experiences for our children. Naíscóil na Daróige believe that Statutory status is crucial at this stage of development and is a logical step. We endorse and support the application made by Gaelscoil na Daróige. We believe the granting of Statutory status would further enhance the educational experience offered to the families in the wider Ballymagroarty area who choose to avail of Irish-medium education.

Cognisant of the benefits of employing a fully qualified teacher, Naíscóil na Daróige have always endeavoured to raise funds to do this. Although we have somehow managed to achieve this, recruitment and retention of staff has proven increasingly difficult and the staff shortages created by covid-19 have further exacerbated the difficulties. Due to their dedication and commitment to the Naíscóil, teachers have provided their services without receiving a full teacher's salary. Staff and management at Naíscóil na Daróige must constantly engage in fundraising to meet the financial shortfall to retain the teaching staff even on an M1 salary. The transformation to statutory would secure the employment of a teacher without the constant distraction of fund raising. The secure employment of a teacher with the potential for salary progression will lead to greater cohesion and continuity and will prove beneficial for children.

The longer hours afforded to statutory provision would further augment the provision of Naíscóil na Daróige. Many of our children come from English speaking families. Full immersion is crucial to their development and the more exposure our children have to Irish, the greater the chance of them acquiring the language. The other Irish Medium schools in the city have statutory status, and this is also afforded to the nearest English Medium School. The provision of longer hours to Naíscóil na Daróige would lead to greater equality in provision.



The granting of statutory status would also have significant educational benefits. It would lead to greater collaboration with the Gaelscoil and the Naíscoil children would benefit from the expertise of the SENCO and from Educational Psychology input to ensure that the specific needs of particular children are identified and met early.

Furthermore, if this Development Proposal is approved, children, parents and educators benefitting from EA SEN support will be availing of the same support network as the Gaelscoil. This will lead to a greater degree of consistency and continuity of approach that will best serve the needs of the pupils as they move through the school. A seamless move through from Naíscoil to Gaelscoil also enhances linguistic development and language acquisition which in turn improves the richness of the children's language experience.

Statutory status can also help significantly increase the number of pupils remaining in IME sector. Gaelscoil Éadáin Mhóir is a case in point. They have experienced significant growth since transforming their Naíscoil to statutory status.

Currently, Naíscoil na Daróige and Gaelscoil na Daróige operate on the same site but under separate management structures. If the development proposal is accepted, the Board of Governors will assume responsibility for the management of the Naíscoil as an integral part of the school which will provide a continuity and consistency of approach. This will also lead to greater efficiency. The Department has also recently bought land adjacent to the school for further accommodation. Having the Naíscoil as an integral part of the school will simplify planning and the delivery of works.

In conclusion, cognisant of the many benefits of statutory status, we, the management committee of Naíscoil na Daróige support the Board of Governors of Gaelscoil na Daróige in submitting a development proposal for statutory status.

Is muideanna le meas, thar ceann Naíscoil na Daróige,

A (Bainisteoir/Manager)

B (Cisteoir/Treasurer)

C (comhairleoir/Adviser)



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## **Appendix C1 Comhairliúchán foirne / Staff consultation**

**28-2-22**

Mhínigh an PO go raibh sé ar intinn ag an Ghaelscoil agus ag an Naíscoil stadás reachtúil a lorg don Naíscoil. Chuige sin a dhéanamh theastaigh comharliúchán leis an fhoireann arís. D'fháiltigh an PO tuairimí ón fhoireann maidir leis an mholadh.

Luaigh Q go mbeadh buntaistí móra ag baint leis an mholadh don naíscoil ó thaobh cúrsaí sainriachtanais de. Bheadh rochtain ag an naíscoil ar shaineolas an SENCO agus ar shíceolaí oideachais na Naíscoile. Chomh maith leis sin bheadh tuilleadh comhoibrithe sa bhonnchéim. D'fhógair Q fosta go mbeadh rochtain ag foireann na Naíscoile ar thuilleadh oiliúna tríd an EA agus tríd na seirbhísí uaitheachais.

Treisigh R na pointí a rinne Q agus mhínigh go n-aistríonn ráta níos airde de na páistí chuig an Ghaelscoil nuair a bhíonn stadás reachtúil ag an naíscoil. Taitníonn se go mór le tuistí nuair a bhíonn tuilleadh uaireanta agus seirbhísí ag na páistí.

Luaigh D go laghdaíonn stadás reachtúil an brú a bhíonn ar fhoireann na Naíscoile mar go mbíonn tuilleadh tacaíochta acu ón phríomhoide agus ón rúnaí i dtaca le cúrsaí riaracháin. Fosta, bheadh cothrom na féinne ag na páistí i Naíscoil reachtúil mar go mbeadh teacht acu siúd le teidlíocht, ar bhéilte scoile saor in aisce.

Thacaigh B leis an mhéid sin agus dúirt go mbeadh rochtain ag an naíscoil reachtúil ar sheirbhísí c2k agus go gcuirfeadh seo go mór le soláthar TFC na Naíscoile.

Luaigh P go mbeadh buntaistí le stadás reachtúil ó thaobh na cóiríochta agus na cothabhála de. Bheadh an Naíscoil in ann leas a bhaint as an ghlantóir/airíoch.

Mhínigh E go raibh neart buntaistí leis an mholadh. Bhí deacrachtaí móra ag an naíscoil le blianta beaga anuas múinteoir cáilithe a cheapadh sa phost gan stadás reachtúil. Chomh maith leis sin, nuair a d'ímigh an múinteoir ar thréimhse mháithreachais, bhí dúshaothar ar bhainistíocht na Naíscoile múinteoir cáilithe le Gaeilge a aimsiú agus a cheapadh. Mar sin de is iomaí athrú a bhí ar fhoireann na Naíscoile.

Luaigh an E fosta go n-éascódh stadás reachtúil féin-luacháil sa Naíscoil agus go dtiocfadh leo tarraingt ar thaithí agus ar shaineolas na Gaelscoile.

Fosta, tá Naíscoileanna reachtúla sna Gaelscoileanna eile sa chathair agus ag an scoil Bhéarla áitiúil. Fágann sé sin Naíscoil na Daróige in áit na leathphingne ag iarraidh tuistí a mhealladh. Mar sin féin, tá suim láidir léirithe arís eile i Naíscoil na Daróige agus an PAN líonta go hiomlán le céad roghanna.

Luaigh E fosta go mbaineann cuid mhór buntaistí leis an naíscoil reachtaúil i bhfianaise na taighde ar an ábhar.

Fosta, tá Naíscoil na Daróige lonnaithe i gceantar ina díothacht ilchinéalach. Tá Baile Mhic Rabhartaigh ar na ceantracha sa 10% is measa ó thaobh na díothachta de. Bheadh an stadás reachtúil ina chuidiú ag an Naíscoil dul i ngleic le seachadadh na díothachta ó ghlúin go glúin.

Rinneadh vóta ar an ábhar gur chóir go raibh stadás reachtúil ag an Naíscoil agus bhí an fhoireann ar aonghuth gur aontaigh siad go láidir leis an mholadh.

The principal explained that the Gaelscoil and the Naíscoil intended to seek statutory status for the Naíscoil. To do so required consultation with the staff again. The principal welcomed comments from staff on the proposal.

Q stated that the proposal for the nursery would have significant benefits in terms of special needs. The nursery would have access to the expertise of the SENCO and the Gaelscoil's educational psychologist. There would also be more co-operation in the foundation phase. Q also announced that Naíscoil staff would have access to further training through the EA and the autism services.

R reinforced the points made by Q and explained that a higher rate of children transfers to the Gaelscoil when the Naíscoil has statutory status. Parents prefer the longer hours and services afforded to statutory settings.

D stated that statutory status reduces the pressure on Naíscoil staff as they receive more administrative support from the principal and secretary. Also, the children in a statutory Naíscoil would be treated fairly as those with entitlement would have access to free school meals.

B concurred with this and stated that the statutory nursery would have access to c2k services and that this would greatly enhance the ICT provision of the Nursery.

P stated that there would be benefits to statutory status in terms of accommodation and maintenance. The Naíscoil would be able to use the cleaner / caretaker.

E explained that there were many advantages to the proposal. The nursery has had great difficulty in recent years in appointing a qualified teacher to the post without statutory status. In addition, when the teacher went on maternity leave, the Naíscoil management found it difficult to find and appoint a qualified teacher with the requisite fluency in Irish. As a result, the staff of the Naíscoil have undergone many changes.

The E also stated that the statutory status would facilitate self-evaluation in the Naíscoil and that they could draw on the experience and expertise of the Gaelscoil.

There are also statutory Naíscoileanna in the other Gaelscoileanna in the city and at the local English school. That leaves Naíscoil na Daróige at a disadvantage when attracting pupils. Despite this, there

has once again been a strong interest in Naíscoil na Daróige and the PAN is filled with first preferences.

E also mentioned that there are many advantages to the statutory nursery in the light of the research on the subject.

Naíscoil na Daróige is also located in an area of multiple deprivation. Ballymacroarty falls in the worst 10% areas in terms of multiple deprivation. The statutory status would assist the Naíscoil in tackling the intergenerational transmission of deprivation.

A vote was taken on the issue that the Naíscoil should have statutory status and the staff were unanimous in agreeing strongly with it.



02871371414, [REDACTED]

### **Appendix C2 Parental Consultation February/March 2022**

The parental consultation was well received by parents with 52 responses submitted. The responses demonstrate strong and unequivocal support for statutory status for Naíscoil na Daróige. 100% of respondents expressed their strong agreement with the proposal.

1. 96.2% of respondents also expressed their strong agreement that their children would benefit from the longer hours afforded to statutory settings. The remaining 3.8% agreed that the additional hours would prove beneficial.
2. 100% of parents were unanimous in their strong agreement that their children would benefit from the employment of a permanent fully qualified teacher.
3. Respondents were also resounding, 98.1%, in their strong agreement that children would benefit from access to the School Meals Service in a statutory setting.
4. Identically, 98.1% of parents indicated their belief that their children would enjoy improved language acquisition as a result of statutory status.
5. 96.2% of respondents, strongly agree that statutory recognition would increase the numbers at Gaelscoil na Daróige with 98.1% also strongly agreeing that the granting of statutory would help ensure a smooth transition for children with Naíscoil to Rang 1.
6. 100% of respondents were also in agreement that statutory status would facilitate greater co-operation and sharing of resources.

#### **Additional comments made in parental survey**

1. I am planning to send my child to Naíscoil na Daróige and I strongly believe that this well-established Naíscoil should have statutory status. I believe my child would benefit from a longer day in Naíscoil providing her with more learning opportunities. I believe that my child would benefit from having a qualified teacher who is paid fairly for the amount of planning/energy/time/care/patience that is required to assist and allow this particular age group reach their potential.

2. It is a great school that deserve the support of the EA and the children deserve access to resources
3. Tá stádas reachtúil tuillte ar an naíscoil. Ceist chomhionannais atá i gceist óir tá stádas reachtúil ag na naíscoileanna eile sa chathair agus ag an scoil Bhéarla áitiúil.
4. My child deserves access to the same hours and services provided to the local English Medium School.
5. Ba chóir go raibh na deiseanna agus na huaireanta céanna ag ár bpáistí. Ba chóir go raibh bhí múinteoir againn mar aon le rochtain ar sheirbhísí UO.
6. Beidh seo ina bhuntáiste iontach don scoil.
7. The best school in Derry needs a statutory status nursery as a feeder school for the local community to attend. Make more places available for students in a full immersion Naíscoil with a fully qualified teacher. Parents need this opportunity.

**Opinions expressed by parents to the office**

1. One parent approached the school during the survey, he wished to place his thanks on record for the commendable work carried out by Naíscoil na Daróige over the years. He conveyed his opinion that the Naíscoil provides an excellent service, as demonstrated by inspections. He stated that statutory status should be viewed not as replacing the Naíscoil but as an augmentation of the service already provided. He added that the provision of statutory status with all the accompanying benefits was crucial considering the school is located in an area with high levels of multiple deprivation.
2. My relative's children attend the English school across the road. Her children have a longer day and have their free school meal. Are we being punished with a shorter day and no free school meal because we wanted to send our children to an Irish school?

## Appendix C3

## Community Consultation February/March 2022

The community consultation was well received by parents with 14 written responses received. The responses received were unanimous in their strong support for statutory status for Naíscoil na Daróige.

The responses were drawn from a wide range of roles in the community including:

- Community volunteer and Director of local English medium creche.
- Oiliúnaí spóirt/sports coach
- Léiritheoir Teilifíse/television producer
- Oibrí sna meáin atá lonnaithe go háitiúil agus ag obair trí mheán na Gaeilge/Locally based media worker working through the medium of Irish /
- General Manager of MFC Sports that supplies leisurewear to the school and also an Irish Dancing teacher that teaches 20+ pupils from the school.
- Councillor
- Citizen
- Oiliúnaí spóirt CLG/GAA sports Coach
- Bainisteoir togra/project manager
- Active Travel Manager with Sustrans
- Príomhoide/Principal
- Is cathaoirleach ar Ghlór na Spéiríní mé/Chairperson
- Manager of local GAA team
- Community Librarian

All respondents unanimously and strongly agreed that Gaelscoil and Naíscoil na Daróige have formed good links with the community.

100% of respondents also strongly agreed that the catchment area is an area of multiple deprivation and would benefit from additional Irish Medium Preschool places. Furthermore, 100% of respondents strongly agreed that Naíscoil na Daróige should be statutory status.

#### **Additional comments made in the community survey**

1. As the Irish language community continues to expand in the Ballymagroarty area it is essential that the local Naíscoil be treated on a basis of equality. The Department of Education has a statutory obligation to promote IM education. In the case of Naíscoil na Daróige previous applications for statutory status had been nefariously treated.

2. Sílim gur rud an-dearfach a bheadh anseo do pháistí an cheantair, tógadh mé féin sa cheantar seo agus chuirfeadh sé go mór le deiseanna na bpáistí ó thaobh cúrsaí léinn, cúrsaí féinmhuiníne agus féinmheasa. Bheadh seo ríthábhachtach chun cruthú do mhuintir na háite go bhfuil Gaelscoil Na Daróige dáiríre faoin Ghaeilge a spreagadh agus a chur chun cinn mar theanga bheo bhríomhar theaghlaigh./ I think this would be a very positive thing for the children of the area, I was brought up in this area and it would greatly enhance the children's opportunities in terms of learning, self-confidence and self-esteem. This would be crucial in proving to the locals that Gaelscoil Na Daróige is serious about encouraging and promoting Irish as a living, vibrant family language.
3. Is scoil í seo a chuireann go mór leis an phobal atá thart timpeall orthu, tá an bhainistíocht fadradharcach, uailmhianach agus ann ar mhaithe go príomha le forbairt na ndaltaí a chinntiú. Ní amháin sin ach tá an scoil tábhachtach sa cheantar úirbeach seo agus le leas an phobail i gcoitinne agus le forbairt na bpáistí a fhreastalaíonn uirthi. Cothaíonn siad nascanna le grúpaí níos faide i gcéin ó thaobh scéimeann éagsúla a thabhairt isteach agus cuireann siad a scoil chun tosaigh ar bhealaí difriúla. Tá tuiscint acu ar an tábhacht le sláinte fisiciúil na bpáistí agus an tábhacht leis an taisteal gníomhach chun na scoile ar mhaithe le sláinte na bpáistí agus cuidíonn sé seo le tuismitheoirí le nascanna a dhaingniú sa phobal agus stádas na scoile a ardú sa chomharsanacht thart timpeall orthu. Tá obair thar na bearta ar siúl ag an scoil seo agus tacaím go mór leo./ This is a school that contributes greatly to the community around them, the management is visionary, ambitious and exists primarily for the purpose of ensuring the development of the pupils. Not only that but the school is important in this urban area and in the interests of the wider community and the development of the children who attend it. They foster links with groups further afield in the introduction of various schemes and promote their school in different ways. They understand the importance of children's physical health and the importance of active travel to school for children's health and this helps parents to strengthen links in the community and to raise the status of the school in the neighborhood around them. This school is doing a tremendous job and I very much support them.
4. Tá mo pháiste féin ag dul go dtí Gaelscoil eile sa chathair toisc go bhfuil an scoil sin níos cóngaraí don áit ina bhfuil muidne inar gcónaí, ach é sin ráite níl ach rudaí maithe cloiste agam faoi Naíscoil na Daróige agus an fhoireann dhíograiseach atá ina mbun. Ba mhaith liom féin go mbeadh stádas reachtúil ag an Naíscoil seo agus an tacaíocht cheart ar fáil don Naíscoil, tacaíocht agus seirbhísí atá ar aon dul leis an mhéid atá ar fáil do ghach Naíscoil eile insan cheantar seo, Gaeilge nó Béarla. Ádh mór oraibh/ My own child is going to another Gaelscoil in the city because that school is closer to where we live, but that said I have only heard good things about Naíscoil na Daróige and the enthusiastic staff who run it. I would like this Naíscoil to have statutory status and the right support available to the Naíscoil, support and services that are in line with what is available to all other Naíscoils in this area, Irish or English. Best of luck to you
5. Is scoil iontach í Gaelscoil agus Naíscoil na Daróige agus is léir go bhfuil leas na bpáistí i gcoilár na scoile. Mar mhúinteoir damhsa sa phobal fuair mé féin an-tacaíocht ón scoil. Is cinnte go gcuideoidh stádas reachtúil leis an naíscoil agus cuirfidh sé go mór leis an obair iontach atá ar siúl faoi láthair./ Gaelscoil and Naíscoil na Daróige is a wonderful school and it is clear that the welfare of the children is at the heart of the school. As a community dance teacher I found myself very supportive of the school. Statutory status is sure to help the nursery and add to the great work that is going on.
6. Feicim sa chlub áitiúil an obair iontach atá ar siúl i nGaelscoil na Daróige. Spreagtar líon suntasach páistí i dtreo an spóirt. Gan amhras, ba chóir go raibh na deiseanna, na háiseanna agus na



huaireanta céanna ag na páistí i Naiscoil na Daróige agus atá ar fáil dá gcomhbhádóiri sna scoileanna eile. I see in the local club the great work that is going on in Gaelscoil na Daróige. A significant number of children are encouraged to take up sport. Undoubtedly, the children in Daróige Nursery School should have the same opportunities, facilities and hours as are available to their peers in the other schools.

7. Obair iontach agus spreagúil ar siúl acu./ Great work being carried out in Naíscoil and Gaelscoil na Daróige.
8. Is céim nadúrtha í páistí ag dul ón Naíscoil go dtí an Ghaelscoil go háirithe má bhíonn an dá scoil ar aon suíomh amháin. Fan am a mbíonn an naíscolaíocht críochnaithe ag páistí, de ghnáth, bíonn caidrimh cruthaithe acu. Mar sin de, má théann na páistí ar aghaidh go dtí an Ghaelscoil ( Naíscoil na Daróige go dtí Gaelscoil na Daróige) atá ar an tsuíomh cheánna, tá fianaise ann go laghdaíonn an t-aistriú nadúrtha seo strus agus imní i bpáistí sna luathbhlianta s' acu.

Mar aon leis sin, is infheistiú láidir, fadréamach, agus áitiúil e don cheantar ina bhfuil an dá scoil. Bronnann an infheistiú seo íomhá dhinimiciúil nua-aimseartha agus bríomhar ar an cheantar, leis.

Going from Naíscoil to Gaelscoil is a natural step for children, especially if the two schools are on the same site. By the time children finish nursery, they usually have formed relationships. Therefore, if the children go on to the Gaelscoil (Naíscoil na Daróige to Gaelscoil na Daróige) which is on the same site, there is evidence that this natural transition reduces stress and anxiety in children in the early years.

In addition, it is a strong, long - term, and local investment for the area in which both schools are located. This investment also gives the area a dynamic, modern and vibrant image.

9. Great link built up with our club and well received within the community.
10. Naiscoil na Daróige should be granted statutory status as this will enable the children to have a longer day in the Naíscoil, have a permanently employed qualified teacher, more access to external services, such as educational psychologists, which is vital. There will also be further co - operation between Naíscoil and Rang 1, ensuring a seamless transition. Also, free school dinners will be available for those who qualify, which will be essential for those families suffering hardship and deprivation in this area. Granting statutory status will also ensure consistency and inclusion, as the other Gaelscoils in the city already enjoy statutory status, as do other English Medium schools in the area.

Appendix D1

Email from Bunscoil Cholmcille/Naíscoil Dhoire a

Chara,

Tacaím le Moladh Forbartha Ghaelscoil na Daróige chun stádas reachtúil dá naíscoil a lorg. Aithním go bhfreastlaíonn Gaelscoil na Daróige ar cheantar Bhaile Mhig Rabhartaigh agus nach gcuirfeadh sé isteach ar iarratais chuig Naíscoil Dhoire & Bunscoil Cholmcille a luíonn i gceantar Bhaile Stíl/an tSeantalaimh

Beidh sé ar leas na gaelscolaíochta sa chathair má éiríonn le Gaelscoil na Daróige stádas reachtúil a fháil dá naíscoil agus cuirfidh sé le hardú daonra na bpáistí atá ag freastal ar an trí ghaelscoil faoi láthair. Tá méadú tagtha ar líon na bpáistí ag freastal ar ghaelscolaíocht sa chathair le cúpla bliain anuas agus is cinnte go neartóidh seo suim tuismitheoirí sa ghaeloideachas.

Guím gach ráth ar an mholadh forbartha seo.

I support Gaelscoil na Daróige's Development Proposal as they seek Statutory Status for their nursery. I recognise that Gaelscoil na Daróige's catchment is within the Ballymagroarty area and it will not have a direct impact on applications to Naíscoil Dhoire & Bunscoil Cholmcille which lies in the Steestown/Shantallow catchment area.

It would be to the advantage of Irish medium in the city generally if Gaelscoil na Daróige succeed in achieving this status as it will add to the already growing population of children currently attending the three gaelscoileanna in the city. It would also strengthen parent's interest in Irish medium generally.

I wish this development proposal every success.

le meas

Príomhoide

Bunscoil Cholmcille & Naíscoil Dhoire

40A Bóthar Bhaile Stíl

Doire

028 71359648

Appendix d2

**Email from Naíscoil agus Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir**

A chara

Ba mhaith linn tacaíocht a thabhairt don iarratas seo chun Naíscoil reachtúil a bhunú ag Gaelscoil na Daróige. Ní rachaidh seo i bhfeidhm orainn de bhrí go bhfuil muid lonnaithe i gceantar eile. Bíonn muid ag obair le chéile chun an Ghaeloideachais a neartú sa chathair agus rachadh an t-iarratas seo go mór leis an aidhm sin.

I would like to offer our support to the plans to develop a Statutory Nursery at Gaelscoil na Daróige. This will not affect our intake as we are based in a different catchment area. We work closely with the other IM schools in the city in order to develop and promote Irish medium education.

Ádh mór oraibh a chairde.

Príomhoide

APPENDIX E: IRISH-MEDIUM PRE-SCHOOL AND PRIMARY ADMISSIONS AND ENROLMENTS FOLLOWING ESTABLISHMENT OF IM STATUTORY NURSERY PROVISION (2008 – 2021)

| Table A - Effect of Statutory Nursery Unit upon IM Nursery Admissions (2008 - 2021) |                             |              |             |                     |         |              |             |                     |         |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------------|---------|--------------|-------------|---------------------|---------|
| Bunscoil Primary  | Statutory Status Start Date | 3 Yrs Before | 3 Yrs After | Difference (Pupils) | Dif (%) | 5 Yrs Before | 5 Yrs After | Difference (Pupils) | Dif (%) |
| Bunscoil an tSléibhe Dhuibh   | 2010                        | 20.33        | 26.00       | 5.67                | 27.87%  | 21.40        | 26.20       | 4.80                | 22.43%  |
| Gaelscoil na Móna   | 2016                        | 20.33        | 26.00       | 5.67                | 27.87%  | 21.20        | 26.40       | 5.20                | 24.53%  |
| Scoil an Droichid   | 2008                        | 17.67        | 24.00       | 6.33                | 35.85%  | 17.40        | 24.60       | 7.20                | 41.38%  |
| Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagáin   | 2012                        | 12.67        | 25.67       | 13.00               | 102.63% | 11.80        | 27.20       | 15.40               | 130.51% |
| Bunscoil na mBráithre Críostaí  | 2009                        | 22.33        | 26.00       | 3.67                | 16.42%  | 21.40        | 26.00       | 4.60                | 21.50%  |
| Gaelscoil Uí Néill  | 2010                        | 21.33        | 25.67       | 4.33                | 20.31%  | 19.60        | 25.80       | 6.20                | 31.63%  |
| Gaelscoil Eoghain   | 2014                        | 12.67        | 24.00       | 11.33               | 89.47%  | 9.40         | 24.00       | 14.60               | 155.32% |
| Gaelscoil na gCrann   | 2010                        | 14.67        | 25.00       | 10.33               | 70.45%  | 12.40        | 25.40       | 13.00               | 104.84% |
| Gaelscoil Éanna   | 2017                        | 24.00        | 26.67       | 2.67                | 11.13%  | -            | -           | -                   | -       |
| Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir  | 2009                        | 16.67        | 26.00       | 9.33                | 56.00%  | 14.80        | 26.20       | 11.40               | 77.03%  |
| Gaelscoil Uí Dhochartaigh   | 2010                        | 12.67        | 25.33       | 12.67               | 100.00% | 15.20        | 25.60       | 10.40               | 68.42%  |
| Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí  | 2014                        | 21.00        | 25.33       | 4.33                | 20.63%  | 17.40        | 25.33       | 7.93                | 45.59%  |
| Gaelscoil Neachtain   | 2018                        | 17.33        | 25.00       | 7.67                | 44.26%  | -            | -           | -                   | -       |
| Gaelscoil an Chaistil   | 2012                        | 14.00        | 23.00       | 9.00                | 64.29%  | 13.80        | 22.80       | 9.00                | 65.22%  |
| Ave Increase  |                             |              | 9.64        | 62.47%              |         | Ave Increase | 9.98        | 71.67%              |         |

APPENDIX E: IRISH-MEDIUM PRE-SCHOOL AND PRIMARY ADMISSIONS AND ENROLMENTS FOLLOWING ESTABLISHMENT OF IM STATUTORY NURSERY PROVISION  
(2008 – 2021)

| Table B - Effect of Statutory Nursery unit upon IM Primary Admissions (2008 - 2021) |                             |              |             |                     |         |              |             |                     |         |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------------|---------|--------------|-------------|---------------------|---------|
| Bunscoil Primary  | Statutory Status Start Date | 3 Yrs Before | 3 Yrs After | Difference (Pupils) | Dif (%) | 5 Yrs Before | 5 Yrs After | Difference (Pupils) | Dif (%) |
| Bunscoil an tSléibhe Dhuibh   | 2010                        | 21.33        | 21.67       | 0.33                | 1.56%   | 21.40        | 23.00       | 1.60                | 7.48%   |
| Gaelscoil na Móna   | 2016                        | 16.00        | 17.67       | 1.67                | 10.42%  | 16.60        | 19.40       | 2.80                | 16.87%  |
| Scoil an Droichid   | 2008                        | 20.33        | 15.00       | -5.33               | -26.23% | 20.20        | 16.80       | -3.40               | -16.83% |
| Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagáin   | 2012                        | 15.33        | 20.33       | 5.00                | 32.61%  | 14.60        | 22.25       | 7.65                | 52.40%  |
| Bunscoil na mBráithre Críostaí  | 2009                        | 16.33        | 20.67       | 4.33                | 26.53%  | 16.40        | 23.00       | 6.60                | 40.24%  |
| Gaelscoil Uí Néill  | 2010                        | 23.67        | 22.00       | -1.67               | -7.04%  | 21.00        | 22.80       | 1.80                | 8.57%   |
| Gaelscoil Eoghain   | 2014                        | 14.33        | 15.00       | 0.67                | 4.65%   | 14.33        | 15.00       | 0.67                | 4.65%   |
| Gaelscoil na gCrann   | 2010                        | 11.00        | 18.00       | 7.00                | 63.64%  | 11.20        | 19.00       | 7.80                | 69.64%  |
| Gaelscoil Éanna   | 2017                        | 25.00        | 25.33       | 0.33                | 1.32%   | -            | -           | -                   | -       |
| Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir  | 2009                        | 18.00        | 14.33       | -3.67               | -20.37% | 17.80        | 15.20       | -2.60               | -14.61% |
| Gaelscoil Uí Dhochartaigh   | 2010                        | 14.33        | 21.33       | 7.00                | 48.84%  | 15.60        | 21.80       | 6.20                | 39.74%  |
| Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí  | 2014                        | 17.00        | 18.50       | 1.50                | 8.82%   | 14.00        | 18.50       | 4.50                | 32.14%  |
| Gaelscoil Neachtain   | 2018                        | 16.67        | 20.67       | 4.00                | 23.98%  | -            | -           | -                   | -       |
| Gaelscoil an Chaistil   | 2012                        | 8.67         | 16.67       | 8.00                | 92.31%  | 10.20        | 16.25       | 6.05                | 59.31%  |
| Ave Increase  |                             | 2.65         |             | 23.73%              |         | Ave Increase | 3.61        |                     | 27.24%  |

## CnaG Response

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Bangor  
Co. Down  
BT19 7PR

Dáta: 27 October 2022

I d'faoibh: Development Proposal 685 (Gaelscoil na Daróige)

A Chara,

Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta supports Development Proposal (DP) 685 that 'A statutory nursery unit will be established at Gaelscoil na Daróige to provide 26 part-time nursery places, with effect from 1 September 2023, or as soon as possible thereafter'. The Development Proposal is consistent with Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta's Strategic Development Plan to ensure the sustainability of the sector.

Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta supports this proposal for the following reasons:

- It is the view of Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta that the change of status from the current pre-school setting from voluntary to statutory unit is in line with the wishes of the local and school community. Moreover, with the subsequent planned replacement of the voluntary provision, no displacement will occur.
- Gaelscoil na Daróige has demonstrated that the leadership of the school can oversee and manage the integration and running of the preschool setting as an integral part of the school.
- The educational, financial and practical benefits of bring both provisions under a single management are articulated within the case for change.
- Given the recent capital investment by the Department of Education into the acquisition of neighbouring land, and also, the provision of the new and additional accommodation for Gaelscoil na Daróige the approval of DP685 would further consolidate IM provision in the area.

- We anticipate that the approval of the DP would have a positive impact on LTB at Gaelscoil na Daróige (Statistical evidence included within the case for change, Appendix D).
- It is also anticipated that it would increase the pool of pupils for Gaelcholáiste Dhoire, Dungiven and, in doing so, contribute to the consolidation of the sector at the primary level and at post-primary level locally and regionally, respectively.

It is for the above reasons that Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta supports the proposal of DP685 and furthermore, we believe that the approval of DP685 will not only improve the quality of education available to the children attending Gaelscoil na Daróige, Ballymagroarty but it will also contribute to its sustainability and thus, the future-proofing of the IM sector locally and regionally.

Is mise le meas



Conor Stiobhard  
Oifigeach Sinscarach Forbartha Gníomhach /Acting Senior Development Officer  
Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta

### ETI Development Proposal Commentary Paper

**DP 685 Gaelscoil na Daróige:** A statutory nursery unit will be established at Gaelscoil na Daróige to provide 26 part-time nursery places with effect from 1 September 2023, or as soon as possible thereafter.

Date of last ETI reports <sup>1</sup>regarding Gaelscoil na Daróige are June 2017 Sustaining Improvement Inspection (action short of strike) and Follow-up inspection, June 2014.

**Web link:**

[Naíscoil na Daróige January 2019](#)

[Gaelscoil na Daróige Sustaining Improvement Inspection Report ASOS June 2017](#)

[Gaelscoil na Daróige Derry FUI June 2014](#)

1. Update on relevant/contextual information since the last published inspection report.

There is a new permanent principal in post since September 2022 (was acting principal from September 2017) in Gaelscoil na Daróige. The middle leaders have attended the DE: ETI 'Stepping Forward Together: Empowering Improvement Programme' in May 2022.

There are members of the management committee of Naíscoil na Daróige who are on a sub-committee of the board of governors of Gaelscoil na Daróige. Also, a member of the governors of Gaelscoil na Daróige is the lead in the management committee of Naíscoil na Daróige.

The enrolment trend in the voluntary provision, Naíscoil na Daróige, has increased to 23 target-age funded places in 2022-23.

At present, the naíscoil is in the follow-up inspection process after an inspection in January 2019<sup>2</sup>. A monitoring visit was conducted on 1 March 2022 and key changes have been made to improve areas of the educational provision.

2. Knowledge of **any contextual information on the quality of education** in the wider local area.

<sup>1</sup>This commentary paper is based on the information and evidence available to ETI on this date. Please check the ETI website [www.etini.gov.uk](http://www.etini.gov.uk) for any new inspection reports that may have published after this date.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.etini.gov.uk/publications/pre-school-inspection-naiscoil-na-daróige-derry>



There is one other Irish-medium provider in the area, within a two-mile radius, which has been withdrawn from PSEP for the 2022-23 academic year due to a small number of applications which were below the minimum requirement. The provision in this development proposal has the potential to impact on the future uptake of places in this setting for subsequent years.

Within a 2-mile radius, 501 first preference applications were received for 562 places for the 2022-23 academic year.

Other Irish-medium providers in the local area and most recent inspection reports are:

[Bunscoil Cholmcille & Naíscoil Dhoire](#), November 2017 – no performance level due to industrial action by the staff.

[Naíscoil & Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir](#), Sustaining Improvement Inspection, 30 May 2019: it was impacted by industrial action and the report noted an increase in the total enrolment of the school and additional modular classrooms.

‘The previous inspection in June 2016 evaluated the overall effectiveness of Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir as having the capacity to identify and bring about improvement. Since the follow-up inspection (FUI) in 2016, the enrolment has increased by almost one-quarter and stands at 171 children in the gaelscoil and naíscoil. The school is preparing to take delivery of two modular classrooms and a multi-purpose room.’

### 3. Potential benefits/concerns associated with the claims of **educational** benefits for pupils made in the Case for Change.

#### Benefits:

1. The employment of a suitably qualified Irish-medium teacher in a statutory nursery unit has the potential to ensure the children receive an optimum immersion experience to support their language acquisition and linguistic skills and overcome current staffing challenges in the voluntary sector.
2. Naíscoil na Daróige is already in existence with 23 pre-funded places 2022-23 academic year; the setting has a registration number of 26 places. Currently, there is a suitably qualified Irish -medium teacher employed in the Naíscoil na Daróige.

4. Any concerns about the **implementation date or phasing of implementation** should this be applicable (i.e., curricular, EF, accommodation, LSCs, etc).

Accommodation is already in place for Naíscoil na Daróige, there are no additional accommodation requirements; however, ongoing maintenance will be required with the current prefabricated building.

5. The **SSP Criteria** indicators requiring ETI input (if known and/or for which information is available).

| Sustainable Schools Criterion  | Indicator   | Meets criterion |                |                           |
|--------------------------------|---|-----------------|----------------|---------------------------|
|                                |   | Yes             | No (reason(s)) | Information not available |
| Quality Educational Experience | 1.1 Attainment levels of pupils, Key Stage tests pending development of new indicators for Primary Schools, GCSE results for Post-Primary Schools.  |                 | N/A            | √                         |
|                                | 1.2 In primary, a single classroom contains no more than <u>two</u> year-groups in a composite class; for example, years 1 and 2.   | √               |                |                           |
|                                | 1.3 A <u>minimum</u> of four teachers at a primary school. This recognises both the needs of pupils and the demands on teachers.  | √               |                |                           |
|                                | 1.4 The ability of the school to cater for children with Special Educational Needs.   | √               |                |                           |
|                                | 1.5 The ability at post-primary level to be able to provide suitable access to the entitlement framework including, where appropriate, linkages with other schools, the FE sector or other providers. |                 | N/A            |                           |
|                                | 1.6 The standards and the quality of learning and teaching at the school.   | √               |                |                           |
|                                | 1.7 The range of curricular and extra-curricular activities available for children including career guidance, physical education, music, art, drama and science.                                      | √               |                |                           |

|  |  |   |  |  |
|--|--|---|--|--|
|  | 1.8 The quality of the <u>physical</u> environment for learning and teaching i.e. the condition, energy and water efficiency and suitability of the buildings.                 | √ | There are ongoing improvements in the school site being provided by DE and EA. |  |
|  | 1.9 The quality of, and arrangements for, pastoral care including the active promotion of the principles of social justice in all areas of the formal and informal curriculum. | √ |  |  |
| Strong Leadership and Management by Boards of Governors and Principals | 4.1 Governors' views on the school based on quantitative and qualitative evidence.   | √ |  |  |
|  | 4.8 There is a school development plan in place and progress is being made to achieve the plan's aims and objectives.  | √ | Subject to COVID-19 recovery priorities.                                       |  |
|  | 4.9 Pupil behaviour, expulsions, suspensions and non-attendance as well as positive behaviours such as involvement in school management (e.g. buddying and mentoring schemes). | √ |  |  |
| <b>Strong links with the Community</b>                                 | 6.1 Degree and quality of parental involvement (schools will be asked to provide evidence on this).  | √ |  |  |
|  | 6.3 Contribution of the school to the community (schools will be asked to provide evidence on this).   | √ |  |  |
|  | 6.4 Presence of other features of provision, e.g. nursery or specialist unit.  |   | N/A  |  |

## 6. Summary of impact of the proposal

The development proposal is a change in management for the naíscoil from being a voluntary pre-school provider to a statutory nursery unit; it would develop further the Department of Education's 'statutory duty to encourage and facilitate Irish -medium education (Article 89, Education (NI) Order 1998)'.

## SAT INPUT TO DP 685

**Gaelscoil na Daroige** (204-6687) - A statutory nursery unit will be established at Gaelscoil na Daróige to provide 26 part-time nursery places with effect from 1 September 2023, or as soon as possible thereafter.

### Background:

Gaelscoil na Daroige is an Irish Medium PS, located in Londonderry. The school's approved admissions and enrolment numbers are set at **18-20** admissions and **116** enrolment. This increase in numbers from 2019/20 to 2020/21 is part of phased increases at the school that have been ongoing since its opening.

DP 685 proposes that a statutory nursery unit will be established to provide 26 part-time nursery places

### Applications:

Over the past four years the school has received the following applications for admission to Year 1 during the admissions process:

| Year           | Approved Admissions | First preference applications | Total Applications (all preferences) | Total Admissions* |
|----------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>2019/20</b> | 15                  | 20                            | 20                                   | 20                |
| <b>2020/21</b> | 18-22               | 21                            | 21                                   | 21                |
| <b>2021/22</b> | 18-22               | 24                            | 24                                   | 24                |
| <b>2022/23</b> | 18-22               | 11                            | 11                                   | 11                |

\*Excludes pupils with a statement of special educational needs

### Temporary Variation (TVs)

If a school receives more applications than it has places available it can request a TV to its admissions and/or enrolment number from the Department

Gaelscoil na Daroige has the following TV approvals over the last four years.

| Year    | Approved Admissions | TV Admissions to | Tv to Enrolment |
|---------|---------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 2019/20 | 15                  | 20               | 85              |
| 2020/21 | 18-22               |                  |                 |
| 2021/22 | 18-22               | 25               | 101             |
| 2022/23 | 18-22               |                  |                 |

### **IWD INPUT TO APPT DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**

**IWD Input: 24 October 2022**

#### **Special Education Needs (SET) Input**

If present enrolment increases are maintained, it is anticipated that the school will reach its sustainability threshold in 2025/26. Attendance at a sustainable school underpins the fundamental principles of the special educational needs (SEN) Code of Practice<sup>3</sup>, which focuses on a continuum of need and a continuum of provision, which may be made in a variety of forms. Children with SEN require the greatest possible access to a broad and balanced education, including the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

In support for the proposal, Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir and Naíscóil Dhoire, note that children will have access to educational and other support services children in other gaelscoileanna in the city already have, and that this is especially important given the present increase in children with SEN.

The last Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) Report (June 2014) noted that 'the children with statements of SEN are identified early and appropriate and effective strategies are put in place to meet their individual learning and emotional needs.'

The Case for Change (CfC) also notes that if the DP is approved, the school would benefit from the permanent employment of a qualified teacher which would improve the ability of the setting to identify and cater for children with SEN.

It is also noted that the proposal is in effect a change in management from a voluntary to a statutory provider, resulting in no change in provision within the area.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/special-educational-needs-code-practice>

SET would not oppose the DP, subject to any impact on pupils with SEN being considered and managed effectively.

**Pupil Support Team (PST) Input**

Nil return.

**Additional Educational Needs Team (AENT) Input**

Nil return.

**Development Proposal Input Provided by IID - DP 685**

**Gaelscoil na Daróige**

Proposal

The Board of Governors of GAELSCOIL NA DARÓIGE proposes the establishment of a STATUTORY PART-TIME IRISH-MEDIUM NURSERY UNIT to take effect from 1st September 2023 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Background

Gaelscoil na Daróige is a Grant-maintained Irish-medium primary school located in the Ballymagroarty area of Derry city. There are currently 103 pupils in the school, *102 at census date*. Gaelscoil na Daróige was opened in September 2005; the school provides Irish-medium education for children from pre-school to Primary 7. Both Naíscóil and Gaelscoil na Daróige are located on the same site which has recently been expanded because of DE investment in acquiring land beside the school which will allow for future expansion. On 9 August 2016, the then DE Minister did not approve DP 454 which proposed the establishment of a part-time statutory IM nursery unit, with 26 part-time places, at Gaelscoil na Daróige with effect from 1 September 2016, or as soon as possible thereafter.

IID Comments

The case for change advises that the current pre-school room meets the minimum requirements for 26-pupils. The case for change states that the room which is approximately 20 years old could be utilised in the interim period until a modular-unit has been provided by DE. If the proposal is successful, before any decision could be made on the provision of a new modular unit, EOT would engage with the EA to conduct a condition survey on the current accommodation and establish if any works could be carried out to improve facilities. This classroom was provided by the community when the school was first opened. The classroom is an old porta cabin and requires frequent maintenance work. If it is found that a new modular nursery unit is required this will be subject to a feasibility report and business case. A new modular unit would cost in excess of £500k and lead in times for delivery would be in the region of 18 months.

Financial Monitoring Teams' comments on DP 685:

'Proposed New part-time nursery unit at the school'.

**204-6687 Gaelscoil na Daroige**

The school's **Provisional** Surplus position as at 31 March 2023 is £145,599.

The school's Surplus in the previous year, up to 31 March 2022 was £139,454.

The school received a total delegated budget of £431,037 in the 2023-24 financial year for **110<sup>1</sup>** FTE pupils, which generates a per capita of £3,919.

The average for all primary schools is £3,403.

The total Free School Meals Entitlement for the school is **42<sup>4</sup>** pupils, which represents 38.18% of the total FTE, which places the school in Band 2 for funding purposes.

The school received £49,237 for Small Schools Support funding, which represents 95.00% of the maximum funding for this factor, within the Nursery & Primary funding stream.

The school also received £15,599 in respect of Primary Principals' Release Time.

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<sup>4</sup> The school's funding allocation is based on the previous year's census data (e.g. the October 2022 census data was used to determine the 2023-24 CFF allocation). **The census data on the Schools+ database relates to an academic year, as opposed to the financial year.** In addition, differences between funded pupils and total pupils within the census count may occur for a number of reasons, including, but not limited to, zero rated pupils, some reception pupils, and over age pupils (paragraph 7 of Annex B to the Common Funding Scheme refers).

All schools receive a delegated budget for the financial year on the basis of verified enrolments as at the October Census prior to the financial year. The figures below represent those figures estimated for the 2023-24 financial year.

Any new provision (including new Nursery units) opening during the year are a pressure for the Department’s “New Schools & Units” fund.

A new 26 P/T Nursery Unit is likely to create a funding need of **around £36k** – based on past costs for such units opening during the financial year – for the period from Opening to the end of that financial year. Full year costs to the *Aggregated Schools Budget* \* are likely to be c. £62k (for new provision, not previously funded).

Details of the school’s budget allocation from the Common Funding Formula, for the last 3 years, is as follows:

| Factor                              | 2023-24<br>£ | 2022-23<br>£ | 2021-22<br>£ |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Pupil AWPU                          | 279,991      | 261,281      | 233,104      |
| TSN – Social Deprivation            | 27,423       | 24,568       | 26,870       |
| TSN – Additional Social Deprivation | 6,123        | 5,367        | 5,069        |
| Premises Area                       | 4,172        | 3,370        | 3,370        |
| Premises FTE                        | 9,458        | 8,713        | 7,735        |
| Small Schools Support               | 49,237       | 51,344       | 49,807       |
| Primary Principals Release Time     | 15,599       | 16,256       | 16,420       |
| Foundation Stage                    | 20,060       | 23,915       | 22,163       |
| Irish-medium Curricular Support     | 14,259       | 13,306       | 11,871       |
| Children Looked After               | 4,714        | 4,744        | 2,372        |

|                             |                |                |                |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Total School Funding</b> | <b>431,037</b> | <b>412,865</b> | <b>378,782</b> |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|

|                 |        |        |        |
|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Pupil FTE (no.) | 110.00 | 102.00 | 91.00  |
| Per Capita      | £3,919 | £4,048 | £4,162 |



**REVISED EARLY YEARS INPUT RECEIVED 12/10/23**

**INPUT FROM EARLY YEARS TEAM ON DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL No 685**

**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL No 685 – IT IS PROPOSED TO ESTABLISH A STATUTORY 26 PLACE PART-TIME IRISH MEDIUM NURSERY UNIT AT GAELSCOIL NA DARÓIGE WITH EFFECT FROM 1 SEPTEMBER 2023 OR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THEREAFTER**

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Background**
- 3. Level of need for pre-school education provision**
- 4. Irish Medium education**
- 5. Recent changes in provision**
- 6. Temporary flexibility**
- 7. Reception Provision**
- 8. Impact on voluntary and private sector providers**
- 9. Ensuring the best use of public resources**
- 10. Consultation responses**
- 11. EA comments**
- 12. Summary of key points**
- 13. Conclusion**
- 14. Future Policy Direction**

**INPUT FROM EARLY YEARS TEAM ON DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL No 685**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF A STATUTORY 26 PLACE PART-TIME IRISH MEDIUM NURSERY UNIT AT GAELSCOIL NA DARÓIGE WITH EFFECT FROM 1 SEPTEMBER 2023 OR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THEREAFTER**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

At the request of the Board of Governors of Gaelscoil na Daróige, the Education Authority (EA) has published Development Proposal Number 685, proposing that a statutory 26 place part-time Irish Medium Nursery Unit be established from 1 September 2023 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Gaelscoil na Daróige is a multi-denominational Irish Medium primary school which was established in 2005. It is located at 12 Coshquinn Road, Ballymagroarty, Co Derry and attracts pupils from the town of Ballymagroarty and the surrounding areas.

Naíscoil na Daróige is a voluntary (non-statutory) PSEP funded playgroup which is located on the same site as Gaelscoil na Daróige. The playgroup is registered for 26 children<sup>5</sup> and has been allocated 22 funded pre-school education places for the 2022/23 academic year. The CfC states that the proposal is to transform the current voluntary playgroup into a 26 part-time place statutory nursery unit within Gaelscoil na Daróige.

**2. BACKGROUND**

A previous Development Proposal (DP No 454) requesting statutory nursery provision at Gaelscoil na Daróige was not approved in 2016. The CfC for the current Development Proposal seeks the same statutory nursery provision as previously requested, that is 26 part time Irish Medium pre-school education places. The current proposal has been considered against the current context, and so reflects changes and updated information since the previous DP, including changes to the pattern of pre-school applications and the overall level of provision in the area.

The CfC (page 14) for DP No 685 advises that the reason for the proposal is primarily to improve the educational experience and outcomes for those attending Irish Medium pre-school provision in Ballymagroarty area and also to contribute towards the long-term sustainability of Irish Medium primary provision, including helping Gaelscoil na Daróige reach and exceed the sustainability threshold of 140 pupils by 2025/26 (CfC page 13). The CfC (page 13) also states that the creation of the statutory Naíscoil would contribute to the long-term viability and expansion of the Gaelscoil but also at the local Irish-medium post-primary Gaelcholáiste Dhoire in Dungiven.

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<sup>5</sup> Source: EA - DP 685 Case for Change page 6

The CfC (page 14) also claims that another benefit is that a single management structure for the Naíscoil and Gaelscoil would lead to enhanced collaboration between Foundation Stage staff in the Gaelscoil and staff in the Naíscoil in curriculum planning and teaching structured to ensure continuity in order to achieve the highest possible educational outcomes for the children. The CfC (page 15) claims that there are additional services associated with statutory status that those preparing the CfC consider current voluntary provision does not have access to, although these services are not detailed.

The CfC (page 15) also states that the the Effective Preschool Provision in Northern Ireland (EPPNI) (DENI 2010) research indicates that increased educational outcomes are produced by a statutory preschool experience.

The CfC (page 16) for DP 685 advises that the April 2023 NI Assembly Research paper ‘Early Years Provision’ states that there is strong correlation between higher staff qualification and better outcomes for children, and links this to the employment of a qualified teacher in statutory pre-school provision. The Department has previously stated that voluntary groups can employ a qualified teacher, or a pre-school leader with equivalent qualifications however the CfC (page 16) advises that this is not possible on a financial basis.

The CfC (page 15) also states that Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta advises parents to send their children to a nursery setting for two years (equivalent to one year full-time) in order to better pick up the target language. The CfC (page 16) also suggests that longer hours are afforded to statutory provision and that these ‘longer hours’ allow the child a greater exposure to the target language. The PSEP is intended to provide one year of funded pre-school education for every child whose parents want it, whether they attend a statutory or non-statutory pre-school education provider. The minimum requirement for a part-time pre-school session is 2.5 hours which is the same for both non-statutory and statutory settings.

Both the voluntary and statutory pre-school sectors are equally valued by the Department for their contribution to the pre-school education of children, with both following common curriculum guidelines and subject to the same education inspection standards.

The CfC (page 16) has stated that a belief that the permanent employment of a qualified teacher will also improve the ability of the setting to identify and cater for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN). The CfC states that children with SEN will benefit from access to outreach supports available to statutory settings which are not available to the voluntary setting Naíscoil na Daróige. The CfC (page 17) suggests that it is anticipated that the need for SEN services will increase due to the added pressures that Covid pandemic created.

The CfC (page 8) also points to the steady admissions numbers of the existing voluntary playgroup over the last 5 years as evidence of parental preference for Irish Medium pre-school provision in the

Ballymagroarty area, with the exception of 2021/22 when it dipped which the CfC (page 8) attributes to the impact of Covid 19.

The existing voluntary playgroup and Gaelscoil na Daróige are currently located on the same site, which the CfC (page 7 and 11) advises has been recently expanded because of DE investment by acquiring further land beside the school. The CFC (page 14) also states that the committee of the voluntary Naíscoil have agreed to the Gaelscoil’s Board of Governors submitting this new Development Proposal.

**Relevant Policies, Practices and Duties**

The main policies, practices and duties relevant to this proposal are:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>The aim of the Pre-school Education Programme is to provide a funded pre-school education place for every target age child whose family want it.</p> | <p>The CfC focuses on the associated benefits of providing statutory pre-school provision and a parental preference for Irish medium pre-school places, rather than unmet demand for pre-school education provision generally. The EA has also advised that sufficient provision exists to meet current demand for pre-school places in the area.</p> <p>This is considered in more detail below.</p>                                     |
| <p>Learning to Learn – A Framework for Early Years Education and Learning</p>   | <p>Published on 7 October 2013, among its key actions is a moratorium on any new or additional full-time provision or conversion from part-time to full-time (defined as over 4.5 hours) in advance of a review of the current levels of full-time provision, existing research and the needs of children being served by it. This proposal is in line with the current moratorium.</p>   |
| <p>Encourage and facilitate the development of Irish Medium education</p>   | <p>Under Article 89 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 the Department has a statutory duty to encourage and facilitate the development of Irish-medium Education. Registered Irish-medium providers with sufficient children can be funded under the Department’s Pre-School Education Programme even where English-medium provision is available in the area. This duty is considered in more detail below.</p>              |
| <p>Displacement of good quality pre-school education provision already in existence</p>   | <p>It is the Department’s practice, where possible, not to displace good quality pre-school education provision already in existence with pre-school education provision in an alternative setting. As this DP is for pre-school provision at an Irish Medium primary school, it is considered in the context of DE’s statutory duty. The potential impact of this proposal on existing provision is considered in more detail below.</p> |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>Ensuring the best use of public resources</p> | <p>In discharging its duties, the Department must seek to avoid unreasonable public expenditure and to make the best use of the resources available to it. In light of this, it aims to fill available pre-school education provision as far as possible with target age children, avoiding over provision and the resulting enrolment of children under 3 years and 2 months (underage children) in statutory settings. This is considered in more detail below.</p> |
| <p>Reception provision</p>                       | <p>A key action under the Learning to Learning framework is the removal of reception provision. Gaelscoil na Daróige does not have reception provision. In each of the last four years there have been settings within the five mile radius that have provided reception places. This is considered in more detail below.</p>   |
| <p>Standardisation</p>                           | <p>In September 2022, the then-Minister for Education announced her intention to standardise the funded pre-school education session length to 4.5 hours per day (22.5 hours per week for 38 weeks of the academic year) to all target aged pupils as part of the proposed Executive’s Early Learning and Childcare Strategy. Implementation of a standardised session length will be on a phased basis and subject to Executive agreement and funding.</p>           |

### 3. LEVEL OF NEED FOR PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION PROVISION

In determining the need for pre-school education provision, the Department generally assumes a level of provision at 95% of target age children, predicated on the application rate for pre-school education places, which is c.93%; however the level of provision within local areas may be higher or lower, based on historic patterns of demand and assessment of ongoing need.

The current level of pre-school education provision within both a one-mile and two-mile radius of the school is used as an indicator of current capacity to meet need for pre-school education provision in urban areas and is considered alongside other factors such as population projections to determine the likely future need for additional pre-school education provision in the area.

The number of pre-school education places and associated percentages are measured against the Year One enrolments for the 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 academic years using school census data.

The analysis of provision below is based on the discontinuation of the part-time funded places currently provided in the voluntary playgroup, and the introduction of 26 part-time statutory nursery places as proposed.

The statistical information available in relation to the level of funded pre-school education provision is as follows:-

**Level of Provision – one mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige.**

**Table 1**

| Year     | Statutory places | Non-statutory places | Reception places | Total pre-school provision | P1 places | Level of pre-school provision (%age of P1 places) | Underage children in statutory places |
|----------|------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------------------|-----------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 2019/20  | 78               | 46                   | 0                | 124                        | 278       | 44.6%   | 0                                     |
| 2020/21  | 78               | 45                   | 0                | 123                        | 277       | 44.4%   | 0                                     |
| 2021/22  | 78               | 38                   | 0                | 116                        | 252       | 46.0%   | 0                                     |
| 2022/23  | 78               | 42                   | 0                | 120                        | 228       | 52.6%   | 1                                     |
| Proposed | 104              | 20                   | 0                | 124                        | 228       | 54.4%   | -                                     |

Source: School Census

The level of pre-school education provision within a one mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige has been considerably below the planning figure of 95% in each of the last four years. This could suggest that there is insufficient levels of pre-school provision in the immediate area surrounding Gaelscoil na Daróige. If approved, the proposed level of pre-school education provision within the one mile radii would increase to 54.4%, which is still significantly below the planning figure.

**Level of Provision – two mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige.**

**Table 1**

| Year     | Statutory places | Non-statutory places | Reception places | Total pre-school provision | P1 places | Level of pre-school provision (%age of P1 places) | Underage children in statutory places |
|----------|------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------------------|-----------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 2019/20  | 676              | 90                   | 0                | 766                        | 739       | 103.7%  | 19                                    |
| 2020/21  | 676              | 77                   | 0                | 753                        | 767       | 98.2%   | 55                                    |
| 2021/22  | 676              | 71                   | 0                | 747                        | 715       | 104.5%  | 50                                    |
| 2022/23  | 676              | 58                   | 0                | 734                        | 679       | 108.1%  | 70                                    |
| Proposed | 702              | 36                   | 0                | 738                        | 679       | 108.7%  | -                                     |

Source: School Census

The level of pre-school education provision within a two mile radius has been above the planning figure of 95% in all of the last four years and would further increase to 108.7% provision after the proposed change. There have also been significant numbers of penultimate aged children enrolled in statutory pre-school provision, further suggesting over provision in the area.

The EA PEG has advised that two children living in the area remained unplaced at the end of the pre-school admissions process for 2021/22, suggesting that there may have been some under provision, however neither of these children applied for an Irish-medium pre-school place, and Naíscoil na Daróige had capacity to accept additional children had they applied. There were 5 unplaced children in the area in 2020/21 and 1 in 2019/20, and PEG has indicated that several English-medium providers as well as Naíscoil na Daróige had capacity to increase the number of places offered, should this be required. In 2020/21, 2 of the 5 unplaced applicants listed an Irish medium pre-school as their 4<sup>th</sup> preference and the 1 unplaced child in 2019/20 did not select any Irish medium pre-schools as a preference. Overall, this suggests that the level of provision is currently sufficient to meet demand for pre-school provision for both English and Irish medium pre-school education provision within the two mile radii.

**Level of Provision – five mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige.**

**Table 2**

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Statutory places</b> | <b>Non-statutory places</b> | <b>Reception places *</b> | <b>Total pre-school provision</b> | <b>P1 places</b> | <b>Level of pre-school provision (%age of P1 places)</b> | <b>Underage children in statutory places</b> |
|-------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|--|--|
| 2019/20     | 1248                    | 127                         | 2                         | 1375                              | 1372             | 100.2%   | 62   |
| 2020/21     | 1248                    | 114                         | 3                         | 1362                              | 1363             | 99.9%  | 77   |
| 2021/22     | 1248                    | 107                         | 1                         | 1355                              | 1328             | 102.0%   | 86   |
| 2022/23     | 1248                    | 94                          | 5                         | 1342                              | 1302             | 103.1%   | 102  |
| Proposed    | 1274                    | 72                          | -                         | 1346                              | 1302             | 103.4%   | -  |

Source: School Census

\*Although reception provision is included in Table 2 above, it is not included in the total pre-school provision figures as reception is not part of the PSEP.

The level of provision within the five mile radius has been above the planning figure in each of the last four years. There have also been very high levels of underage children in each of the last four years. If approved, the proposed level of pre-school education provision within the five mile radius would increase to 103.4%, which is above the planning figure. Overall, this would suggest that there is more than adequate pre-school provision in the wider area.

A list of the providers in the two and five mile radii is attached at Annex A.

#### **4. IRISH MEDIUM EDUCATION**

##### **Context**

Under Article 89 of the Education (NI) Order 1998, the Department has a statutory duty to 'encourage and facilitate the development of Irish Medium Education'. The duty under the 1998 Order must be considered alongside the duty under Article 44 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 (the Department and boards shall have regard to the general principle that, so far as is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure, pupils shall be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents). It is important that the Department strives to meet demonstrated parental preference in an area for pre-school education at grant-maintained and controlled Irish Medium primary schools. In discharging these duties it is essential that the Department does not inadvertently constrain the development of Irish Medium education.

All funded pre-school education settings regardless of location and management type are accessible to children from all backgrounds and are subject to the same inspection standards. All pre-school education settings follow the same curricular guidance the broad framework of which ensures equality of opportunity, pointing to staff acknowledging and respecting the culture, beliefs and lifestyles of the families of all children. However, it is acknowledged that parents state preferences for pre-school education provision taking into account a wide range of factors, and in some cases parents may have a preference for pre-school education delivered through the medium of the Irish language, and this is taken into account in the Early Years Team (EYT) advice. Registered Irish-medium providers with sufficient children can be funded under the Department's Pre-School Education Programme even where English-medium provision is available in the area.

##### **Irish Medium Education in the area**

As well as the voluntary pre-school provision at Nailscoil na Daróige, there is one statutory Irish-medium pre-school education setting within a two mile radius, namely Bunscoil Cholmcille which provides 26 part-time pre-school places. Another local non-statutory Irish-medium provider within the two mile radius, Naíscoil Cholmcille, was withdrawn from PSEP for the 2022/23 academic year as they failed to meet the minimum requirement of 6 applications<sup>6</sup>.

The CfC sets out that the number of admissions to the pre-school provision at Naíscoil na Daróige has been between 16-23 in each of the last five years (CfC Table D Pg.8). This is an increase since DP 454 was submitted, when the Naíscoil had admitted between 10-17 children in the previous three years. This suggests that parents in the area may have a preference for Irish medium pre-school education provision, and that demand may be increasing.

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<sup>6</sup> Additional information added October 2023: This setting returned to the PSEP for the 2023/24 academic year and currently provides 11 funded Irish medium pre-school education places.



The table below shows that the number of first preference applications to the setting has varied over the last four years (although the overall number of children admitted has stayed quite level), and every child whose parents wanted an Irish-medium pre-school place for them was offered an Irish-medium pre-school place each year.

**Table 3 – 1<sup>st</sup> Preference Application Rates for Naíscoil na Daróige**

| Year    | Number of 1 <sup>st</sup> Preference Applications at End of Admissions Process | Total Number of Target Age Children Admitted to Funded Place |
|---------|--|--|
| 2019/20 | 16   | 22 (PAN 22)  |
| 2020/21 | 22   | 23 (PAN 23)  |
| 2021/22 | 14   | 16 (PAN 23)  |
| 2022/23 | 22   | 22 (PAN 22)  |

Source: School Census & Education Authority

**Table 4 - Level of Irish-medium pre-school education provision – two mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige**

The statistical information available in relation to the level of Irish-medium funded pre-school provision is as follows:

**Table 4**

| Year               | Statutory places | Non-statutory places in IM settings | Reception places | Total pre-school provision (ex reception) | P1 places | Level of pre-school provision (%age of P1 places) | Underage children in statutory places |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|---|-----------|---|---------------------------------------|
| <b>2019/20</b>     | 26               | 36                                  | 0                | 62  | 35        | 177.1%  | 0                                     |
| <b>2020/21</b>     | 26               | 37                                  | 0                | 63  | 40        | 157.5%  | 0                                     |
| <b>2021/22</b>     | 26               | 27                                  | 0                | 53  | 45        | 117.7%  | 0                                     |
| <b>2022/23</b>     | 26               | 22                                  | 0                | 48  | 29        | 165.5%  | 0                                     |
| <b>As Proposed</b> | 52               | 0                                   | 0                | 52  | 29        | 179.3%  | -                                     |

Source: School Census Data

The proposed level of Irish Medium provision has been significantly higher than the planning figure of 95% in each of the last four years, which suggests there is over provision in the area, which would increase further if the proposal were approved. This is supported by the fact that every child whose parents selected an Irish-medium pre-school as their first preference in each of the last three years was offered an Irish-medium place, and the Naíscoil had capacity to increase provision in each year, had it been needed. A non-statutory Irish-medium pre-school setting (Naíscoil Cholmcille) was removed from the PSEP programme in the 2022/23 academic year for not reaching the minimum enrolment figures. This data would further reinforce that there is already significant over-provision of funded Irish-medium pre-school education provision in the area.

### **5. RECENT CHANGES IN PROVISION**

Naíscoil Cholmcille, an Irish-medium pre-school within a 2 mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige, was withdrawn from PSEP for the 2022/23 academic year as they failed to meet the minimum requirement of 6 applications<sup>7</sup>.

Another non-statutory pre-school setting within the two mile radius (St Bernadette's Playgroup) was also removed from the PSEP for 2022/23, having voluntarily taken the decision to remove themselves from the programme. This setting has not returned to the programme for the 2023/24 academic year

### **6. TEMPORARY FLEXIBILITY**

In the 2019/20 academic year there were a total of 36 requests for additional pre-school places requested in a two mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige through Temporary Flexibility. Of these 36 requests, 13 were approved.

In the 2020/21 academic year, there were 9 requests for additional pre-school places requested in a two mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige through Temporary Flexibility. Of these 9 requests, 5 were approved.

In the 2021/22 academic year, there were 21 requests for additional pre-school places requested in a two mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige through Temporary Flexibility. Of these 21 requests, 2 were approved.

In the 2022/23 academic year, there were 10 requests for additional pre-school places requested in a two mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige through Temporary Flexibility. Of these 10 requests, 2 were approved.

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<sup>7</sup> Additional information added October 2023: This setting returned to the PSEP for the 2023/24 academic year and currently provides 11 funded Irish medium pre-school education places.

The requests that were not approved were not supported by the EA because there was sufficient provision in the area to meet demand and subsequently those additional places were not approved by the Department.

There is one Irish Medium statutory nursery unit in the area, Bunscoil Cholmcille. There has only been one request for Temporary Flexibility in this setting in the past 4 years. The request was for an additional place for a [REDACTED] whose siblings had been placed at Bunscoil Cholmcille in the 2022/23 academic year and the request was approved.

A list of Temporary Flexibility requests in the area is attached at Annex D.

### **7. RECEPTION PROVISION**

Gaelscoil na Daróige does not provide reception places.

No other schools within the two mile radius provide reception places.

### **8. IMPACT ON VOLUNTARY AND PRIVATE SECTOR PROVIDERS**

The PSEP is a partnership between statutory and voluntary/private pre-school education providers and both sectors are equally valued for their contribution to the education of pre-school children. Both sectors adhere to the same curricular guidelines and are inspected to the same educational standards. In considering DPs for statutory provision, careful consideration is given to the impact of any new provision on existing good quality voluntary/private providers in PSEP.

The CfC (page 8) sets out that admissions to Naíscoil na Daróige have been consistent in recent years, with the setting admitting between 22 and 23 children in four of the last five years, the exception being the dip to 16 children in 2021/22. The EA has advised that every child who has applied for a place at the setting in each year received the offer of a place. This suggests that statutory pre-school education provision at the setting could be sustainable, although the historical enrolments to the voluntary playgroup could suggest that the setting may not fill all the proposed additional places with target age children.

As the proposal is to transform the existing voluntary PSEP funded provision to new statutory provision, it is not expected that this would have a significant impact on most other providers in the area, although it is possible that the increased number of pre-school places proposed could displace some existing good quality provision in the area and further increase the level of underage children accessing funded pre-school places. It is possible that the non-statutory provision at Naíscoil Cholmcille could see a drop in demand if the increase in demand that the CfC anticipates for Naiscoil na Daroige were to happen as predicted.

### **9. ENSURING THE BEST USE OF PUBLIC RESOURCES**

In discharging its duties, the Department must seek to avoid unreasonable public expenditure and to make the best use of the resources available to it. In light of this, it aims to maximise available pre-school places for target age children, avoiding over provision and the resulting enrolment of children younger than 3 years and 2 months (underage children) in statutory settings. There have been 194 underage children attending a funded pre-school setting within the two mile radius in the last four years.

As this proposal is to convert the existing non-statutory pre-school provision to statutory provision, it would appear that part of the potential impact of the establishment of a nursery class at the school could be partially mitigated. The voluntary pre-school setting has received sufficient applications to fill its registration of 22-23 places in three of the last four years, however, it has only filled its places on first preference applications in one of those years. The proposed increase in pre-school education places in the area may lead to further underage children accessing statutory pre-school places in the area.

EYT notes that the CfC (page 13) suggests that converting the existing non-statutory pre-school provision to a statutory nursery class could assist the Gaelscoil in increasing their enrolment figures. EYT notes that the enrolment trends of the Naíscoil and Gaelscoil to date demonstrate that not all children who attend the Irish-medium pre-school provision go on to attend the Irish-medium primary school. The CfC (page 8) shows that the approved admissions number is lower than the registration number of the playgroup, and lower than the size of the proposed pre-school class. A table in the CfC (page 11) displays Gaelscoil na Daróige's projected continued growth to 139 pupils by 2025/26 which is fractionally short of the sustainability threshold of 140 pupils.

### **10. CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

The CfC states that the parents of pupils were consulted during February and March 2022. The views are reported in the CfC to have indicated strong, unequivocal support for the proposal. The CfC states that Governors, teachers, trustees and parents alike all feel that this is a necessary step to secure the long-term stability of Irish Medium education in the local area. (CfC page 1)

A pre-publication statutory consultation exercise was also carried out with schools that may be impacted by the proposal in May and June 2022. A total of 60 local schools and pre-school providers were forwarded the correspondence. There were two responses received to this consultation, from Gaelscoil Eadain Mhoir and Naíscoil Dhoire who both supported the proposal on the grounds that it would not have a direct impact on either provider and that it would be to the advantage of Irish Medium education in the city in general. It was also noted that having statutory status and a qualified teacher to teach the pupils could have a positive impact on language acquisition.

### **11. EA COMMENTS**

The EA has advised that, in keeping with its duty to assist the Department's statutory requirement to encourage and facilitate Irish Medium education it supports Development Proposal 685 (CfC Pg5).

The EA PEG also considered the DP in line with guidance provided by DE regarding pre-school education and the statutory duties to encourage and facilitate integrated and Irish-Medium education and advised that it supports the proposal on the basis of demonstrated parental demand as evidenced by the number of 1<sup>st</sup> preferences received for 2022/23 (22 1<sup>st</sup> preferences for 22 places) (CfC Pg5).

The EA PEG did, however, note the following:

- If approved, there would be potential displacement of existing Irish Medium funded non-statutory pre-school provision within the 2 mile radius;
- If approved, there would be the potential for increased uptake of underage children into other statutory nursery provision; and
- If approved, there would be potential for uptake of underage children into the statutory nursery unit at Gaelscoil na Daróige.
- An IM pre-school within a 2 mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige was withdrawn from PSEP for 2022/23 academic year as they failed to meet the minimum requirement of 6 applications. If approved, the new provision would have the potential to impact on the uptake of places in this setting in subsequent years.

## 12. SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

The following summarises the key points taken into consideration

- The current level of provision within the one mile radius has been significantly below the planning figure in each of the last four years, ranging from 44.4% to 52.6%. This would suggest there is under provision of funded pre-school provision in the immediate area. If approved, the level of provision will only increase marginally to 54.4%
- The level of provision at the two mile radii is, however, considerably higher at 108.1%. If approved, the level of provision will increase to 108.7%.
- The proposal is to replace existing non-statutory pre-school education provision with a new statutory part-time nursery unit at Gaelscoil na Daróige;
- The level of provision in both the one and two mile radii indicates that there is sufficient pre-school provision within the Irish-Medium sector.
- An Irish-medium pre-school within a 2 mile radius was withdrawn from PSEP for 2022/23 as they failed to meet the minimum requirement of 6 applications, however, the setting did return to the PSEP for the 2023/24 academic year, demonstrating capacity to respond to changes in demand for Irish medium provision.
- All children in the area, whose parents wanted an IM pre-school place and remained in the admissions process to the end, were offered an IM pre-school place, with the exception of 2 applications in 2020/21 who listed an IM pre-school as their 4th preference.

- There is no compelling evidence that the additional pre-school places requested are required to meet current demand for Irish-Medium provision in the area. IM places have remained available at the end of the admissions process in three of the last four years, with the exception of the current 2022/23 academic year during which an Irish-medium provider was removed from PSEP for not meeting the minimum requirement of 6 applications.
- If additional pre-school places were required, the existing IM pre-school provider has capacity to increase provision to its registration number of 26.
- The evidence available suggests that the additional provision requested could be sustainable, although it could also lead to an increase in the number of underage children accessing statutory pre-school places;
- The current provision is capped at its registration number of 26 children. Transformation to statutory status would facilitate the provision of 26 pre-school places, and up to 30 if temporary flexibility were needed and approved;
- NISRA population projections suggest a decline in the pre-school cohort between 2018 and 2041;
- Under Article 89 of the Education (NI) Order 1998, the Department has a statutory duty to 'encourage and facilitate the development of Irish Medium education'. This duty should be considered alongside the duty under Article 44 of the 1986 Order;
- Pre-school is accessible to all, but Naíscoil na Daróige have filled all of their 22/23 allocated places in three of the last four years which suggests a parental preference in the area for pre-school education delivered through the medium of Irish;
- There is other statutory Irish Medium pre-school education provision within 2 miles, Bunscoil Cholmcille, who filled all 26 places each year;
- EA PEG supports the proposal in the context of the statutory duty to encourage and facilitate the development of Irish Medium education.

### 13. CONCLUSION

It is the Department's practice not to displace, where possible, good quality pre-school provision already in existence with pre-school provision in an alternative setting or management type.

The pattern of applications to the Naíscoil demonstrates that the current level of demand for Irish medium provision is fully catered for by the existing provision, which has capacity to increase the number of places offered to 26, should they be required in future. There is no difference between the capacity of the existing provision which has a registration figure of 26 places and the proposed provision which would be 26 places, and it is not suggested by the CfC that a need for additional capacity is the reason for the proposed change, rather, it is suggested that the reason is to effect a change of management type, from voluntary to statutory, in order to enable the setting to avail of a variety of perceived benefits that are available to statutory pre-school settings.

Whilst the EYT is not satisfied that the case has been made that the proposed change is necessary to meet the requirements of the Pre-School Education Programme, or to meet demand for Irish medium pre-school provision in the area, it recognises the support of others including the EA, which suggest that this proposal is about transformation rather than displacement.

Having considered all the information available, including the enrolments over a number of years, the EYT has concluded that it is unlikely that a statutory unit would significantly impact on other good quality provision in the area any more than the current non-statutory provision already does. It is likely that the provision would be sustainable, although some places, if the provision were approved, may be filled by underage children.

Some of the perceived benefits cited in the CfC relate to the primary school, rather than the provision of pre-school education, and so are outside the remit of EYT. The main factor relating to the provision of pre-school education is the assertion in the CfC that the quality of the education provision would increase as a result of transformation. The CfC (page 14) states that researched commissioned by the Department of Education titled 'Effective Preschool Provision in Northern Ireland' (EPPNI) published in 2010 indicates that children who attend nursery units and nursery schools have higher educational outcomes than children attending voluntary or private settings. This research is now some 13 years old and although it acknowledged there is a negligible difference in attainment of Key Stage 2 Mathematics between statutory and non-statutory sectors ('almost 3 times as likely to attain level 5' for statutory versus 'over twice as likely to attain level 5' for non-statutory), the comparison made in English attainment is not a direct comparison as the comparison was made between two different levels of achievement. Both the voluntary and statutory pre-school sectors are equally valued by the Department for their contribution to the pre-school education of children, with both following common curriculum guidelines and subject to the same education inspection standards.

Based on all the information available, and taking into account the statutory duties placed upon the Department, EYT considers that the proposed change could be considered to be reasonable, although it is not necessary to meet current or projected demand for Irish medium pre-school education in the area. After considering the comments provided by the EA and the consistently high level of applications and enrolments to the existing pre-school provider over a number of years, EYT has concluded that the requested statutory nursery unit would be unlikely to have a detrimental impact on other current pre-school education provision in the area.

It is important to note however that whilst Naíscoil Cholmcille PG was removed from PSEP in 2022/23 for not reaching the minimum requirement of 6 first preference applications, did return to the PSEP for the 2023/24 academic year and therefore could be negatively impacted upon in the event of DP 685 being approved.

It is noted that the overall level of provision within a two radius of Naíscoil na Daróige is above the Department's target figure. However, if the proposal is approved it would only very marginally increase provision in the area (4 places).

The EYT has taken into account all of the inputs made and considers that this proposal is about continuation of existing levels of provision rather than displacement. On balance therefore, EYT considers that the proposal to establish a 26 place part-time statutory nursery unit at Gaelscoil na Daróige is not necessary, but could be deemed reasonable under the relevant statutory duties.

The team notes that, at the time of writing, the pre-school admissions process for the 2023-24 academic year has closed.

### 14. FUTURE POLICY DIRECTION

EYT, in considering options to support Irish medium education in the area, including aiming to meet demand for Irish medium education within the context of area planning and the overall sustainability of the school estate (including examining evidence of expected future demand), have considered whether there may be potential for this provision to be considered to be reasonable in future.

In September 2022 the previous Minister indicated her intention to standardise the session length for funded pre-school education provision. This is in line with both the [Fair Start Report](#), which includes an action that *“DE should standardise the length of pre-school education day to at least 4.5 hours per day, including access to free school meals for eligible children, thereby improving equality of provision”* and the [New Decade New Approach Deal](#) (NDNA) commitment: *“The Executive will publish a Childcare Strategy and will give immediate priority to developing arrangements to deliver extended, affordable, responsive, high quality provision of early education and care initiatives for families with children aged 3-4.”*

Funding has been committed for a Scoping study intended to build an independent evidence base on the current state of the sector in terms of its readiness for standardisation and the potential options, costs and timescales for this. The scoping report will enable the Department to establish, subject to Executive agreement and funding, an implementation plan for the phased roll out of a universal, standardised, funded pre-school session length. It is recognised that implementation will take time, however, it is reasonable to consider the potential impact of pre-school standardisation on this Development Proposal.

The standardisation of pre-school session length will require additional capacity to be created within the pre-school sector across Northern Ireland, although the level of additional capacity required will differ from area to area.



Within the two mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige, there are no afternoon places which would need to be replaced, either through additional classes within existing settings, or new classes in settings that currently do not deliver PSEP provision. There may still need to be additional provision established in the area to facilitate a standardised pre-school session.

In order to ensure that the DE aim of a place for every target-aged child whose parents want it is maintained, the roll out of standardisation will need to be carefully managed in order to ensure that sufficient places are available at every stage of the roll out. While it is not yet possible to provide a timescale, additional provision may be required within the two mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige to support the roll out of a standardised pre-school session length in the area.

As set out above, EYT is unable to conclude that the proposed additional provision at Gaelscoil na Daróige is currently necessary at this time; however in line with the statutory duty and taking into account parental demand for provision of statutory Irish Medium pre-school provision in the area, it would seem reasonable that in due course full time pre-school provision at Gaelscoil na Daróige should be considered in respect of plans for the standardisation of the pre-school session length in the Derry and Strabane area.

The Department is considering options to streamline the development and planning processes to facilitate a smooth transition to a standardised pre-school session length on a phased basis. The information provided in relation to this proposal will be taken into consideration when planning for standardisation in the area. Officials are seeking to minimise the administrative burden on settings wishing to establish new pre-school education provision as part of this process; as such, Gaelscoil na Daróige is not required to take any additional steps in order for the proposal of full time pre-school provision at the school to be considered during the planning for pre-school standardisation.

**Early Years (Pre-School) Team**

**Updated October 2023**

## Annex A

**List of the providers in the one and two mile radii of Gaelscoil na Daróige****One mile radius****Vol/Priv**

|         |                             |
|---------|-----------------------------|
| 2BB0511 | Naíscóil na Daróige         |
| 2AB0043 | Rainbow Child Family Centre |

**Primary School No Nursery Unit**

|         |                            |
|---------|----------------------------|
| 2046687 | Gaelscoil na Daróige       |
| 2036473 | St Eithne's Primary School |
| 2036581 | St Patricks Primary School |

**Primary School With Nursery Unit**

|         |                                     |
|---------|-------------------------------------|
| 2036472 | Holy Family Primary School          |
| 2036227 | St Paul's Primary School Slievemore |

**Two mile radius****Nursery School**

|         |                             |
|---------|-----------------------------|
| 2116345 | Belmont Nursery School      |
| 2116336 | Galliagh Nursery School     |
| 2116267 | Carnhill Nursery School     |
| 2116023 | The Academy Nursery School  |
| 2116266 | Bligh's Lane Nursery School |

**Vol/Priv**

|         |                                 |
|---------|---------------------------------|
| 2AB0040 | St Bernadette's Playgroup*      |
| 2AB0045 | St Joseph's Community Playgroup |
| 2AB0071 | Naíscóil Cholmcille**           |

**Primary School No Nursery Unit**

|         |                           |
|---------|---------------------------|
| 2036069 | St Anne's Primary School  |
| 2036461 | St Therese Primary School |
| 2036032 | St John's Primary School  |

**Primary School With Nursery Unit**

|         |                                   |
|---------|-----------------------------------|
| 2016071 | Greenhaw Primary School           |
| 2036142 | St Brigid's Primary/NurserySchool |
| 2010380 | Londonderry Model Primary School  |
| 2030364 | Rosemount Primary School          |
| 2036084 | Steelstown Primary School         |
| 2036574 | Bunscoil Cholmcille               |
| 2036555 | St Eugene's Primary School        |
| 2030381 | Holy Child Primary School         |

\*Removed themselves from PSEP for 2022/23

\*\*Did not meet minimum enrolment figures for 2022/23

Annex B

**Wards which fall at least partially within a two mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige**

Ballymagroarty

Brandywell

Cairn Hill

City Walls

Creggan

Creggan South

Culmore

Ebrington

Foyle Springs

Galliagh

Madam's Bank

Northland

Shantallow

Shantallow East

Sheriff's Mountain

Skeoge

Springtown

Annex C

**Population statistics and projections**

EYT has considered the NISRA birth rates and population predictions to identify potential future trends.

- Birth statistics by academic year for wards which fall at least partially within a two mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige indicate a decrease of 109 (12.2%) in the pre-school cohort between September 2020 admissions and September 2022 admissions (888 to 779).

A list of the wards considered is attached at Annex B.

- Population projections for three year olds for Derry City and Strabane Local Government District predict an overall decrease of 408 (19.3%) from 2,114 to 1,706 between 2018 and 2043.

These figures suggest that demand is likely to considerably decrease in the longer term; however they cannot fully take into account population migration and other factors, so can only be indicators of the future pre-school population and not an exact prediction of demand.

## Annex D

**Temporary Flexibility**

Belmont Nursery School requested five additional places in 2019/20. The EA PEG recommended that one of these requests should be approved and the other four were not approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area.

Galliagh Nursery School requested one additional place in 2019/20. The EA PEG recommended that this request should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.

Galliagh Nursery School requested four additional places in 2021/22. The EA PEG recommended that one of these requests should be approved and the other three were not approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area.

Holy Family Primary School requested nine additional places in 2019/20. The EA PEG recommended that seven of these requests should be approved and the other two were not approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area.

Holy Family Primary School requested eight additional places in 2021/22. The EA PEG recommended that all eight of these requests should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.

St Brigid's Primary/Nursery School requested four additional places in 2019/20. The EA PEG recommended that all four of these requests should be approved.

St Brigid's Primary/Nursery School also requested four additional places in 2020/21. The EA PEG recommended that all four of these requests should be approved.

St Brigid's Primary/Nursery School requested four additional places in 2021/22. The EA PEG recommended that all four of these requests should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.

St Brigid's Primary/Nursery School requested three additional places in 2022/23. The EA PEG recommended that all three of these requests should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.

Rosemount Primary School requested eight additional places in 2019/20. The EA PEG recommended that all eight of these requests should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.

Rosemount Primary School also requested one additional place in 2020/21. The EA PEG recommended that this request should be approved.

Steelstown Primary School requested four additional places in 2019/20. The EA PEG recommended that all four of these requests should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.

Steelstown Primary School also requested four additional places in 2020/21. The EA PEG recommended that all four of these requests should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.

Steelstown Primary School requested five additional places in 2021/22. The EA PEG recommended that one of these requests should be approved and the other four were not approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area.

Steelstown Primary School also requested five additional places in 2022/23. The EA PEG recommended that all five of these requests should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.

St Eugene's Primary School requested five additional places in 2019/20. The EA PEG recommended that one of these requests should be approved and the other four were not approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area.

St Eugene's Primary School requested one additional place in 2022/23. The EA PEG recommended that this request should be approved.

Bunscoil Cholmcille requested one additional place in 2022/23. The EA PEG recommended that this request should be approved.

**INPUT FROM EARLY YEARS TEAM ON DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL No 685 (03/07/23)**

**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL No 685 – IT IS PROPOSED TO ESTABLISH A STATUTORY 26 PLACE PART-TIME IRISH MEDIUM NURSERY UNIT AT GAELSCOIL NA DARÓIGE WITH EFFECT FROM 1 SEPTEMBER 2023 OR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THEREAFTER**

- 15. Introduction**
- 16. Background**
- 17. Level of need for pre-school education provision**
- 18. Irish Medium education**
- 19. Recent changes in provision**
- 20. Temporary flexibility**
- 21. Reception Provision**
- 22. Impact on voluntary and private sector providers**
- 23. Ensuring the best use of public resources**
- 24. Consultation responses**
- 25. EA comments**
- 26. Summary of key points**
- 27. Conclusion**
- 28. Future Policy Direction**



**INPUT FROM EARLY YEARS TEAM ON DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL No 685****ESTABLISHMENT OF A STATUTORY 26 PLACE PART-TIME IRISH MEDIUM NURSERY UNIT AT GAELSCOIL NA DARÓIGE WITH EFFECT FROM 1 SEPTEMBER 2023 OR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THEREAFTER****15. INTRODUCTION**

At the request of the Board of Governors of Gaelscoil na Daróige, the Education Authority (EA) has published Development Proposal Number 685, proposing that a statutory 26 place part-time Irish Medium Nursery Unit be established from 1 September 2023 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Gaelscoil na Daróige is a multi-denominational Irish Medium primary school which was established in 2005. It is located at 12 Coshquinn Road, Ballymagroarty, Co Derry and attracts pupils from the town of Ballymagroarty and the surrounding areas.

Naíscoil na Daróige is a voluntary (non-statutory) PSEP funded playgroup which is located on the same site as Gaelscoil na Daróige. The playgroup is registered for 26 children<sup>8</sup> and has been allocated 22 funded pre-school education places for the 2022/23 academic year. The CfC states that the proposal is to transform the current voluntary playgroup into a 26 part-time place statutory nursery unit within Gaelscoil na Daróige.

**16. BACKGROUND**

A previous Development Proposal (DP No 454) requesting statutory nursery provision at Gaelscoil na Daróige was not approved in 2016. The CfC for the current Development Proposal seeks the same statutory nursery provision as previously requested, that is 26 part time Irish Medium pre-school education places. The current proposal has been considered against the current context, and so reflects changes and updated information since the previous DP, including changes to the pattern of pre-school applications and the overall level of provision in the area.

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<sup>8</sup> Source: EA - DP 685 Case for Change page 6

The CfC (page 14) for DP No 685 advises that the reason for the proposal is primarily to improve the educational experience and outcomes for those attending Irish Medium pre-school provision in Ballymagroarty area and also to contribute towards the long-term sustainability of Irish Medium primary provision, including helping Gaelscoil na Daróige reach and exceed the sustainability threshold of 140 pupils by 2025/26 (CfC page 13). The CfC (page 13) also states that the creation of the statutory Naíscoil would contribute to the long-term viability and expansion of the Gaelscoil but also at the local Irish-medium post-primary Gaelcholáiste Dhoire in Dungiven.

The CfC (page 14) also claims that another benefit is that a single management structure for the Naíscoil and Gaelscoil would lead to enhanced collaboration between Foundation Stage staff in the Gaelscoil and staff in the Naíscoil in curriculum planning and teaching structured to ensure continuity in order to achieve the highest possible educational outcomes for the children. The CfC (page 15) claims that there are additional services associated with statutory status that those preparing the CfC consider current voluntary provision does not have access to, although these services are not detailed.

The CfC (page 15) also states that the the Effective Preschool Provision in Northern Ireland (EPPNI) (DENI 2010) research indicates that increased educational outcomes are produced by a statutory preschool experience.

The CfC (page 16) for DP 685 advises that the April 2023 NI Assembly Research paper 'Early Years Provision' states that there is strong correlation between higher staff qualification and better outcomes for children, and links this to the employment of a qualified teacher in statutory pre-school provision. The Department has previously stated that voluntary groups can employ a qualified teacher, or a pre-school leader with equivalent qualifications however the CfC (page 16) advises that this is not possible on a financial basis.

The CfC (page 15) also states that Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta advises parents to send their children to a nursery setting for two years (equivalent to one year full-time) in order to better pick up the target language. The CfC (page 16) also suggests that longer hours are afforded to statutory provision and that these 'longer hours' allow the child a greater exposure to the target language. The PSEP is intended to provide one year of funded pre-

school education for every child whose parents want it, whether they attend a statutory or non-statutory pre-school education provider. The minimum requirement for a part-time pre-school session is 2.5 hours which is the same for both non-statutory and statutory settings.

Both the voluntary and statutory pre-school sectors are equally valued by the Department for their contribution to the pre-school education of children, with both following common curriculum guidelines and subject to the same education inspection standards.

The CfC (page 16) has stated that a belief that the permanent employment of a qualified teacher will also improve the ability of the setting to identify and cater for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN). The CfC states that children with SEN will benefit from access to outreach supports available to statutory settings which are not available to the voluntary setting Naíscoil na Daróige. The CfC (page 17) suggests that it is anticipated that the need for SEN services will increase due to the added pressures that Covid pandemic created.

The CfC (page 8) also points to the steady admissions numbers of the existing voluntary playgroup over the last 5 years as evidence of parental preference for Irish Medium pre-school provision in the Ballymagroarty area, with the exception of 2021/22 when it dipped which the CfC (page 8) attributes to the impact of Covid 19.

The existing voluntary playgroup and Gaelscoil na Daróige are currently located on the same site, which the CfC (page 7 and 11) advises has been recently expanded because of DE investment by acquiring further land beside the school. The CFC (page 14) also states that the committee of the voluntary Naíscoil have agreed to the Gaelscoil's Board of Governors submitting this new Development Proposal.

**Relevant Policies, Practices and Duties**

The main policies, practices and duties relevant to this proposal are:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>The aim of the Pre-school Education Programme is to provide a funded pre-school</p> | <p>The CfC focuses on the associated benefits of providing statutory pre-school provision and a parental preference for Irish medium pre-school places, rather than unmet demand for pre-school education provision generally. The EA has also advised that</p> |
|--|---|

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>education place for every target age child whose family want it.</p>                 | <p>sufficient provision exists to meet current demand for pre-school places in the area.</p> <p>This is considered in more detail below.</p>  |
| <p>Learning to Learn – A Framework for Early Years Education and Learning</p>           | <p>Published on 7 October 2013, among its key actions is a moratorium on any new or additional full-time provision or conversion from part-time to full-time (defined as over 4.5 hours) in advance of a review of the current levels of full-time provision, existing research and the needs of children being served by it. This proposal is in line with the current moratorium.</p>   |
| <p>Encourage and facilitate the development of Irish Medium education</p>               | <p>Under Article 89 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 the Department has a statutory duty to encourage and facilitate the development of Irish-medium Education. Registered Irish-medium providers with sufficient children can be funded under the Department’s Pre-School Education Programme even where English-medium provision is available in the area. This duty is considered in more detail below.</p>  |
| <p>Displacement of good quality pre-school education provision already in existence</p> | <p>It is the Department’s practice, where possible, not to displace good quality pre-school education provision already in existence with pre-school education provision in an alternative setting. As this DP is for pre-school provision at an Irish Medium primary school, it is considered in the context of DE’s statutory duty. The potential impact of this proposal on existing provision is considered in more detail below.</p>                             |
| <p>Ensuring the best use of public resources</p>  | <p>In discharging its duties, the Department must seek to avoid unreasonable public expenditure and to make the best use of the resources available to it. In light of this, it aims to fill available pre-school education provision as far as possible with target age children, avoiding over provision and the resulting enrolment of children under 3 years and 2 months (underage children) in statutory settings. This is considered in more detail below.</p> |
| <p>Reception provision</p>  | <p>A key action under the Learning to Learning framework is the removal of reception provision. Gaelscoil na Daróige does not have reception provision. In each of the last four years there have been settings within the five mile radius that have provided reception places. This is considered in more detail below.</p>   |
| <p>Standardisation</p>  | <p>In September 2022, the then-Minister for Education announced her intention to standardise the funded pre-school education session length to 4.5 hours per day (22.5 hours per week for 38 weeks of the academic year) to all target aged pupils as part of the proposed Executive’s Early Learning and Childcare Strategy.</p>   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | Implementation of a standardised session length will be on a phased basis and subject to Executive agreement and funding. |
|--|---|

**17. LEVEL OF NEED FOR PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION PROVISION**

In determining the need for pre-school education provision, the Department generally assumes a level of provision at 95% of target age children, predicated on the application rate for pre-school education places, which is c.92%; however the level of provision within local areas may be higher or lower, based on historic patterns of demand and assessment of ongoing need.

The current level of pre-school education provision within both a two-mile and five-mile radius of the school is used as an indicator of current capacity to meet need for pre-school education provision and is considered alongside other factors such as population projections to determine the likely future need for additional pre-school education provision in the area.

The number of pre-school education places and associated percentages are measured against the Year One enrolments for the 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 academic years using school census data.

The analysis of provision below is based on the discontinuation of the part-time funded places currently provided in the voluntary playgroup, and the introduction of 26 part-time statutory nursery places as proposed.

The statistical information available in relation to the level of funded pre-school education provision is as follows:-

**Level of Provision – two mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige.**

**Table 1**

| Year | Statutory places | Non-statutory places | Reception places | Total pre-school provision | P1 places | Level of pre-school provision (%age of P1 places) | Underage children in statutory places |
|------|------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------------------|-----------|---|---------------------------------------|
|------|------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------------------|-----------|---|---------------------------------------|

## Appendix E

|          |     |    |   |     |     |        |    |
|----------|-----|----|---|-----|-----|--------|----|
| 2019/20  | 676 | 90 | 0 | 766 | 739 | 103.7% | 19 |
| 2020/21  | 676 | 77 | 0 | 753 | 767 | 98.2%  | 55 |
| 2021/22  | 676 | 71 | 0 | 747 | 715 | 104.5% | 50 |
| 2022/23* | 676 | 58 | 0 | 734 | 679 | 108.1% | 70 |
| Proposed | 702 | 36 | 0 | 738 | 679 | 108.7% | -  |

Source: School Census

The level of pre-school education provision within a two mile radius has been above the planning figure of 95% in all of the last four years and would further increase to 108.7% provision after the proposed change. There have also been significant numbers of penultimate aged children enrolled in statutory pre-school provision, further suggesting over provision in the area.

The EA PEG has advised that two children living in the area remained unplaced at the end of the pre-school admissions process for 2021/22, suggesting that there may have been some under provision, however neither of these children applied for an Irish-medium pre-school place, and Naíscoil na Daróige had capacity to accept additional children had they applied. There were 5 unplaced children in the area in 2020/21 and 1 in 2019/20, and PEG has indicated that several English-medium providers as well as Naíscoil na Daróige had capacity to increase the number of places offered, should this be required. In 2020/21, 2 of the 5 unplaced applicants listed an Irish medium pre-school as their 4<sup>th</sup> preference and the 1 unplaced child in 2019/20 did not select any Irish medium pre-schools as a preference. Overall, this suggests that the level of provision is currently sufficient to meet demand for pre-school provision for both English and Irish medium pre-school education provision.

### Level of Provision – five mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige.

**Table 2**

| Year    | Statutory places | Non-statutory places | Reception places * | Total pre-school provision | P1 places | Level of pre-school provision (%age of P1 places) | Underage children in statutory places |
|---------|------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|-----------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 2019/20 | 1248             | 127                  | 2                  | 1375                       | 1372      | 100.2%  | 62                                    |
| 2020/21 | 1248             | 114                  | 3                  | 1362                       | 1363      | 99.9%   | 77                                    |

|          |      |     |   |      |      |        |     |
|----------|------|-----|---|------|------|--------|-----|
| 2021/22  | 1248 | 107 | 1 | 1355 | 1328 | 102.0% | 86  |
| 2022/23  | 1248 | 94  | 5 | 1342 | 1302 | 103.1% | 102 |
| Proposed | 1274 | 72  | - | 1346 | 1302 | 103.4% | -   |

Source: School Census

\*Although reception provision is included in Table 2 above, it is not included in the total pre-school provision figures as reception is not part of the PSEP.

The level of provision within the five mile radius has been above the planning figure in each of the last four years. There have also been very high levels of underage children in each of the last four years. If approved, the proposed level of pre-school education provision within the five mile radius would increase to 103.4%, which is above the planning figure. Overall, this would suggest that there is more than adequate pre-school provision in the area.

A list of the providers in the two and five mile radii is attached at Annex A.

## **18. IRISH MEDIUM EDUCATION**

### **Context**

Under Article 89 of the Education (NI) Order 1998, the Department has a statutory duty to 'encourage and facilitate the development of Irish Medium Education'. The duty under the 1998 Order must be considered alongside the duty under Article 44 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 (the Department and boards shall have regard to the general principle that, so far as is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure, pupils shall be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents). It is important that the Department strives to meet demonstrated parental preference in an area for pre-school education at grant-maintained and controlled Irish Medium primary schools. In discharging these duties it is essential that the Department does not inadvertently constrain the development of Irish Medium education.

All funded pre-school education settings regardless of location and management type are accessible to children from all backgrounds and are subject to the same inspection standards. All pre-school education settings follow the same curricular guidance the broad framework of which ensures equality of opportunity, pointing to staff acknowledging and respecting the culture, beliefs and lifestyles of the families of all children. However, it is acknowledged that parents state preferences for pre-school education provision taking into

account a wide range of factors, and in some cases parents may have a preference for pre-school education delivered through the medium of the Irish language, and this is taken into account in the Early Years Team (EYT) advice. Registered Irish-medium providers with sufficient children can be funded under the Department's Pre-School Education Programme even where English-medium provision is available in the area.

### Irish Medium Education in the area

As well as the voluntary pre-school provision at Nailscoil na Daróige, there are two statutory Irish-medium pre-school education settings within the local area, Bunscoil Cholmcille within a 2 mile radius and Gaelscoil Eadain Mhoir within a 5 mile radius. A local non-statutory Irish-medium provider, Naíscoil Cholmcille, has been withdrawn from PSEP for the 2022/23 academic year as they failed to meet the minimum requirement of 6 applications.

The CfC sets out that the number of admissions to the pre-school provision at Naíscoil na Daróige has been between 16-23 in each of the last five years (CfC Table D Pg.8). This is an increase since DP 454 was submitted, when the Naíscoil had admitted between 10-17 children in the previous three years. This suggests that parents in the area may have a preference for Irish medium pre-school education provision, and that demand may be increasing.

The table below shows that the number of first preference applications to the setting has varied over the last four years (although the overall number of children admitted has stayed quite level), and every child whose parents wanted an Irish-medium pre-school place for them was offered an Irish-medium pre-school place each year.

**Table 3 – 1<sup>st</sup> Preference Application Rates for Naíscoil na Daróige**

| Year    | Number of 1 <sup>st</sup> Preference Applications at End of Admissions Process | Total Number of Target Age Children Admitted to Funded Place |
|---------|--|--|
| 2019/20 | 16   | 22 (PAN 22)  |
| 2020/21 | 22   | 23 (PAN 23)  |
| 2021/22 | 14   | 16 (PAN 23)  |
| 2022/23 | 22   | 22 (PAN 22)  |

Source: School Census & Education Authority



**Table 4 - Level of Irish-medium pre-school education provision – five mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige**

The statistical information available in relation to the level of Irish-medium funded pre-school provision is as follows:

**Table 4**

| Year               | Statutory places | Non-statutory places in IM settings | Reception places | Total pre-school provision (ex reception) | P1 places | Level of pre-school provision (%age of P1 places) | Underage children in statutory places |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|---|-----------|---|---------------------------------------|
| <b>2019/20</b>     | 52               | 36                                  | 0                | 88  | 69        | 127.5%  | 0                                     |
| <b>2020/21</b>     | 52               | 37                                  | 0                | 89  | 68        | 130.9%  | 0                                     |
| <b>2021/22</b>     | 52               | 27                                  | 0                | 79  | 71        | 111.3%  | 0                                     |
| <b>2022/23</b>     | 52               | 22                                  | 0                | 74  | 54        | 137.0%  | 6                                     |
| <b>As Proposed</b> | 78               | 0                                   | 0                | 78  | 54        | 144.4%  | -                                     |

Source: School Census Data

The proposed level of Irish Medium provision has been significantly higher than the target figure of 95% in each of the last four years, which suggests there is over provision in the area, which would increase further if the proposal were approved. This is supported by the fact that every child whose parents selected an Irish-medium pre-school as their first preference in each of the last three years was offered an Irish-medium place, and the Naíscoil had capacity to increase provision in each year, had it been needed. A non-statutory Irish-medium pre-school setting (Naíscoil Cholmcille) were removed from the PSEP programme in the 2022/23 academic year for not reaching the minimum enrolment figures and there were also 6 underage pupils given a funded place in Gaelscoil Eadain Mhoir in that same academic year. This data would further reinforce that there is already significant over-provision of funded Irish-medium pre-school education provision in the area.

## **19. RECENT CHANGES IN PROVISION**

Naíscoil Cholmcille, an Irish-medium pre-school within a 2 mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige, has been withdrawn from PSEP for the 2022/23 academic year as they failed to meet the minimum requirement of 6 applications. They are included as a PSEP provider in the admissions process for the 2023/24 academic year and have an admissions number of 10 with 8 first preference applications received at stage 1 of the admissions process.

## **20. TEMPORARY FLEXIBILITY**

In the 2019/20 academic year there were a total of 51 requests for additional pre-school places requested in a five mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige through Temporary Flexibility. Of these 51 requests, 19 were approved.

In the 2020/21 academic year, there were 22 requests for additional pre-school places requested in a five mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige through Temporary Flexibility. Of these 22 requests, 5 were approved.

In the 2021/22 academic year, there were 35 requests for additional pre-school places requested in a five mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige through Temporary Flexibility. Of these 35 requests, 2 were approved.

In the 2022/23 academic year, there were 16 requests for additional pre-school places requested in a five mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige through Temporary Flexibility. Of these 16 requests, 2 were approved.

The requests that were not approved were not supported by the EA because there was sufficient provision in the area to meet demand and subsequently those additional places were not approved by the Department.

There are two Irish Medium statutory nursery units in the area, Bunscoil Cholmcille and Gaelscoil Eadain Mhoir. There has only been one request for Temporary Flexibility in either of these settings in the past 4 years. The request was for an additional place for a [REDACTED] whose siblings had been placed at Bunscoil Cholmcille in the 2022/23 academic year and the request was approved.

A list of Temporary Flexibility requests in the area is attached at Annex D.

## **21. RECEPTION PROVISION**

Gaelscoil na Daróige does not provide reception places.

St Columba's Primary School had 2 reception pupils in 2019/20, 3 in 2020/21, 1 in 2021/22 and 5 in 2022/23.

## **22. IMPACT ON VOLUNTARY AND PRIVATE SECTOR PROVIDERS**

The PSEP is a partnership between statutory and voluntary/private pre-school education providers and both sectors are equally valued for their contribution to the education of pre-school children. Both sectors adhere to the same curricular guidelines and are inspected to the same educational standards. In considering DPs for statutory provision, careful consideration is given to the impact of any new provision on existing good quality voluntary/private providers in PSEP.

The CfC (page 8) sets out that admissions to Naíscoil na Daróige have been consistent in recent years, with the setting admitting between 22 and 23 children in four of the last five years, the exception being the dip to 16 children in 2021/22. The EA has advised that every child who has applied for a place at the setting in each year received the offer of a place. This suggests that statutory pre-school education provision at the setting could be sustainable, although the historical enrolments to the voluntary playgroup could suggest that the setting may not fill all the proposed additional places with target age children.

As the proposal is to transform the existing voluntary PSEP funded provision to new statutory provision, it is not expected that this would have a significant impact on most other providers in the area, although it is possible that the increased number of pre-school places proposed could displace some existing good quality provision in the area and further increase the level of underage children accessing funded pre-school places. It is possible that the non-statutory provision at Naíscoil Cholmcille could see a drop in demand if the increase in demand that the CfC anticipates were to happen as predicted.

## **23. ENSURING THE BEST USE OF PUBLIC RESOURCES**

In discharging its duties, the Department must seek to avoid unreasonable public expenditure and to make the best use of the resources available to it. In light of this, it aims to maximise available pre-school places for target age children, avoiding over provision and the resulting enrolment of children younger than 3 years and 2 months (underage children) in statutory settings. There have been 327 underage children attending a funded pre-school setting within the five mile radius in the last four years.

As this proposal is to convert the existing non-statutory pre-school provision to statutory provision, it would appear that part of the potential impact of the establishment of a nursery class at the school could be partially mitigated. The voluntary pre-school setting has received sufficient applications to fill its registration of 22-23 places in three of the last four years, however, it has only filled its places on first preference applications in one of those years. The proposed increase in pre-school education places in the area may lead to further underage children accessing statutory pre-school places in the area.

EYT notes that the CfC (page 13) suggests that converting the existing non-statutory pre-school provision to a statutory nursery class could assist the Gaelscoil in increasing their enrolment figures. EYT notes that the enrolment trends of the Naíscoil and Gaelscoil to date demonstrate that not all children who attend the Irish-medium pre-school provision go on to attend the Irish-medium primary school. The CfC (page 8) shows that the approved admissions number is lower than the registration number of the playgroup, and lower than the size of the proposed pre-school class. A table in the CfC (page 11) displays Gaelscoil na Daróige's projected continued growth to 139 pupils by 2025/26 which is fractionally short of the sustainability threshold of 140 pupils.

## 24. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The CfC states that the parents of pupils were consulted during February and March 2022. The views are reported in the CfC to have indicated strong, unequivocal support for the proposal. The CfC states that Governors, teachers, trustees and parents alike all feel that this is a necessary step to secure the long-term stability of Irish Medium education in the local area. (CfC page 1)

A pre-publication statutory consultation exercise was also carried out with schools that may be impacted by the proposal in May and June 2022. A total of 60 local schools and pre-school providers were forwarded the correspondence. There were two responses received to this consultation, from Gaelscoil Eadain Mhoir and Naíscoil Dhoire who both supported

the proposal on the grounds that it would not have a direct impact on either provider and that it would be to the advantage of Irish Medium education in the city in general. It was also noted that having statutory status and a qualified teacher to teach the pupils could have a positive impact on language acquisition.

## **25. EA COMMENTS**

The EA has advised that, in keeping with its duty to assist the Department's statutory requirement to encourage and facilitate Irish Medium education it supports Development Proposal 685 (CfC Pg5).

The EA PEG also considered the DP in line with guidance provided by DE regarding pre-school education and the statutory duties to encourage and facilitate integrated and Irish-Medium education and advised that it supports the proposal on the basis of demonstrated parental demand as evidenced by the number of 1<sup>st</sup> preferences received for 2022/23 (22 1<sup>st</sup> preferences for 22 places) (CfC Pg5).

The EA PEG did, however, note the following:

- If approved, there would be potential displacement of existing Irish Medium funded non-statutory pre-school provision within the 2 mile radius;
- If approved, there would be the potential for increased uptake of underage children into other statutory nursery provision; and
- If approved, there would be potential for uptake of underage children into the statutory nursery unit at Gaelscoil na Daróige.
- An IM pre-school within a 2 mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige was withdrawn from PSEP for 2022/23 academic year as they failed to meet the minimum requirement of 6 applications. If approved, the new provision would have the potential to impact on the uptake of places in this setting in subsequent years.

## **26. SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS**

The following summarises the key points taken into consideration

- The current level of provision within both the two mile and five mile radii are currently higher than the planning figures (108.1% at two miles and 103.1% at five miles). If approved, the level of provision will increase to 108.7% and 103.4% respectively;
- The proposal is to replace existing non-statutory pre-school education provision with a new statutory part-time nursery unit at Gaelscoil na Daróige;
- The level of provision in both the two and five mile radii indicates that there is sufficient pre-school provision within the Irish-Medium sector.
- An Irish-medium pre-school within a 2 mile radius was withdrawn from PSEP for 2022/23 as they failed to meet the minimum requirement of 6 applications, however, they have received 8 first preference applications for the 2023/24 academic year.
- All children in the area, whose parents wanted an IM pre-school place and remained in the admissions process to the end, were offered an IM pre-school place, with the exception of 2 applications in 2020/21 who listed an IM pre-school as their 4th preference.
- There is no compelling evidence that the additional pre-school places requested are required to meet current demand for Irish-Medium provision in the area. IM places have remained available at the end of the admissions process in three of the last four years, with the exception of the current 2022/23 academic year during which an Irish-medium provider was removed from PSEP for not meeting the minimum requirement of 6 applications.
- If additional pre-school places were required, the existing IM pre-school provider has capacity to increase provision to its registration number of 26.
- The evidence available suggests that the additional provision requested could be sustainable, although it could also lead to an increase in the number of underage children accessing statutory pre-school places;
- The current provision is capped at its registration number of 26 children. Transformation to statutory status would facilitate the provision of 26 pre-school places, and up to 30 if temporary flexibility were needed and approved;
- NISRA population projections suggest a decline in the pre-school cohort between 2018 and 2041;
- Under Article 89 of the Education (NI) Order 1998, the Department has a statutory duty to 'encourage and facilitate the development of Irish Medium education'. This duty should be considered alongside the duty under Article 44 of the 1986 Order;
- Pre-school is accessible to all, but Naíscoil na Daróige have filled all of their 22/23 allocated places in three of the last four years which suggests a parental preference in the area for pre-school education delivered through the medium of Irish;

- There is other Irish Medium pre-school education provision within 2 and 5 miles, Bunscoil Cholmcille and Gaelscoil Eadain Mhoir, who both fill all 26 places each year;
- EA PEG supports the proposal in the context of the statutory duty to encourage and facilitate the development of Irish Medium education.

## **27. CONCLUSION**

It is the Department's practice not to displace, where possible, good quality pre-school provision already in existence with pre-school provision in an alternative setting or management type.

The pattern of applications to the Naíscoil demonstrates that the current level of demand for Irish medium provision is fully catered for by the existing provision, which has capacity to increase the number of places offered to 26, should they be required in future. There is no difference between the capacity of the existing provision which has a registration figure of 26 places and the proposed provision which would be 26 places, and it is not suggested by the CfC that a need for additional capacity is the reason for the proposed change, rather, it is suggested that the reason is to effect a change of management type, from voluntary to statutory, in order to enable the setting to avail of a variety of perceived benefits that are available to statutory pre-school settings.

Whilst the EYT is not satisfied that the case has been made that the proposed change is necessary to meet the requirements of the Pre-School Education Programme, or to meet demand for Irish medium pre-school provision in the area, it recognises the support of others including the EA, which suggest that this proposal is about transformation rather than displacement.

Having considered all the information available, including the enrolments over a number of years, the EYT has concluded that it is unlikely that a statutory unit would significantly impact on other good quality provision in the area any more than the current non-statutory provision already does. It is likely that the provision would be sustainable, although some places, if the provision were approved, may be filled by underage children.

Some of the perceived benefits cited in the CfC relate to the primary school, rather than the provision of pre-school education, and so are outside the remit of EYT. The main factor relating to the provision of pre-school education is the assertion in the CfC that the quality of the education provision would increase as a result of transformation. The CfC (page 14) states that researched commissioned by the Department of Education titled 'Effective Preschool Provision in Northern Ireland' (EPPNI) published in 2010 indicates that children who attend nursery units and nursery schools have higher educational outcomes than children attending voluntary or private settings. This research is now some 13 years old and although it acknowledged there is a negligible difference in attainment of Key Stage 2 Mathematics between statutory and non-statutory sectors ('almost 3 times as likely to attain level 5' for statutory versus 'over twice as likely to attain level 5' for non-statutory), the comparison made in English attainment is not a direct comparison as the comparison was made between two different levels of achievement. Both the voluntary and statutory pre-school sectors are equally valued by the Department for their contribution to the pre-school education of children, with both following common curriculum guidelines and subject to the same education inspection standards.

Based on all the information available, and taking into account the statutory duties placed upon the Department, EYT considers that the proposed change could be considered to be reasonable, although it is not necessary to meet current or projected demand for Irish medium pre-school education in the area. After considering the comments provided by the EA and the consistently high level of applications and enrolments to the existing pre-school provider over a number of years, EYT has concluded that the requested statutory nursery unit would be unlikely to have a detrimental impact on other current pre-school education provision in the area.

It is important to note however that whilst Naíscoil Cholmcille PG was removed from PSEP in 2022/23 for not reaching the minimum requirement of 6 first preference applications, it has received 8 first preference applications for the 2023/24 academic year and therefore could be negatively impacted upon in the event of DP 685 being approved.

It is noted that the overall level of provision within a two and five mile radius of Naíscoil na Daróige is above the Department's target figure. However, if the proposal is approved it would only very marginally increase provision in the area (4 places).



The EYT has taken into account all of the inputs made and considers that this proposal is about continuation of existing levels of provision rather than displacement. On balance therefore, EYT considers that the proposal to establish a 26 place part-time statutory nursery unit at Gaelscoil na Daróige is not necessary, but could be deemed reasonable under the relevant statutory duties.

The team notes that, at the time of writing, the pre-school admissions process for the 2023-24 academic year has closed.

### **28. FUTURE POLICY DIRECTION**

EYT, in considering options to support integrated education in the area, including aiming to meet demand for integrated education within the context of area planning and the overall sustainability of the school estate (including examining evidence of expected future demand), have considered whether there may be potential for this provision to be considered to be reasonable in future.

In September 2022 the previous Minister indicated her intention to standardise the session length for funded pre-school education provision. This is in line with both the Fair Start Report, which includes an action that *“DE should standardise the length of pre-school education day to at least 4.5 hours per day, including access to free school meals for eligible children, thereby improving equality of provision”* and the New Decade New Approach Deal (NDNA) commitment: *“The Executive will publish a Childcare Strategy and will give immediate priority to developing arrangements to deliver extended, affordable, responsive, high quality provision of early education and care initiatives for families with children aged 3-4.”*

Funding has been committed for a Scoping study intended to build an independent evidence base on the current state of the sector in terms of its readiness for standardisation and the potential options, costs and timescales for this. The scoping report will enable the Department to establish, subject to Executive agreement and funding, an implementation plan for the phased roll out of a universal, standardised, funded pre-school session length. It is recognised that implementation will take time, however, it is reasonable to consider the potential impact of pre-school standardisation on this Development Proposal.

The standardisation of pre-school session length will require additional capacity to be created within the pre-school sector across Northern Ireland, although the level of additional capacity required will differ from area to area.

Within the 5 mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige, there are 78 afternoon places (Annex E) that will no longer be available following standardisation and which may need to be replaced, either through additional classes within existing settings, or new classes in settings that currently do not deliver PSEP provision. If these classes were removed from the 5 mile radius level of pre-school provision as set out above, the level of provision would reduce to 97.4%

In order to ensure that the DE aim of a place for every target-aged child whose parents want it is maintained, the roll out of standardisation will need to be carefully managed in order to ensure that sufficient places are available at every stage of the roll out. While it is not yet possible to provide a timescale, additional provision may be required within the five mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige to support the roll out of a standardised pre-school session length in the area.

As set out above, EYT is unable to conclude that the proposed additional provision at Gaelscoil na Daróige is currently necessary at this time; however in line with the statutory duty and taking into account parental demand for provision of statutory Irish Medium pre-school provision in the area, it would seem reasonable that in due course full time pre-school provision at Gaelscoil na Daróige should be considered in respect of plans for the standardisation of the pre-school session length in the Derry and Strabane area.

The Department is considering options to streamline the development and planning processes to facilitate a smooth transition to a standardised pre-school session length on a phased basis. The information provided in relation to this proposal will be taken into consideration when planning for standardisation in the area. Officials are seeking to minimise the administrative burden on settings wishing to establish new pre-school education provision as part of this process; as such, Gaelscoil na Daróige is not required to take any additional steps in order for the proposal of full time pre-school provision at the school to be considered during the planning for pre-school standardisation.

**List of the providers in the two and five mile radii of Gaelscoil na Daróige****Two mile radius****Nursery School**

|         |                             |
|---------|-----------------------------|
| 2116345 | Belmont Nursery School      |
| 2116336 | Galliagh Nursery School     |
| 2116267 | Carnhill Nursery School     |
| 2116023 | The Academy Nursery School  |
| 2116266 | Bligh's Lane Nursery School |

**Vol/Priv**

|         |                                 |
|---------|---------------------------------|
| 2BB0511 | Naíscóil na Daróige             |
| 2AB0040 | St Bernadette's Playgroup*      |
| 2AB0043 | Rainbow Child Family Centre     |
| 2AB0045 | St Joseph's Community Playgroup |
| 2AB0071 | Naíscóil Cholmcille**           |

**Primary School No Nursery Unit**

|         |                            |
|---------|----------------------------|
| 2046687 | Gaelscoil na Daróige       |
| 2036473 | St Eithne's Primary School |
| 2036581 | St Patricks Primary School |
| 2036069 | St Anne's Primary School   |
| 2036461 | St Therese Primary School  |
| 2036032 | St John's Primary School   |

**Primary School With Nursery Unit**

|         |                                     |
|---------|-------------------------------------|
| 2036472 | Holy Family Primary School          |
| 2036227 | St Paul's Primary School Slievemore |
| 2016071 | Greenhaw Primary School             |
| 2036142 | St Brigid's Primary/NurserySchool   |

|         |                                  |
|---------|----------------------------------|
| 2010380 | Londonderry Model Primary School |
| 2030364 | Rosemount Primary School         |
| 2036084 | Steelstown Primary School        |
| 2036574 | Bunscoil Cholmcille              |
| 2036555 | St Eugene's Primary School       |
| 2030381 | Holy Child Primary School        |

**Five mile radius**

**Nursery School**

|         |                            |
|---------|----------------------------|
| 2116348 | Trench Road Nursery School |
| 2116233 | Lisnagelvin Nursery School |
| 2116232 | Strathfoyle Nursery School |

**Vol/Priv**

|         |                                 |
|---------|---------------------------------|
| 2BB0565 | Chapel Road Community Playgroup |
| 2BB0448 | Drumahoe Community Pre-School   |

**Primary School With Nursery Unit**

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| 2046646 | Gaelscoil Eadain Mhoir                          |
| 2036475 | Longtower Primary School                        |
| 2016564 | Fountain Primary School                         |
| 2066558 | Oakgrove Integrated Primary School              |
| 2030373 | Nazareth House Primary School                   |
| 2036288 | Good Shepherd Primary School and Nursery School |
| 2010382 | Ebrington Primary and Nursery School            |
| 2036533 | Hollybush Primary School                        |
| 2016124 | Ashlea Primary School                           |
| 2012261 | Newbuildings Primary School                     |
| 2032212 | Glendermott Primary School                      |

**Primary School No Nursery Unit**

|         |                                   |
|---------|-----------------------------------|
| 2036465 | Chapel Road Primary School        |
| 2016203 | Lisnagelvin Primary School        |
| 2036259 | Sacred Heart Primary School       |
| 2036143 | St Oliver Plunkett Primary School |
| 2012052 | Culmore Primary School            |
| 2012095 | Ballougry Primary School          |
| 2012227 | Drumahoe Primary School           |
| 2036247 | St Columba's Primary School       |

\*Removed themselves from PSEP for 2022/23

\*\*Did not meet minimum enrolment figures for 2022/23

**Wards which fall at least partially within a five mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige**

Ballymagroarty

Brandywell

Cairn Hill

Caw

City Walls

Clondermot

Creggan

Creggan South

Culmore

Drumahoe

Ebrington

Enagh

Foyle Springs

Galliagh

Kilfennan

Lisnagelvin

Madam's Bank

New Buildings

Northland

Shantallow

Shantallow East

Sherrif's Mountain

Skeoge

Slievekirk

Springtown

Victoria

**Population statistics and projections**

EYT has considered the NISRA birth rates and population predictions to identify potential future trends.

- Birth statistics by academic year for wards which fall at least partially within a five mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige indicate a decrease of 62 (4.9%) in the pre-school cohort between September 2017 admissions and September 2019 admissions (1,256 to 1,194).

A list of the wards considered is attached at Annex B.

- Population projections for three year olds for Derry City and Strabane Local Government District predict an overall decrease of 408 (19.3%) from 2,114 to 1,706 between 2018 and 2043.

These figures suggest that demand is likely to considerably decrease in the longer term; however they cannot fully take into account population migration and other factors, so can only be indicators of the future pre-school population and not an exact prediction of demand.

**Temporary Flexibility**

Belmont Nursery School requested five additional places in 2019/20. The EA PEG recommended that one of these requests should be approved and the other four were not approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area.

Galliagh Nursery School requested one additional place in 2019/20. The EA PEG recommended that this request should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.

Galliagh Nursery School requested four additional places in 2021/22. The EA PEG recommended that one of these requests should be approved and the other three were not approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area.

Holy Family Primary School requested nine additional places in 2019/20. The EA PEG recommended that seven of these requests should be approved and the other two were not approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area.

Holy Family Primary School requested eight additional places in 2021/22. The EA PEG recommended that all eight of these requests should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.

St Brigid's Primary/Nursery School requested four additional places in 2019/20. The EA PEG recommended that all four of these requests should be approved.

St Brigid's Primary/Nursery School also requested four additional places in 2020/21. The EA PEG recommended that all four of these requests should be approved.

St Brigid's Primary/Nursery School requested four additional places in 2021/22. The EA PEG recommended that all four of these requests should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.

St Brigid's Primary/Nursery School requested three additional places in 2022/23. The EA PEG recommended that all three of these requests should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.



Rosemount Primary School requested eight additional places in 2019/20. The EA PEG recommended that all eight of these requests should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.

Rosemount Primary School also requested one additional place in 2020/21. The EA PEG recommended that this request should be approved.

Steelstown Primary School requested four additional places in 2019/20. The EA PEG recommended that all four of these requests should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.

Steelstown Primary School also requested four additional places in 2019/20. The EA PEG recommended that all four of these requests should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.

Steelstown Primary School requested five additional places in 2021/22. The EA PEG recommended that one of these requests should be approved and the other four were not approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area.

Steelstown Primary School also requested five additional places in 2022/23. The EA PEG recommended that all five of these requests should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.

St Eugene's Primary School requested five additional places in 2019/20. The EA PEG recommended that one of these requests should be approved and the other four were not approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area.

St Eugene's Primary School requested one additional place in 2022/23. The EA PEG recommended that this request should be approved.

Longtower Primary School requested four additional places in 2019/20. The EA PEG recommended that all four of these requests should be approved.

Longtower Primary School requested four additional places in 2020/21. The EA PEG recommended that all four of these requests should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.

Longtower Primary School requested four additional places in 2021/22. The EA PEG recommended that all four of these requests should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.

Longtower Primary School requested four additional places in 2022/23. The EA PEG recommended that all four of these requests should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.

Nazareth House Primary School requested two additional places in 2019/20. The EA PEG recommended that one of these requests should be approved and the other one was not approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area.

Nazareth House Primary School requested one additional place in 2020/21. The EA PEG recommended that this request should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area.

Nazareth House Primary School requested two additional places in 2021/22. The EA PEG recommended that this request should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area.

Nazareth House Primary School requested two additional places in 2022/23. The EA PEG recommended that this request should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area

Ebrington Primary and Nursery School requested eight additional places in 2019/20. The EA PEG recommended that all eight of these requests should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.

Ebrington Primary and Nursery School requested eight additional places in 2020/21. The EA PEG recommended that all eight of these requests should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.

Ebrington Primary and Nursery School requested eight additional places in 2021/22. The EA PEG recommended that all eight of these requests should not be approved as additional pre-school places were not required to meet a shortfall in the area. The request was not approved.

Glendermott Primary School requested one additional place in 2019/20. The EA PEG recommended that this request should be approved.

Bunscoil Cholmcille requested one additional place in 2022/23. The EA PEG recommended that this request should be approved.

## Annex E

**List of the providers in the five mile radius of Gaelscoil na Daróige which currently have part time afternoon sessions which will no longer be available following standardisation**

|         |                                    |                               |
|---------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2116233 | Lisnagelvin Nursery School         | 26 part time afternoon places |
| 2066558 | Oakgrove Integrated Primary School | 26 part time afternoon places |
| 2036533 | Hollybush Primary School           | 26 part time afternoon places |

**Summary of Statutory responses**

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 1. | Principal of local school. Supports the proposal. The nialscoil is growing in the city and should be made available to children in Ballymartle. Irish medium education is a growing sector within the city |
|    |  |
|    |  |