

Example Letter

Dear *(please enter name of elected representatives and/or other persons of influence)*

The Minister for Education's recent speech referencing the Admissions Bill highlighted how it is unfair that a non-religious family, or a family from a different religion, living closely to their local publicly-funded school, finds that preference is given to children of the same religion as the school. Furthermore Minister Richard Bruton TD noted that this occurs even when the children gaining admission are living some distance further away from the school than those applying who do not share the same ethos. It is concluded that it is unfair that parents, who might otherwise not do so, feel pressure to baptise their children in order to gain admission to the local school.

Protestant families living in rural Ireland face a similar dilemma. To attend a school of their personal choice, reflecting their chosen ethos, they have no alternative but to attend a Protestant faith school as a boarder. For families making this choice their children have received less than 50% of the funding from Minister Richard Bruton TD, towards their ICT education as that of their neighbours attending the local Voluntary Secondary or ETB school.

We would ask that the proposals forwarded for consultation provide opportunity for families from all Christian denominations and other religious traditions to be afforded the opportunity to choose a school reflecting their ethos of choice.

The Minister's proposals ignore that the problem facing many oversubscribed schools arises because of an absence of capacity within some areas of high population growth. Put simply the State has failed to make adequate provision for anticipated population growth and the required educational provision. Changing the admissions rules as proposed does nothing to address this core problem, and instead will merely deliver a new cohort of children who are excluded from education within their own faith group in accordance with their own ethos.

We would ask that you would give some consideration as to how you might address this anomaly and ensure that the proposals put forward by Minister Richard Bruton TD, in his consultation paper on the proposed Admissions Bill, do not impinge negatively on all faiths and traditions attending Sligo Grammar School.

Yours sincerely

(name)