

FACTS ABOUT EDUCATION

Labour's Priorities in EDUCATION 2010-2015



Ruairi Quinn TD



QUALITY OF OUTCOMES HOW DOES IRELAND COMPARE?

Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a worldwide evaluation of 15-year-old school children's performance, coordinated by the OECD. The latest results from 2006 are below.

While Ireland is quite proficient at reading, our education system is only average in terms of science and maths.

Reading Literacy - Ireland ranked 5th among 29 countries.

Science Literacy - Ireland ranked 14th among 30 countries.

Maths Literacy - Ireland ranked 16th among 30 countries.



SCHOOLS AND PUPILS (2008/9)

498,914 pupils in 3,303 Primary Schools
341,312 pupils in 732 Secondary Schools
139,134 students in 32 Third Level Colleges

TEACHERS AND STAFF (2008/9)

Primary Teachers	31,349
Secondary	27,236
Third Level	30,000
Non-Teaching Staff	1,100
Special Needs Assistants	10,500
English Language Support	1,535

PRIMARY SCHOOLS BY ETHOS (2010)

Roman Catholic	2894 schools
Church of Ireland	182 schools
Educate Together	56 schools
Presbyterian	14 schools
Muslim	2 schools
Jewish	1 school
Others	20 schools
Gaelscoileanna	138 schools

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN IRELAND

Vocational School Pupils	98,900
Post Leaving Cert Courses	38,000
VTOS Courses	5,403
Youth Reach	3,133
Senior Traveller Training	1,089

DID YOU KNOW?

- There are **498,914** pupils in **3,303** primary schools in Ireland.
- The average primary class size was **24:1** in 2008 - one of the highest in Europe.
- **10,500 Special Needs Assistants** worked in schools in 2009. A Government review is believed to have reduced the number by **1200** in 2010.
- **2008 saw the highest birth rate since 1896.** The 74,500 children born in 2008 will start school in 2012!
- **The Department of Education failed to spend €396 million** of its 2009 budget for new permanent school buildings.
- **790 schools rented prefabs in 2009.**
- **165 schools spent over €50,000 renting prefabs** – more than enough to cover mortgage payments on a permanent school building.
- In 2010, the Department of Education plans to build **52 major school projects.** Over **1100 schools remain on the school building waiting list.**

1. Achieve a political consensus to increase educational spending as a percentage of GDP to 7%, ahead of European norms.
2. Introduce a transparent school building programme to meet demand, including replacement of prefabs with permanent buildings, for primary and secondary schools.
3. Create a National Forum on Patronage and Pluralism, in the primary sector, with participation from all the stake holders so as to provide a wider range of choice in the ethos of the primary school.
4. Establish a National Pre-School scheme based on the primary school infrastructure.
5. Improve the standard of Irish educational outcomes in literacy, maths and science, so as to give Ireland a world class education system.
6. Establish a Right to Read Literacy Programme to deal with the 20% functional illiteracy levels among early school leavers.
7. Implement a Freedom of Conscience provision for students and teachers in our State financed Teacher Training Colleges.
8. Introduce a new employment programme to hire recent Teacher Training Graduates so as to provide experience and additional support staff to the primary school sector.
9. Reform the structure of the Primary School Boards of Management and the role of the Principal so as to devolve more autonomy and responsibility to the School Principal in the management and operation of their school.
10. Reform the Vocational Education Committees to create local Education Boards which would supply support services to all primary and secondary schools.
11. Recognise Educate Together as a secondary school Patron.
12. Develop the third level sector as a Centre for International Excellence to attract more foreign students to study in Ireland.
13. Encourage deeper co-operation and integration within the third level sector, including shared facilities and staff, so as to improve standards and increase efficiencies.
14. Promote the health and well being of all students so as to reduce the number of early leavers through a comprehensive system of sport and exercise for all.
15. Negotiate with the 18 Religious Teaching Congregations to secure the transfer, at no cost to the State, the legal ownership of their schools. These schools will continue under the existing Patronage arrangements.



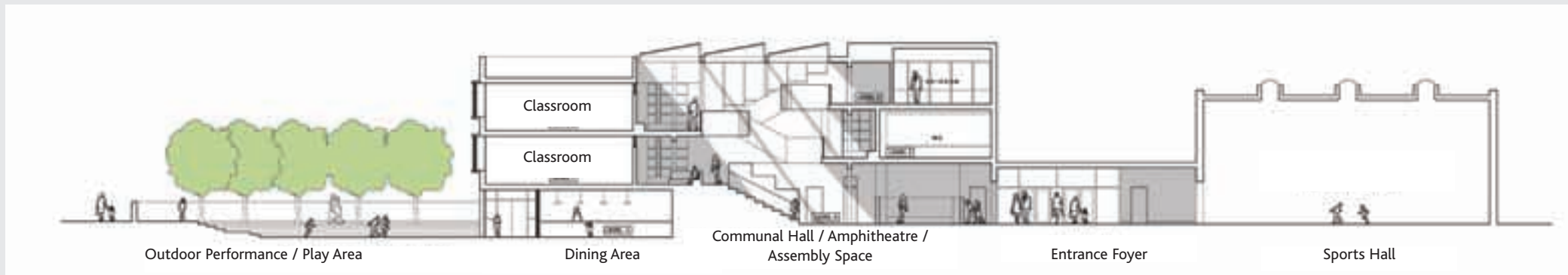
A SCHOOL FOR THE 21st CENTURY



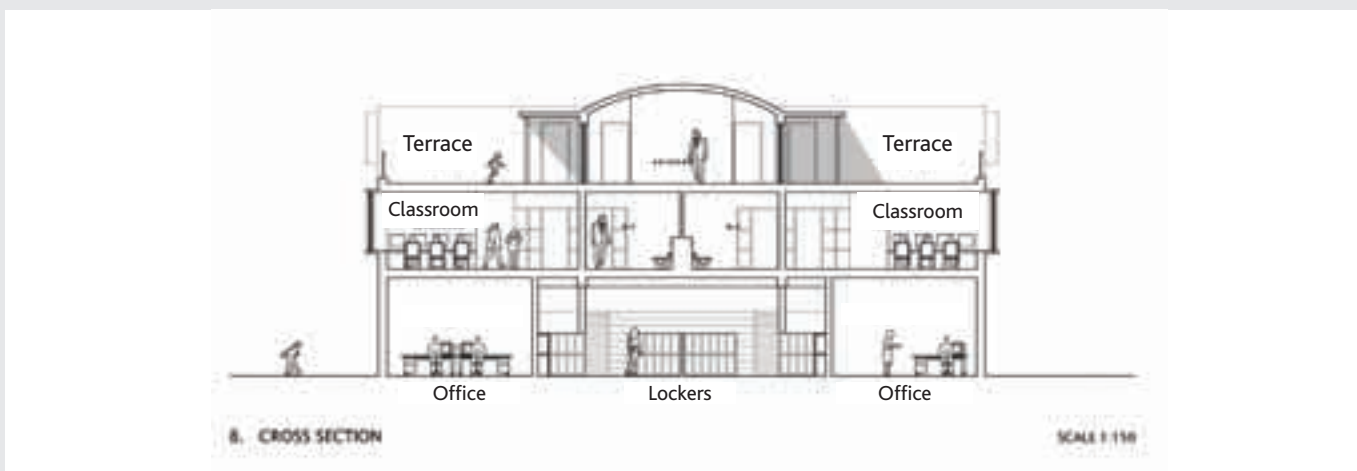
View of amphitheatre/assembly space



Site plan



Cross section through school



Cross section



Street view

- Labour's School for the 21st Century is designed to enhance the quality of education for students, teachers and society.
- Our design promotes more personalised learning. A school should be a microcosm of society, a space that invites and encourages innovation.
- The classrooms are grouped around a Communal Hall, allowing opportunities for spontaneous contact and encouraging pupils to communicate together. The hall is the 'Town Square' of the school.
- The design allows for the creation of an amphitheatre, a dramatic performance and assembly space. The surrounding classrooms are conceived of as autonomous units situated around the communal hall.
- The transition spaces between classroom and hall are porch-like open areas where students can work on their own, allowing for openness and seclusion to the hall at the same time.
- The entrance is a place of welcome for children and parents, creating an important public space.
- This design was developed for Labour by Mullarkey Pederson Architects, Derry & Dublin.

A TRANSPARENT SCHOOL BUILDING PROGRAMME

- Many school buildings in Ireland are a disgrace. After thirteen years of Fianna Fáil rule, we have over 120,000 empty houses and yet 50,000 children go to school in prefabs.

- The school building programme is not working. It is bureaucratic and slow. It is clouded in secrecy and designed for political patronage by Fianna Fáil. Labour will introduce an open and transparent system for parents, teachers and local communities.

- Labour will develop Community Educational campuses where pre-school facilities, primary schools and secondary schools can be located on the one site. This will facilitate the sharing of educational and sporting facilities by the local community.