



PRESS RELEASE

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FURTHER STATEMENT ON NOTRE DAME SCHOOL

The GSD is now panicking that the schools are being built and that their neglect of education facilities for a decade and a half is being shown up. Somehow they give more importance to a delay of a few weeks in delivering a brand new school than to 16 years of allowing school buildings to deteriorate without the hint of a replacement. On building schools they simply have no experience.

They are trying to pick on minor points like who said what and trying themselves to most irresponsibly cause worry and concern among families, when all has been dealt with properly and responsibly and is under control, with the school being happy at the approach taken. Families can be perfectly at ease that their children are being well and safely looked after.

Perhaps relying on their memory of how they used to do things, the Opposition seems to think that all the arrangements have been left to the last moment simply because they were not aware of these.

Proper and responsible contingencies have been in place all along. It was expected that the delays in the early stages of construction would have been made up and that the school could have been ready for opening. But responsible planning calls for all scenarios being contemplated, which included the possibility, as can be the case with all major construction, that it would not. This was all factored in and planned for and most certainly not left until people asked the question!

The Opposition, which has ZERO experience in building schools, will not be aware that apart from all the work of the project team, there is an active, high level new School Projects Board, chaired by the Minister, with representation from the key stakeholders, including senior Education officials, which meets regularly to monitor progress and constantly review the situation in all the school projects.

A totally reasonable, planned, strategic decision was taken to avoid any rush and to ensure that all is ready and in place before moving the children in. The decision was taken in consultation with the Head Teacher and the Teachers' Union NASUWT.

Minister for Education John Cortes commented, "We are approaching this in absolutely the correct way. There is no rush. And there is no shame in accepting that a construction project can take a little longer than one would like. The benefits to the children and to the teachers of the new school will

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mean that this ranting and raving by the GSD will be forgotten in no time. But the fantastic new school will remain for decades. That's the problem with the GSD, they cannot cope with the legacy we are creating."