

CORRESPONDENCE
MEETING OF THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT OF LIMERICK
18TH MAY 2026

- Email dated 5th May 2026 from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Education and Youth in reply to Notice of Motion that this District write to the Minister for Education regarding changes to the teaching of Irish in both primary and secondary level Junior and Leaving Certificate cycles, requesting a greater focus on oral communication.
- Email dated 6th May 2026 from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Finance in reply to Notice of Motion that this District calls on the Department of Education/Finance and Transport to ringfence a portion of the recent substantial increases in Corporation Tax receipts to Public Transport, incorporating the School Transport Scheme in light of the cost of living crisis and global fuel uncertainty.
- Letter dated 6th May 2026 from the Department of the Taoiseach in reply to Notice of Motion that this District write to Taoiseach Micheál Martin and Tánaiste Simon Harris to formally request a Limerick City Taskforce be created, as has been established in Dublin and Cork.
- Email dated 8th May 2026 from the Private Secretary to the Minister for Health in reply to Notice of Motion that this District write to the Minister for Health requesting that the double shingles vaccination be given free of charge to those 65 years of age and over. The cost to pensioners of the two-dose shingles vaccination service – Shingrix is €487 (€243.50 per vaccination dose) in a retail pharmacy.

From: Correspondence Unit <education-correspondenceunit@corr.cloud.gov.ie>

Sent: Tuesday 5 May 2026 11:57

To: Customer Services <customerservices@limerick.ie>

Subject: [EXTERNAL]DES-CU-02113-2026

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Aedín Foley

Corporate Headquarters Merchant's Quay Limerick

customerservices@limerick.ie

PLEASE QUOTE REF NUMBER ON ALL CORRESPONDENCE

Our Ref: DES-CU-02113-2026

5th May 2026

Dear Aedín Foley ,

The Minister for Education and Youth, Ms. Hildegard Naughton TD, has asked me to thank you for your correspondence and to respond to you on her behalf regarding the request that there be greater focus on oral communication in the teaching of Irish.

The Irish language curricula at primary and post-primary levels have been reviewed in detail in recent years. The development of learners' proficiency in spoken Irish is now a key aim for learning Irish at all levels. Following research and consultation, a new Primary Language Curriculum was introduced from September 2019. For the first time, two new specifications were introduced for Irish at Junior Cycle in 2017: the L1 specification is targeted at students in Irish-medium schools, including Gaeltacht schools, and the L2 specification is aimed at students who use the Irish language as a second language, mainly in schools that operate through the medium of English. The Irish curriculum for Senior Cycle is currently being reviewed.

The Department of Education and Youth has acknowledged in the Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy 2024 that learning experiences and outcomes in the Irish language need to be enhanced. The Strategy indicates that improving learning experiences and outcomes in the Irish language is essential for all learners. There is a need for an increased focus on the development of communication skills in Irish. A range of supports and initiatives to support

teaching and learning of the language are currently underway under the leadership of the department, including those outlined below.

The department has developed the ‘Is Féidir Liom, Is Féidir Linn...’ Action Plan for Irish in English-Medium Schools which will be implemented during the 2025/26 and 2026/27 school years. The purpose of the action plan is to support and improve the teaching, learning and use of Irish in English-medium schools and will support primary and post-primary schools in implementing existing curriculum specifications to provide better learning experiences of Irish and increase the use of Irish among children and young people.

The action plan is informed by an extensive consultation at national and school level. Discussions with children and young people were a key part of the consultation, and their views are strongly reflected in the action plan. It is also informed by national and international research and by the approach taken to language planning for minority languages in other jurisdictions. The key message is that children and young people want to learn Irish and to be able to speak it but their experiences of learning Irish need to be much better.

Two reports on the consultation have been completed by SEALBHÚ, Dublin City University on behalf of the department. One on the views of national stakeholders, experts and national and international research on language learning and the other on the views of pupils, students, (student) teachers, school leaders and parents. The Action Plan and both reports are available on the department’s webpage here: [Action Plan for Irish in English-Medium Schools](#)

Recognising the importance of Irish for all students and the creation of opportunities for partial immersion in Irish the department, supported by experts from third level institutions and teacher support services, has a project supporting schools to implement a Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach to support Irish in English-medium schools. Participating schools are supported by Oide personnel through weekly Professional Learning events focused on teaching and learning another subject area through Irish. The project aims to improve learner competence, confidence and disposition towards Irish. Oide and An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta & Gaelscolaíochta (COGG) have created supportive resources and materials for schools who are engaging with this project. More information is available on Oide’s website.

The ‘PE Through Irish’ Initiative for primary schools is an innovative approach to language learning, designed to enhance children’s acquisition of Irish by embedding it within meaningful, engaging, and enjoyable physical activity. By integrating Irish with the Physical Education curriculum, the initiative fosters authentic opportunities for communication, helping young students to associate the target language with positive, active learning experiences. The current materials have been specifically designed for children from Junior Infants to 2nd Class. Within the next two years, it is envisaged that resources will be available for all primary school levels, ensuring that students progress through a coherent and developmentally appropriate pathway for learning Irish in the context of PE. Approximately 1,000 schools have registered via the COGG website to date.

Foras na Gaeilge is responsible for the promotion and encouraging the use of Irish on a daily basis as a living language throughout the island of Ireland. Details of the initiatives and organisations that they fund are available on their website: www.forasnagaeilge.ie. This department is supporting Foras na Gaeilge with the production of a new Irish-Irish Dictionary over a 5-year term with the department projected to support the project to the value of €250,000 by 2026. The department also provides funding to support Gaelbhratach, a programme which supports and encourages schools in their efforts to promote the Irish language at primary and post-primary level, on an annual basis. Schools are awarded the Gaelbhratach flag upon successful completion of a variety of targets. The targets relate to music, art, sport, the organisation of and participation in events and much more. The primary aim of the scheme is to create and encourage a culture of speaking Irish informally within the school community and beyond. The department expects to continue to seek funding to support these projects in future budgets.

The Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht (DRCDG) provide funding for up to 400 students from post-primary DEIS schools to attend a 2-3 week course in the Gaeltacht. DRCDG also provide support for Árainn Gaeltachta, an initiative which provides funding so that up to 30 post-primary students per year can spend a full year attending any one of the 3 post-primary schools on the Aran Islands.

You may be aware that TG4 has dedicated TV channel, Cúla 4, for children and young people. TG4 also provides many interesting and useful resources to support students learning Irish and through Irish on TG4 Foghlaim. <https://foghlaim.tg4.ie/> The Department of Education and Youth also recently published a new policy on Irish-medium education outside of the Gaeltacht (POLG). The aim of this new policy is to provide a framework for the delivery of Irish-medium education of a high standard across all sectors outside of the Gaeltacht and to build on the achievements of the Policy on Gaeltacht Education.

The policy sets out the department's vision to make high-quality Irish-medium education available to all in inclusive and multicultural educational settings, to foster a particular affinity with and love for the Irish language and culture will be fostered in children and young people and to ensure that appropriate supports and resources available to Irish-medium education settings and their communities. Foras na Gaeilge contributed to the development of this policy through their membership of the Steering Committee and their participation in bilateral meetings with the department. The policy and the consultation process are available on the department's webpage here: [Policy for Irish-Medium Education outside of the Gaeltacht](#).

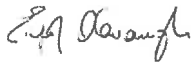
It is an aim of Government to increase, on an incremental basis, the use and knowledge of Irish as a community language. Department officials and agencies will continue to review and reform the learning and teaching of Irish and increase access to Irish-medium education through the school patronage process as appropriate.

The department continues to promote Irish in the education system and to support Irish-medium education through a variety of initiatives. The department is contributing to a number of actions in the Government's 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030 and the 5 Year Action Plan 2018 -2022, that highlight the department's commitment in this area. Details of the department's actions under the 20-year strategy are available at www.gov.ie/en/publication/f67134-20-year-strategy-for-the-irish-language-2010-2030/.

Indeed, the most recent curricular changes at primary and Junior Cycle level referred to above have emphasised not only the importance of learning both languages but also the wider benefits of bilingualism. The development of these new language curricula reflects this department's reassertion of its commitment to the Irish language and to progressing the language education.

I trust this information is helpful to you.

Yours sincerely,



Eimear Kavanagh

Private Secretary

From: Ministers Office <mo-finance@corr.cloud.gov.ie>

Sent: Wednesday 6 May 2026 12:01

To: Customer Services <customerservices@limerick.ie>

Subject: [EXTERNAL]FIN-MO-01771-2026

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Our Ref: FIN-MO-01771-2026

Ms Aedín Foley

Meetings Administrator

Limerick City and County Council

customerservices@limerick.ie

Dear Ms. Foley,

The Tánaiste and Minister for Finance, Mr Simon Harris TD, has asked me to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 24th April 2026, which was received from the Department of Transport, in relation to a resolution that was agreed at the Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick held on the 20th April 2026.

Yours sincerely

Niamh Murtagh

Private Secretary to the Minister for Finance

A Member of the Minister for Finance staff. The Minister is a Designated Public Official under the Regulation of Lobbying Act, 2015 (details available on www.lobbying.ie).

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Tá an fhaisnéis atá sa ríomhphost seo (agus in aon cheangaltáin) faoi rún agus is don fhaighteoir/do na faighteoirí beartaithe é agus é/iad sin amháin. Mura tusa an faighteoir

beartaithe, níor cheart duit an teachtaireacht seo ná aon chuid di a úsáid, a nochtadh, a chóipeáil, a dháileadh ná a choinneáil. Sa chás gur trí earráid a fuair tú an ríomhphost seo, tabhair fógra dom láithreach faoi sin agus scríos gach cóip den ríomhphost seo ó do ríomhchóra(i)s. Tabhair faoi deara go bhféadfaidh an ríomhphost seo agus aon fhreagra air bheith faoi réir iarraidh ar a eisiúint de bhun an Achta um Shaoráil Faisnéise



6 May 2026

Ms Aedín Foley
Meetings Administrator
Limerick City and County Council
Merchant's Quay
Limerick
V94 EH90



Reference Number: DOT-TM25-01424-2026

Dear Ms Foley

Thank you for your letter to the Taoiseach, Micheál Martin, T.D., dated 24 April 2026.

This is an acknowledgment to confirm that your letter has been received and will be processed by officials within the Department of the Taoiseach.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christina Downey".

Christina Downey
Department of the Taoiseach

Telephone: 01 619 4021

Email: taoiseach@taoiseach.gov.ie

From: Ministers Office <noreplymo-health@corr.cloud.gov.ie>

Sent: Friday 8 May 2026 10:26

To: Customer Services <customerservices@limerick.ie>

Subject: [EXTERNAL]HEA-MO-02861-2026

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HEA-MO-02861-2026

8th May 2026

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ýDear Ms. Foley,

On behalf of the Minister for Health, Jennifer Carroll MacNeill T.D., I would like to thank you for your correspondence.

The immunisation programme in Ireland is informed by the advice of the National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC). NIAC considers the prevalence of the relevant disease in Ireland as well as international best practice in relation to immunisation when developing its advice.

The current NIAC guidelines state that the shingles vaccine may be considered in those aged 65 years and older, due to the greater burden and severity of disease in this age group and in those aged 18 years and older at increased risk of shingles.

Shingles vaccination is not currently provided as part of the national immunisation programme.

The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) has carried out a Health Technology Assessment (HTA) on the herpes zoster vaccine which protects against shingles. A HTA is a multidisciplinary research process that collects and summarises information about a health technology. The information can cover a range of fields, including clinical effectiveness and safety, cost-effectiveness and budget impact, organisational and social aspects, and ethical and legal issues. The information is collected and presented in a systematic, unbiased and transparent manner.

HIQA's HTA examined the evidence on the clinical effectiveness and safety of shingles vaccines. The cost effectiveness and budget impact were also reviewed, along with the ethical, social and organisational implications of including the vaccine in the adult immunisation schedule.

HIQA published this HTA on 19 July 2024. The HTA found that adding the shingles vaccine to the routine immunisation schedule, at the vaccine price at the time, for all adults aged 65 years and over would not be cost effective and would be associated with a substantial budget impact. If made available to everyone aged 65 and older, vaccination would cost €218m over five years.

Whilst the HTA found that the introduction of the shingles vaccine was not cost effective based on the cost of the vaccine, it found that it could be cost effective for vaccination of those at 75 years and 80 years if the cost of the vaccine was reduced by 80%.

Given that the healthcare budget is finite and decisions regarding increased spending relating to a change in one area could impact the provision of other health technologies and treatments within the healthcare system, the cost-effectiveness must be considered in any decision-making process.

The Department of Health considered the findings of this HTA in 2024 and determined that the introduction of the vaccine could be reconsidered when the cost effectiveness of the vaccine is confirmed as being more favourable.

The introduction of the shingles vaccine to the immunisation schedule in Ireland is again being actively considered for a cohort of immunocompromised individuals, in line with NIAC advice and cognisant of the cost effectiveness of market pricing and available funding.

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ýYours sincerely,

Joann Lynch

Private Secretary to the Minister for Health