

Education

Investing in the future of our children



INDEPENDENT
IRELAND

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Ireland's education system is largely responsible for the developed economy of today. In order to remain competitive, we must continually invest in all of our children's futures. Therefore, Independent Ireland proposes we:

Increasing Funding for Education

- Maintain **small class sizes** by hiring more teachers. This means increasing funding;
- **Reduce bureaucracy** coming from the Ministry of Education. Oversight is important, but if teachers are forced to spend hours each week reporting what they already taught, they spend less time planning on what to teach next;
- Increase funding for **Special Needs Assistants (SNAs)**;
- Increase **capitation grant** for all schools;
- Increase funding for **early childcare services**;
- Increase threshold **SUSI grants**;
- **Expand delivery of transportation services to primary and secondary school students** to improve safety and reduce emissions caused by private vehicles driven by parents unable to receive transportation services for their children;
- Redirect funding for **school meals and book rental** into the baseline funding of schools. This will enable schools to make strategic use of funding. Principals and teachers understand the needs of their pupils better than bureaucrats imposing a one-size-fits-all approach imposed by the Department of Education;
- Create and fund **greater links between Gardaí and local schools** to address early intervention and diversion away from youth crime and anti-social behaviour;

Ensuring an Education System That is Fit For Purpose

- **Oppose any politicisation of education**;
- Ensuring that **Irish culture**, tradition, and language remain cornerstones of our education system;
- Reform school transport and the **"close school" rule**, which deprives many children of access to transport and restricting their educational opportunities;
- **Amend means tests for educational grants** for third-level education to take pressure off the middle class, who are disproportionately burdened by education costs;
- Create a low-interest, **government-backed student loan** scheme available to all secondary school graduates;

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Ensuring an Education System That is Fit For Purpose

- **Add road safety** to secondary school curriculum;
- Deliver **Youth Workers** equitably throughout the country, to adequately serve all areas;
- Include **nutrition education** in school curriculum and increase physical education;
- Place a greater **emphasis on physical education** as a physical, mental, and emotional health measure. Ensuring the diverse needs of pupils are met in terms of physical education is vital to cultivating a healthy populace.
- Ensure all **sexual education is age-appropriate**;
- Promote education on **safe and responsible social media use**;
- Provide **emotional health education** to all pupils;

Provide increased vocational and apprenticeship opportunities

- Provide increased **vocational and apprenticeship** opportunities as alternatives to third-level education;
- Encourage young people, particularly **early school leavers**, to continue training that will better themselves and our economy at large;
- **End the stigma** associated with “not making it into third level,” which contributes to the shortage of skilled tradespeople in Ireland;
- **Increase funding for vocational and apprenticeship training.**



“We are committed to ensuring the next generation of Irish schoolchildren continue to receive the best education possible by funding more teachers, more educational programs and by rewarding the hard work of our second level students”