



Ms Éilis Fallon  
Committee Secretariat  
Committee of Public Accounts  
Leinster House  
Dunlin 2  
D02 XR20

Your Ref: SO245 PAC 33

23rd March 2021

Dear Ms Fallon

Your letter dated 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021 refers.

Gaelscoil an tSlí Dála (Roll No. 20224K), Co Laois opened with temporary recognition in September 2005 on a parish owned site in rented prefab accommodation. The school opened with an enrolment of 10 pupils and a staffing allocation of one teacher (Principal). Since then 4 additional prefabs have been added (one rental and three purchased).

The school received permanent recognition on the 11<sup>th</sup> December 2019 with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019 and has current enrolment of 48 pupils and a staffing of Principal, one mainstream assistant, two special class teachers and a part-time special education teacher.

As the school was operating with temporary recognition from 2005 to 2019, this would have had a knock-on impact on the timeline for putting permanent accommodation solutions in place given that the long term viability needed to be established.

As requested a breakdown of the €329,622 rental expenditure from 2008 to 2020 indicated in my letter dated 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021 in respect of Gaelscoil an tSlí Dála is outlined below as well as the capital expenditure on the three purchased prefabs.

	Purchased/Rented	Year Rented/Purchased	Rental spend 2008 to 2020
Prefab 1	Rented	2005	€177,015
Prefab 2	Rented	2007	€152,607
Prefab 3	Purchased	2010	€38,592 (Purchase and installation costs)
Prefab 4	Purchased	2015	€48,030 (Purchase and installation costs)
Prefab 5	Purchased	2019	€60,262 (Purchase and installation costs)

At a wider level, the number of new rental contracts for prefab accommodation has reduced significantly since previous years with 37 approved in 2020. This compares to 282 approvals for permanent accommodation under the Additional Accommodation Scheme for 2020.

This reduced reliance on rented prefab accommodation is expected to continue over the coming years particularly with the downward trajectory on demographics at primary level.

Following on from the Department's most recent national demographic analysis, the Department will be using this information to undertake a case by case assessment of the long-term accommodation requirements of schools that currently have rented prefabricated accommodation. Many of these schools are part of the pipeline of projects under the school building programme. The Department will seek to ensure that opportunities for maximising VFM opportunities are achieved with the delivery of permanent accommodation solutions as part of the rollout of the NDP.

Yours sincerely



Seán Ó Foghlú  
Secretary General