



Réada Cronin TD
Leinster House
Kildare St
Dublin 2

reada.cronin@oireachtas.ie

29th July 2026

Dear Deputy Cronin,

I refer to PQ Ref: 40668/26.

As you will be aware, the Guardian *ad litem* National Service, as provided for under the Child Care Acts 1991-2022, came into effect on 23 June 2026. The Guardian *ad litem* National Service has been established to ensure that children's voices are heard, and their best interests are independently presented, by an appointed Guardian *ad litem*, in child care proceedings.

The commencement of the Guardian *ad litem* National Service marks a significant transformation of this sector. The new National Service will create a national, professional, high-quality service that better serves children and the courts.

Guardians *ad litem* are appointed to children in childcare proceedings where the judge identifies the need for a Guardian *ad litem* to represent the views and best interests of a child. Since 23rd June, orders from the court have been sent to the Guardian *ad litem* National Service and an authorised Guardian *ad litem* has been appointed.

The circumstances in which a child can be assigned a Guardian *ad litem* are set out in Section 35B of the Child Care (Amendment) Act 2022 and Section 25 of the Mental Health Act 2001.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Norma Foley'.

Norma Foley TD
Minister for Children, Disability and Equality