

15th February 2022

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am writing to you at the request of the Department of Education who are seeking the following information on the nationality, mother tongue, ethnic/cultural background and medical card eligibility of students who have been offered and accepted a place in post-primary schools for the coming year.

The Department requires this information for the purposes of statistical analysis and reporting in the areas of social inclusion and integration of students in the education system. The Department has also informed the schools that it has consulted with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner in respect of the data they are now seeking to collect.

The Department has advised schools that it will only use this information in an aggregate format for the above purposes, i.e. not identifying individual students. Access by Department staff to any of this information is restricted to a small number of Department staff, not exceeding 15, who provide technical support to schools on the collection of this data or who work in the area dealing with statistical analysis. Further information on the purposes for which this data is required by the Department and how it is managed and secured is available in Departmental circulars 0047/2010 & 0023/2016. A FAQ on the use of the data of post-primary students by the Department is also available. Copies of both of these documents may be found on www.gov.ie or on request from the school.

With the exception of the Central Statistics Office (CSO) the Department has informed schools that it will not share individual data on a student's nationality, mother tongue, ethnic/cultural background or medical card eligibility with any other body or person outside of the Department. The CSO may obtain the information provided to the Department under the Statistics Acts. The CSO manage the data so provided in a secure manner and to the same standards that operates for the National Census.

Please note that schools are empowered under legislation¹ to receive information on a student's nationality which they may in turn share with the Department. In order to collect details of mother tongue and share it with the Department, the school must obtain the consent of the parent/guardian. In respect of the ethnic/cultural background and medical eligibility of the student (because this is deemed sensitive and personal² for data protection purposes) the school must first obtain the explicit written consent of the parent/guardian to collect this data and share it with the Department.

Please complete the consent form contained in the link provided and submit it via OpenApply.

Yours sincerely,



Marius Carney
Head and Principal

¹ Social Welfare (Consolidation) Act 2005 sections 262-266 and S.I. 317 of 2015 Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment)(No. 4) (Sharing of Information) Regulation 2015.

² Section 2 of Data Protection acts, 1988 and 2003