



- it's not fair on the children, staff or parents".

He said that the school mainly consists of pre-fabricated buildings, "we have 11 pre-fabs on the site now. Cold in Winter, warm in summer. There are eleven separate heating schemes on the school site".

This nonetheless impacts the children's school experience "every room front and back is exposed to the elements. You don't have corridors, they have to go outside to go into the next classroom. Storage space is small", he said.

"We have past pupils who have returned to do work experience or work placement that can't believe that we're still in the same accommodation" he said.

"We're doing what the department asks us to do, we're implementing the curriculum, implementing change, we're looking after the children - we're doing our part of it - but the department are essentially saying that our children are second class citizens" he said.

In a Statement, the Board of Management of Gaelscoil Chnoc na Ré expressed their confusion and disappointment from the news that there will be further delays to any potential developments of the school.

They said that they proudly deliver strong academic outcomes while fostering cultural identity, confidence and a love of learning through the Irish language.

"We fully meet every Departmental requirement, embrace curriculum developments, and maintain the highest standards of teaching, care and inclusion.

We have upheld our side of the partnership"

However, they believe the State has not held up their reciprocal responsibility for the provision of a safe, modern, fit-for-purpose school building as they are consistently facing delays.

"The recent news that Gaelscoil Chnoc na Ré has once again been excluded from the Department's priority list is not simply disappointing; it represents a serious breakdown in trust" the board said.

The board said that the need for improved accommodation has not diminished and that their enrollment continues to grow, reflecting the increasing demand for Irish-medium education in the area. They believe the pressure on existing facilities is ongoing and unsustainable.

The board said that their frustration is not solely about bricks and mortar — it is about the absence of transparency, timelines and meaningful engagement.

They believe this highlights a broader issue, as "to overlook a thriving and expanding Gaelscoil is not a minor administrative issue. It is a failure to recognise the importance of Irish-medium education and the rights of our children to learn in suitable conditions".

The Parents' Association Committee is also deeply disappointed and concerned by the decision of the Department of Education and Youth not to approve funding for a new school building for Gaelscoil

Chnoc na Ré.

"Our school has served families in the community for many years, nurturing children through Irish-medium education in a caring and inclusive environment. It is deeply distressing that today's pupils are expected to learn in facilities that are widely acknowledged as no longer fit for purpose.

Adequate school accommodation is not a luxury — it is a basic requirement for our children's safety, education and wellbeing" the committee said.

They continued that the "Personal voices matter and are far harder to ignore. Consistent and collective pressure is essential to ensure this decision is reviewed urgently.

Our community has waited long enough. Further delay cannot be justified" they re-affirmed.

In a letter addressed to the current Minister for Education Hildegard Naughton, one parent expressed their frustration over the issue.

They said that they have interacted with Ministers, including previous Minister for Education Helen McEntee, but the responses that they have received are "standardised, generic correspondence that merely reiterated procedural stages of the ADAPT Programme, [the previous Minister] noted that the project remained at Stage 2(a)/2(b) of architectural planning, and referred broadly to national priorities and forthcoming implementation plans".

The parent broke down the Department's own published figures, which they believes re-iterates the lack of attention the school is getting: "Dublin has 18 projects identified to progress; Galway has 11 projects identified to progress; but across the Connacht and North-West region combined, projects are allocated to Galway, Leitrim, Roscommon, and Donegal, while Mayo has none and Sligo has none".

They say that this comes amid "repeated assurances over many months that Gaelscoil Chnoc na Ré was being advanced, and despite the fact that the project has funding approval, a clearly defined brief for a new 12-classroom primary school with SEN provision, and a confirmed site, it has once again been excluded from national capital investment decisions".

Despite this, the parent did say they were "acutely aware that repeated representations have been made in support of this project by Frank Feighan TD, Marian Harkin TD, and Senator Nessa Cosgrove, all of whom have sought progress for Gaelscoil Chnoc na Ré in good faith and have received similar assurances from the Department".

The board, parents committee, staff., principals past and present, and indeed the children continue their battle for adequate accommodation for their school that is not in any means a luxury, but a basic necessity.

