

Press Releases - Students request meeting with the Minister - 11/05/00

Transition year students at Presentation College, Glasthule are requesting an urgent meeting with the minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment to discuss their concerns on the minimum wage.

"In these days of apathy and cynicism towards the political system it's up to the Minister to prove to these young lads that the political system does work" According to Councillor Eoin Costello "the students are very disappointed that the recently introduced legislation on the minimum wage does not cover them."

"I was down at the school last week talking to the students as part of Fine Gael's "Democracy in Action" programme. Under the programme representatives from Fine Gael go to secondary schools throughout Dublin to give students an introduction to the political system. Part of the talk is a Student Ballot where students are asked to vote in a mini election, which illustrates how the electoral system in Ireland works. "

" A survey for the Youth Council of Ireland last year showed an alarming level of apathy amongst students towards the political system"

According to Councillor Costello. "When I asked the Glasthule lads if they would vote they asked me what the point was as nothing ever changes. So I asked them was there an issue that they felt strongly about? Many of them were concerned about the minimum wage legislation."

The students felt that the legislation should apply to all workers, not just those over 18. They said that many of them work part-time and felt that they were being exploited by employers who pay well under the minimum wage.

"I felt I could prove to the lads that democracy does work by getting them to write to the Minister concerned at the Department

for Enterprise, Trade and Employment requesting a meeting to discuss their concerns. I am posting the letter from the students to the Minister today and I hope that, in the interests of democracy, the Minister will agree to meet the students. "