

Submission no: 007



Lissycasey N.S.,
Lissycasey,
Ennis,
Co.Clare

Roll no. 18555V

Tues. 29th Sept. 2020

Dear Helen,

Review of the existing Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 and Preparation of a new Clare County Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

Thank you for the invitation to take part in this public consultation.

School Profile

Lissycasey N.S. is a co-educational primary school which sits at the western edge of the village of Lissycasey on the main Ennis-Kilrush road.

We have 7 mainstream classes and two special classes. We have other children throughout the mainstream classes with special needs such as ASD, Down Syndrome, Selective Mutism and severe anxiety.

Our school is underpinned by a culture of mutual respect and our aim is to foster teaching and learning in a stimulating and enjoyable way that appeals to children of all abilities and allows them to thrive. Staff and pupils are encouraged to achieve their potential and face life confidently.

Enrolment

We have 171 pupils enrolled and most of the children in our school come directly from the surrounding area. We have two classes for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder. Six of these children travel by bus from Ennis.

It is envisaged that our enrolment will remain stable for the short to medium term. It is impossible to predict beyond four years.

Lissycasey Community Development Group Proposed Sport's Hall

We are in the process of building an extension to house our two special classes and one more mainstream class. It is expected that this build will commence in January 2021.

However, the Department of Education has told us that they are not in position to provide P.E. halls to schools at the present time. Our site is extremely restricted and there is not space to build a hall even if this policy were to change in the future.

We have put huge energy into Physical Education in our school and until Covid, we had a walking club, gave active homework, provided afterschool football, soccer, basketball and

athletics training. Despite all of this, we cannot offer these activities or even basic PE lessons for much of the year due to weather and lack of an indoor space. It is almost impossible to cover any elements of the gymnastics and dance strands on the curriculum.

The Lissycasey Community Development group has opened a path from the back of our school to the GAA car park in order to alleviate the congestion on the main road at 9.00am. This would provide quick and safe access to the proposed new sport's hall for our pupils. We have been assured that the school would have full use of the new facilities and we cannot count the myriad of ways in which this would enhance the education and full development of all our pupils.

The children in our special classes would have been granted a "central space" in the past as their absolute need for extra physical activity was seen to be paramount. Such a space is no longer funded by the DES and therefore will not be included in our new extension. We try to bring these children outside as often as possible but it is often the case that they don't get any physical activity all day and this proves to be extremely detrimental to their concentration, self-regulation and learning. In particular it is disadvantageous to their social adjustment.

Our community and our school are dedicated to advancing sports and activities in the community but this effort is eroded more and more every year as our weather becomes more inclement and unpredictable.

Our school PE curriculum is

"Designed to develop a desire for daily physical activity and encourage constructive use of free time and participation in physical activities in adult life."

Taught properly, it exposes children to various sports and teaches basic skills in the hope that they will find one or several activities that they can pursue in order to maintain a healthy lifestyle. This is impossible to do in our school.

We are constantly amazed by the level of volunteerism and dedication of many in Lissycasey to the development of the village for the whole community.

This village is set apart from other communities in that it has quite a large population but no proper facility in which to congregate for sporting events, promote participation in sports and activities and enhance the wellbeing of the community for generations to come.

This sport's hall would provide the one thing that is missing in this community and would ensure that our school can help generations of children to experience the joy of physical exertion and the satisfaction of achievement while developing skills and positive attitudes that enhance self-esteem.

Yours sincerely,

Mary Killeen,
Chairperson, Board of Management

Brid Finnegan
Principal, Lissycasey N.S.