



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Oifig um Cheannasáí Seirbhíse do Chúram Príomhúil  
Cúram Sláinte Phobail FSS an Mheán Iarthair  
Ascaill Bhaile Choimín,  
Páirc Gnó an Ráithín, Ráithín  
Luimneach  
Teil: 061 483722

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HSE Mid West Community Healthcare  
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15<sup>th</sup> December 2021

**Deputy Joe Carey**  
**Francis Street**  
**Ennis**  
**Co. Clare**

**Re.: PQ Ref: 59343/21 “To ask the Minister for Health if he will respond to a query (Dental Services available to children in Primary Schools throughout Co. Clare); and if he will make a statement on the matter.”**

Dear Deputy Carey,

I refer to your recent Parliamentary Question regarding the above. I can advise you of the following:

The Principal Dental Surgeon has confirmed that the HSE Dental Services provide school dental checks to Primary School children when they are in the two ‘target classes’ i.e. 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> classes in Primary School. A school dental check is scheduled for the children in the target classes and they attend the HSE dental clinics for the dental check to be carried out.

As a direct result of Covid 19 government restrictions and guidelines, HSE Dental clinics were closed for the most of 2020 which had a direct impact on the cohort of children in the ‘target classes’ scheduled to be seen from the 2019/2020 academic year. Another factor which impacted the provision of the school dental checks was the redeployment of dental staff to assist in the Covid 19 response programme.

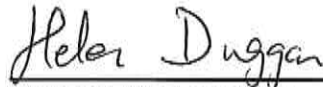
Since the resumption of the school dental checks, the priority has been to address the backlog of children who were due to be seen from the 2019/2020 academic year, as the checks for this cohort of children had been postponed due to the pandemic. The Principal Dental Surgeon has confirmed that children will be called in the order in which they were due to be called i.e. the children in the target classes by each academic year, which will mean that children will be older when they are called for their school dental check up.

The Principal Dental Surgeon has confirmed that a Children’s Emergency Dental Service is provided. Both prior to and during Covid 19, children who do not fall into the target classes and present with ‘routine dental issues’ would always have been redirected from the HSE Dental Services.

The Principal Dental Surgeon has advised that the HSE Dental Service is finding it difficult to recruit dental surgeons which also impacts on the level of service provision and unfortunately, this is an issue which is being experienced in both the public and private dentistry services.

I trust the above addresses the issues raised in your Parliamentary Question.

**Yours sincerely,**



p.p. **Carmel McLaughlin**  
**General Manager**  
**Primary Care**