



**Oifig an Aire Oideachais agus Scileanna**  
Office of the Minister for Education and Skills

Mr Derek Linster,  
Chairperson Bethany Survivors  
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17 June, 2011

By email to: [Derek.linster@talktalk.net](mailto:Derek.linster@talktalk.net)

Dear Derek,

Further to our meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2011 with your colleagues and Deputies Joe Costello TD and Dominic Hannigan TD, I have reviewed the papers provided by Mr Niall Meehan together with the papers held in my Department, in relation to Bethany Home.

At the outset, I want to assure you that I could feel the hurt and pain that clearly remains with you and your colleagues, even after all of these years.

In addition, I wish to re-assure you and your colleagues that the religious ethos of an institution was not a criterion for inclusion within the Residential Institutions Redress Scheme. While catholic religious orders ran the majority of specified institutions, others were either run by organisations having a protestant ethos or run on a non-denominational basis.

The Residential Institutions Redress Act, 2002 specified named institutions and section 4 of the Act allowed for the insertion into the Schedule of "*any industrial school, reformatory school, orphanage, children's home, special school which was established for the purpose of providing education services to children with a physical or intellectual disability or a hospital providing medical or psychiatric services to people with a physical or mental disability or mental illness in which children were placed and resident and in respect of which a public body had a regulatory or inspection function*" by Ministerial Order.

As you are aware, the inclusion of the Bethany Home was previously considered and not included within the Scheme, on the basis that it did not come within the scope of the Scheme as it operated as a mother and baby home.

Following the publication of the Ryan Report, there were a range of requests and demands for the scheme to be extended. These included your request for the Bethany home to be included on the basis that it operated as a children's home. However, the Government of the time decided against the inclusion of any further institutions within the scheme.

The redress scheme was introduced as an exceptional measure to address a very particular circumstance. Specifically, the scheme was designed to deal with abuse in a range of residential institutions for which public bodies had responsibility. The decision not to extend the scheme has meant the exclusion of a range of institutions which could have been considered for inclusion.

I have considered the points made at the meeting and have had the papers submitted reviewed. Having taken all the circumstances into account, I regret that I have found no basis to revisit this decision. I know my decision will come as a disappointment to you but I want to state that my decision has been based on serious reflection and careful consideration of the issues raised at our meeting.

Yours sincerely,



Ruairi Quinn, T.D.

Minister for Education and Skills