



Item for Agreement of Class Rep Council

ITEM NO. 2312-05 ORPHANAGE CARE

Proposed by

Christine O'Mahony (VP Diversity and Inclusion)

Issue Definition

The Comhlámh End Orphanage Volunteering Working Group, is made up of volunteer sending agencies and International NGOs and forms part of a growing global movement dedicated to the issue. The Working Group has launched their “Put Children First: End Orphanage Care Campaign” and are looking for Student Unions across the Island to sign the pledge. The Union of Students Ireland (USI) supports this pledge. The working group is of the opinion that every child has a right to grow up in a family that cares for them. Research has shown that Institutional Care is harmful to children. It is harmful to their health, development and wellbeing and puts them at increased risk of abuse and exploitation. These findings have galvanised a global movement to end orphanage care and volunteering. In 2019 the UN passed a resolution which recognised the harm of orphanage care and orphanage volunteering and called for the end to both. Ireland voted in favour of this resolution.

The common issues for children in institutional care include:

- Increased risk of sexual and physical abuse
- Lack of stimulation
- Harsh discipline
- Children are less likely to attend school
- Some children are in frequent isolation

All these serious issues make it harder for a child to assimilate back into a family and community.

Issue Action

Council pledges its support to the “Put Children First: End Orphanage Care” Campaign.

Issue Mandate

The VP for Diversity and Inclusion will contact the End Orphanage Volunteering Working Group and will officially sign the pledge on behalf of DCU Students’ Union.