

Minister Zappone makes statement on Excavations on site of former Mother and Baby Home Site, Tuam

Friday 3rd March, 2017

Katherine Zappone TD, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs today commented on the finding of human remains on the site of the former Mother and Baby Home in Tuam, Co. Galway. This follows work by the Commission on Mother and Baby Homes which carried out planned excavations there.

The Minister said:

“This is very sad and disturbing news. It was not unexpected as there were claims about human remains on the site over the last number of years.

Up to now we had rumours. Now we have confirmation that the remains are there, and that they date back to the time of the Mother and Baby Home, which operated in Tuam from 1925 to 1961.”

The Minister said that we must respond sensitively and respectfully to the situation. She said that her Department had brought together all of the key Departments and agencies to set out a way forward. This will include the following:

- The Commission will continue its work under its terms of reference, including such matters as post mortem practices and procedures, reporting and burial arrangements for residents of Mother and Baby Homes

- The Coroner for North Galway will take the steps he deems necessary under his independent statutory functions
- Galway County Council will engage with the Commission in relation to the immediate next steps on the site
- Galway County Council will engage with local residents and other interested parties on what should happen next in relation to the remains
- There will be an information line for factual information, and a service for those who feel personally affected by the news.

Minister Zappone added:

“Today is about remembering and respecting the dignity of the children who lived their short lives in this Home. We will honour their memory and make sure that we take the right actions now to treat their remains appropriately.”

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