

**Annual Report of the Board of Management
Of
Scoil Ghormáin Naofa, Castletown**

The purpose of this Annual Report is to provide a summary of information on the operation of Scoil Ghormáin Naofa in line with requirements of the Education Act.

Management

Board of Management (BoM)

Our Board of Management is comprised as follows:

Joe O'Shaughnessy (Chairperson), Lisa Dempsey (Secretary), Louise Whittle (Teachers' Nominee), Mary Hearne (Patron's Nominee), Concepta Church (Treasurer and Parent Nominee), Noel Ivanoff (Parent Nominee); Niamh Ní Shuilleabháin (Community Nominees)

All Board members are obliged to keep confidential matters discussed at Board meetings, unless otherwise agreed by the Board, with this information being distributed by means of an Agreed Report.

Members of the Board may be placed in a difficult situation when individual parents/community members/ teachers may ask them to comment directly on a particular situation or ask them to bring a situation to the attention of the Board. *This means of communication should be avoided.*

If a parent or a teacher or a community member requires an issue/concern to be discussed at a Board of Management meeting, *the issue must be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the Board of Management.*

It is important to note that Board members are not delegates of their electorates and will consider each issue collectively, from a neutral and an objective viewpoint.

Meetings

The new Board of Management met three times since January 2016. A number of BOM members attended training provided by the Dublin Diocese.

The Board as a Corporate Entity: Louise Whittle, Mary Hearne, Lisa Dempsey

Appointments and Finance-the Role of the Treasurer: Lisa Dempsey and Joe O'Shaughnessy

Legal Issues – Anti Bullying: Louise Whittle and Lisa Dempsey

School Ethos:

A caring, nurturing experience of Christianity is central to the school. Scoil Ghormáin Naofa forms part of the Arklow parish. Fr. Martin Cosgrove, Fr. Michael Murtagh, Fr. Binoi and Fr. McCarney visited the school regularly and celebrated masses throughout the year.

Our ethos found formal expression this year in:

- Prayer – a feature of daily school life.
- First Penance.
- First Communion.
- School masses to celebrate the beginning and conclusion of school year, at Christmas and on 6th January.

- School assemblies.
- The school adopted the new Grow in Love Programme for Junior and Senior Infants last year. This will be extended to First and Second Class next year.

Policies Ratified by BOM 2015/16

Child Protection	04/09/2015
Anti-Bullying Policy	04/09/2015
SPHE	11/04/2016
Drama	11/04/2016
Physical Education	11/04/2016
Music	11/04/2016
Maths	14/06/2016
History	14/06/2016
Geography	14/06/2016
Science	14/06/2016
Visual Arts	14/06/2016
Supervision	14/06/2016
Administration of Medicine	14/06/2016
Acceptable Use Policy	14/06/2016
ICT Policy	14/06/2016
Attendance and Participation Policy	14/06/2016
Critical Incident Policy	14/06/2016

In School Management

Management of Staff

Lisa Dempsey was ratified as Designated Liaison Person (DLP). Mrs. Anne Gilmartin Ryan was ratified as the Deputy Designated Liason Person (DDLp).

The Principal and the Deputy Principal met regularly as part of the In School Management team. Ms. Paula D'Arcy, our Special Duties teacher with responsibility for P.E. and Drama successfully completed the Active School Process.

Both teachers and SNAs have fulfilled their additional work requirements in relation to the Croke Park Agreement for 2015/16.

School Staffing can be outlined as follows:

Principal (Teaching): 1
 Mainstream Teachers: 4
 Support Teachers: 2
 SNA's: 3
 Secretary: 1
 Cleaners: Contract company.

The Board of Management acknowledges the outstanding hard work of our teaching staff, who are very dedicated to their vocation of teaching. The Board would also like to acknowledge the work of our SNA's and our school secretary who play such a vital role in our school life.

Management of Pupils

The BoM are familiar with the school's Code of Behaviour/Anti-bullying policies. All new entrants' parents must sign up to both codes before being enrolled in the school.

Scoil Ghormáin Naofa encourages good attendance by presenting pupils who reach 100% attendance with a gold certificate of excellent attendance, pupils who are absent for only one day with a silver certificate of attendance and pupils who are absent for two days with a bronze certificate of attendance at the end of the school year. Our overall percentage attendance to date is 95.3%. Our projected enrolment for September 1st 2015 is 114 pupils.

Management of relationships with parents and the wider community

The principal attended the Parent Association (PA) AGM and attends all meetings of Scoil Ghormáin Naofa's Parents Association. The BoM acknowledge the strong, positive relationship that exists between the BoM and the Parents Association and is sincerely grateful for all the work done to support the children and staff of the school.

BoM agreed reports are made available to the school community and are published on the school website after each meeting. There is a constant flow of information between the P.A. and the B.o.M. and clear lines of communication are maintained at all times.

The school communicates with the general parent body through a termly school newsletter, our school website (www.castletownnationalschool.ie), the school Twitter account (@Castletown_NS), frequent letters home as well as the school text system operated through our administration software (Aladdin).

The attendance rate at this year's Parent Teacher meetings was excellent. These were held in Term one and each parent was allocated approximately 10 minutes.

Management of Resources

Finances:

The financial management of our school is conducted in strict compliance with Department of Education requirements. School accounts are audited to fulfil the Boards responsibility in relation to financing the school needs. The accounts are in turn examined by the Treasurer of the Board of Management. The Treasurer issues financial reports regarding account balances at each Board of Management meeting. The accounts of the school are computerised by the school secretary. School finances continue to be tight and require prudent financial management. Additional funds are provided by school fundraising activities. The Board would like to sincerely thank all those who support these activities so generously and assure them that the money will be used wisely and prudently.

From September 2016 the Board of Management have decided to request a voluntary contribution of €75 from each family to contribute to school costs such as:

- ICT Infrastructure, software and devices.
- Visiting groups/teachers to support the curriculum development of the Arts, PE and SPHE Curriculum.
- Supplement School Trips and Tours.
- Purchase purpose designed resources for pupils with additional needs.
- Resource the new Infant curriculum framework, Aistear.

School Building

A Summer Works application was made for fencing around the perimeter of the basketball court. It is hoped that funding for this project will be received during the next academic year for work to commence in 2017.

Minor works completed were:

- Presses were installed in the classroom in the old building.
- A leak between the old and the new building was fixed.
- A water tank was replaced above the library.
- A number of doors and windows were fixed.

Curricular Resources

At the beginning of the School year capitation was spent on books to restock the Book Rental Scheme, purchase Art & Craft provisions for the year and replenish office supplies.

Continued focus was on ICT, Special Education and provision of books for literacy. Further investment has been made in Infant Education for the introduction of the Aistear Programme. Training was also paid for by the BoM for upskilling in relation to First Aid.

Health and Safety

For security purposes parents are requested to enter the school through the entrance lobby which is monitored by our secretary, Siobhán Geoghegan.

Parents are requested to sign pupils out if leaving school before dismissal time.

Parents are requested to explain absences.

Our water quality was tested regularly by Wexford County Council.

First aid kits were replenished. Fire drills were carried out each term

Staff supervise the playground before school each morning for ten minutes to ensure the safe assembly of children on the school playground.

Outside Tutors

GAA (Wexford GAA) and Tag Rugby (Leinster RFU Branch) coaching ran at different times of the year in the school. The coaches were supervised by teachers also.

ICT

- 10 new iPads were purchased.
- Scoil Ghormáin Naofa regularly updates parents through its website www.castletownnationalschool.ie and the school Twitter account @Castletown_NS.

- Dyslexia Software was purchased.

2. Teaching and Learning

REPORT OF AGGREGATE STANDARDISED TEST RESULTS in ENGLISH READING

Number of students in second, fourth and sixth classes whose **scores** on a standardised test of English reading fall within the following ranges in respect of tests undertaken in May 2016:

Test administered: Drumcondra Reading

	Sten 1	Sten 2	Sten 3	Sten 4	Sten 5	Sten 6	Sten 7	Sten 8	Sten 9	Sten 10	Total Enrolment
2 nd	0%	0%	10%	10%	0%	20%	20%	30%	0%	10%	10
4 th	7%	0%	0%	0%	21%	21%	21%	21%	0%	7%	14
6 th	0%	0%	0%	20%	7%	40%	7%	13%	7%	7%	15
Total 2015/16	3%	0%	3%	10%	10%	28%	15%	21%	3%	8%	39
Normal Distribution	2.3%	4.4%	9.2%	15%	19.2%	19.2%	15%	9.2%	4.4%	2.3%	

The following actions were taken to achieve literacy targets set as part of our School Self Evaluation process:

- 6 weeks of Literacy Lift-Off was provided to 1st and 2nd Class.
- 6 weeks of Guided Reading was provided to 3rd -6th Class.
- Staff engaged in professional development prior to and during the implementation of our new literacy strategies.
- Resources were purchased to help us deliver on our new initiatives.
- 6 weeks of Peer Tutoring was provided to 1st – 5th classes.
- Increased Parental involvement was encouraged through initiatives such as shared reading and paired reading.
- The number of opportunities that children were given to speak in front of the class increased, e.g. report back findings from groupwork, present projects, participate in debates. Etc.
- Teachers taught discrete oral language lessons.

Maths**REPORT OF AGGREGATE STANDARDISED TEST RESULTS in MATHEMATICS.**

Number of students in second, fourth and sixth classes whose **scores** on a standardised test of Mathematics fall within the following ranges in respect of tests undertaken in May 2016:

Test administered: Drumcondra Maths

	Sten 1	Sten 2	Sten 3	Sten 4	Sten 5	Sten 6	Sten 7	Sten 8	Sten 9	Sten 10	Total Enrolment
2 nd	0%	10%	0%	0%	20%	0%	10%	20%	30%	10%	10
4 th	0%	7%	7%	7%	0%	21%	14%	21%	7%	14%	14
6 th	0%	7%	0%	13%	13%	33%	7%	13%	7%	7%	15
Total 2015/16	0%	8%	3%	8%	10%	21%	10%	18%	13%	10%	39
Normal Distribution	2.3%	4.4%	9.2%	15%	19.2%	19.2%	15%	9.2%	4.4%	2.3%	

The following actions were taken to achieve numeracy targets set as part of our School Self Evaluation process:

- Professional development of the staff took place prior to and during the implementation of our new Maths strategies. Our Learning Support Teacher attended Mata sa Rang Workshops and other members of staff were made aware of relevant courses in the local education centre.
- The PDST delivered a 2-hour presentation to staff regarding problem solving and teaching approaches.
- Teachers focused on mathematical language and Oral/Mental Maths.
- The strategies suggested in the PDST Mental Maths Handbook were shared and adopted as appropriate.
- A bank of resources were created. Kits were created containing all the materials a class teacher might need to allow the children to discover for themselves concepts in: Length, Weight, Time, Money, Capacity, Shape and Space.
- The Maths School Plan was reviewed and updated.

Physical Education was chosen as our third area of SSE . Surveys were carried out and collated.

An INTO directive was issued in April 2016 which directed all members to cease co-operation with School Self Evaluation and as a result no PE School Improvement Plan or Report will be issued this year.

Planning

Staff use a fortnightly planning template that is gathered monthly as a record of short term planning. These records can be used as assessment and as information for future planning and policy development.

Assessment and Reporting

- Standardised tests were used to monitor pupil progress in English and Maths in May. This information and school performance was relayed to parents through the end of year school report that was sent home in June. The information gathered was also used inform progress in Literacy, Numeracy and where to target General Allocation Support for next year.
- Formal Parent/Teacher meetings were held in November.

Support for Pupils

- The Principal and relevant teachers meet with Educational Psychologists regularly to prioritise candidates for assessment/observation. Miss Aoife O'Connor is our NEPS Psychologist and a strong and positive professional relationship exists between the school community and Ms. O'Connor.
- Regular reviews of pupils with School Support or School Support Plus plans took place between all relevant teachers. The General Allocation caseload was also reviewed each term and the timetable was adapted to ensure support was allocated where it was most needed.
- Learning support and Resource Teaching consisted of a balance between withdrawal and in class support in literacy and numeracy. In-class support took place in all classes.
- The Resource Teacher liaises with relevant secondary schools to ensure the smooth transition for 6th class pupils with special needs.
- All teaching staff members have undertaken relevant CPD to meet individual needs over the course of the year in areas including: Reading Recovery, Maths, Incredible Years, Friends for Life and First Aid training courses.
- Over the duration of the year consultation was sought with relevant professionals in relation to particular students and their educational/social needs. Play therapists, Occupational Therapists and Educational Psychologists were amongst the professionals consulted (without compromising pupil identity or confidentiality) over the course of the year.

The Board continues to acknowledge the strong level of professionalism among the staff and ensured adequate support was in place to aid in CPD. Cost of specific training courses was covered by the BOM.

Curricular Development:

- The Education Passport was completed for 6th class pupils.
- S.S.E. – Questionnaires regarding Physical Education were administered to pupils from Junior Infants to 6th and to all parents/guardians. (gathering evidence)

- A member of the Professional Development Service for Teachers consulted with staff regarding School Self Evaluation and Numeracy.
- Station teaching was introduced to all class levels.
- Problem Solving was prioritised in numeracy.
- Standardised Testing in Literacy and Numeracy was completed for all class groupings in May 2016.
- A school Twitter account was created and introduced.
- Maths Week was celebrated in October.
- Science Week was celebrated in November.
- World Book Day was celebrated in March.
- Aistear was integrated as a key component of infant education.
- New Language Curriculum Training was completed by whole staff.
- Reading Recovery was introduced to junior students.
- Ready Set Go Maths stations were introduced to Junior and Senior Infants.

School Activities / Achievements:

- District Hurling Finalists
- District Football Finalists
- Swimming Lessons – Junior Infants to 6th
- Scholastic Book Fair
- Awarded Green Schools Flag for Travel
- Awarded Active School Flag
- Tag Rugby Coaching
- GAA Coaching
- Celebrated Proclamation Day
- Celebrated Catholic School's Week
- Celebrated Grandparents Day
- Held a Christmas Carol Service in the church.
- Participated in a WOW day
- Participated in a Cycle Workshop
- Participated in a Bling Your Boots Day
- Committees were elected for ASF and Green Schools.
- Student's Council was elected.
- Finalist in Easons' Spelling Bee in Bunscoil Loreto Gorey
- Football Blitz for 3rd/4th class in Tomnahealy.
- Golf for Girls in association with ILGU
- All classes attended a school tour in June 2016
- Children celebrated Seachtain na Gaeilge
- Playground initiative – 5th/6th class pupils developed games and activities for younger pupils: Fun Friday. Skipping games were taught by the older students to the younger students.
- Participated in National Bowling week – 4 students were chosen to compete in the final of the competition.
- Participated in the Sing Out Loud Concert in Wexford Opera House.
- Participated in the Peace Proms concert in the Hub Kilkenny.
- Participated in The Big Sing in the Arklow Bay.
- Participated in the Arklow Music and Drama Festival: Junior and Senior Infants were highly commended for their performance. 1st and 2nd class won 1st prize in their category. Many other individual children also participated in the competition.
- 1916 Play performed by 5th and 6th class.

- 5th and 6th class attended a play and drama workshop in Wexford Opera House: Me, Mollser.
- 5th and 6th class attended a tag rugby blitz in Wexford town.
- Teachers participated in 'Be Active After School' training.
- School Garden

Community Involvement:

- Christmas Tree decorations for local church were created
- Graduation Ceremony for 6th Class – Presentation of certificates
- Grandparents Day was celebrated
- Parental involvement in paired reading
- Children participated in the local community clean-up
- The wider community was invited to celebrate Proclamation Day alongside the school community.
- Sports Day
- Rackard League
- Golf Classic
- Table Quiz

Conclusion

The Board of Management would like to express its appreciation to the hard working, dedicated and committed staff of Scoil Ghormáin Naofa, led by Ms. Lisa Dempsey.

It also commends the community, both school and parish who actively support the school in so many ways.

The pupils of the school are deserving of special mention for their excellent behaviour, cooperation, their academic and extra curricular achievements.

The Board is pleased that the religious ethos and characteristic spirit of the school is being promoted and being developed into the future.

Yours sincerely,

Lisa Dempsey, Secretary to the Board of Management