



Gorey Educate Together NS is pleased to be in a position to offer the pupils in our school who have experienced the death of a close relative, or a separation or divorce in their family, the opportunity to participate in the RAINBOWS 12-week Peer Support Programme, (which already takes place in over 600 venues throughout the country.)

When something significant happens in a family, the entire family is affected. If a parent dies or parents separate or a painful loss occurs, not only do the parents grieve, the children do also. Grief is an expression of love and a normal human reaction to a significant loss. Children find it difficult to verbalise their feelings of grief because of their age and inexperience. Grief may surface in their behaviour, schoolwork and emotional well-being.

**RAINBOWS** is a support group that helps children put their *feelings into words*, work through their grief, build a stronger sense of *self-esteem*, and begin to *adapt to* what has taken place in the family. **RAINBOWS** is *not a counselling group*. It is a safe, confidential setting where children will share their grief associated feelings with each other and with trained, volunteer facilitators, who are members of our staff. The children can begin to realise that they are not 'the only one.'

Children are generally grouped with others experiencing a similar loss. Children may be assigned to mixed groups because of necessity.

There are tragic losses that can cause extreme trauma. The Rainbows programme is **not** adequate in these circumstances. Professional help should be sought. If children are already attending professional counselling/family therapy etc. the professional's advice must be sought before application is made for attendance at Rainbows.

We invite you to discuss the contents of this letter with your child in advance of application to attend Rainbows, so that they understand what Rainbows is about.

The Rainbows programme consists of 12 sessions and will take place on Monday and Tuesday afternoons (2 groups) from 2.30 – 3.15pm, starting on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> February.

The slip below should be returned in an envelope to the school office and an application form will be given to you at a future date. There will be a limited number of spaces available this year and priority shall be given to the older children in the school.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact us.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jacinta Hayes, Class Teacher  
and Rainbows Co-Ordinator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Raymond Swan, Principal

-----  
Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for attending Rainbows: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/guardian signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_