

Board of Management of Gorey Educate Together NS, 27th September 2012: report to families and staff

Attendees: Karen Loughran (Chairperson,) Raymond Swan (Secretary,) Colin Webb (Treasurer,) Tracy Smith, Sarah Anderson, Deirdre Flynn

Apologies: Allen Holman

1. Joint Session of Board of Management and Parent-Teacher Association Committee

- Welcome & Introductions: Siobhan Smyth & Karen Loughran
- Thought for the Day: Tracy Smith
- Principal's Report:

Current enrolment: 351 (13 mainstream classes; 2 special classes)

Staffing: 41 (22 teacher posts/23 individuals; 12 Special Needs Assistants; secretary + part-time secretary; part-time caretaker; 2 part-time cleaners; 1 part-time after-school supervisor. Also, 2 SNAs employed as Bus Escorts and 2 SNAs employed as after-school supervisors.)

School Development (past 13 months)

Facilities: furnished additional classroom accommodation; significant investment in maths equipment, infant materials and SESE (history/geography/science) materials; 16 laptop computers, laptop trolley, 6 iPads; new multi-sensory room; new 'outdoor classroom.'

Pastoral/pupil management: New link with Play Therapist in training; continuation of 'Rainbows' peer support programme (every two years); introduction of the *SALT* conflict resolution skills programme; behaviour support programme for teachers; introduction of 'behaviour cards' to aid the tracking of behaviours and misbehaviours; continued positive framework for pupil management, including: 'class of the week' initiative, 'reflection room,' etc.

Curriculum: Continuing Professional Development in the areas of Literacy & Numeracy. Increased emphasis on Questioning as a methodology. Realignment of approach to maths teaching: additional hands-on, real-life problem solving. New school plan for Learning Support & Resource Teaching. A number of teachers completed Special Education and Literacy & Numeracy in-service courses, as well as *Learn Together* and Literacy & Numeracy summer courses.

Pupils benefitted from participation in many **extra-curricular activities**, including: Intel Mini-Scientist programme, Green Flag programme, percussion workshops, School Musical, essay competition, quiz competitions, rugby/hockey/Gaelic football/soccer coaching and/or competitions, 'living history' workshops, organising bake sales, *Seachtain na Gaeilge*, Diversity Week, school trips (including Gorey Town Council visit and Aviva Stadium Trip.) After-school opportunities for pupils: Irish dancing, Somatic Movement, Arts & Crafts, Swimming and Hip-Hop Dancing.

Ethos: Continued emphasis on communication (newsletters/website/school guide/text-a-parent.) Parental involvement in classroom activities: wormery, pancakes, baking, iPads, art, other. School Community events: Sports Day, end of year event for 6th class, 'Blow Bubbles for Autism,' Open Classrooms event, Breakfast Together, December performances, 'Two-cans' food appeal, PTA Sponsored Walk, Discos, St. Patrick's Parade. Pupil voice: School Council, Class Charters, consultation re: outdoor classroom, responsibilities: broadcasters, gardeners, shopkeepers, playground minders, etc. Petition for the return of the school milk programme. 'What pupils want 2012-2013:' hands-on activities (arts/sports/science, etc.)

- PTA Annual General Meeting to be held during October.
 - PTA Financial Report was presented to the meeting.
 - PTA Annual Sponsored Walk: Sunday 30th September, Courtown Woods
 - A decision was made not to participate in the Educate Together National Office 'Winter Raffle.' However, a donation to the national office will be made from PTA funds.
2. The Board co-opted Angie Dooley to its membership as a Community Representative.
 3. The Board made a number of amendments to the school's new Critical Incident Plan.
 4. The Board declined a request from a parent regarding the administration of medicine to a pupil by school staff.
 5. The Board approved a leave application.

6. Two permanent teachers had expressed an interest in undertaking the new Certificate in Ethical and Multi-Denominational Education. The Board decided to offer co-funding. (Funding might or might not be available to others staff members in future school years.)
7. Hire of School Premises. Work will continue regarding the formalisation of a Rental Agreement. In the interim, the School Hall only will be offered to GETNS teachers and parents.
8. The Board expressed thanks to the staff for all work regarding the 'Back to School' period.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 6th November 2012, 8pm at the school