

# Gorey Educate Together National School

*Scoil Náisiúnta Foghlaim le Chéile, Guaire*

Principal's Newsletter

19th January 2016

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**Monday 18th January:** Gaelic games coaching continues on Mondays. Current classes: Laura's Senior Infants, Lynn & Michelle's 1st classes and Andrea & Daire's 2nd classes. Running shoes must be worn.

**Monday 18th January:** Optional Homework Club continues, (2nd—6th classes.) For details please contact Brian Quigley or Mairéad Jordan (the organising teachers), or the school secretary.

**Tuesday 19th January:** Chess Club continues on Tuesdays. (Club is full.)

**Wednesday 20th January:** Soccer coaching with Mikael Allain continues on Wednesdays. Current classes: Daire & Andrea's 2nd classes. Running shoes must be worn.

**Thursday 21st January:** Football Association of Ireland *futsal* blitz, Gorey. The school will enter teams in the event.

**Thursday 21st January:** Leinster League chess match at Gorey Educate Together.

**Thursday 21st January:** Bodhrán classes restart. (No Tuesday class this term.)

**Monday 25th January:** Trip for 6th classes to '1916 Experience' and Dunbrody Famine Ship, New Ross.

**Friday 29th January:** Bake Sale by the children on our school council. Details to follow..., (the children will vote for a Charity.)

**Friday 29th January, 7pm:** Credit Union table quiz at Gorey Community School. The school will enter teams in the event.

**Monday 1st February, for 5 days:** 'Heritage in Schools' workshop for every class. Presenter: Eric Dempsey of *Birds Ireland* (and RTÉ radio.)

**Monday 22nd February:** Optional after-school swimming for 4 Mondays. (Details to follow...)

**February 25th and 29th:** Percussion workshop for every class, (African drumming.)

**February 29th—March 2nd:** Optional school photos. Details to follow...



*'Hour of Code' in 3rd class. Martin Luther King Day assembly by 6th class. 'Upstanders' anti-bullying display in PE Hall. More photos on school website.*

## **Parking**

Please don't block the parking spaces near the pedestrian gate, (by parking in the 'set down' area.)

Please don't block the wheelchair parking spaces, (lots of turning space is needed.) Please remember that all other parking spaces near the wheelchair parking spaces are reserved for staff.

Drivers — always take extreme care at and near the school.

## **Extracts from our Parental Involvement Policy (See school website for full policy.)**

The involvement of all parents is sought and encouraged...

Respect for the professional role of the teacher and the statutory responsibilities of the Principal, Patron and the Board of Management is always an important consideration.

Parents are invited to become involved in the school in many ways and at many levels, for example: Serving on school bodies (Board of Management, Parent-Teacher Association\*, Educate Together Board of Directors, E.T. National Forum,) Fundraising, Organising Social Events, Policy-making, e.g. Parent-Teacher Association Constitution\* and volunteering in our classrooms.

### **Benefits of Parental Involvement**

Children benefit from greater diversity in the classroom.

Parental skills may support and complement work already taking place.

Parental involvement actively supports and encourages the child's learning.

A wide range of activity is facilitated. This can be interesting and fun, and can lead to a broader and more holistic education.

It promotes 'good parent/teacher relationships and a better level of understanding between home and school' (National Parents' Council.)

It enhances communication, trust and respect between parents and teachers.

Parents can learn about the Curriculum.

Parental involvement allows children to see that school is an extension of home and therefore fosters the idea of the 'school family.'

Parental skills can contribute to the smooth running and development of the school.

### **How to Get Involved**

Parents are, first of all, invited to consider their skills, interests and time available, and communicate this information to the class teacher, the principal and/or to the PTA\*.

Parents can consult, by appointment or in writing, with the class teacher about hobbies, skills or interests they can share with the class bearing in mind that needs change from year to year.

Parents can work in conjunction with the teachers in a planned and co-ordinated way. Should any differences or difficulties arise, the school's existing grievance procedure should be utilised.

Ongoing projects over a number of weeks may enhance and enrich the work the children are involved with in the classroom: parents are encouraged to discuss any ideas they may have with the teacher.

Parents can help with swimming, tours and trips, organising the school library, art and P.E. resources, and may also like to make costumes for school concerts.

Parents may get involved in many extra-curricular activities such as chess, yoga, football, music and art, and they would be particularly welcome to initiate project work with the children in the areas of the school garden, a children's newsletter etc.

Opportunities are endless—baking, woodwork, cultural exchanges and discussion... the school welcomes all ideas.

### **Guidelines for Getting Involved**

Parents come into the classroom at the invitation of the teacher, by prior arrangement and for an agreed purpose. The classroom teacher, in consultation with the Principal, holds the final decision on the suitability and viability of all suggestions.

**The happiness, welfare and safety of the children are our primary concern. A child's personal history and academic achievements are strictly confidential: it is important not to discuss your thoughts on how a pupil might be doing [academically/behaviourally/socially/emotionally] with any party. (Uncertainties in this area should be discussed with the class teacher or principal only.)**

Respect for the teachers in their professional capacity is essential.

Discipline/behaviour remains the responsibility of the teacher.

All work will be supervised by the teacher.

Parents who participate should be conscious of and sensitive to the needs of the entire class, not just the needs of their own child.

In the interests of safety, toddlers and younger children cannot be accommodated during a classroom activity.

The highest standard of adult behaviour and language is expected.

Punctuality and consistency are crucial.

No fees are payable. Any expenses that you wish to reclaim must be sanctioned in advance by the Board of Management, and must be accompanied by receipts.

In the case of an ongoing project that takes place over a number of weeks, parents will meet with the teacher to discuss the activity. It remains the responsibility of the teacher to determine its appropriateness (e.g. is it suitable for the age group; has something similar already been done, etc.)

The teacher has the final say in the event that he/she feels an activity is falling short of its original aims and objectives.

The school ethos must be upheld at all times and it is important to keep in mind that the school is multi-denominational, co-educational, child centred and democratic. Consequently, respect for all the partners in education - children, teachers and parents - must be upheld at all times.

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\*Please note that the school's previous PTA Committee concluded its term of office during November. A new 2015-2016 committee was not formed, due to a shortage of volunteers. Later this term the Board of Management will invite the school community to form a new PTA Committee. Details to follow...

*Many thanks to all our Parent Volunteers - past, present (and future!)*