



*Loreto Secondary School,
Spawell Road,
Wexford.*

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E-mail: loretowexford@eircom.net
Website: www.loretowexford.com
Office hours: 8.15 a.m. to 4.15 p.m., Monday to Friday

Wednesday, 4 May 2016

Dear parents/guardians and students,

The Board of Management wishes to announce its appointment of Ms. Chris O' Reilly to the position of Deputy Principal in this school with effect from 1 September 2016.

Ms. O' Reilly has taught Irish and History in this school since 1994 and has also held in-school management positions during her time in Loreto.

The Board wishes Ms. O' Reilly every future success and happiness in this important leadership position and pledges its full support to her at all times.

She replaces the outgoing Deputy Principal, Sr. Carmel, who retires on 31 August 2016.

Yours faithfully,

Billy O' Shea,
Principal and Secretary to the Board of Management.



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Thursday, 25 February 2016

Dear parents/guardians and students,

I write to inform you of two very significant staff developments.

Firstly, Sr. Carmel, our Deputy Principal, has announced her retirement with effect from the end of the current school year in June.

This announcement comes as a tremendous shock to all of us on staff who have had the pleasure to work with Carmel as Deputy Principal over the past 11 years. She has filled so many roles for us as colleague, friend, confidante, educationalist and Loreto sister. She did so with an incredibly strong work ethic, sense of compassion and, crucially, no shortage of good humour, song and merriment.

However strong our sense of loss, I feel that Loreto students, both past and present, will be very sad to hear of Carmel's imminent departure. Armed with an uncanny ability to know more than 700 students by their first name, Carmel was always there for every Loreto student whenever the need arose. She celebrated good and happy times with them over the years but was also the person in the school most sought by them when the going was tough and when the kind embrace, friendly chat and box of tissues were most needed. I know that so many parents and guardians have been deeply appreciative of the care and understanding shown by Carmel to their daughters over the years when they experienced serious personal and family upset.

Carmel has asked us to rejoice with her at this time as she is very much at peace with her decision. It will take us some time to be happy! It is also pleasing to see that she leaves the role in good health and ready to take on new and different roles within the Loreto Order in the years ahead.

I suppose the greatest tribute that I can pay to Carmel is that she has well and truly established a template for what is most needed in a Deputy Principal in a school like ours – a strong commitment to Christian values and to the pastoral care of each member of the school community.

In due course, the Board of Management will begin the process of appointing her successor. This will be no easy task.

Secondly, Ms. Bee McDonald has announced her retirement from her position of Maths teacher from the end of this school year. Bee's association with Loreto is almost life-long as she has filled the roles of past-pupil, teacher, the school's first lay principal, post of responsibility holder and mother of a past-pupil, not to mention sister of past-pupils and current school secretary. It is hard to think of anyone else so immersed in the proud Loreto tradition.

Bee started her teaching career in Loreto in 1977. She built up considerable expertise in the teaching of Maths and has shared this, as well as her enthusiasm for the subject, with students right up to the present day. Consistently showing great care for all students in her charge, she championed, in particular, the welfare of less able students and those who were going through difficult times in their lives. She did an especially fine job when co-ordinating the LCVP and Transition Year programmes in the school and was always seen by her colleagues and students as a highly organised and enterprising teacher.

In recent years, Bee pioneered the development of the school's Academic Council and the structure and system that she now leaves behind her will be of immense benefit to Loreto staff and students for many years to come.

As she prepares to take her leave of Loreto, Bee is heartened by the dedication, expertise and enthusiasm of the young teachers who have joined the Maths Department in recent years. They, in turn, are very appreciative of how well Bee helped and encouraged them as they started their teaching careers.

This is a difficult letter for me to write as I will miss both Carmel and Bee in so many different ways. Between them, they have given lived and real expression to the school's core values of truth, freedom, justice, sincerity and joy. They are both very happy with their decisions to retire and will leave Loreto this summer with the most sincere gratitude, respect and appreciation of colleagues, students and parents.

Yours faithfully,

Billy O' Shea,
Principal.



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Friday, 22 January 2016

Dear parents/guardians and students,

I would like to bring the following points to your attention:

New school building

The Chairperson of the Board of Management, Sr. Helen, and I attended a meeting with officials from the Department of Education and Skills and the National Development Finance Agency in Tullamore last Friday. The news was all positive!

Firstly, Roadbridge will begin the advance site works at Pembroke Hill on and from Monday, 25 January 2016. These works will continue until early April.

Secondly, the preferred tenderer, Inspired Spaces Consortium, will be using the Sammon Group to build the new school. Sammon are based in Kilcock, Co. Kildare and have vast experience in school building projects, as a quick visit to their website, www.sammongroup.com, will reveal. We have been told that building will commence in early June and that the date on which the new school will be handed over to us for occupancy will be Thursday, 28 September 2017.

The school rejoices at this great news.

150th anniversary

This is an appropriate time to advise you that the school will be celebrating its 150th anniversary next September.

A committee of staff is presently putting together a calendar of events to mark this special occasion and will consult with Parents' and Students' Councils before submitting its proposals to the Board of Management for approval.

It is expected that details of the anniversary celebrations will be announced in February.

Attendance at school

I wish to emphasise to you how important it is that each student would attend school on a very regular basis.

Experience tells us in no uncertain terms that there is a very strong link between high levels of attendance and academic achievement.

Absences should be kept to an absolute minimum. Parents are reminded that they must sign each student's absence note and state clearly and honestly the reason for each absence.

The school fully understands and appreciates the genuine reasons to explain certain absences.

Ms. O' Reilly, Sr. Carmel and I, along with our colleagues, keep a close eye on absences and will contact individual families as required if unexplained absence levels are a matter of concern.

Voluntary Contribution

A sincere thank you is extended to all families who have kindly supported our Voluntary Contribution Scheme of €150 per family this year. Any outstanding contributions will continue to be accepted by the School Secretary, Noeleen Goggin, who will receipt all payments. This payment may also be made from our website by using the Easy Payments Plus icon.

Car park

For safety reasons, parents are asked once again not to enter the school car park when delivering/collecting students.

The only exception to this is in the case of students with temporary or long term mobility issues.

Ipads

The school is pleased to announce that it has purchased a set of 30 ipads for classroom use by students. Wireless broadband has been extended to the Teach Mhuire building to facilitate this development.

Please contact me if you require any further information on the above points.

Yours faithfully,

Billy O' Shea,
Principal.



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Tuesday, 22 September 2015

Dear parents/guardians,

I write in relation to an important financial matter in the school.

The Board of Management is very aware of the considerable costs associated with education and of the competing demands being placed on the family budget. We know also that many families have seen a considerable reduction in income in recent times. Mindful of this overall situation, the school seeks to be as understanding and as sensitive as possible in its financial dealings with you.

The Board sought your support this year for an Administration Charge per student to cover the cost of all photocopying, consumable materials, printing, postage, student diary, locker, swipe card/assessment tests (1st year students only) and 24 hour personal accident insurance. To date, this payment has been made in respect of 99% of students, a truly outstanding level of support for which the school is most grateful.

However, it is still necessary for the Board of Management to seek your support for its Voluntary Contribution Scheme for 2015/2016. This need arises from the ongoing reductions in State payments to schools and from costs that continue to escalate e.g. electricity, heating. Put simply, the school would not be able to balance its budget without a well-supported Voluntary Contribution Scheme.

Full details are as follows:

<p style="text-align: center;">Voluntary Contribution Scheme, 2015/2016 €150 per family</p>

1. Loreto, Wexford seeks a voluntary contribution of €150 per family in respect of the 2015/2016 school year. This works out at 41c per day per family.
2. A family's voluntary contribution can be paid in any of the following ways:
 - a. One payment of €150
 - b. Three payments of €50
 - c. One or more payments of smaller amounts
3. The school will be happy to accept a donation in excess of €150 if any family, with the means to so do, wishes to make such a contribution.
4. All contributions should be addressed to Noeleen Goggin, School Secretary with cheques being made payable to Loreto Secondary School, Wexford.
5. A receipt will be issued for every payment.
6. Contributions can also be made online by clicking on the Easy Payments Plus icon on the school website – www.loretowexford.com
7. Please be advised that there is no need for you to contact me or the School Secretary to explain if you cannot make any contribution. We fully understand the severe financial constraints facing so many families. We also acknowledge that some parents may have a principled objection to such a request.
8. The only two people in the school who administer the scheme are the School Secretary and Principal. No details of individual payments are made known to anybody else. The work of the School Secretary and Principal in this regard is subject to inspection on an annual basis by the external auditor.
9. The school engages in no other fund-raising activity to finance its own budget.

In conclusion, I wish to make three points:

- The Board seeks your support for this year's Voluntary Contribution Scheme so that the school can continue to do its best to cater for all students in the face of reduced state grants and increased expenditure. The burden is shared if every family can make a contribution in accordance with its means.
- This scheme is entirely voluntary.
- I am available to deal with any questions/comments/matters arising from this letter.

Thanking you for your support and wishing every blessing on you and your family,

Yours faithfully,

Billy O' Shea,
Principal and Secretary to the Board of Management.

Please keep up-to-date with school activities by visiting
www.loretowexford.com on a regular basis.



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Letter to families, 14 August 2015

Dear parents/guardians and students,

I wish to welcome you all to the start of the new school year and to express the hope that the summer holiday has been enjoyable and restful. The less we say about the weather the better!

There are some points of information that I would like to bring to your attention at this time, as follows:

New school building

It is expected that an announcement will be made within the next month regarding the identity of the successful tenderer for the building of the new school.

It is also expected that work will commence very shortly on preparatory site work.

A meeting with Department of Education and Skills officials in May confirmed that all is going to plan to have us in our new school building in summer 2017.

More detailed information will be provided throughout the new school year.

School calendar, 2015/2016

Please see our school website – www.loretowexford.com – for details of the calendar for the year. We have changed its format this year in order to make it easier to include details of events as the year progresses.

Commencement details, 2015/2016

All students are obliged to attend **Introduction Meetings** in the school as follows:

Thursday, 27 August 2015

4th year	9.00 a.m. to 11.00 a.m.
5th year	11.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.
6th year	2.00 p.m. to 3.00 p.m.

Friday, 28 August 2015

1st year	9.00 a.m. to 10.20 a.m. Following the meeting, timetabled classes will be held for 1 st year students until 3.33 p.m. Students need only bring a pen, copy and their lunch on this day.
2nd year	11.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.
3rd year	2.00 p.m. to 3.00 p.m.

Timetabled classes will commence for all students on Monday, 31 August 2015, 8.50 a.m. to 3.59 p.m.

2015/2016 Timetable

Details of students' timetables will be available on e-portal from Thursday, 20 August 2015.

Please note that, as allocations of students to Irish, English and Maths classes in 2nd, 4th and 5th years will not be made until the commencement of term, the stated teacher on e-portal for these subjects may not be the allocated teacher from September. Additionally, some optional 4th year groupings will only be finalised when students return to school.

Full timetable details will be explained to students at their Introduction Meeting.

Leaving Certificate results and college places

The school extends sincere congratulations to the 117 students who received Leaving Certificate results last Wednesday. We hope that offers of college places will add to the sense of joy that was reflected in the faces of so many students, teachers and parents this week.

All results will now be analysed by the school on a subject-by-subject basis and will, in due course, be discussed with the Board of Management, subject departments, Parents' and Students' Councils as we seek to further develop the high standards that the school expects.

Junior Certificate results

These results will be given to students at 9.30 a.m. on Wednesday, 9 September 2015 in the Concert Hall. There will be no classes for 4th year students on this day but school proceeds as normal for all other year groups.

Student Attendance

It is expected that every student will be in school each day. It is a well-proven fact that high levels of attendance correspond very closely with good outcomes in examinations. Indeed, this is borne out very strongly in our Leaving Certificate results this year.

When a student is absent there must be a good reason for it e.g. genuine illness, essential appointment, bereavement.

All absences must be explained in writing to the Class Teacher and the relevant absence form must be left into the Secretary's office by 8.50 a.m. on the day of return to school.

All non-essential and/or discretionary appointments must be scheduled for outside school hours e.g. driving lessons, driver theory test, certain medical/dental appointments.

I am appreciative of the support of most parents in this important matter.

Financial Information

A.

For the 2015/2016 school year there will be an **Administration Charge** of €60 per student in years 2 to 6, €75 per student in year 1. This will cover the cost of all photocopying, consumable classroom materials, printing, postage, handouts, student diary, locker, Swipe Card and Assessment Tests (1st year students) and 24 hour personal accident insurance.

Cheques should be made payable to Loreto Secondary School.

The most convenient way to make this payment is by means of the Easy Payment online facility that can be accessed from the school's home page on www.loretowexford.com

Alternatively, this amount will be collected in the Secretary's Office as follows:

Year Group	Date	Time
4 th	Thursday, 27 August 2015	08.30 – 09.00
5 th	Thursday, 27 August 2015	11.00 – 11.30
6 th	Thursday, 27 August 2015	13.30 – 14.00
1 st	Friday, 28 August 2015	08.30 – 09.00
2 nd	Friday, 28 August 2015	11.00 – 11.30
3 rd	Friday, 28 August 2015	13.30 – 14.00
2 nd chance to pay – all year groups	Monday, 31 August 2015	08.15 – 09.00

It is at these times that student diaries will be issued.

B.

The following **examination costs** will arise for 3rd and 6th year families:

Mock examinations (3rd and 6th years)

€105 per student payable in January 2016

Junior Certificate

Entry fee €109 (2015 figure) payable in March 2016*

Leaving Certificate

Entry fee €116 (2015 figure) payable in March 2016*

Entry fee for repeat students €301 (2015 figure) payable in March 2016*

* waiver applies for medical card holders

C.

The Board of Management will request the support of families for a **Voluntary Contribution** of €150 per family. Further details will follow in September 2015.

Road and car park safety

In the interests of safety, I must ask parents not to park on the double yellow lines when collecting daughters from school. Such illegal parking is very dangerous as it seriously restricts the view of drivers as they exit the school grounds.

Additionally, the use of school car parks is restricted to staff and a limited number of 6th year students. Parents are asked, once again, not to drive into these car parks for the purpose of collecting or depositing their daughters.

We are happy to make an exception to this policy in the case of students with special needs or temporary mobility issues.

School website – loretowexford.com

Your attention is once again drawn to the school website. Please visit this site on a regular basis as it is full of up-to-date and useful school information.

We continue to make a paper copy of all correspondence/forms available at Reception for the benefit of families without internet access.

Please contact me if you need any clarification in relation to the above matters.

Yours faithfully,

Billy O' Shea,
Principal.