



**Loreto Secondary School,
Spawell Road,
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Office hours: 8.15 a.m. to 4.15 p.m., Monday to Friday

Monday, 30 April 2018

Dear parents and guardians,

I write in relation to three matters at this time, as follows:

Voluntary Contribution Scheme for 2017/2018

The school is most grateful to families that have already contributed to this year's voluntary contribution scheme.

I write now to seek the support of families that have not made any contribution to date.

Loreto Secondary School engages in no fund-raising activities to finance its operations. Instead, it relies totally on the goodwill and support of families for its annual Voluntary Contribution Scheme. This support is all the more important as the school's funding from the Department of Education and Skills still contains the cutbacks imposed in recent years.

So, what am I asking for in this letter?

1. If you are in a position to pay the full €150 per family voluntary contribution the school would be very pleased to receive this amount from you at your earliest convenience.
2. If you are not in a position to pay €150 but would be willing to donate a smaller sum in accordance with your ability to pay we would be very grateful for your support.

Please send any payment to the School Secretary, Noeleen Goggin, who will then issue a receipt to you. Contributions can also be made online by clicking on the Easy Payments Plus icon on the school website – www.loretowexford.com

3. We ask you to ignore this letter if you are not in a position to make any payment. We appreciate only too well the severe financial worries facing so many families and it is not our wish to place any additional pressure.

I also wish to make it clear that this contribution scheme is entirely voluntary.

Student Attendance

At the recent Spring General Meeting of Parents, I presented figures indicating the average number of days absent per student in the six different year groups in the period from 31 August 2017 to 23 March 2018. Those in attendance agreed that the figures were high.

Accordingly, I now wish to repeat a strong request to you, as parents and guardians, to ensure that your daughter is only absent from school when she has a genuine reason e.g. illness, important family event. It is essential that all such absences are properly explained in writing by you to the school by means of your daughter's School Diary.

I also wish to state that students should only seek permission to leave the school in the course of the day if it is absolutely essential e.g. illness, medical/dental appointment. You are asked to ensure that other discretionary appointments e.g. driving lessons, hair/beautician appointments are scheduled for after school.

Put simply, every absence impacts upon your daughter's academic progress in school. It is essential, therefore, that they be kept to a minimum and fully-explained to the school.

New School

- The latest update from the Department of Education and Skills (DES) is that negotiations are continuing with bidders in relation to the re-tendering process for works completion and facilities management.
- The previously stated timeline whereby the school will be handed over to us in the summer remains unchanged.
- Based on this information, all planning for September 2018 – timetable, curriculum and staffing - assumes that we will be in our new school at Pembroke Hill.
- As a precaution against any further delay, the school is working with DES officials to provide additional temporary accommodation at Spawell Road. This contingency planning is seen by the Board of Management as a necessary measure to ensure continuity of students' education in case the new school is not handed over as planned. The Board will be doing all in its power to ensure that this contingency planning will not have to be activated.
- We have been invited to a further meeting with DES and NDFA officials in Tullamore on Wednesday, 16 May 2018. I shall keep you fully informed of the outcome of this meeting.

Please contact me if you wish to discuss any matter in relation to this letter.

Yours faithfully,

Billy O' Shea,
Principal.