



**Loreto Secondary School,  
Pembroke Hill,  
Ballynagee,  
Wexford.**

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Friday, 1 March 2019

Dear parents/guardians,

I wish to take this opportunity to inform you of a number of matters relating to our school, as follows:

<b>School Library – Gift a Book</b>
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As World Book Day approaches on Thursday, 7 March it reminds us to never forget the importance of reading. Reading is one of the most valuable gifts we can give our young people, not only to improve their literacy skills for educational purposes but to gift them the enjoyment that can be found in reading a really good book.

Although we are settling in well here in our new school at Pembroke Hill, there is one area where a shortfall remains – our new library. In Spawell Road, the library had been renovated to a science lab quite a number of years ago and, as a consequence, there is not one of our present students in Loreto who has had access to a school library – until now. However, it seems that having a brand-new state of the art building does not equate with having a fully-stocked library. Thanks to some students who generously contributed to our second-hand book drive last May, we have a very small stock of mostly teenage fiction but, unfortunately, many of the books from the old library are well past their use-by date.

As a result, we are asking parents and guardians if they would be willing to help stock our library and make it an inviting space that will encourage our students to read more. This is such an exciting opportunity to help give them access to both fact and fiction – to have knowledge at their fingertips and open up new worlds. We would be most appreciative if you feel you could help in any way possible.

Therefore, we are asking if you could donate what you can - a book, a series of books (fact/ fiction/ subject specific, etc.) or perhaps you would prefer to offer a book token to the value of your choice. All donations can be anonymous or you may like to signify that they have been donated by you. *The Book Centre* in Wexford town have very generously offered to keep a list of a variety of books, as recommended by Amy and Leona in *The Book Centre*, and also a list of more subject specific books as recommended by Loreto staff members. Any books purchased here can also be checked to ensure that we do not receive too many of the same book – just ask a staff member when buying.

Kindly drop all books and/or tokens to a member of the library committee in the GP area before school or at lunchtime from Monday 4 – Friday 8 March. The Mary Ward Library here in the school could be and should be one of the biggest assets of our school and we would very much appreciate your generosity.

*‘Our hope is that the elementary reading of comics will lead to the joy of reading good books’ –  
Nelson Mandela*

Patricia Kinsella  
(On behalf of the Mary Ward Library committee)

## The Wellbeing of Students

In a school community of 780 students, a huge emphasis is placed on the wellbeing of all young people entrusted to our care.

The full range of how the school promotes wellbeing is set out in a 21 page policy document that can be found on our website under the Junior Cycle tab. As many people may not have the time to study this document, what now follows is a summary of how we deal with student wellbeing:

In this school, the following procedures are in place to support the wellbeing of our students:

- **Subject Teacher:** The subject teacher is responsible for maintaining a safe environment in which to work. The subject specific teacher is also responsible for monitoring the progress of each student in his/her care, providing assistance where needed.
- **Class Teacher:** Each base class has a dedicated class teacher. This teacher is asked to take a particular interest in the welfare of the students in his or her class. The Class Teacher will monitor attendance and sign the school journal of students in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year on a weekly basis.
- **Year Head:** The school has assigned three teachers to the role of Year Heads in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year. Year Heads monitor the students in their year group, ensuring that they are supported throughout their time in the school. Year Heads will also monitor attendance within the year group, contacting home where necessary. Year Heads will work closely with Class Teachers to ensure the wellbeing of the students in their care.
- **Guidance Counsellors:** Ms. Foley and Ms. Kelly deliver timetabled guidance classes to senior cycle students. In the first term of the year, they meet with every 1<sup>st</sup> year student. Furthermore, they are also available to meet students on an individual basis, should the need arise.
- **Student Care Co-ordination Team (SCCT):** The SCCT meet weekly to discuss individual cases of concern, as well as general, school-wide initiatives. This group is made up of the Principal, Deputy Principals, Guidance Counsellors and the Learning Support team. In the event of a critical incident, the SCCT will convene as soon as possible to consider the appropriate response, in line with established guidelines.
- **Student Support Team (SST):** Where there is a confirmed case of bullying behaviour and the issue has not been resolved, the SST will meet to investigate the matter further and consider its response. The SST will support those involved and seek to ensure a satisfactory resolution.
- **Child Protection:** New child protection procedures came into effect from December 2017. As a result, the school has prepared a comprehensive Student Safeguarding Statement. More

detailed information on child protection can be found on our website, under the 'Child Protection' tab.

- **Learning Support (LS) Team:** The LS team coordinate the learning support timetable and liaise with parents of those students with additional needs. The LS team also work closely with feeder primary schools, to identify students who may need additional care upon entering Loreto, Wexford.
- **Meitheal/Cara:** Following an interview process, 15 senior cycle students are appointed as Meitheal leaders. They support, encourage and help 1<sup>st</sup> year students throughout their initial year in the school. The Cara system entails all Meitheal leaders carrying on a pastoral role in 6<sup>th</sup> year for 2<sup>nd</sup> year students.
- All students have **timetabled classes** in Social, Personal, Health Education (SPHE)/Wellbeing for the full duration of their six years in Loreto.

In addition to the procedures outlined above, the school organises a number of events each year aimed at the wellbeing of our school community. These events are organised by various subject departments and teachers over the course of the year. The following summarises some of these initiatives:

- School visit for incoming 1st year students, held in May
- 1<sup>st</sup> year Retreat to Ballyvaloo
- Study Skills seminars for students and parents
- Two general meetings of parents are held each year. This is an opportunity to update the parent body about school developments and any issues of concern
- Internet Safety. The school organises workshops for 1<sup>st</sup> year students around the area of internet safety
- Guest speakers. The school organises visits from various guest speakers. These vary from year to year and can be on a range of different topics. Guest speakers will be invited to the school in line with circular letter 0043/2018 'Best practice guidance for post primary schools in the use of programmes and/or facilitators in promoting wellbeing consistent with the Department of Education and Skills' Wellbeing policy statement and framework for practice'
- Friendship week. This week is organised to promote the importance of friendship and inclusiveness.
- Wellness Week. This week is organised by the Students' Council to promote the wellbeing of the student body.
- 6<sup>th</sup> year Wellbeing Day
- Visiting theatre/performing groups with a wellbeing theme
- Amber Flag Initiative
- 6<sup>th</sup> year Glendalough Retreat
- Prize-giving Ceremony
- Multicultural Week

Also, the school seeks to promote an environment which is positive, affirming and true to our ethos. The school will endeavour to provide as many co- and extra-curricular activities as possible, thereby giving our students the opportunity to enhance their wellbeing outside of the classroom. Students from all year groups are encouraged to become involved in the numerous sporting teams representing the school.

Parents with any concerns whatever about student wellbeing issues in Loreto are warmly invited to contact me or the Deputy Principals, Ms. O' Reilly and Mr. McGinnity.

Details of an initiative being undertaken by the post-primary schools in Wexford Town to further provide for student and staff wellbeing will be communicated to you in the coming week.

### **Expansion of School Catering Service**

The school has engaged the services of Oven Door Catering to work with our long-serving caterer, Glenda McKiernan, in providing a wide range of food options for both students and staff from 07.45 to 16.15 daily.

Menu and cost details are posted in the General Purpose Area.

### **Child Protection**

The Board of Management has completed its annual review of the Child Safeguarding Statement. This statement may be viewed under the child protection tab on the school website.

The Board has confirmed Billy O' Shea as the Designated Liaison Person for any child protection concerns in the school. In his absence, Chris O' Reilly has been appointed as the Deputy Designated Liaison Person.

### **In Brief.....**

- Have you supported our Voluntary Contribution Scheme (€150 per family) this year? If not, contributions will continue to be accepted by the School Secretaries, Noeleen Goggin and Ann McClannon
- Please check our school website on a weekly basis to catch up on what's happening – [www.loretowexford.com](http://www.loretowexford.com)
- Date for your diary - Monday, 25 March 2019, 17.30 to 18.45 - Spring General Meeting of parents
- E-portal will be offline for the next few weeks to allow for the preparation of mock examination reports

Wishing you well as we travel into a beautiful but increasingly busy time of year,

Yours faithfully,

Billy O' Shea,  
Principal.