**Report by the Board of Management on the Operation of**

**St. Oliver Plunkett Primary School.**

**1st February 2016**

The following is a report on the operation of St. Oliver’ Plunkett Primary School by the Board of Management during the period Jan 2015 to the present day. The report serves as an addition to the information provided on the website, the various newsletters issued by the school, letters to parents, information packs etc.

**School Enrolments** - School enrolments continue to be steady and we are accepting 60 children every year into Junior Infants. The school lost a teacher in the last year but with improved pupil teacher ratio amendments by the Dept of education we will have 18 mainstream teachers for Sept 2016. At present we are limited by the Patron to an intake of 60 pupils. It is hoped that whenever staffing allows, that from time to time we can divide our Jun inf. classes into 3 classes of 20 which greatly benefits the children in their first year of school. We have been able to do this for the past three years. The average attendance remains quite healthy at 94.2%. The Board would like to remind parents that children missing in excess of 20 days are reported to the National Education Welfare Board (now TUSLA).

**National Staffing** - There are 28 full time teaching posts on the staff at present. There are 3 Special Needs Assistants, a full time secretary, caretaker and cleaner. A part time contract cleaner is also employed by the Board of Management.

**Management and Representation and Patronage** – The school is under the Catholic Patronage of Very Rev. Dr. Michael Smith, Bishop of Meath. A new Board of Management was elected in the Autumn of 2015. The Election and nomination of Board members followed the protocols and guidelines as laid down by the Diocese of Meath and the Dept of Education. The Board of Management meets every 5 – 6 weeks and is chaired by Joan Walshe who is the Patron’s representative on the Board. The other Patron’s representative is Fr Louis Illah. The Principal Fergal Kelly and Mary Reilly are the two teacher representatives on the Board while Damien Gath and Sinead Corbett are the Parent’s nominees. Collette O’Reilly and Brigid Smith are the community representatives. Fergal Kelly is the secretary of the Board while Colette O’Reilly is the Treasurer. Other positions such as Data Protection Officer, Health and Safety Officer, PRO, Maintenance Officer are delegated to other Board members. The present Board met formally on eleven occasions during the school year 2014/2015 and members of the Board visit the school frequently.

**Financial Management**: The Financial Management of the school is conducted under CPSMA guidelines and is in compliance with D.E.S. requirements. The school treasurer Collette O’Reilly works closely with the school Principal Fergal Kelly and the school secretary Bridget McDonagh to ensure that accounts are kept up to date and that budgets are kept. The treasurer reports back to the Board at each Board meeting. The Board acknowledges the valuable contribution Parents and the Parents Association make towards helping to fund school activities. Over the past few years the school been able to access grant aid from other sources other than the staple capitation and DEIS grants. We have secured extra money from the summer works grant and emergency works grant as well as further funding from the devolved works grant which was initially secured in Dec 2012.

 We hope that as Ireland emerges from recession that some of the resources and grants that have been cut to primary schools will be restored over the next few years.

**Staffing** Deirdre Murphy retired after many years teaching in St Oliver’s while we welcomed Lorraine Madden and Ciara mc Mahon to the teaching staff in September 2015. We also welcome Shannon Byrne to the school as an assistant secretary.

**Maintenance and Development**: The Board of Management has been very pro-active with regard to the maintenance and development of the school. Our new extension carried on at pace through 2014 and it seemed it would be ready for full use by Sept. however, due to problems with the chemical composition of block work in the school the school was alerted to the possibility that remedial works needed to take place on the building. This was a disappointment to the Board of Management and the school community in general and while we were able to have three classes in the new building we were waiting for a long time before the remedial works begun at last in October 2015.. At the time of writing three classrooms are within weeks of completion and the next phase will begin in March which will involve work on the remaining blockwork in the three remaining rooms and ancillary rooms and corridors. The Board of Management is doing everything it can in consultation with our architect to ensure that works can take place as quickly as possible. The delay in this building project has had a knock on effect in terms of other improvements planned to the school such as yard improvements, new lobby area, window replacement and removal of older prefabs, however 2016 should see a huge amount of outstanding works completed to the school. The new Board of Management remains committed to ensuring the delivery of the best possible building and resources for the school community of St Oliver’s.

**Information Technology**: Interactive Whiteboards are in every classroom and this is supplemented by a computer room. The Board of management has made a considerable investment in I-pads which are a brilliant resource in supporting our literacy and numeracy programmes.

A pupil management system has been installed and this makes for more effective monitoring of the daily attendance and punctuality of all students. Text alerts are sent to notify parents of certain school events or reminders of meetings.

The new ***pod*** system has been linked with our pupil information system and this involves the centralisation of data on pupils to be held by the Dept of Education. This will aid the Dept in compiling statistical information and perhaps tracking children when they move school. The Board would like to thank the parents for their help in providing the school with the requisite information that was needed in setting up this system.

**Curricular/Extra Curricular activities**: The Board of Management expresses its gratitude to the staff for the organisation of all the sporting and musical and pastoral events that are evident in the school at various times during the school year. These activities are highly important in ensuring that there is connectivity between the pupil and school and they help to foster a sense of pride in the school. In particular we would like to commend the flexibility and willingness of the staff to participate in preparation of the children for school sacraments, school choirs, school football and sports teams, Christmas plays, the many Green School activities including various awareness days, and the fabulous musical which took place for 6th class at the end of the year. The Board would like to support the green schools team in their efforts to secure a fourth green flag for the school. We also acknowledge the hard working staff in our behavioural unit who continues to establish our newly refurbished unit on such a sound footing. Finally thanks to all staff for helping our school achieve very commendable results for both literacy and numeracy. The school is achieving scores well ahead of national norms in areas of both curricular subjects.

**Parents Association** – The Board would like to thank the Parents Association for their trojan work throughout the year. The school children and staff benefits from their support which comes in many forms. The Board would like in particular to thank the P.A. for their financial support towards our Active Schools programme as well as their work on our Action Team Partnership group which discusses policy and procedure on a more informal level. The Parents Association also supported our anniversary, sacramental and intercultural celebrations which could not have been as successful without their input.

**Child Protection** - *Notification regarding the Board of Management’s annual review of the Child Protection Policy.*  The Board of Management wishes to inform the Parent Body that the school’s annual review of the Child Protection Policy was completed at the Board meeting of 16th April 2015. This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in Appendix 2 of the Departments ‘Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools’. The next review will be conducted in April 2016. The full child protection policy can be viewed on the website stoliverplunkettnsnavan.ie The designated Liaison Person is Fergal Kelly and the Deputy Liaison Person is Mairead Traynor.

**Work of the Board of Management** - The policies of Gaeilge, Mathematics, English, Child Protection, Attendance and Data Protection were all reviewed in the past year. The Board carried out its annual review of the school’s standardised test results for literacy and numeracy. The Board is actively involved in monitoring the school’s DEIS Plan for Numeracy, Literacy, Attendance, Parental involvement and liaison with outside agencies. All policies are available on the school’s website stoliverplunkettnsnavan.ie. Parent feedback forms are sent home on a regular basis. The Board would like to thank all those families who took part in the survey. The feedback received will now be used to inform future planning.

**School Self Evaluation**:

The Board’s support is on-going towards schools self evaluation in numeracy and literacy. Some of our literacy support requires individual guided reading that is evident right across the junior classes and will be extended right up through the school over the coming years. A considerable financial commitment is needed for these initiatives and the Board of Management with help from the Parents Association have been very pro-active towards this. A separate report regarding school self evaluation was prepared at the end of the school year and is also available on the website

The Board is aware of the many programmes in place throughout the school that serve to enhance the teaching and learning of the school. The Board compliments the staff on the implementation of these programmes.

A non-exhaustive list is as follows –

Friends First

Zippy’s Friends

Friendship Week

Power Hour

Maths 4fun/ Ready Steady Go Maths

Science4fun

Friends Fun

The school chose oral language and problem solving as it main areas to concentrate on over the past year. While continuing to consolidate and improve those areas we have also looked extensively at our physical education curriculum and we put an active schools plan together in the year 2015 to help improve the physical wellbeing of our pupils and the school community in general. We are working with Meath local sports partnership to achieve the health Promotion flag for 2016. We are hosting a couch to 5k programme in the school starting in January of this year for the parents and the school community and The Board welcomes this kind of activity which is very valuable towards the highlighting of health and wellbeing for the school community.

**Book Rental** – The Book Rental Scheme has proven to be very successful and has made a considerable financial difference to many families. Book Rental will further be extended to other books next year. The Board would like to acknowledge our book rental committee for all the work over the holiday period to ensure our books were ready for use in Sept.

**Communication**:

In an effort to enhance communication between the school and the parent body a meeting of parents of Junior/senior Infant children was held in October and a Coffee Morning was hosted by the Parents Association for the Parents of 1st and second class parents in December . The Principal attends most monthly Parent Association meetings and communicates all relevant information to the parents at these meetings. A monthly newsletter is sent out to the whole parent body and this newsletter can also include some items of community interest. Parents attend the school for Christmas plays, x-factor and many other school celebrations.

 Parent teacher meetings are held as normal in November. School report cards are sent during the second last week of the final term to facilitate parents who wish to meet teachers.

A comprehensive survey for parents was held as part of our active schools plan and our health promotion plan in 2015.

**Festivities and Occasions**.

The school held a hugely successful international day during Catholic School’s Week which involved parents from our international countries in school activities and culminated in a very colourful assembly which was attended by members of the Board of Management and others.

The school held their 40 year anniversary celebrations in October. Fr Hurley celebrated a mass and there were activities and gatherings of past pupils and past staff . There was a display of historical roll books and refreshments.

In November we had a visit from the defence forces to present the national flag to the school as part of the 2016 centenary celebrations.

 As this was Anne Barden’s last formal occasion as Chairpersonof the Board of Management she was presented with a suitable gift from the Board.

In December we opened our school library with a visit from Jackie Dunne- a well known children’s author. We had poetry and book readings and once again the parents were on hand to help with the refreshments and arrangements. Thank you to Frances and Rosaleen for their library work all year.

**Conclusion:**

St. Oliver Plunkett Primary School is a Catholic school which strives to provide children with the basic training they need so that they will grow to be integrated members of the community and self reliant individuals.

The B.O.M. would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the community who actively support and assist the school in fulfilling this aim.

The Board acknowledges the excellent behaviour of the children. We thank them for coming to school each day ready and equipped for the day ahead. We are very proud of the feedback we receive from post Primary schools concerning the academic and extra curricular achievements of our Past Pupils.

Signed:

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Joan Walshe Fergal Kelly

Chairperson B.O.M. Príomhoide