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

**St. Oliver Plunkett Primary School.**

**1st February 2015**

The following is a report on the operation of St. Oliver’ Plunkett Primary School by the Board of Management during the period Jan 2014 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 gained an extra teacher in Sept. 2014 but, we expect to lose this teacher again due to our figures on Sept. 30th 2014. 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 these pupils 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 two 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 4 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. The Board of Management meets every 5 – 6 weeks and is chaired by Anne Barden who is the Patron’s representative on the Board. The other Patron’s representative is Joan Walshe. The Principal Fergal Kelly and Padraig Farrell are the two teacher representatives on the Board while Damien Gath and Pamela Carroll 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 eight occasions during the school year 2013/2014 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 accounts are audited annually. 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 has faced financial cuts due to the contraction in the economy. Our capitation grant has been cut but our minor works grant has been recently restored. 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.

**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 seemed 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 huge disappointment to the Board of Management and the school in general and while we were able to have three classes in the new building we are still awaiting news as to the future of the extension as it stands. We know that extensive remedial work is needed to rectify and remove the affected block work and at this time of writing we are unsure when this work will start. 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. Some refurbishment of the prefabs took place over the summer as we needed three of the prefabricated units for 4th and 5th classes. We will continue to keep our parents informed as to the latest development with the building. Other refurbishments during 2013/3014 included roof lights in rooms 13 and 14 in order to increase light in these areas together with refurbishment of the Principal’s office and special education rooms. A new library was created and this is a beautiful room to be enjoyed by everyone. A new behavioural unit is now situated in room 5. The increased space in this area is a huge improvement to this facility.

**Information Technology**: Interactive Whiteboards are in every classroom and this is supplemented by a computer room. 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.

**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 teams, 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 congratulate Mr. Roche and the Green Schools committee on achieving a 3rd Green Flag. We also acknowledge the hard working staff in our behavioural unit who continue 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.

**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 schools annual review of the Child Protection Policy was completed at the Board meeting of 19th June 2014. 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 2015. 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 Anti-bullying, Emotional & Behavioural Unit Strategy, Enrolment, Administration of Medicine, 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.

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 complements 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 are putting an active schools plan together in the year 2014/2015 to help improve the physical wellbeing of our pupils and the school community in general.

**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.

**Catherine Fulvio** – An evening with Catherine Fulvio was held for the school community in February and this turned into a huge event attended by over 300 patrons. It was a great opportunity for staff /parents/BOM to get together. It also proved to be a great opportunity to raise funds for the school. The Board would like to thank Ruth Dunne, Colette O’Reilly and the committee for their organisation of this event.

**Communication**:

In an effort to enhance communication between the school and the parent body a meeting of parents of Junior Infant children was held in May and a Coffee Morning was hosted by the Parents Association for the Parents in September. 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. The school with hold an international day during catholic schools week to involve parents from our international countries in school activities.

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.

**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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Anne Barden Fergal Kelly

Chairperson B.O.M. Príomhoide