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

**St. Oliver Plunkett Primary School.**

The following is a report on the operation of St. Oliver’ Plunkett Primary School by the Board of Management during the period June 2012 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 at just under 500 pupils. While we lost a mainstream teacher last year we hope to regain this teacher in Sept. 2014 due to our figures on Sept. 30th 2013. 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. There are 27 full time teaching posts on the staff at present. 5 Special Needs Assistants, a full time secretary, caretaker and cleaner plus a part time contract cleaner are 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 ten occasions during the school year 2012/2013 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 and our minor works grant of €16,000 has been completely abolished. This is a cumulative grant reduction of over 20%. We understand that these cuts have come at a time when schools face increases in running costs and at a time when more and more parents face financial difficulties and are unable to contribute voluntarily to school running costs. The recent news that the Minor Works grant and Summer Works scheme have been reinstated to schools is a very positive development.

**Maintenance and Development**: The Board of Management has been very pro-active with regard to the maintenance and development of the school. The school hall has been refurbished to a very high standard while our application for an extension to replace out of date prefabs submitted in April 2012 was successful. This project is now underway under the direction of Gaffney & Cullivan Architects. Crossdoney Construction are the builders. This is a very exciting development for the school and the upgrade to our present facilities are a hugely welcome development.

**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.

Child Protection: Notification regarding the Board of Managements 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 25th April 2013. 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 2014. 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.

The policies of Enrolment, Health and Safety, Drug Misuse, Data Protection have also all been reviewed in the past year.

**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 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

Friendship Week

Power Hour

Maths 4fun

Science4fun.

**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.

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 of parents was held as part of our self evaluation process last 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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Anne Barden Fergal Kelly

Chairperson B.O.M. Príomhoide