**Principals Report to the Board of Management**

**Academic Year 2019 - 2020**

**ERSS Carrick-on-Suir**

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**Introduction**

This report has been prepared to comply with section 20 of the Education Act, 1998. It covers the school academic year of 2019 - 2020. It was presented at the Board of Management meeting on 28th May 2020.

The next report will issue in summer 2021.

**Total enrolment**

296 students were enrolled in the school at the start of the 2019/2020. This was the figure we submitted for the September returns to the DES. This figure included two Spanish students. There was some movement from the school during the year. We took in three students and lost one. If we could get to 300 students it would be a bench mark as we would get a greater allocation for DP and career guidance.

**Ethos and links with ERST**

A variety of services and liturgies took place during the year. The Start-of-Year Mass, Masses for the Holy Souls, good engagement in Advent celebrations etc. The religion department worked well with Fr. Cahill who was engaged to work as Chaplin with the school the previous year. Graduation Mass for 6th year students (this has been postponed to Autumn, Covid 19 allowing) and Masses for departed members of family of the school community were organised. It was a pleasant experience to have a school choir at some of these masses. Students continued to help in the daily parish masses by reading at mass.

All the major Catholic occasions were marked with differing events and awareness raising exercises. November was marked as a month of remembrance. Advent was celebrated. Ashes were distributed by Fr. Cahill on Ash Wednesday.

We were fortunate this year to have a middle management position allocated to Ethos. With this position excellent work was done in the area. There was huge growth in our social justice programme in the school. Our social justice committee, young SVP and green schools worked in a collaborative way to tackle the issues.

The school received grant aid from the global schools organisation. This was allocated to our social justice initiatives.

We hosted an event in Mount Sion, with Dan Mulhall (Irish Ambassador to USA) the keynote speaker, for circa 20 schools, attended events and worked with other schools in the ERST community on the social and ecological justice agenda. Our SVP committee organised a very successful funding raising carol service at Christmas. Covid 19 put a stop to our efforts. We were due to send a delegation of five to Geneva to attend the United Nations the week before the lock down. Ms. Barry was invited to visit an EREBB conference in South Africa, in May. This was also put on hold.

There has been a positive reaction to our rebranding of the school. With the rebranding came a move to a more digital approach to how we go about our business. It was lucky we had started this process last year or we would have been in a very difficult position to continue our educational provision and student support remotely. The website and website organiser were vital to our substantial efforts. All staff are to be commended with the work they have put in.

Mr. Leo Hogan, from ERST was invited as the guest of honour to our awards night. Leo joined us in September to train our students council and completed training with our staff. Leo has taken over from Mr. Eddie Bourke as our ERST link person.

Two of our 5th years were due to support pilgrims on the Waterford and Lismore Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes this year. Again this was cancelled.

The school’s Religious Education department was greatly assisted by our chaplains, the Diocesan Advisor (who visited the school in November) and the local priests.

Our links to ERST head office have in the main been very positive. I feel our efforts to develop the school in terms of shared PE hall and matters such as this could be better supported.

In my first year as Principal I would like to acknowledge the role of the JMB in my coping with the demands/understanding of the role and for all the advice they have imparted in this direction.

**Charity and Social Awareness**

Students and staff raised circa €3,000 for the following charities:

* St. Vincent De Paul Christmas Appeal, where the students were complimented on having the biggest contribution from a school in the Carrick area ever.
* Pieta House was the benefit of numerous contributions from members of the school community.
* There was a large involvement in the “Darkness into Light” initiative.
* There were many cake sales, raffles, walks, fasts etc. that resulted in the meals on wheels, the local hospital etc. benefitting local initiatives.

The parents council raised circa €1,200 in their annual funding raising event. They have earmarked this for the library they set up last year and other initiatives.

**Academic**

Excellent results were achieved by the students taking the Leaving Certificate. Very impressive results were also achieved by the school’s Junior Certificate students in 2019. Around 60% of our students move to third level, and about 20% to apprentice training.

A detailed subject-by-subject analysis completed by subject planning convenors reveals that the levels of attainment by ERSS students in state examinations in 2018 were, once again, considerably above the national average. Our uptake in higher level Maths and Irish in leaving certificate 2019 was well below the national average. We are working at increasing these numbers in line with the national average. This analysis is shared with the school’s subject departments, BOM and Parents’ Council. The school rejoices in the academic success of all students.

The BOM congratulates all students and their teachers on the continued excellence of results in the school while encouraging all to focus on the potential for continued improvement.

Supervised Study was organised throughout the year and was availed of by an average of 40 students each evening. This again stopped on March12th. as did our plans to host Saturday study.

The homework club was a tremendous success for the students (and their families) involved. Great credit is due to the teachers involved who do the work in a voluntary capacity.

We had a subject inspection in English in November 2019. This was a positive experience for the English department. The BOM is particularly keen to thank the teachers for their considerable work and enthusiasm in supporting exchanges with the inspectorate.

Last year we had advisory SEC visits from the inspectorate. We have taken on board the advice from these meetings in our school development planning. We also had advice/support from the inspectorate during the school lock-down.

We were able to avail of the services of a French language support assistant during the year. We also hope to have three students join us from Spain to participate in our Transition Year Programme, from one company and four from another company. The students who visited last year brought a new dimension to the school. They were two excellent boys who settled well into the school. Their academic commitment was a great example to our boys. Covid 19 may interfere with our plans.

Making LCVP was met with resistance from a small number of students. In the main the subject content and the vocational approach was of benefit to students, so we will continue with it for next year. It may be a bit more difficult as we have a large fifth year cohort.

**Staffing**

The school’s total teacher allocation from the DES for 2018 - 2019 was 22.4. Of this total, 3.12 was set aside for students with special educational needs under the overall co-ordination of the school’s SEN coordinator. We have 0.5 allocation for Deputy Principal duties and a further 0.5 allocation for Career Guidance and 0.14 allocation for programme coordinator. We have been allocated 22.5 teachers for next year at the current time. With a decrease in enrolment w will be over quota next year, as things currently stand. Ms. Gleeson retired from the school in November to talke up the role as principal in CBS Callan. To date I have been informed three/four teachers expect to move on from the school. We currently have advertisements for teachers in the area of French/Irish, Religion, Accounting, Art, Geography and computers.

Our caretaker of over 25 years retired last summer and was replaced by Ray O’Brien. Ray has settled in well and has put his stamp on the place. His position is up for review before he moves into year 2 of his contract.

**Middle Management**

Due to various activities in the school there were changes to our middle management team. Ms. Gleeson retired, Ms. Barry took up the post of DP, Ms. Lenane retired from her post and Mr. Fanning was out long term sick.

After staff discussion and BOM initiating the review of the POR, interviews were held remotely in April. Mr. Foran, Ms. Moylan and Mr. Carroll were appointed to the team.

Here follows the report from those appointed to the middle management team. This report is based on the appointee submitting a report and being interviewed by the senior management team.

The general feeling from the post holders is that they enjoyed the challenge of their respective posts. Most believed they learned during the year. Most felt supported by their colleagues. There were some areas of general concern. There is still a degree of concern with the level of consistency in the application of the code of behaviour from teachers.

With the advent of the new people to the team, there may be changes to the roles of some of the post holders.

All individual reports are available in the office.

I would like to take this chance to recognise the contribution of teachers to the leadership/management of the school in roles not appointed to the assistant principals. These roles include Greenschools, Student Support, End of Year Organisation, School Website, Amber Flag Initiative, Student Mentoring, First Year Transition, Student Council to mention but a few.

I would also like to acknowledge the work of Maura and Jenny in the administration section of the school.

We were fortunate to have POR training with Mr. Noel Brosnan. Noel works for the centre for school leadership as a coach. We offered the middle management team the opportunity to engage in the coaching process. Three of the team took up the opportunity and are currently working with Noel.

**Digital Learning and Information Technology (I.T.)**

Ms. Gleeson our ICT middle management post holder retired in November. Mr Foran has stepped into her role and has recently been appointed to a POR role.

Last year Ms. Kane took over the school website making it a dynamic entity. It has become a centre piece in our communication system with parents and the outside world. We also have a school Facebook, Twitter and most recently Instagram presence.

At the start of the year we moved to make communication with parents through erss.ie, vsware, and email. We occasionally communicate through text and if parents require reports etc. posted out we will facilitate them.

Last year we used vsware as a closed system to monitor attendance and record assessment results. It was also used for the production of the school time table. At the beginning of this year we gave parents access to the system. This has meant staff have had to up their game in terms of accuracy. Later in the year we also used it to inform parents of student engagement in our remote learning enterprise.

In spring of last year we introduced Microsoft 365 to the school. This is an extremely powerful tool. Last year we used if predominantly for emails. This year we were using it for school events (calendar) and as a central “storage” for our subject planning. Nearly all plans have been placed on the facility for access by all teachers, the inspectorate, etc. We had planned to continue to grow the value of the system to the school when the lock-down was announced in March. With the announcement we had to move rapidly in introducing the system to all students.

The ICT team quickly set all students up on the system. This gave them access to a closed system where they could email teachers, join meetings, participate in on line classes, send in work and do online assessment. We expect to have a system of blended learning in September where all classes will be offered to a live class and a remote class at the same time. Teacher training has been arranged for August to make sure that all teachers are up to speed.

Along with Microsoft teams Ms. Kane developed a web-based approach for learning and teaching. This enabled teachers and students interact in the event that they didn’t have the skills, technology or broadband to engage with Teams.

I would like to publically compliment everyone involved with the remote learning effort. There has been nothing but positive feedback. A very special word of thanks to Ms. Kane and Mr. Foran for setting the systems up and keeping the show on the road. An enormous amount of time, effort and patience have gone into the process.

At the start of the year our hopes were to plan to build another computer room as the current one is not really fit for purpose. Our funding was to be a golf classic in May. This did not happen. Our ICT budget was spent on employing our consultants, who look after our systems, provide training and usually source computers for us. With the move to remote learning we purchased 10 tablets for student who didn’t have adequate technology.

**Capital Development**

The present Board are keen to move forward with some capital projects in the school. We have made some progress this year.

* Our Astro-turf facility opened in October. It has been an excellent addition to the school. We also transformed one of the classrooms into a gym suite, where the boys van work during inclement weather.
* The joint development of a sports hall with Scoil Mhuire. We seem to have hit a block. There seems to be little or no desire from the trustees of both schools to engage in the process.
* Emergency Works. We have been awarded funding to replace our water tanks. We are hoping to be in a position to build a universal access toilet facility. This has become more necessary as we have students who need other toilet arrangements due to a variety of reasons.
* Summer Works: We have applied for the installation of girls toilets. (June, 2019). To date we have not heard anything with regard to this project.
* There was a substantial spend on the roof, toilets, boiler house etc. we also purchased a ride on lawn mower. All classrooms were allocated new notice boards. We are currently sourcing visualisers, a recommendation from the inspectorate.
* We have prioritised a new computer room as something that we need in the school.
* During the year all classroom doors were fitted with windows, according to good practise in terms of child protection.

**Sport and Extra curricular**

This year we were lucky to have many sports available for the students. This is mainly due to the commitment of staff members to the students getting involved in a variety of activities. Covid 19 put a stop to our efforts at an early stage in the year. This said we had teams representing the school in GAA football, soccer, hurling and cross country running. If the year was as normal we would have had athletics, rugby and possibly basketball.

Educational tours, field trips, poetry and creative writing competitions were common place. Theatre trips, Maths Week, Science Week, Chess Club, Horse riding , Enterprise, All manner of career trips, trips to Dáil Eireann, Green School Committee, Amber Flag committee, Wellbeing committee, Young SVP, Peace and Justice committee, every kind of a Transition Year trip among other things.

The 52 Transition Year students contributed hugely to the image of the school through the projects they got involved in and through how they represented themselves, their families and school during Work Experience. They were involved in many projects and initiatives during the year. To mention but a few, enterprise and Science Week in the library, the mini garden project, visits to the old peoples home, etc. This year our TY class entered a team into the Bank of Ireland quiz and were crowned county Tipperary champions. This gained them entry into an all Ireland final where there was to be a prize of €25,000 for the winning school.

We had two visitors from the Canaries as part of the programme this year. They settled well and were an addition to the programme. There will be a relatively small TY group next year. It is looking that it will be about 38 students at the moment. We hope to have 5 Spanish visitors to the programme, but it is extremely difficult to find host families with the Covid situation.

**Child Protection**

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Mr. Michael Walsh and the Deputy DLP is currently Mr. Linda Barry who is acting as Deputy Principal. The Board will carry out its annual review of its Child Protection Policy in February 2021.

All oversight reports were signed off in the Board meetings. We sought advice from Tusla on a couple of occasions but did not submit a report. In our English inspection we were compliant with the Child Protection protocols required.

Mr Walsh and Ms. Barry have attended DLP and DDLP training from SPHE in relation to child protection.

During the year I felt the need to contact Tusla on one occasion with reference to concerns I had about four students. I was advised not to report he matter of concern but to monitor it.

There are major concerns around in this area with reference to the provision of toilets for the girls who attend the school. It is unwise to have school girls using the same toilets as the female staff, and possibly a child protection risk.

**Health, Safety and Welfare**

We had one fire drill this year. This went well, with no incidents to report. Covid prevented our other two drills.

Teachers have engaged in the process of monitoring their own working environment. By teachers notifying potential problems to the management many issues have been avoided. Some teachers are reluctant to engage in the process as of yet.

Teachers are mandated to record and submit any incidents that occur under their watch in the accident and incident book. We had a few incidents of broken bones, mostly during sports related activities. All students have made full recoveries.

We had an incident where a student left the school without permission and without being collected. On his way home he collapsed. An ambulance needed to be called. This incident highlights the importance of teachers taking rolls correctly and school protocols being adhered to.

Teachers attention to be drawn to the “Guideline on Managing Safety, Health and Welfare in Post Primary schools” with particular reference being given to subject specific templates. Our Science Inspections revealed areas where our practise could be enhanced.

Student and staff welfare continue to be a central part of what we are trying to maintain and improve in school. The only school policy in the staff room in a paper form is our “Dignity in the Workplace Policy”. In our management team meetings we highlighted staff welfare as the issue of primary concern to us and have been working on it over the past few months.

The student support team continue to do excellent work in identifying and caring for vulnerable students. This has continued through the lock down, in as much as we are able to engage with the students in question. There is at least one student in the school who has gender identity issues. Our infra structure in terms of toilets is unacceptable in termes of such students.

**Wellbeing**

It is evident that the school community in ERSS looks at all school activities through the lens of a wellbeing microscope. The Health and Safety, Child Protection, Code of Behaviour, Pastoral Care, Student Support and for that matter all school policy is aimed at providing a safe and caring community where we can all reach our full potential.

We plan to introduce training next year in making the school a more positive place to work in. DES expects all schools to have a whole school wellbeing plan developed under an SSE umbrella over the next three years. We have started this planning and have draft documents drawn up. We were due to meet with a delegation of parents of students from each year group the day the school closed for the lockdown.

Our timetable has changed so that all junior cycle students from now on will have 400 hours of wellbeing as required by the DES. WE will be doing a short course in PE with all students. We have decided to continue with CSPE and SPHE with ne class per week, and have introduced choir/drama, computer applications, personal development and a wellbeing class.

**Student Support and Pastoral Care**

All teachers continued to take a keen interest in the pastoral care of their students. Many teachers have taken on a voluntary pastoral role of Class Tutor in order to support students. In addition, the student support committee meets regularly to discuss pertinent issues that we have become aware of in relation to student care.

The school’s Guidance Counsellor has been away on maternity and parental for the past year. Due to a shortage of similar teachers we were unable to replace her so the level of support for students lacked this element of support.

A dedicated Pastoral Care Co-ordination Team continued to be very active in 2019 -2020. Comprising the Principal, Deputy Principal, Chaplains, Counsellor, Learning Support Teachers, and other interested teachers, this team met as often as necessary and ensured that adequate provision was made for all students experiencing particular difficulties in school and in their personal lives. This Pastoral Care team worked closely with the Year Head team and the Wellbeing committee in delivering a whole school approach to student support.

One of the striking elements of the school is the fact that it is a genuinely caring community. It appears all members of the community are valued, included and minded in their journey through school. The current sixth year have 5 student who have found this journey very difficult.

**Student Empowerment and Voice**

The Students’ Council operated with the support of Mr Noel Casey, a former teacher in the school. It continues to be a well-run organization that makes a valued contribution to the day to day running of the school. With Ms. Gleeson’s departure, Ms. Mulcahy has taken on the support of the student council role.

The lockdown happened at a time just before the next council was to be elected. Ms. Mulcahy is currently engaged in electing next year’s council remotely. Mr Leo Hogan from ERST did the student council training module with our students last year.

This year’s council contributed to the development of the basketball court and part funded our student of the week initiative. I am extremely grateful of the funding and the role these students play in the school. Their voice and representation of the student body is highly valued.

They have also been the student voice in terms of policy ratification and initiatives carried out in the school. They have acted as members of focus groups brought about to lead change in all elements of school life.

**Code of Behaviour**

We have all become conscious of all the forms of justice engaged in working in an institution. The core values that lead our relationships are based on the principals of natural and social justice. Breakdown of relationships are best resolved by using a process of natural justice. We are keen advocates of supporting ecological and natural justice in how we go about our business as an educational institution.

Students continued to co-operate in a very positive way with the school’s behaviour code as evidenced by favourable comments throughout the year from teachers and visitors to the school. The Board thanks the students for their excellent behaviour. There still seems to be a little bit of a breakdown in terms of how we apply the code consistently.

Student’s cooperation with the code is manifested in the figures. There have been very few representations made to Year Heads regarding poor student behaviour. Very few students reached the red card scenario. We had no official suspensions, although on one or two occasions students were asked not to come in unless they were willing adhere to the school rules in terms of uniform.

Two students with their representatives were asked to present themselves in front of a subcommittee of the Board as a result of ongoing breaches of the code. Both were advised they would be suspended if there was not an improvement. We didn’t suspend or expel any student during the year. A couple of sixth year student were asked to study at home for a few days as their study methods were impinging on learning/teaching in a classroom setting.

We continue to run the student of the week competition. As with last year the vast majority of students have been nominated at this stage of the year.

Our focus on hoodies and access to the toilet has proved successful. We hope to continue to move in small steps. From TY down uniform compliance has been excellent. There are a few students in senior cycle who don’t like to follow the code in terms of uniform. Ties continue to be an issue. We will have them as a focus next year.

Parents have been given access to vsware, where they can take some responsibility in monitoring their boys lateness and attendance. There has been detention on Friday afternoons for students who have problems with lateness. We will be introducing a system next year where all teachers will be asked to cover one of these detentions as part of their Croke Park hours.

**School Environment**

The school environment has improved dramatically during the year. There has been a new caretaker appointed who has helped the situation, and the school community seem to be more interested in keeping the place tidy. The lockers are managed very well and this leads to the pplace been tidier. The Green School committee continues Trojan work in these aspects but there needs to be more work done to shift the culture.

We needed to replace a pump on the heating system during the winter. We had a visit from n inspector from the DES building section who suggested we need a new heating system. We hoped he would push this agenda for us in Tullamore, but we heard nothing more of it.

We spent time and money on the roof and as a result had an eventless year in terms of leaks etc. We also spent some funds on toilets and the changing room. As a result the facilities are better and there is less vandalism. We continue to work on trying to get girls toilets and universal access toilets for the school.

Most of the classrooms are kept tidy at this stage. There are some instances where they are left in a disgraceful condition. Members of the school community need to be more conscious of the effects of an untidy work environment on wellbeing and learning/teaching.

We are at an advanced stage in changing the lighting in the school to LED. This will be discussed at the last BOM meeting of the year.

**Loss of Teaching Time**

Part and parcel of operating the school is time lost to learning and teaching. This occurs for the following reasons:

* Staff illness both certified and uncertified

This year there was substantial disruption caused by teacher illness. Our DT was out on ill leave for the whole year and was replaced by one of our French teachers. This had a knock on effect when it came to time tabling. Another teacher an AP 1 post holder has been on ill leave from Christmas to the end of the year. On top of this there was the usual ill leave, a day here and there and a few weeks missed.

* Family related leave

We had one teacher return to us after Easter break having been on leave since before I started in the school. As the teacher in question was a careers teacher she was impossible to replace. Another teacher went on maternity leave from Christmas. She plans to extend this leave until Christmas of this year.

We had applications for one career break and for three job shares next year. With all that has happened we now have only one person following through with the job share.

* Staff training
* Student involvement in extracurricular activities.

**Staff Recruitment and Retention:**

Last year proved to be difficult in terms of staff recruitment. We were unable to fill our careers position with a suitably qualified replacement. Pressure came on our MFL department with the appointment of Ms. Barry to the role of Deputy Principal (acting). We lost an Irish teacher to a maternity leave. Again it proved very difficult to replace her. We needed to employ some teachers unqualified to teach subjects and some people who had the subject specifications but were unqualified as teachers.

I feel we did a really god job with the teachers we recruited and I would have no hesitation in employing any of them again, but hopefully as qualified teachers in their subject areas.

We currently have advertisements on Education Posts.ie seeking suitable replacements for teachers that may be leaving next year.

**Parental Involvement and Contact**

Parents were given access to Vsware at the beginning of the year. With this development parents were expected to check their sons files for attendance, punctuality and assessment reports. We also used the system as a means to communicate with parents with respect to online engagement during the extended school closure from March to June.

The website is now a dynamic entity and is used to disseminate school related information, as is Facebook, Twitter and more recently Instagram.

The school organized information meetings for parents in 2019/2020 on the following matters:

• New 1st year students

• Information meetings (Student Support and SEN)

• Subject choices for 5th years

• Parent-teacher meetings for every year group

• Open Days

• One-to-one meetings with the parents of incoming students where needed.

We plan to have a sixth year graduation in October/November Covid 19 allowing (as suggested by the sixth year cohort). We also plan to have our TY graduation when things settle back to something like normal. Parents have always been an integral part of these celebrations. We hope and pray that we will be able to proceed with them as soon as is possible.

A subcommittee was established to involve/inform parents in relation to the cancellation of the school tours. Ms. Murray, the Barcelona tour organiser, was extremely persistent with the tour company and managed to recoup a substantial amount of the monies paid out. The first year tour was similarly reimbursed.

All meetings were very well attended by parents. The school website was updated weekly and contained a great deal of information for parents on current news as well as all school policies. For families without internet access, hard copies of all updates and policies continued to be available from reception. Several useful links were added to the website through the year.

The Principal, Deputy Principal and all teachers were available on an appointment basis to meet parents to discuss any concerns about students. Representatives of the Parents’ Council met with Mr. Walsh, Principal, on a regular basis to liaise on school matters.

Mr. Walsh addressed the Parents’ Council A.G.M., and attended all council meetings thereafter. At the AGM two parents were elected to represent the parents on the newly formed Board of Management.

The parents council was actively involved again this year and the events organised were;

* Annual Fund raiser
* Mock interviews for sixth years (cancelled)
* School Library
* Financial Assistance
* Parent voice for policy development
* Tea and coffee provision for different events

It gave me a great boost to work with the members of the council who are keen to support the school in its mission and vision.

**School Development Planning**

All policies that make up the school plan are available on the school’s website: The following have been the main developments in school planning throughout 2019 – 2020:

* The ongoing review of subject development plans in all departments in the context of the new Junior Cycle with an emphasis on the provision of 400 hours of wellbeing for the incoming first years in 2020.
* The ongoing development of our Digital Learning Strategy. This has moved to a new level with the establishment of remote teaching in the school. We have planned to have all staff upskilled so they will be in a position to offer blended classes in September. This will involve teachers taking classes in school that will be broadcast to students through Microsoft Teams.
* Staff continues to develop numeracy and literacy resources for our SIP programme.
* The development of our SIP in the area of learning and teaching
* The continued development/integration of the new Code of Behaviour. We had intended to have training in Restorative Practises during the year but his fell through (Covid 19). We have reference to restorative practise in some of our policies and many teachers are using it to guide their “behaviour” discussions.

**Professional Development of Staff**

Teachers were very committed to their professional development. With the school closure teachers rapidly got up to speed with what was required for an online learning service.

JCT, PDST (SEN whole school planning), ERST and subject organisations were all well interacted with. We had a few teachers away for training in relation to management and leadership.

Teachers continue to be innovative and suggest whole school training. The use of the 9 hours for personal CDP and planning was a success, with teachers actively engaging in the process. It is planned to continue with a similar approach to Croke Park hours next year.

**Board of Management**

The BOM dealt with a number of complex issues throughout its first year including, building projects, admissions, policy development and HR. An agreed report was available to all stakeholders on the schools website from February.

The current Board continues to work well together in the interest of the school. We missed one meeting this year due to Covid 19. We plan to have our final meeting remotely. This has been set up so hopefully it will go ahead as planned. It will probably be the model by which we conduct meetings into the near future. One of our members is the parent of a sixth year student and may need to be replaced.

**Financial Accountability**

The BOM has appointed a financial sub-committee that monitors the schools financial position. This committee is supported by the school secretary, the schools accounts person and the school auditor. Audited accounts were submitted to the DES and the trustees as required.

I would like to mention and thank the contribution of parents/guardians to the school through the voluntary contribution over the past year.

**Community Links**

The BOM is particularly appreciative of the assistance provided by the local Carrick-on-Suir and wider community in providing work experience placements for Transition Year and LCVP students.

In addition, the school appreciates the generosity of local clubs and organisations in sharing their facilities with our staff and students. We continue to have strong links with the local community and would like to acknowledge the help given to the school community from the school Chaplin, The school’s JLO (from and Garda), the local shops and businesses, WIT, MSD, Sanofi, Carrick-on-Suir Motor Club to mention but a small few.

The school has also interacted on formal levels with:

1. Tusla – regarding Child Protection, Family Conferences and Attendance

2. NEPS – Educational Psychological Assessments and Friendship Programme and information to our Pastoral Care Team on Student Support Programmes.

3. CAHMS – Behavioural and psychiatric support.

4. NCSE – Applications for Special Education Needs 5. Feeder Primary Schools – Student passports.

5. NEWB – reporting absences and attendance initative

**Conclusion**

As a second year Principal to the school and a relatively inexperienced Principal my thanks goes to the students, parents and staff for their continued support and application. It has been a very difficult year for us all. Great credit is due to all for their resilience and resolute good spirit. I feel we work well with each other in an open manner where students are the core of what we are about.

In the spirit of Blessed Edmund Rice we all strive for the betterment of our school in terms of facilities, educational provision, learning and teaching and the evolution of all our community into the best possible people we can be.

In the words of Nelson Mandela:

**“There can be no keener revelation**

**of a society’s soul**

**than the way**

**in which it treats its children”**

Thank you all.