

RETNS Board of Management Meeting, 14 March, 2016 - Report to the School Community

Communication: The BoM has received positive feedback from the school community regarding its new regular communication - the Report to the School Community. The reports will be circulated by email within a week of each BoM meeting and will also be posted on the website.

25th Anniversary: Events to celebrate 25 years of RETNS are planned for Friday 20 May. The plans include an evening party for the whole school community, past and present (over 18s only). While this is to be a celebration and not a fundraising event, the aim is for the event to be self-financing. An organising committee is being formed; ideas and volunteers are welcome.

Front of School: Following further research, including discussions with our insurers and the local authority, the BoM is concerned not only about the safety of our school community while crossing the area in front of the school, especially the children, but also about potential liability with respect to people and vehicles. Signs will be put up shortly to inform car owners that they use the area at their own risk. The BoM intends to seek advice from traffic/parking engineers in an effort to find an interim solution for separating cars from pedestrians, while maintaining parking capacity, as well as a longer term solution for upgrading the area to be implemented when funds permit. If any members of the school community have expertise or helpful contacts in this regard we would be delighted to hear from them. In the meantime, chippings will be laid over the Easter break in order to make the surface more even.

Drivers' Behaviour: The behaviour of a minority of drivers continues to put the children at unnecessary increased risk. We urge all drivers to slow right down and not to mount the kerb or park anywhere other than against the railings. Cars parked in the middle of this area reduce the visibility of pedestrians and cause congestion. If spaces are not available, drivers should park properly and legally in the surrounding streets and walk the short distance to school.

Enrolment Policy: Following the report of the Enrolment Review Group, the BoM has begun to draw up a revised enrolment policy for children taking up places from September 2019 onwards. As previously communicated, the revised policy will give preference to siblings of children who already attend RETNS. The BoM is working closely with the national Educate Together (ET) office, which must ratify any changes to the policy. We expect to have the revised policy in place within the next one to two months.

Income: As communicated in February, the school finances are now in need of substantial improvement. The BoM has begun working on various measures to improve the financial situation, including a sustainable fundraising plan for the school. As part of this, a "brainstorming" session will be held early in the new term, at which any and all fundraising ideas will be welcome.

ET Finances: Having received reassurances in relation to the financial operations of ET nationally, the BoM has agreed to comply with the request made at a recent ET EGM for a voluntary contribution of €1,000 from all ET schools. This contribution is designed to address a shortfall in the funding of the ET national office.

Veggies: The BoM approved a request from the teaching staff to plant vegetables with the children in the side garden.

The BoM also considered some routine matters, which for reasons of confidentiality are not included in this report.

RETNS Board of Management (bom@retns.ie).