

## **RETNS Board of Management Meeting, 22 February, 2016 - Report to the School Community**

The new, complete Board of Management (BoM) met for the first time last Monday. Your BoM members for the next four years are:

**Pete Lunn (Chairperson); Aileen Fallon (Patron Nominee); Mary Carron (Principal); Mary Griffin (Teacher Nominee); Guy McGrath (Parent Nominee); Claire Branagan (Parent Nominee); Niamh White (Community Nominee); Sarah Benson (Community Nominee).**

**Communication:** At this meeting the BoM considered requests for more regular communication between the BoM and the school community. In line with many ET schools around the country, the BoM agreed to circulate a Report to the School Community following our monthly meetings to give everyone a clear idea of how the school is being managed and what decisions are being made. This is the first such report. Reports will also be posted on the website.

**Enrolment Policy:** The BoM received and considered the report of the Enrolment Review Group. Given the overwhelming result of the survey of the school community described in this report and the balance of the issues raised, we have agreed in principle to draw up a new policy that gives preference to siblings. The precise details of the policy will be worked out over coming weeks. We will ensure that it complies with Department of Education and Skills rules and it will also be ratified by ET. The BoM would like to thank everyone who took part in the consultation exercise and, particularly, those who volunteered their time to be on the Review Group, which has done an excellent job.

**Front of School:** After a long period of investigation and inquiry, the BoM has received confirmation that the area in front of the school is owned by the Department of Education and Skills. This should allow progress to be made in making the area safer for our children. Its present condition and current parking practices need to be improved.

**Income:** After several years during which the school finances exhibited healthy surpluses, we unfortunately find ourselves in a position where this is no longer the case. RETNS can be proud of the recent improvements to the outdoor area, IT equipment and classroom acoustics, as well as the Seomra Sonais. We thank the previous BoM for their work on this. However, we are now entering a period in which generating additional income is going to be essential if we are to sustain and further improve our school. The BoM is considering new initiatives to address this problem. We welcome any and all suggestions and help from the school community.

**ET Finances:** The Chairperson reported back from a recent Emergency General Meeting called by the Board of Directors of Educate Together. ET is presently struggling to fund the national office following recent expansion of ET schools. A motion was passed asking schools to make an additional voluntary contribution. Following receipt of information on ET financial operations, the BoM will make a decision on a contribution at its March meeting.

**Sherpa Kids:** The BoM considered an approach from a private provider to offer flexible before and after school care on-site at RETNS. Recognising the potential benefits of this service, the BoM is seeking more information and will consider the prospect further over coming weeks. We would welcome queries and feedback from the school community on the prospect of such a service being available at RETNS.

**Student Council Charity:** The BoM was happy to approve the Student Council's choice of charity for this year, which is to be Barretstown.

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

**RETNS Board of Management.**

