

# Bray School Project Information Booklet

## OUR FOUNDING PRINCIPLES

Developed in the late 1970s the aims of our school are to provide a single-stream national school that is

- Multi-denominational - Co-educational - Child-centred - Democratically-run

## MULTI-DENOMINATIONAL

The multi-denominational aspect of the school is widely recognised but not always clearly understood. Children from many different religious and non-theistic backgrounds attend the school. The school's multi-denominational Religious Education Programme (including Atheist beliefs) aims to develop in children those aspects of personal, social, moral and spiritual development which facilitate the growth of understanding and knowledge of life within the pluralist society in which they live. The Religious Education Programme booklet is available to all parents in the school.

The Board of Management also facilitates groups of parents who wish to arrange denominational religious instruction for their children outside school hours in the school building. Organisation and cost of specific instruction remains the responsibility of the parents.

## CO-EDUCATION

The Bray School Project is actively co-educational. This means that the school is not only mixed in its composition, but that it positively encourages respect and understanding between the sexes.

## CHILD CENTREDNESS

The school's approach to education is child-centred. This child-centred approach advocates that each child has her or his own unique set of talents and rates of progress in different areas, and that each child should be nurtured along their own path. The child-centred approach has the preparation of the child for later life as one of its goals, but equally seeks to help children take advantage of the unique experiences and exciting discoveries of childhood. The Primary School curriculum laid down by the Department of Education and Skills is designed to be child centred.

## A DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL

As a democratic school parents are able to play a role in major decisions relating to the ethos and management of the school through the school's democratic structures. Our school would not be what it is without parental involvement. Parents are encouraged to meet other parents, share the responsibility of raising funds and share the many benefits of being involved in their child's education. There are many ways of getting involved whether by teaching an extra curricular activity (ECA), helping in the classroom or by becoming a member of a school committee (see below).

## THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS IN THE BRAY SCHOOL PROJECT

Several structures exist in the BSP to ensure the school functions in a democratic way. These are:

### **THE BRAY SCHOOL PROJECT ASSOCIATION:**

The BSP Association founded the school and is its patron body (in the Catholic and Church of Ireland education systems this role is usually taken on by a Bishop). It exists to safeguard the ethos of the school – ensuring that the teaching and the management of the school continues to maintain the multi-denominational, co-educational, child-centred, democratic principals the school is committed to. Anyone interested in supporting these beliefs can join the BSPA – you do not have to be a parent of a child in the school and being a parent of a child in the school does not make you an automatic member of the BSPA – you have to join every year for a small administrative fee.

### **WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR ME TO JOIN THE BSPA?**

The BSPA has the ultimate responsibility for deciding the school's policies in a number of crucial areas. The association, through its executive, is responsible for:

- a) providing the school with its premises and looking after all major repairs and renovations
- b) ensuring that the school maintains its ethos in order to ensure that the school's executive reflects the genuine wishes of parents and is accountable to them, as many parents as possible should participate at the AGM.

### **The BSPA Executive :**

This committee is elected by the BSPA to undertake their day-to-day business. Committee members must be members of the BSPA. It is made up of a Chair, a Treasurer, a Secretary, the Chair of the Board of Management, the Principal and other ordinary members and reports

to the BSPA at an Annual General Meeting. It also appoints the Chair of the Board of Management and two other members.

### The Board of Management:

The Board of Management manages the school in accordance with the Department of Education and Skills Rules for National Schools. It employs teaching and ancillary staff. The Board is responsible for the running of the school and organises school maintenance. It must ensure that the school has adequate funding. The officers of the Board serve for a three-year term. In addition to the Executive appointments, there are two elected parents' representatives, an elected teachers' representative, the principal teacher, and two people from the wider community, bringing the total Board membership to eight.

### The Parent/Teacher Association:

Membership of the PTA is open to all parents and teachers. The function is to provide a forum for discussing issues and topics of interest to parents and teachers, to foster a sense of community in the school, to give practical help to the school with programmes such as extra curricular activities and playground development. The PTA is led by a steering committee who co-ordinate activities.

### The Pupils' Council:

The pupils from 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6<sup>th</sup> classes elect a council annually which meets regularly to discuss issues relating to the school and of concern to the pupils. These matters are then brought to the attention of the Staff, Board of Management, PTA, or Executive as appropriate.

### Code of Behaviour:

Children enrolled in Bray School Project are required to co-operate with the Code of Behaviour and ethos of the school as well as all other policies on curriculum, organisation and management.

### Communication:

The school communicates with parents by notes in school bags, text messaging and our website. In cases of emergency parents will be contacted directly by telephone.

### Transport:

The Bray School Project has no geographical limit to its catchment area but the school plays NO role in securing state funded transport to the school for any pupil.

### Legislation:

The school is subject to the Rules for National Schools, Departmental Circulars, the Education Act (1998), the Education Welfare Act (2000), the Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act (2004) and all relevant equality legislation.