

ST. SENAN'S EDUCATION OFFICE



Dear Chairperson/Principal,

I hope this finds you well. Although the Christmas holidays are now but a distant memory, and we are already looking forward to the wonders of springtime, most especially the longer evenings, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a belated Happy New Year and all the very best for the year ahead. I do hope that you managed to get a well-deserved break and some down time over the Christmas period.

I would like to thank all those chairpersons and principals who submitted responses to our recent survey on the services provided by St. Senan's Education office. Your input was very valuable, and we were extremely pleased with the positive feedback regarding the level of support provided to schools by the office. I have passed on your compliments and expressions of gratitude to all staff members here in the office. One request which was made by several schools was that we might regularly send out a list of recent circulars accompanied by a short message outlining the purpose of the circular and its relevance to our schools. Below, you will see that we have begun this process and I hope that it will be of assistance to you. Board of Management training for new chairpersons and their principals was delivered over eight nights across the four dioceses during the months of November and December. This was the first of the full suite of training modules which will be rolled out during the tenure of the current boards of management. Sincere thanks to all who attended. Feedback received from attendees was very positive and we were delighted with the level of engagement on the night.

The next module of training is entitled, *"The Board as a Corporate Entity."* This module is designed for all BOM members and will be rolled out during February, March, and April. **Chairpersons and Principals are strongly urged to ensure that all BOM members are made aware of the training and encouraged to attend.**

Please note that as this second training module will be delivered over 20 evenings during the coming weeks, Kevin and I will be less available to take phone queries and offer advice during this period. You may continue to contact Linda and Gwen as normal.

We look forward to meeting at a training event in your area over the coming months.

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Aislinn Foley



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CIRCULARS

All Department of Education Circulars, dating back as far as 2017, can be accessed on the St. Senan's Education website. All circulars appear in order of the date of publication at the following link:



 **Please click to read**

Recent Circulars:

• [Circular 0001/2024](#)

This circular outline the details of increased grant funding to be paid to schools to address cost of living increases.

• [Circular 0004/2024](#)

The purpose of this circular is to make schools aware that in order to increase the availability of retired teachers, the Department of Education has extended the limited waiver of public sector pensions for a further two years. It is hoped that this measure will assist in addressing the issue of the current shortage of substitute teachers.

• [Circular 0005/2024](#)

This circular should be highlighted to teachers who are undertaking further study which are directly related to and relevant to their work as a schoolteacher. The objective of the Teacher Fee Refund Scheme is to provide a partial refund towards the cost of course fees and examination fees upon the successful completion of the teacher professional learning course/s (where the course duration is longer than one year funding is provided upon successful completion of each year of the course).

NCSE Policy Advice Paper

The National Council for Special Education has published its most recent policy advice paper entitled, "An Inclusive Education for an Inclusive Society" which will be of interest to you.

➤➤➤ [Please click to access the paper](#)

STAFFING SCHEDULE AND MAIN PANEL

At a meeting held earlier this month, we were advised by the Department of Education that they hoped to issue the staffing schedule by the end of January. As all SET clusters were due for review, it was suggested that this might delay the issue of this circular to schools.

We were also advised that the earliest the main panel will issue to relevant schools, is Monday 8th April next. All schools which will have a permanent vacancy must notify our office in advance as soon as the vacancy becomes known to the school.

Please contact Linda at: linda.fleming@limerickdiocese.org to register any forthcoming permanent vacancies in your school.



FUNCTION OF ST. SENAN'S EDUCATION OFFICE



We have received several queries recently from persons other than chairpersons and principals, who are seeking advice on school-related issues. It is important to be aware that the function of St. Senan's Education Office is to advise and offer guidance to chairpersons and principals in relation to the management of their schools.

In instances where other school stakeholders cannot be advised by school management, the following should apply:

- Teaching staff and other support staff should be directed to their respective unions for any advice they may require.
- Parents should be directed to the National Parents' Council should they require any advice in relation to school processes and procedures.



CORRESPONDENCE WITH ST SENAN'S EDUCATION OFFICE

The vast majority of chairpersons and principals who communicate with St. Senan's office by email and phone, do so in a most polite and professional manner and we thank you sincerely for this positive engagement. Unfortunately, in recent times, a small but increasing number of people have begun to adopt a discourteous tone when communicating with us by email and telephone. Whilst we are more than happy to offer assistance and guidance to our schools, I would like to remind principals and chairpersons of the need to maintain a respectful tone in all correspondence with this office, both verbal and written.

Similarly, another emerging trend is that of principals stating in their email, or phone correspondence, that their query is "urgent," where this is not, in fact, the case. It has become apparent that some principals are utilising the term as a means to avoid waiting their turn for a reply. We always endeavour to respond immediately to urgent queries. All other queries are dealt with in the order in which they are received, or, in order of importance, depending on the workload of the office staff at the time. Therefore, in the interests of fairness to all who rely on this office for advice and other services, we respectfully request that email or phone queries only be marked as "urgent" where this is genuinely the case. Your co-operation in the above matters is very much appreciated.

NOTIFYING NEW BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEMBERSHIP TO THE CHARITIES REGULATOR



An Rialálaí
Carthanas
Charities
Regulator

Under the Charities Act 2009, every board of management must register its school with the Charities Regulator. As part of this registration process, the names, residential addresses and start date of each board of management member must be registered with the Charities Regulator whose website can be accessed at the following link:

<https://www.charitiesregulator.ie>

Further information on the registration process for schools can be found in the following document:
[Updated-school-registration-guide-final.pdf](#)

In light of the recent change of BOM membership, schools will need to log on to the website and input the details of the BOM members who have been elected for the 2023-2027 term.

If any change in board membership occurs during the four-year tenure of the BOM, the details already registered must be amended and updated accordingly.

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT TRAINING -THE BOARD AS A CORPORATE ENTITY

Dear esteemed attendees,

We are thrilled to announce that a series of training events have been scheduled on multiple dates from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm. As we are expecting a large number of attendees, we kindly request that you arrive as close to 6 pm as possible. This will allow us to sign the attendance register promptly and commence with the delivery of the event on time. Tea and coffee will be served from 6 pm onwards.

We urge the chairpersons and principals to communicate with all board members and register for their preferred date and venue. (Chairs and principals can book on behalf of their fellow board members.) While we understand that it might not be possible for all eight members of your Board to attend the same training session, we strongly encourage all members to attend on a date that suits them.

To make your booking, please use the following link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/st-senans-board-as-a-corporate-entity-training-3020949?utm-campaign=social&utm-content=creatorshare&utm-medium=discovery&utm-term=odclsxcollection&utm-source=cp&aff=escb>

Please note that there are limited spaces available at each hotel that we cannot exceed. To avoid disappointment, we recommend that you make your booking as soon as possible.

Here are the dates and venues for each location:

CASHEL & EMLY

- Tues 6th February - Talbot Hotel, Clonmel
- Weds 7th February - Talbot Hotel, Clonmel
- Tues 19th March - Anner Hotel, Thurles
- Weds 20th March - Anner Hotel, Thurles

KERRY

- Weds 13th March - Heights Hotel Killarney
- Thurs 14th March - Heights Hotel Killarney
- Thurs 21st March - The Rose Hotel, Tralee
- Mon 8th Apr - The Rose Hotel, Tralee
- Tues 9th Apr - The Rose Hotel, Tralee
- Weds 10th April - Heights Hotel Killarney

KILLALOE

- Mon 26th February - Abbey Court Hotel, Nenagh
- Tues 27th February - Abbey Court Hotel, Nenagh
- Weds 28th February - Abbey Court Hotel, Nenagh
- Mon 15th April - Inn @ Dromoland, Clare
- Weds 17th April - Inn @ Dromoland, Clare
- Mon 22nd April - Inn @ Dromoland, Clare

LIMERICK

- Tues 12th February - Castletroy Park, Limerick City
- Weds 13th February - Woodlands Hotel, Adare
- Thursday 18th April - Castletroy Park, Limerick City
- Tues 23rd April Woodlands Hotel, Adare



As Catholic Schools week draws to a close, we pause to reflect on the profound theme of Catholic Schools as Communities of Service. At the heart of this theme lies the essence of Christian service- the embodiment of faith in action.

In our Catholic schools, we follow the footsteps of Jesus Christ, who served every soul with equal compassion, transcending differences in nationality, creed, and background. Jesus not only preached faith but also lived it through His actions, revealing to us the true essence of the Kingdom of God.

As His followers, it is our duty to emulate His example in all our earthly endeavors. Every individual, regardless of age, is called to continue His sacred service in the present, while sowing seeds of hope and kindness for future generations.

We urge school leaders to align the school community initiatives with the social, moral, cultural, and spiritual values of our collective ethos and the example of Christ. If our children can recognize this connection, it will leave an indelible impression on their formation.

In the words of St Teresa of Ávila, "Christ has no body on earth now but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours." Let us, therefore, be the eyes that see the world with compassion, the feet that walk the path of goodness, and the hands that bless all of creation.