



# Corridor Echoes

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## SPECIAL EDITION

Dear Parents,

This is a very special edition of *Corridor Echoes*. As mentioned in Volume 10 Issue 1 the theme of this school year is '*positivity*'. We want to embrace everything that is positive about our school, the pupils, the parents, the school staff, the parents' association, the board of management, Ferrybank.....

### ***Positivity* in St. Mary's Boys' National School**

We are just about at the end of the second month of the school year and I would like to wish the very best to everybody involved in the St. Mary's Boys' School community, i.e. teachers and other staff members, pupils and their families, priests and people of the parish and the wider community who work together to contribute to the great school we have here.

We have wonderful, enthusiastic pupils who put their very best efforts forward every day. They are kind, caring, welcoming and friendly and they work hard on all the interesting topics their teachers plan for them. Every year they represent our school very well in activities, events and trips outside the school. People have often remarked to me on how well behaved our pupils are and how polite and respectful they are.

We strive to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and secure learning environment where the needs of our pupils are identified and addressed. While we are proud to be a school with a Catholic ethos we also give due recognition to children of all other religious beliefs and none.

**We aim to provide an appropriate, stimulating and challenging education for all our pupils.**

We welcome and encourage the involvement of parents through home/school contacts and, through their involvement in and growth of the Parents' Association. Our teachers, both individually and collectively, engage enthusiastically with professional and personal development programmes.

We aim to prepare our pupils for their place in a modern society by actively promoting equality and by celebrating the diversity we have within our own school community.

Through our Green Schools' Programme we are encouraging our pupils to be environmentally aware and appreciate their own community.

We have a very active Student Council who work very hard on topics that affect their fellow pupils. The pupils are encouraged to take the lead on issues that matter.

We have a very pro-active Board of Management that does a great job in managing our school. We also have a number of seriously interested parents whose wish is to have a vibrant Parents' Association. I hereby call on you parents to get involved. Our school needs you.....

## A WHOLE-SCHOOL APPROACH.....

### What is a Whole-School Approach?

The elements of a whole-school approach include:

- \* An ethos, policies and practices that are in harmony
- \* A teamwork approach
- \* An inclusive and involved school community
- \* A systematic process for planning and reviewing policy

### Consistent Ethos, Policies and Practices

One of the challenges and opportunities for school management and staff is to create a positive school climate. All school policies and practices have the potential to have an impact on this and must be assessed from this perspective.

### A Teamwork Approach

Staff as a team have the opportunities to confirm that all school policies support their objectives.

### A Whole-School Approach to Curriculum and Classroom Management

The foundation of positive learning is effective teaching and an inclusive and engaging curriculum. The learning programme in the school and how it is presented can have a significant effect on the behaviour of pupils. Classroom management and teaching methods have a strong influence on pupils' behaviour. The classroom environment, like the wider school environment, gives the pupils clear messages about teachers' expectations and creates consistent boundaries. The skill of our teachers in managing the routine engagement with pupils is a critical factor in preventing problems.

Fairness isn't  
about giving  
everyone the  
same. Fairness is  
about giving  
everyone what  
they need.

### School Policies

To ensure that we keep up to date with the latest ideas and methodologies we regularly review and update both our curriculum plans and organisational policies. Our policies can be viewed on our website or by contacting the office.

### Website

Our new website and blog will be available soon. It will be packed with news of everything that is important regarding our school. In the meantime our old website and blog is available on

*[www.ferrybankboys.scoilnet.ie](http://www.ferrybankboys.scoilnet.ie)*

The blogs are available on

*[www.ferrybankboys.scoilnet.ie/blog](http://www.ferrybankboys.scoilnet.ie/blog)*

It's very interesting to see some of the recent and not-so-recent news.

## Facts about Bullying

1 in 3 of children in Irish primary schools are involved in bullying behaviour.

Over 1 in 5 of primary school children in Ireland are the target of bullying behaviour.

Any child can become involved in bullying behaviour.

*A significant proportion of bullying is rooted in a lack of respect for difference. There is a growing acknowledgement of the prevalence and impact of this kind of bullying, also known as 'prejudice-based' or 'identity-based' bullying. Homophobic and transphobic bullying are types of identity-based bullying that are rooted in prejudice.*

Some children are more vulnerable to experiencing identity-based bullying because of their actual or perceived difference.

There is a clear link between the experience of homophobic or trans-phobic bullying at school and serious negative personal and educational outcomes for young people. Although bullying is repeated behaviour a single incident on social media can be considered bullying and a single incident of intentional negative behaviour may be considered harassment (Equal Status Acts).

Our teachers strive to make their classrooms welcoming, safe and inclusive for every child - this is the best approach to ensure respectful relationships across the school community. A positive school climate and culture is a key principle of the Department of Education and Skills Anti-Bullying Procedures. The Procedures encourage schools to prevent bullying behaviour by supporting a positive school climate and culture that is welcoming of difference and diversity, that is based on inclusiveness, and which promotes respectful relationships across the school community.

Our teachers are skilled in supporting children to thrive regardless of their background, identity, family type, belief system, ethnicity or ability. They are supported to carry out this work by the primary curriculum which is child centred and which acknowledges the uniqueness of each pupil

and caters to the needs of each child.

**The key message is that everyone should be treated with respect.**

### School Creed

I believe that I am special.  
I am different from every other person  
And have my own gifts.  
I believe that God knows and loves me just  
as I am.  
He helps me to grow to be like him  
And always do my best.  
I believe I can become the person God  
wants me to be  
Because the people in my school and family  
care for me.

### The Inclusive School

The Equal Status Act 2000 places duties on schools and other educational establishments. It • prohibits discrimination on nine grounds, • prohibits harassment and sexual harassment, • requires reasonable accommodation of people with disabilities, and • allows for positive action to promote equality for those who are disadvantaged or who need special facilities or arrangements. The nine grounds on which discrimination is prohibited are • gender, • marital status, • family status, • sexual orientation, • religion, • age, • disability, • race, • and membership of the Traveller community.

## Key Elements of a Positive Culture in our School

### • OUR SCHOOL:-

- ⇒ acknowledges the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment
- ⇒ acknowledges the uniqueness of each individual and his worth as a human being
- ⇒ promotes positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all
- ⇒ prohibits vulgar, offensive or other aggressive behaviour or language
- ⇒ has a clear commitment to promoting equality
- ⇒ has the capacity to change in response to pupils' needs
- ⇒ identifies aspects of the curriculum through which positive and lasting influences can be exerted towards forming pupils' attitudes and values
- ⇒ takes particular care of "at risk" pupils and uses its monitoring systems to facilitate early intervention where necessary
- ⇒ recognises the need to work in partnership with and keep parents informed on procedures to improve relationships on a school-wide basis
- ⇒ recognises the role of parents in equipping the pupil with a range of life skills
- ⇒ recognises the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying
- ⇒ promotes habits of mutual respect, courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of people in groups and communities
- ⇒ promote qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding both in school and out of school
- ⇒ staff share a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing bullying/aggressive behaviour by any member of the school community

