

Scoil an Spioraid Naoimh Boys Parents Association
Meeting 6 January 2015

In attendance: Louise Crowley, Susan O'Shea, Donal Murray, Jean Mallon, Sharon O'Neill, James McKeon, Rosaleen Fitzgerald, Terri Kruschke, David Corkery, Mary O'Connor.

Apologies: Gillian Connery

1. Fundraising and finance

It was noted by Susan that the current balance in the PA account is approx €6,200. At Susan's request it was agreed that to avoid the storing of coins, the coin converter should be used to facilitate the lodging of monies raised in coin form.

Brian Cuthbert has indicated that the major project that might require support in 2015 is the proposed development of a seomra Gaeilge – a dedicated resource to assist the boys with their Irish – with a view to enhancing their learning experience. Further information on this initiative to follow. Jean noted the successful bag packing initiative pre-Christmas which raised just over €1000 and agreed to confirm the date for Winter 2015 with her contact in Dunnes Stores. Additionally Susan reported that although the figures were not as yet finalised, the Christmas raffle generated a net profit of approx €250.

Possible fundraising initiatives for 2015 were considered, the good income generated by a table quiz was noted, and Donal Murray spoke to his experiences of organising the table quizzes for the PA with the support of Jim Ring and Bishopstown GAA club. Whilst a table quiz in 2015 was not ruled out, in the short term it was agreed that the PA will host a Book Swap in Bishopstown GAA Club in February. Families will pay €10 for entry to the book swap; each child can bring 5 unwanted books and exchange them for 5 books of his/her choice. The event will be both income generating for the PA and also beneficial to the children acquiring new books. The €10 charge will also include a complimentary tea or coffee for parents. Parents will be encouraged to bring baked goods with each bun being sold for 50 cents. It is envisaged that the sons of the parents running the event will man the cake stalls and take responsibility for the sale of the baked goods.

Sat Feb 7 was agreed as the date for the event, subject to securing the GAA hall. Donal and Louise to make enquiries and confirm; to commence immediately after morning training for the boys, likely starting time 11.30, to run until 2pm. Terri agreed to make enquiries regarding the experience of another school with which she has ties that has run a similar event, and report back. **(NOTE – Function Room in the club now booked from 11-2.30 on Feb 7)**

2. Traffic Management

Donal Murray spoke to this issue, reporting his ongoing attempts to secure the assistance of local politicians and Gardaí. The issue of safety was acknowledged and it was agreed that Donal and others would arrange a meeting with members of the City Council roads department, the Gardaí and local politicians with a view to addressing the issues.

One of the major concerns expressed by those in attendance was the immediate danger posed by parents who continue to drive up to the school gates in the mornings. The previous efforts of the school to thwart this were noted, and in particular the use of cones to physically discourage this behaviour was regarded as being particularly successful. Although not capable of preventing access, the PA noted that it sent a very clear message to parents and in general was abided by most. Thus it is proposed that subject to agreement from the school and prior consultation with the Gardaí and the Residents Association, the PA might finance the purchase of two new large cones and that would be re-instated in their previous position. Related to this was a request that parents (and especially parents of junior infants at induction), be reminded of the importance of not driving to the school gates at drop off/pick up times.

3. Communions/Confirmations 2015

a. Blazers

Mary reported on the 2015 confirmations/communions – noting that 8 new blazers had been ordered; 2 for confirmation and 6 for communion (no invoice has been received as yet). The second confirmation fitting is scheduled for Feb 9. Mary mentioned her wish to recruit an “apprentice” to assist with the work and to become familiar with the annual process.

b. Teas and Coffees

The lovely time experienced by the boys and their families at the post ceremony receptions was noted – notwithstanding the typical reluctance of parents to volunteer to support the events. Once again Rosaleen agreed to take charge of the events in 2015, and a call will go out to all parents in 5th class/1st class in advance. The recent acquisition of email addresses for most parents was noted and it was suggested that this might prove a more efficient means of notifying parents and securing their involvement. Only if volunteers are forthcoming will the possibility of introducing home baking be considered. It is envisaged that a pre meeting involving volunteer parents will be scheduled 3 weeks in advance of both events with levels of attendance dictating the approach to the events.

4. Easter Raffle

The Easter raffle will proceed as per previous years. There will be a small chocolate egg (crème egg size) for every boy, one regular Easter egg for each class draw and three prizes (vouchers) for the overall school draw.

5. Coder Dojo initiative for 4th/5th/6th class boys

Donal Murray explained the proposed initiative to the meeting, outlining the school’s intention to establish a coder dojo workshop for 4th/5th/6th class boys. A meeting was held in the school for interested parents and potential contributors in December and a follow up meeting for scratch training for parents is scheduled for Thursday 8 Jan. The arrangements surrounding the proposal were outlined to the meeting, the need for parent support and

presence at the Sunday morning sessions in the school will be vital for the venture to commence in late January. The PA expressed its support for the initiative.

6. Education evenings Spring 2015

A new proposal for providing parent-led evening classes for parents on school grounds was presented to the meeting. It received the support of those present, being regarded as a very positive means of encouraging parents in to the school and possibly creating a more inclusive and mutually beneficial environment. It is proposed that one evening a week for 4 weeks, parents would be invited to attend a series of 1 hour classes in one discipline, with the classes being delivered by suitably qualified, volunteer parents. Participating parents would attend one 4 week programme and pay €5 per class. Whilst classes on conversational Irish; conversational English for non native speakers, an introduction to the Irish legal system and an introduction to health/safety/nutrition for children were suggested, it is envisaged that parents will be surveyed to identify areas of interest as well as areas where qualified parents might be able and willing to contribute. This is to be followed up by a preliminary registration process, to allow for the class topics to be agreed. An invitation to attend will be extended to the parents in SSN (Girls).

7. Charity fundraising

It was suggested that a greater emphasis might be placed on charitable initiatives to which the boys could directly contribute, and to further encourage the raising of local and international social policy issues. In this regard it was suggested that a request might issue to the boys to donate football boots/runners and jerseys they may have outgrown etc, but that are still in good condition. It was suggested that these might be usefully donated to a charity such as UNICEF for distribution. Secondly the practice of "Team Hope Christmas Boxes" was raised by Terri, who noted that this would be something for the boys to actively engage with, allowing them to fill a shoe box with small toys (cars, bouncy balls etc) for distribution at Christmas time. Terri is to investigate and revert.

8. PA presence on website/App.

The need to raise the awareness of PA activities was noted and it was agreed that with the approval of the school, the minutes and follow up details relating to the proposed initiatives will be posted to the SSN website and APP. Louise to contact Brian about the best manner to convey the necessary information.

9. Christmas Party 2015

The meeting expressed satisfaction as to the current involvement of sufficient parents to ensure that this will go ahead again in 2015.

10. AOB

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday Feb 10 at 8pm.