



## From the CEO's Desk

As we approach the end of our first term in the academic year, 2009 – 2010, it is timely to reflect on the challenges we have addressed and also to reflect upon and celebrate the many gifts that have been bestowed upon us, as educators.

Without exaggeration, not a family in our nation has managed to escape the harshness of recession. The pursuit of savings and cost-cutting measures has been relentless and education has been particularly hard hit. The publication of the Murphy Report poses a further challenge. It is a testament to the resilience of our schools that we continue in the pursuit of the best for our students.

And yet, looking back over the hundreds of ways in which our schools get around obstacles placed in their paths, the creative energy that Principals and staff invest in the lives of their students so that each student gets every opportunity despite cut-backs, the sheer determination to make a positive difference in the lives of others, must surely be true manifestations of the creative work of the Holy Spirit, working in us and through those with whom we work.

Even in the best of times, there are everyday burdens to be carried. In this past year, we have witnessed the heart break of those amongst our CEIST schools who have lost parents, siblings and loved ones. There aren't enough words to comfort those who have lost students, staff members and loved ones to early death. Maybe our best role is simply walk the road of bereavement, shoulder to shoulder with those bereaved and be of absolute and unconditional support. Our actions towards each other have immense power to bring comfort and peace.

Seeing God in our everyday lives in spite of adversity may seem difficult, but when we witness the sheer joy of students receiving all they wished for in the Leaving Cert or Junior Cert examination results, or hear the laughter of students going from classroom to classroom, or see the fruit of teacher-student collaborations attain highest recognition nationally and internationally, then we not only see the unique context of the Catholic school, but profoundly we see God in our everyday lives. My sincere thanks to all of you for your commitment to our students and to school life.

In this Newsletter, Margaret O'Brien, Director School Support Services makes her final contribution, as she takes up the post of Principal in St. Joseph's Secondary School, Tulla, Co. Clare on December 1<sup>st</sup>.

We are grateful to Margaret for contributing so generously and passionately to the foundation of our Trust and while Margaret is gone from our office, she is not lost to us, as she remains within the fold of the CEIST schools network. In the New Year we will be appointing an Acting Director of School Support Services, from within the current cohort of Co-ordinators. I pay tribute to each of the Co-ordinators, who continue to give to our schools, the benefit of their wisdom and experience.

Ned Prendergast, Director of Faith Development and his team continue to have an immense impact on our schools. It is now more fully appreciated, that Faith permeates the life of each school and is not confined to the RE Department alone.

Mike Higgins, Director of Finance and our colleague Accountant Bernadette McKeown, have prepared some very salient aspects of good governance and financial practices for this edition of the Newsletter. They remain vigilant in the support of best practice in our schools.

The CEIST website has received a major overhaul, thanks to John Woods, Information and Communication Systems Manager. John has worked tirelessly on the site which has gone live in recent weeks, to much acclaim. In this age of efficiency of economy, time and communication, we earnestly entreat you to log on to the website, for daily updates, and regular communication.

Finally, as we go about our homes and our daily work this Advent season, let us bring God's presence with us, let even our smallest accomplishments give him glory and bring us joy. And when we grow weary at times, let us be infused with the light of the Holy Spirit and the energies of our founding Congregations.

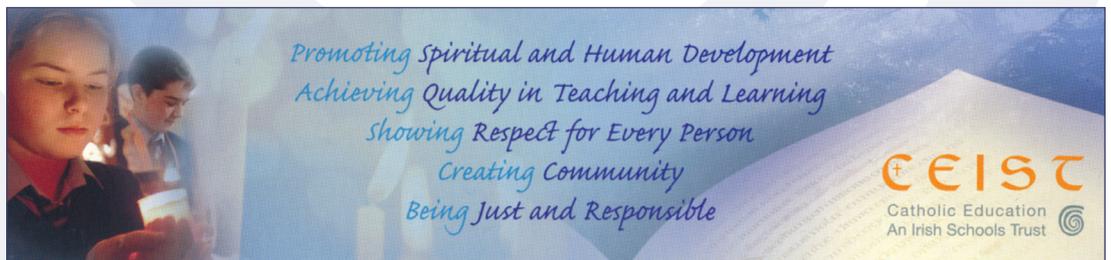
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# Schools Relationships Management

**Appointments:** School Support Services personnel have been busy supporting Boards of Management in the selection process for Principals and Deputy Principals over the summer. Congratulations to all of you who have been appointed. For the first time we held an induction day for new Principals and Deputies in the CEIST Office in August. It was a pleasure meeting people face to face and to share our respective hopes and aspirations for the years ahead. It also provided an opportunity for the new incumbents to network with each other and share ideas. I am certain that it gave our Conference in October an additional buzz, particularly at the dinner table! On the other side of that coin we have been sorry to see so many people change at senior management level in our schools in such a short space of time; as it amounts to a huge loss of experience and expertise. May we wish all who retired this year a very fruitful and enjoyable retirement!

**CEIST Conference:** The whole event is certainly my highlight of the year. This year we have tried to include workshops from our own schools in order to share best practice. If you have any ideas for next year we would be glad to hear about them. It can be a very simple idea which works well in your school and may have an innovative twist to it. Any ideas which you might have for next year's speakers or topics of interest would also be greatly appreciated.

**Joint Training for Boards of Management:** For the second year we are co-operating with the JMB and other Trusts to deliver training to new Boards of Management. This should reduce the number of outings for new Boards and give a common view of the role and responsibilities of Boards. One member of the School Support Services or their colleagues in Faith Development will attend the inaugural meeting of the newly appointed Boards. We are hugely grateful for the generosity of Board members in giving of their time, voluntarily, on behalf of CEIST school communities. Many thanks to the outgoing Board members for their contribution over the past three years!

**Celebration of Anniversaries of Foundations:** Mercy College, Woodford recently celebrated its Golden Jubilee. Mary Immaculate Secondary School, Lisdoonvarna celebrated its Diamond Jubilee and St. Aloysius, Cork celebrated an astounding 170 years of education. Congratulations to all who continue this great tradition.

**Training for teachers preparing for middle-management:** In order to ensure that teachers in CEIST schools are given an opportunity to develop their leadership potential, a stimulating series of lectures will be held in a cluster of eight participating schools. This will be delivered with the cooperation of the LDS, and SDPI with CEIST at the behest of Marie Therese Gilmartin in Presentation, Clondalkin. Seven other CEIST schools (Presentation Kilcock, Presentation Lucan, Mercy Goldenbridge, Mercy Drimnagh, Sancta Maria Rathfarnham, Presentation Warrenmount and Caritas Ballyfermot) will form the cluster. The course will be delivered on a rotational basis in three schools and in the CEIST Education Office for one of the four weeks on a trial basis. The Principals of those schools will meet to add to or amend the outline programme as needed. Following a review of the pilot programme it will then hopefully be offered to other clusters of CEIST schools who wish to run it in their own areas. Your School Relationships Co-ordinator; Damien, Michael, Tom and Tony will be happy to speak to you and see how this might be accommodated. We would be delighted to strengthen further the common bond between all CEIST schools.

**Barristers in the Making:** Congratulations to the 10 fifth year students from Our Lady's College, Greenhills, Drogheda who recently beat stiff competition from the US, the UK and South Africa in a Mock Trial Association Empire City Invitational in New York. Visit CEIST website to hear the student's lively interview on RTE. Congratulations to Ms. Hanratty their teacher for preparing them and for the combined dedication of the students involved.

**Choral Success:** Quite a lot of CEIST schools have choirs to be proud of who enrich the musical life of schools on many occasions. It is also a very enjoyable pastime for the participants which they can carry forward into adult life and often contribute to liturgical celebrations in both their schools and parishes. Recently, Presentation Ballyphehane, Cork and Presentation Loughboy, Kilkenny gave wonderful performances in the Regional Final of Co-operation North Schools Choirs competition. Loughboy (pictured above) emerged the winners and we salute their achievement. Congratulations also to their conductor Veronica Collier.



**Musicals:** The season for musicals has begun. Those which we have heard about so far: "Joseph and His Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat" in St. Mary's, Arklow which was fabulous according to their Board Chairperson. Presentation Thurles production of "Godspell" was a great success on the 15-17th October. Colaiste Muire, Ennis performed for "The Magic of The Musical" on the 25th-28th November. St. Anne's Tipperary performed a tribute to Elvis Presley called "All Shook Up" on the 3rd-5th December. The pantomime "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" was performed in Ard Scoil na nDéise, Dungarvan on the week of November the 30th "Grease" is to be performed in Mercy Mounthawk on the last week in January. St. Mary's Midleton is performing "Hairspray" on the 7th-11th February.

**Scholarships:** Many students throughout our schools have achieved outstanding results in the State Exams. A student of Eureka Secondary School, Kells received second prize in the Naughton Scholarship Awards and a student from Scoil Carmel, Limerick received a JP Mc Manus Scholarship on foot of her Leaving Cert results. Well done to all students and staffs who attained great success in their studies over the past year.

**Focal Scoir:** As I leave CEIST for St. Joseph's Tulla may I extend my sincere thanks to all school personnel who have been so courteous and helpful to me over the past few years.

**Buildings:** It is good news that Colaiste Chríost Rí, Portlaoise opened its new PPP building in September 2009. Progress is also being made on the amalgamation in Abbeyfeale which is due for completion in September 2011 and Doon has begun the planning process for its PPP building. St. Columba's Stranorlar recently had their new playing pitches opened by Shay Given, Ireland's soccer goalkeeper and past pupil of the school.

## SCHOOL RELATIONSHIP CO-ORDINATORS (SRC)



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# FAITH DEVELOPMENT

In the midst of all the talk of cut-backs, reverse benchmarking and social strife, do you ever feel like finding a nook in a rock somewhere and hiding? Better still of letting the beauty and quietness of a holy place seep into your soul and calm your life? Do you ever feel like a bit of spiritual nourishment out of the ordinary, a place to reclaim your soul and tap into something bigger and calmer and deeper, something maybe to give you courage and energy for the next stage of the journey. Worn and all as you may feel is there still a hunger in you, a tug that you have never quite met or left behind? If there is, read on below.

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## Because you are worth it: Time out to reflect during Holy Week.

CEISC is responding to many requests that we arrange more opportunities for 'time out' for teachers in their busy lives. Call those opportunities what you will, reflection days, retreat days, spiritual-time-out-to-recover-and-renew-the-spirit days, we have responded by organising such 'spaces' at four locations in the early days of Holy Week next.

The idea is that on the evening of Palm Sunday (March 28th 2010) you might take yourself to one of those locations and be there until Tuesday mid-day (March 30th). It is the beginning of the Easter Break and, if ever there is a good time to do such a thing, this just might be it.

### The four locations are as follows:

- 1) Tearmann Spirituality Centre Glendalough Co. Wicklow, with Fr. Michael Rogers.
- 2) Ballintubber Abbey Retreat Centre, Co. Mayo, with Fr. Frank Fahey.
- 3) Grace Dieu Manor Retreat Centre, Waterford with the Sacred Heart retreat team.
- 4) The Nano Nagle Centre, Ballygriffin, Co Cork with the team there.

Each location offers a very special experience and intending participants may opt for any of the four locations. You will be accommodated on a first come first served basis.

## Grace Dieu Manor Retreat Centre, Waterford.

Grace Dieu Manor is the lovely Retreat Centre of the Sacred Heart congregation whose only secondary school is part of CEISC. Outside Waterford on the Tramore Road, it is a very congenial place of spiritual search and accompaniment with lovely garden walks and quiet spaces in which to spend time out. The emphasis here is on the spirituality of the heart, on honouring the sacred journey of each participant while paying attention to the point in life where she or he is now to be found. For more, google Grace Dieu Manor Retreat Centre.

## The Nano Nagle Centre, Ballygriffin, Co Cork

Ballygriffin, as many of you will know, is the birthplace of Nano Nagle, founder of the Presentation Sisters and inspirational figure for Catherine McAuley, Edmund Rice and so many others. The Nano Nagle Centre is clustered within an organic farm where heritage, spirituality and ecology are integrated and where wholeness and well-being of spirit, mind and body is fostered through prayer, reflection and meaningful ritual. You will be challenged here by the wonder of the universe and experience the wholeness and interconnectedness of life. There is an opportunity to discover new depth and meaning in life by enlivening one's personal story with the stories of the Universe, or Jesus and Nano Nagle. For more see [www.nanonaglebirthplace.ie](http://www.nanonaglebirthplace.ie)

## Tearmann Spirituality Centre, Glendalough

Glendalough is a mystical, enchanting and holy place and the homely Tearmann Centre is the former An Oige hostel looking out on the valley and the lower lake. From here Fr. Michael Rogers leads participants on reflective walks and inner journeys that have become legendary. He links the natural beauty of the place to our own place in the cosmos. He also links the evocative history of the monastic settlement to the questions posed to faith and to church today. Check out [www.tearmann.ie](http://www.tearmann.ie)



## Ballintubber Abbey, Co Mayo.

Ballintubber Abbey is a remarkable place by any standards and the restored Chapter House a wonderful place to centre a personal retreat.



Founded in 1216 the Abbey is the only church in Ireland where for almost 800 years Mass has been offered without a break. This in spite of Cromwellian burnings, suppression by Henry V111 and the notorious priest hunter, Sean an Sagart. It is a place of spiritual resilience and in hard times there would be no better place to balance the feet you stand on. As part of the experience Fr. Frank Fahy leads participants on part of the old Tóchar Phádraig (Patrick's Causeway), the main road between Cruachan (seat of the Kings of Connaught) to Cruachan Aigle, the sacred mountain of our pagan ancestors later called Croagh Patrick. The theme of pilgrimage is to the fore, interwoven with strands of Celtic spirituality. Check out [www.ballintubberabbey.ie](http://www.ballintubberabbey.ie)

## Practical Arrangements

Text or email your name, chosen location and contact details to Ned Prendergast as soon as possible to secure your place. 086-0437139 or [nprendergast@ceist.ie](mailto:nprendergast@ceist.ie)  
The inclusive cost of the Sunday to Tuesday is €150.00 with participants providing their own transport. It is open to anyone connected to CEISC, all staff, retired-staff, board members etc. There will be at least one CEISC staff member present at each location and they will be in contact with participants nearer the date.

## FAITH DEVELOPMENT CO-ORDINATORS



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# CEIST Conference 2009



*Antony Hanly & Lloyd Bracken (CEIST) Light the CEIST candle*



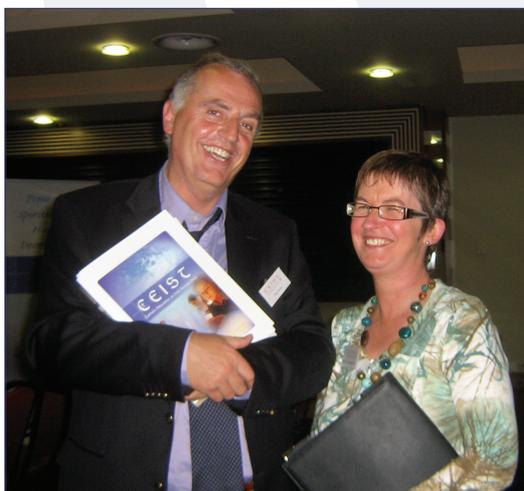
*Fr. Timothy Radcliffe addresses delegates*



*Calasactius College Oranmore School Choir*



*Fr. Timothy Radcliffe with Anne Kelleher, CEO, CEIST*



*Pat Power, Principal, St Brigid's College, Callan with Mary B. Lannigan Ryan, Deputy Principal, Presentation Secondary School, Thurles*



*Section of Crowd at the Conference*

# CEIST Conference 2009



*Anne Looney, CEO, NCCA*



*Lloyd Bracken (CEIST) and Karen McLaughlin (St Brigid's College, Callan)*



*St Brigid's School Choir, Tuam*

Our Fourth Annual Education Conference was held recently in the Clayton Hotel, Ballybrit, Co. Galway. This year in addition to our Principals and Deputy Principals, we invited Chairpersons from the School Boards of Management, and their presence greatly added to the conference.

CEIST would like to thank all who attended and we hope the conference was both an enjoyable and beneficial experience for you.

CEIST would also like to sincerely thank all of our speakers for their insightful presentations and workshops.

The Conference programme and many of the presentations along with feedback from our evaluation sheets distributed at the conference will be made available in our revamped Members' Area, which is due to "go live" in early 2010.



*Photos from our workshop*

# CEIST Information and Communication Systems



We have revamped our website and we hope that you find it easier to use. The new site includes dedicated sections from our three departments, Faith Development, School Support and Finance.

The inclusion of the three department sections should make it easier for you to quickly locate relevant information. We plan

to add more useful resources and guidelines for our schools within these sections so make sure to check them out!

The CEIST schools section on the website includes a profile on each of our 112 schools, where we have included each schools mission statement and history of the school along with their contact details. The information contained within "school history" has been taken from our archives and we would be glad to add any further details for schools that wish to add to their profile.

We will be including a school feature each month on the home page of the website and if you would like to have your school featured we would love to hear from you.

Also we have made some changes to our monthly e-newsletter, which indeed is another opportunity for our schools to promote recent news and events within their school.

The free e-news is e-mailed to our subscribers at the end of each month and includes updates from the CEIST education office along with other news and events of interest to our CEIST community.

We are revamping our Members Area at present and one of the objectives of this private site will be to promote best practice by providing a platform for our members to share ideas and resources. The area will include an exchange forum for sharing online conversations, documents and images on different topics of interest. We also plan to upload relevant resources and guidelines that we hope will be of use to our members.

The Members Area will provide a secure platform for our schools to submit documents online to our education office and have a centralised area for locating relevant CEIST templates and correspondence with the education office.

We plan to run a pilot project for the development of this private site and would like to involve some of our Principals and Deputy Principals or indeed School ICT Co-ordinators.

If you would like to work with us on the project, please e-mail [jwoods@ceist.ie](mailto:jwoods@ceist.ie).

We would like to thank all schools who have sent in their statistics forms to date. This data will be entered into our database where we plan to present useful analysis from the information gathered back to our schools via our Members Area.

One of the topics raised at our recent conference was the area of ICT training for our Principals and Deputy Principals. We are in the process of sending out questionnaires to our School Principals/Deputy Principals to ascertain what type of training is most required and we hope to progress with this training in due course once feedback has been obtained.

Finally many thanks to all who have sent items to us in the past for the website and e-news. We very much welcome the opportunity to promote your news and events, and indeed value your feedback, which is very beneficial to us.

# EDUCENA

I greatly appreciate the opportunity to provide you with an update on THE EDUCENA FOUNDATION in this Christmas newsletter. In a few weeks time, I will have completed my first year as CEO and it has been a most enjoyable and challenging experience where I utilised my business skills and experience in dealing with many issues.

Some of you, I will already have had the pleasure of meeting, despite a brief and flying visit, I can proudly say that I have been to each of our 112 CEIST school sites to check the legal versus physical boundaries. Last October, I was also privileged to have the opportunity to address the CEIST Conference in Galway and to explain the purpose and goals of EDUCENA.

The name EDUCENA is derived from two words **EDUC** – Education and **ENA** – Enabled, thus representing the abbreviation for “Education Enabled”. It was established as a property foundation with charitable status about the same time as CEIST was incorporated in April 2007. Our strategy and direction is overseen by a separate board of directors comprising of Congregational Members and Non- Executive Directors. Our Board meets regularly to transact its business which covers many topics including property and funding matters.

EDUCENA’s primary role is to fund the operations of CEIST as Trustee to your schools and in time will become the legal owner of most of the CEIST School properties. The change in ownership is subject to Canonical (Church) approval which is in progress and is expected to be completed over the next couple of years. It involves

many legal issues including a review of property titles which is well underway. From your Board of Management’s perspective, it will be a seamless change as your school continues with their daily business of educating pupils.



Over the summer months in conjunction with CEIST we embarked on a Facilities Management Pilot Study across 10 CEIST schools, to determine if there was opportunity to reduce operating costs by consolidating the purchasing requirements under various categories. The results were reviewed by the boards of both foundations in the autumn and were considered very encouraging.

Arising from this outcome, it is proposed to roll out a CEIST Facilities Management Program early next year focused at central procurement. An FM partner will be appointed early in the New Year and we will pronounce further on this joint initiative including the hosting of regional workshops in order to advise Principals and Administrators of the proposed operation of the program and the potential benefits that may accrue to participating CEIST schools.

I look forward to meeting you in the New Year and wish each of you and your families a Holy and Peaceful Christmas.

Liam Bergin, CEO, EDUCENA.

## LIST OF NEW BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT 2009 - 2012

School Name	Address	Secretary	Chairperson
St. Mary's College	Ballysadare, Sligo	Ms. Suzanne Thorn	Mr. James Costello
Coláiste Muire	Ballymote, Sligo	Mr. Gerry KIELTY	Dr. Richard Thorn
Presentation de la Salle College	Bagenalstown, Carlow	Mr. Gerard Watchorn	Ms. Breda McDonald
Scoil Mhuire Secondary School	Bunrana, Donegal	Mr. Liam Rainey	Mr. Frank McHale
St. Leo's College	Carlow, Carlow	Ms. Clare Ryan	Ms. Mary Wheatley
St. Joseph's Secondary School	Castlebar, Mayo	Áine Bean Uí Mhóráin	Mr. Frank McCarrick
Our Lady's Secondary School	Castleblayney, Monaghan	Mr. Gerard McGuill	Sr. Columba Gargan
Sacred Heart Secondary School	Drogheda, Louth	Ms. Mary Caffrey	Mr. Eamon Cooney
Caritas College	Ballyfermot, Dublin 10	Ms. Adrienne Whelan	Sr. Phyllis Lee
Our Lady of Mercy College	Beaumont, Dublin 9	Ms. Rose Mary Lynch	Mr. Tadg Farrell
Presentation College	Warrenmount, Dublin 8	Mr. Peter McCarney	Sr. Gemma McKeivitt
Coláiste Muire	Ennis, Clare	Ms. Jean Pound	Mr. Oliver Hanrahan
Eureka Secondary School	Kells, Meath	Ms. Caroline O'Reilly	Sr. Columba Gargan
Scoil Carmel	O'Connell Avenue, Limerick	Ms. Elizabeth Flanagan	Dr. Jim Gleeson
Meán Scoil Mhuire	Convent Road, Longford	Mr. Paul Costello	Mr. Frank Gearty
St. Raphael's College	Loughrea, Galway	Mr. Paul Cafferky	Mr. Gerard Dervan
St. Joseph's College	Lucan, Dublin	Ms. Audrey Doyle (A)	Sr. Mary Rossiter
St. Mary's Secondary School	Nenagh, Tipperary	Mr. Michael Dineen	Sr. Ena Quinlan
St. Mary's Secondary School	Newport, Tipperary	Mr. Patrick O'Toole	Mr. Tom Earle
Meán Scoil Mhuire gan Smal	Roscommon, Roscommon	Ms. Miriam Hunt	Mr. Derry O'Donnell
St. Joseph's Secondary School	Rush, Dublin	Ms. Patricia Hayden	Mr. Liam Butterly
Mercy College	Sligo, Sligo	Ms. Collete O'Hagan	Ms. Margaret Burke
St. Joseph's Secondary School	Spanish Point, Clare	Ms. Mary Crawford	Mr. Bernard Olsthoorn
Scoil Mhuire	Strokestown, Roscommon	Mr. Eamonn Corrigan	Sr. Mary Lee
St. Anne's Secondary School	Tipperary Town, Tipperary	Mr. Donie O'Byrne	Mr. Matthew Kelleher
Mercy Secondary School	Tralee, Kerry	Mr. John O'Roarke	Ms. Margot O'Carroll
Scoil Mhuire	Trim, Meath	Ms. Jackie Maher	Ms. Kate Mulvenna
St. Joseph's Secondary School	Tulla, Clare	Ms. Margaret O'Brien	Sr. Maureen Frawley
Sacred Heart Secondary School	Tullamore, Offaly	Ms. Pauline McKenna (A)	Ms. Miriam O'Callaghan
Our Lady of Mercy Secondary School	Ozanam Street, Waterford	Mr. Eugene Broderick	Mr. Dermott McDermot
Sacred Heart School	Westport, Mayo	Ms. Mary Ryan	Mr. Pearse O'Malley

# FINANCE MATTERS!



Welcome to the Finance section of the second edition of the 2009 CEIST Newsletter! In this edition we are focussing mainly on Health & Safety in Schools, Risk Assessment and Insurance. As you know there is considerable legislation in relation to health and safety and it may not always be possible to remain up to date on the latest compliance issues. We hope that this page may offer some reminders and assistance to our schools. As always we welcome all feedback and we would be delighted to hear from you.

The Finance Team can be contacted as follows:

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## Students on Work Experience

We appreciate that work experience is a very important part of the educational development of a student. We also appreciate the burden placed on schools when arranging placements with employers. Please find below some small tips which may be of assistance:

- It is important that the school requests the following information when contacting local employers for support in placing students with them (a) Business occupation of the employer. (b) The type of work the student will be asked to carry out (c) Details of safety precautions that will be put in place, including supervision / monitoring of the student when participating on work experience.
- In the cases where the parent/student has arranged their own work experience placement, the school should still ascertain the same information as detailed above.
- The teacher responsible for arranging the work experience program in the school should be satisfied with the above information before confirming placement with the student and employer.

When the employer confirms agreement to facilitate a student on work experience, this should be followed up by issuing "Letter A" which can be located on our insurers web-site [www.allianz.ie/schools](http://www.allianz.ie/schools). In many cases, the employer will request an indemnity in respect of the performance of such work by any student of the school. For such cases, the school should issue "Letter B" which is also located on [www.allianz.ie/schools](http://www.allianz.ie/schools).

## Health and Safety Management System for Schools

The Safety, Health and Welfare Act, 2005 requires every employer, including schools, to develop and implement an effective occupational health and safety management system. The Health and safety Authority is currently working with the Department of Education and Science to develop a health and safety management system for post-primary schools.

The HSA is currently finalising its Guidelines on managing health and safety in post-primary schools and they will be issued to all schools in late January/early February 2010. The issuing of the Guidelines will coincide with FAQs on the HSA website and the HSA will be working with the education partners through their events to promote and explain the Guidelines. They will encompass a guideline and a series of tools including an audit tool and risk assessment templates to assist schools in managing their own safety.

If your school is currently developing its health and safety systems or if you are amending a safety system, take a browse through the publications section of the Health and Safety Authority's web site: [http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Publications\\_and\\_Forms/](http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Publications_and_Forms/).

## Fire Safety Management

The Board of Management has a legal responsibility under the Fire Services Act 1981 to ensure that school buildings are maintained in a safe condition. The key objectives of fire safety management are:

1. To minimise the risk of fire;
2. To protect the means of escape; and
3. To limit the spread of fire.

Principals need to manage fire safety in the same way that they manage other health and safety issues, by implementing fire safety measures agreed and monitored by the Board of Management. To do this they will usually consult professionals from their local fire brigade and/or their insurers. The main duties regarding fire safety management are:

- Carry out hazard and risk assessments.
- Be responsible for fire safety training.
- Produce an emergency plan and put up fire notices.
- Conduct fire drills.
- Check the adequacy of fire fighting apparatus and its maintenance.
- Consult with and implement recommendations of the local fire brigade.
- Conduct fire safety inspections (preferably every term).
- Make more frequent informal checks to confirm that the fire safety rules are being followed.
- Ensure that fire escape routes and fire exit doors/passageways are unobstructed and that doors operate correctly.
- Check that the fire detection and protection alarm systems are maintained, tested and records kept.
- Include fire safety in the regular health and safety reports to the Board of Management.

## Engagement of Contractors to carry out capital works in schools

It is important for all schools to be aware that their School Insurance Policy specifically excludes liability arising from or in connection with construction, alteration, renovations or repair to the school buildings. It is important also to note that separate insurance cover is required in respect of work of this nature. In view of the significant increase in exposure presented by such activities, it is recommended that all such work should be carried out by "bonafide" contractors, experienced in this area. All contractors must have their separate Public Liability and Employers Liability insurance's in place. Taking this approach ensures that claims arising in connection with the work is dealt with under the Contractors insurance and do not, therefore, impact on School Insurance premiums. Confirmation that the Contractor does carry such insurance should be obtained prior to the commencement of the work.

**Thank You!...** To all those schools who have submitted their licence fees for 2009/10 and school accounts for 2008/9. As you are aware the Licence Fees are due by 31st October and school accounts are due by 1st November. It is imperative that deadlines are adhered to, to ensure that the schools' Boards of Management discharge their financial responsibilities to D.E.S. and comply with Section 18 of the Education Act. We look forward to receiving any outstanding fees or accounts in the coming weeks.

## Engineering Inspection

For schools which have lifts or have recently installed lifts, it is now a legal requirement to arrange Engineering Inspection cover.

Legislation changed in November 2007. Previously schools in Educational Establishments only had a duty of care to complete a thorough examination on their lifts. Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, and subsequent European legislation, a thorough examination is required on all lifting plant within a place of work.

**Q. My maintenance company inspects my lift, why do I need someone else to inspect it?**

A. All schools have a duty of care to make sure their plant is safe. If an incident

happens, a school must prove their compliance with health and safety legislation by proving what measures were in place to prevent an incident occurring. The first question asked would be did they have a thorough examination completed by an independent competent person so that there could be no question mark surrounding the integrity of the examination. A maintainer who inspects their own work does not follow the spirit of the legislation and a conflict could occur regarding the inspection of their own work and freedom to advise on all defects without "fear or favour". This means that as they have two interests in the equipment (inspection and maintenance), they may not be able to inspect the plant in an unbiased manner.