



Newsletter

No. 83 September 2025

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The Millennial Saint: Carlo Acutis

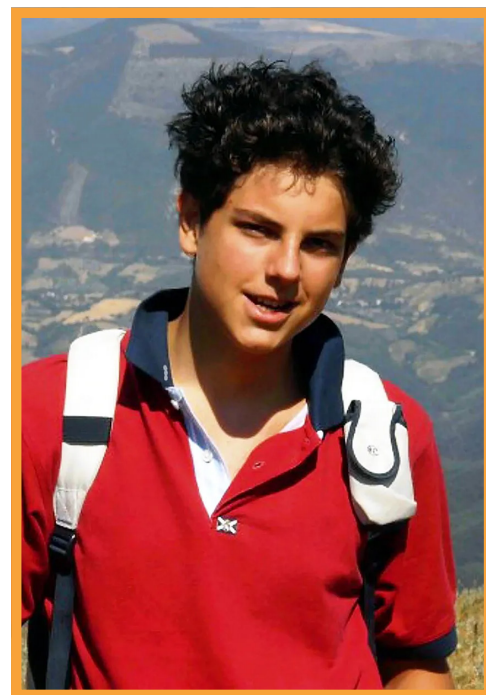
On 7th September 2025, Carlo Acutis, a 15-year-old Italian teenager was canonised as a saint by Pope Leo XIV, along with Pier Giorgio Frassati. His life was short, but his example has had an extraordinary impact on people of all ages, and particularly the youth of today. Carlo's story is striking because he was not a priest, missionary, or martyr in the traditional sense; rather, he was an ordinary boy who lived an ordinary life, yet managed to reflect extraordinary holiness.

Carlo was born in London in 1991 but grew up in Milan. From an early age, he showed a deep love for God and the Church. He had a special devotion to the Eucharist, which he called "my highway to heaven." At just 11 years old, he began cataloguing Eucharistic miracles from around the world, creating a digital exhibition that has since toured internationally and continues to inspire countless people.

Carlo was also a typical modern teenager - he loved video games, playing soccer, and spending time with friends. What set him apart, was his constant awareness of God's presence and his desire to serve others. He often helped the homeless, defended classmates who were bullied, and encouraged his peers to seek a deeper relationship with God.

At the age of 15, Carlo was diagnosed with an aggressive form of leukaemia. Though his illness progressed rapidly, he faced it with remarkable courage and faith. He died in 2006, leaving behind a legacy that continues to touch millions. St. Carlo Acutis stands as a powerful witness that holiness is possible in everyday life. He demonstrates that sanctity is not about withdrawing from the modern world, but about living fully in it, with one's heart fixed on God.

For all of us today who are searching for meaning, his life shines as proof that faith can be vibrant, joyful, and deeply relevant. St. Carlo's example challenges us to ask ourselves how we are using our gifts and our time to serve God and others.



Please distribute to members of the Board of Management

This Newsletter is also available on the CPSMA website at www.cpsma.ie

Tel: (01) 629 2462 • Email: info@cpsma.ie

NEXT



Mini Checklist for Chairpersons

- ☐ Check whether there are any vacancies on your board of management after the Summer. (These members need to be replaced in accordance with the Governance Manual 2023-2027) Contact us if you have any specific queries on this.
- ☐ Schedule your first board meeting and at that meeting, consider arranging dates of board meetings for the remainder of the school year.
- ☐ Ensure that contact details of any new Chairperson or Principal have been registered with CPSMA. This can be done simply by phoning CPSMA and providing the relevant details to Ciara or Susan. Chairpersons should also have contact details for board members.
- ☐ If there has been a change of Principal or Deputy, the board will most likely have to ratify a new Designated Liaison Person and Deputy Designated Liaison Person.
- ☐ Remind all board members of the confidentiality of board meetings. This is a good idea at the start of all meetings, but especially at the beginning of the new school year or when new members join. We have a short [Podcast](#) for board members which may be helpful for new board members.
- ☐ If you are accepting students into a special class or special school in the 26/27 school year, your school's admission policies should be reviewed by the board as soon as possible in accordance with [Circular 39/2025](#) and the subsequent [Information Note](#) and forwarded to the Patron for his approval. For further details, see below article on "Admissions for 26/27 School Year" in this Newsletter.
- ☐ Your school's Bí Cineálta policy should be ratified by the board and in place for the new school year. Make sure that Bí Cineálta (anti-bullying) is included on the board of management's agenda from September 2025 onwards. You might consider watching the [Bí Cineálta Video for Board Members](#) at your next meeting.
- ☐ Child Protection issues should be dealt with in the normal way, pending receipt of further training. Boards have until December 2026 to adopt the [Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025](#). Training for DLP's and DDLP's is being provided currently by Oide. CPSMA will be explaining these new procedures fully in the October 2025 Newsletter and will be providing training to board members in due course, so schools should continue to use the existing procedures for now.
- ☐ There may be new staff in the school who are required to have contracts signed and their vetting received or checked prior to commencing in the school. Contracts are available on our website cpsma.ie under "Appointments". Our office can be contacted for specific information in this regard.
- ☐ Take a deep breath... It's only September!



3. Admissions for 26/27 School Year Special Classes/Schools

Toward the end of the 2024/25 academic year, the Department directed that admissions policies for schools with special classes and special schools should be reviewed ahead of admissions starting for these schools for the 2026/2027 school year. Your Patron may have requested that this review be undertaken as soon as possible, to ensure that your admissions policy is in line with the requirements of [Circular 39/2025](#) and subsequent [Information Note](#).

So schools should follow Steps 1-5 below:

Step 1: Insert the required Eligibility Criteria into your school's Admission Policy.

The admission policy relating to a special class or special school admission **must** include the following standard text as the eligibility criteria.

“Children and young people are eligible for enrolment in a special class for (insert category of special educational need e.g. autism) when the following is provided in support of such an application:

Professional report(s) outlining:

- Diagnosis of special educational needs e.g. Autism: DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11 (psychologist, psychiatrist, multi-disciplinary report)

AND

- A demonstration of the understanding of complexity of the child's overall level of need/s evidenced in the professional reports

AND

- Given the severity or complexity of the child's support needs, a clear professional recommendation as to what educational placement type would be most appropriate to best meet the child's needs, along with the rationale for same

AND

- A letter from the NCSE confirming that the child is known to them and that the child has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a special class for (insert category of special educational need e.g. autism).

Step 2: Review your admission policy to ensure that there are no additional eligibility criteria for the special class or special school.

Examples of such clauses include a requirement for reports within the past year etc. or that children must be capable of integration with mainstream classes.

Step 3: Review your admission policy to ensure that there are no selection criteria/clauses which could be construed as discriminatory.

No clauses should exist which could prevent children with significant levels of need from accessing a place in a special class or school, or have the effect of unfairly restricting access to that class, for a child who otherwise meets the eligibility criteria. Examples of such clauses are contained in the [Information Note](#) [page 3/4].



Step 4: Arrange for your Board to approve the draft amendments and send the proposed Admission Policy to your Patron for approval.

Your Patron may have stipulated a date by which such policies are to be returned for Patron approval, but in any event it should be as soon as possible. Schools may not commence their admission process for the 26/27 school year without these amendments being made and approved by their Patron. This may require schools to delay their admission process.

Step 5: When approved by the Patron, your Board should ratify the Admission Policy, which should then be published by the school, before the Admission process commences.

Requirement for parents to notify NCSE before 1st October, 2025

Schools are reminded of the NCSE requirement for parents to notify the NCSE that a child requires a special class or special school place for the 2026/2027 school year by the 1st October 2025.

The timeline for the parent notification system to the NCSE is contained in [Circular 39/2025](#). Parents/guardians can notify the NCSE via the parents notify system which is outlined on the NCSE website at <https://ncse.ie/notify-ncse-special-class-special-school>.

Parents/guardians engaging with this process will then be provided with a letter from the NCSE, confirming the outcome of the NCSE's review of the supporting evidence provided to them, which they can then give to the school/s as part of their application for enrolment in a special class or special school.

[Circular 39/2025](#) also reminds schools that, where schools are aware that parents of a child or young person already enrolled in a mainstream class in their school is seeking a special class or special school place, these schools should advise the NCSE of these children before 1st October. These children should also be discussed at SENO planning meetings with schools.

In Summary:

- (1) **1st October 2025** is the latest date for notification to NCSE of a child seeking a place in special class or school in 2026/27 school year.
Please be aware of this date for children within your school who may wish to transfer to a special class and also for parents applying to your school for places in a special class or school.
- (2) Ensure that the eligibility criteria are exactly as set out in Step 1 above and in Circular 39/2025
- (3) Check to ensure that the selection criteria contained in your admission policy are only those permitted. For example, you may not request details of parent's occupation or a child's religion or special needs requirements as part of the application for a place in your school.
- (4) CPSMA will be advising further on the Admission Process and will be providing a suite of template Admission Letters in our October Newsletter.



4. School Finance



Finance is unfortunately an ever-present concern for schools and one that has been raised over the summer months by CPSMA with your support. CPSMA would like to express it's appreciation of the principals and board members who argued so tirelessly in favour of the much needed increases in school funding.

Morning Ireland – 5th June 2025

School Principal, Marie McKeogh and CPSMA General Secretary, Seamus Mulconry spoke in a feature on the reduction to the ICT grant and the shortfall in funding experienced by schools.

Morning Ireland <https://www.rte.ie/radio/radio1/clips/22518166/>

RTE News <https://www.rte.ie/news/2025/0605/1516766-primary-school-grants/>

Six One News – 12th June 2025

Four Primary School Principals and General Secretary of CPSMA appeared on the Six One News, highlighting the financial difficulties being experienced by schools, due to lack of funding and increases in running costs.

RTE News <https://www.rte.ie/news/education/2025/0612/1518003-education/>

Limerick Leader – 2nd July 2025

Limerick Leader <https://www.limerickleader.ie/news/national-news/1839806/desperate-irish-teacher-says-govt-funding-is-not-enough-as-parents-expected-to-chip-in.html>

FSSU Training: Monthly Reporting Template - New Users

FSSU are hosting training in relation to the Monthly Reporting Template.

This webinar training will be particularly beneficial to new users of the Monthly Reporting Template. It will also be helpful for schools who are already using these templates and wish to familiarise themselves with the new features in the 2025/2026 Monthly Reporting template.

Secretaries, Principals and Treasurers are invited to attend one of the following sessions:

Webinar 2 - Date: Wednesday 17th September 2025 • Time: 11.00am-12.00pm

[Register](#)

Webinar 3 - Date: Thursday 25th September 2025 • Time: 2.30pm-3.30pm

[Register](#)

Webinar 4 - Date: Tuesday 30th September 2025 • Time: 2.30pm-3.30pm

[Register](#)



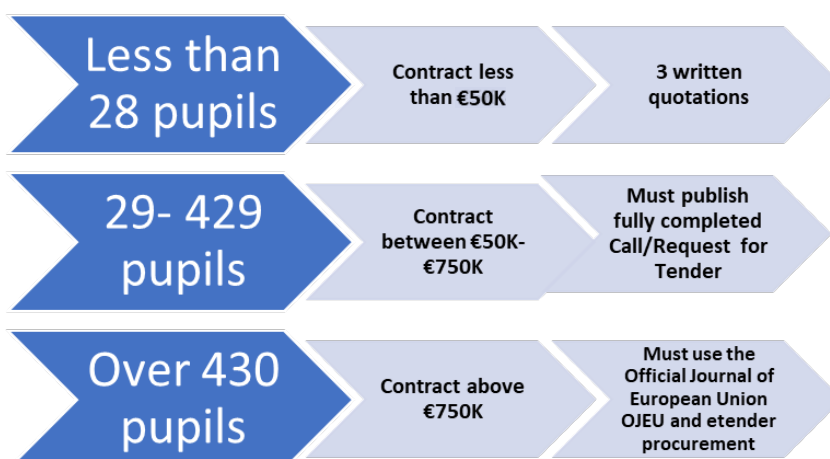
5. School Hot Meals Scheme



A. Key messages for schools e-tendering for the first time for school hot meals or for schools who have reached the end of their previous contract with a supplier.

Schools should take the following steps:

1. Establish the value of contract over three years. (No.of pupils x 182 x 3.20 x 3)



2. Select one of the following preferred options for delivery of the service.

(Guidance on this is available in [DEY Technical Guidance](#) document available on www.spu.ie)

- (1) Meals Pre-Prepared Off-site and Delivered Ready to Eat; or
- (2) Meals Pre-Prepared Off-Site and Heated in the School's Designated Preparation and/or Servery Area; or
- (3) Meals Pre-Prepared Off-Site and Heated in the School by use of an External Pod or Mobile Catering Unit ; or
- (4) Meals Fully Prepared On-Site.

3. Complete e-tendering process correctly.

Setting up an e-tender account and completing the Call for Tender and the Tender Response Document will take approx.2-2.5 hrs. It may be helpful to watch the relevant video first. A second person (e.g. a BOM member or AP holder) to assist, when following the instructions can also be helpful.

Completing the documents in accordance with the instructions provided, will ensure procurement compliance and avoid potential appeals from unsuccessful food business operators or operators claiming your e-tender notice was inaccurate and/or misleading. Mistakes in e-tendering can result in schools having to take down their Call for Tender and start again.

4. Be aware that some of the responsibilities placed on the Food Business Operator include:

- Employment of staff to prepare/heat meals
- Food standard and hygiene control
- Compliance with health and safety regulations
- Building regulations (location of service delivery mechanism should not negatively impact future school development)
- Provision of appropriate waste management system for food left-overs

Strictly following the guidance documents and completing your e-tender Call For Tender accurately will ensure that the provider is fully aware of their responsibilities as a Food Business Operator.

5. Ensure your school or staff do not inadvertently become a Food Business Operator.

A member of the school staff can assist with the delivery of this service, only if they have been directly employed by the Food Business Operator to do this. This will require a separate contract between the member of staff and the Food Business Operator.



6. Schools should note the following:

- The value on the contract must be correct and should be based on a three year contract value. If you put the value for one year only, then the school will need to tender again next year.
- Schools must apply annually to DSP for funding.
- Remember to choose one of the 4 delivery options and put that number in the box on the CFT, to clearly indicate to potential tenderers which option you are procuring.
- Licence Agreements and Deed of Renunciation documents are also required and templates are provided in the suite of support documents, available on www.spu.ie

B. Key messages for schools who intend providing a Cold Lunch Option for September- December 2025 (while awaiting completion of their Hot Meals e-Tender competition).

This Cold Lunch Option may be used by schools for a temporary period and is, of course, optional for schools. If availing of this option, schools should take the following steps:

1. Establish value of the contract over September to December period 2025 . (e.g. number of pupils X number of school days X €1.70)

Schools should then secure three written proposals from suitable food suppliers.

2. Note that food preparation for this model must take place off-site.

While there are Food Safety regulations and requirements on Food Suppliers of cold lunches, there is a lower threshold of responsibility and therefore less potential for areas of concern. This temporary model delivering cold plate lunches to schools will not fall under Building regulations/ Fire regulations etc.

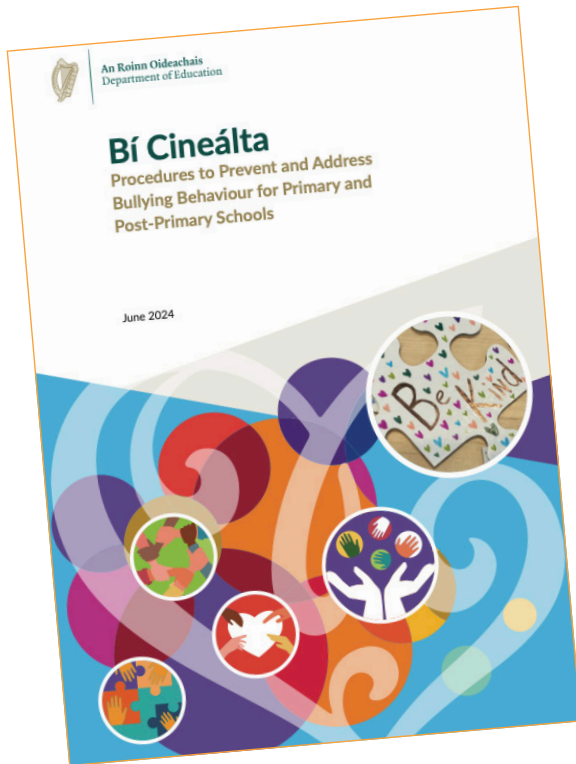
3. Schools availing of this temporary measure should continue with publishing their e-tender Call For Tender in parallel with availing of this option.

Supports for Schools

- ✓ There is a suite of Documents on www.spu.ie which includes Guidance and videos on e-tendering, Call For Tender , Tender Response Document, Licence Agreement templates, Deed of Renunciation template, Data Protection Agreement template.
- ✓ Webinars will assist schools with the initial tendering process and later with Assessment of tenders and Managing the contract. The first of three webinars, entitled “Supporting Primary Schools in Procuring Hot School Meals” can be accessed [here](#).
- ✓ Should you require any further clarity, please ensure you avail of support from school.meals@welfare.ie
- ✓ You can also call CPSMA on 01-6292462 or email us on info@cpsma.ie



6. Bí Cineálta



All schools' Bí Cineálta policies have to be in place by the start of the 25/26 school year and most schools will already have their policy ratified by their board. If this hasn't been done yet in your school, make sure to have your policy ratified by the board as soon as possible and arrange for it to be published on your website.

Template policies are available and advice can be sought from CPSMA in this regard. You can call us on 01-6292462 or email us on info@cpsma.ie.

From now on, the principal has to make a report at each board meeting on the number of cases of bullying arising in the school since the last meeting, without giving specific details of such cases. The topic of bullying, in general also, has to be discussed at every board meeting. CPSMA has prepared a [short video for board members](#) in relation to Bí Cineálta which may be helpful for your board members to watch together.

7. “Aid to the Church in Need” invites schools to join global Rosary campaign

The Papal Charity “Aid to the Church in Need” has asked CPSMA to inform schools of an international campaign to encourage children to pray the rosary for peace.

This October, “Aid to the Church in Need Ireland” invites schools to take part in the international prayer initiative, **One Million Children Praying the Rosary**, now in its 20th year.

Children across the world will pray the Rosary for peace, especially on **October 7th**. Last year, over 1.2 million children joined in.

Inspired by the words of St Padre Pio, who said, “**When one million children pray the Rosary, the world will change,**” this campaign may help to bring hope and healing to our world.

Today, many children are unfamiliar with the Rosary. This initiative may offer a way for teachers, especially in sacramental years, to introduce prayer into the classroom.

Aid to the Church in Need provides free resources (including rosary beads) to schools. To register your school or learn more, email brandon.scott@acnireland.org.

Whether praying alone or together, every prayer matters.

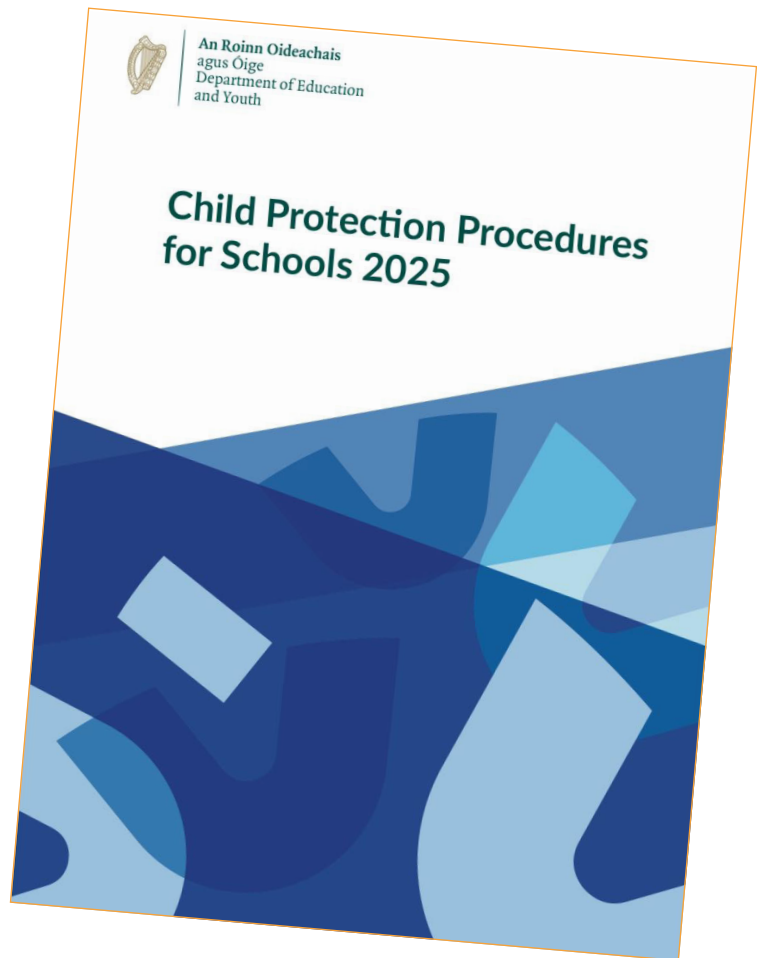


8. Revised Child Protection Procedures 2025 – Important Update for Boards of Management

The Department of Education and Youth has published the [Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025 \(Circular 41/2025\)](#), replacing the Revised 2023 Procedures. These updated procedures are an important step in strengthening the culture of child safeguarding in our schools.

Training for Designated Liaison Persons (DLPs) and Deputy Designated Liaison Persons (DDLPs) has now commenced. Oide will be in direct contact with schools to arrange this training, and attendance will be required. Child Protection Training for boards of management will begin in the second term of this 2025/2026 school year (after Christmas) and will be delivered across each diocese.

Boards of management are advised that the updated procedures may only be adopted after board of management training has been received. The new procedures are required to be adopted before **December 31, 2026**. Until this training has been provided, boards and school leaders should continue to follow the 2023 Child Protection Procedures, including when reviewing or updating their Child Safeguarding Statement.



Next Steps for Schools:

- Ensure DLPs and DDLPs attend the Oide training as scheduled.
- Attend board of management training after Christmas when available in the Diocese.
- Adopt the 2025 procedures after training has been received and before 31st December 2026.
- Continue to prioritise safeguarding by maintaining compliance with the 2023 Procedures, until the new procedures have been adopted.
- Short webinars on the 2023 Child Protection Procedures for all Board Members are available at www.cpsma.ie

9. CPSMA Training Webinars & Podcasts

CPSMA is committed to supporting Boards of Management and Principals with practical training and guidance resources.

Tá CPSMA tiomanta do thacaíocht a thabhairt do Bhoird Bhainistíochta agus do Phríomhoidí le hacmhainní oiliúna agus teorach atá praiticiúil agus spreagúil.

Bí Cineálta

A video presentation for all Board Members on the Revised Anti-Bullying Procedures (2025)

- [1. Bí Cineálta Video - English](#)
- [2. Bí Cineálta Video - As Gaeilge](#)

Appointments

Teacher Recruitment (2025)

[Teacher Recruitment CPSMA Video](#)

If you are short on time, try these podcasts on recruitment – 10-20 minutes.

- [1. Teacher Recruitment - Advertising](#)
- [2. Teacher Recruitment - Shortlisting](#)
- [3. Teacher Recruitment - Interviews](#)
- [4. SNA Recruitment - Appointment Procedures](#)
- [5. SNA Recruitment - Shortlisting and Interviews](#)
- [6. SNA Recruitment - Post Interviews](#)

A series of detailed webinars all about the Recruitment Process

- [1. Principal Appointments - Guidance for Chairpersons](#)
- [2. Teacher Appointments - Preparation & Advertising](#)
- [3. Teacher Appointments - Shortlisting](#)
- [4. Teacher Appointments - Interview](#)
- [5. Teacher Appointments - Post Interview Administration](#)
- [* Additional Appointment Resources](#)

Data Protection

- [1. Data Protection - What schools need to know- October 2024](#)
- [2. Data Protection October 2024 Podcast](#)
- [3. Data Protection School Case Studies](#)
- [* Data Protection Toolkit](#)

Finance and the Role of the Treasurer

- [1. Financial Obligations & Role of Treasurer - School Considerations](#)



Boards of Management

- [1. Board Functions & Responsibilities](#)
 - [2. Board Member Roles & Responsibilities](#)
 - [3. Board of Management Meetings](#)
 - [4. Board in Action - Effective Board Meetings](#)
 - [5. Board in Action - Admissions, Pupil Behaviour, Family Law, Parental Complaints, Anonymous Letters & Employment Law](#)
 - [6. Podcast - The process of electing Teacher and Parent nominees on to the Board of Management](#)
 - [7. Webinar - Procedure for the selection of members from the Community for appointment to the board](#)
 - [8. Webinar - New Chairpersons - Connecting with CPSMA](#)
 - [9. Webinar - Living Our Ethos - A Resource for Boards of Management](#)
 - [10. Podcast - An introduction to Board Meetings for All Board meetings](#)
- Resources - [Children's First E-Learning Programme](#)
- * [Additional Board of Management Resource](#)

Health and Safety

- [1. Safe and Healthy Workplaces: The HSA Inspection process in primary schools - Webinar 28th February 2023](#)
 - [2. Introduction to Health & Safety for Boards of Management](#)
 - [3. School Health & Safety Risk Assessment & Review](#)
- * [Useful Links to resources on Safety, Health and Welfare in a school setting](#)
- * [Additional Health & Safety Resource](#)

Legal Issues

- [1. Legal Issues Webinar - 6th November 2024](#)

10. Blessing of the Schoolbags

Here is a simple blessing that could be used at assembly or in class for the blessing of school bags at the start of the year. Children can, of course, make up their own Schoolbag/backpack Blessings!



"As you carry your bag, may you know that Jesus is walking with you always looking after you.

May you keep safe in all you do, may you be more aware of others too.

May you know the warmth of God's protecting presence in all you do and say, and

May the Lord help you at school, to grow in every way".



11. Employment Assistance Scheme

The 'Wellbeing Together' Employee Assistance Service is a confidential programme at no additional cost that provides you and your family members with immediate help and support in managing whatever work or personal issues you are facing.

EAS offers unlimited access for you and your family to a telephone helpline, available, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Counselling is also available to family members. This includes your spouse, civil partner or dependent, where the family member can be described as a person over the age of 16 and residing at the family home.

Call on:

- **Freephone:** 1800 411 057
- **WhatsApp:** Text 'Hi' to 087 369 0010
- **SMS:** Text 'Hi' to 087 145 2056 for support in managing whatever work or personal issues you are facing.

12. Departmental Circulars

0032/2025	special-needs-assistant-allocation-2025/26
0041/2025	publication-of-child-protection-procedures-for-schools- 2025
0042/2025	Grant Scheme for ICT Infrastructure 2025
0039/2025	approach-and-key-measures-to-support-the-forward-planning-for-special-education-provision-for-the-2026/2027-school-year-and-beyond/
0043/2025	recruitment-of-special-needs-assistants-snas-supplementary-assignment-arrangements-for-the-2025/2026-school-year/
0044/2025	banning-the-use-of-and-access-to-personal-mobile-phones-by-pupils-during-the-school-day
0046/2025	funding-scheme-for-secure-mobile-phone-storage-solutions
0040/2025	revision-of-capitation-grant-rates-for-recognised-primary-schools-in-the-2025/26-school-year/
0047/2025	home-tuition-grant-scheme-2025/2026-special-education-component
0050/2025	revision-of-primary-teacher-salaries-under-the-public-service-agreement-2024/2026-effective-from-01-august-2025/
0053/2025	revision-of-salaries-of-clerical-officers-and-caretakers-employed-under-the-1978/1979-scheme-under-the-public-service-agreement-2024/2026-effective-from-01-august-2025/
0055/2025	revision-of-salaries-for-school-secretaries-previously-grant-funded-and-bus-escorts-effective-from-01-august-2025/
0056/2025	revision-of-salaries-for-special-needs-assistants-snas-under-the-public-service-agreement-2024/2026-effective-from-01-august-2025/
0057/2025	home-tuition-grant-scheme-for-children-with-no-school-place-nsp
0059/2025	home-tuition-grant-scheme-for-children-in-care-cic-2025/2026



Seirbhís Cúnamh d'Fhostaithe.

Is seirbhís saor in aisce agus faoi rún í an tSeirbhís Cúnamh d'Fhostaithe faoina dtugtar tacaíocht folláine do mhúinteoirí, do chúntóirí riachtanas speisialta agus d'fhoireann uile na scoile. Is iad Spectrum.Life a chuireann an tseirbhís seo ar fáil.

Tá do Sheirbhís Cúnamh d'Fhostaithe **ar fáil 24/7, 365 lá den bhliain**, agus cuirtear an tacaíocht seo a leanas ar fáil*:

Tacaíocht
Láithreach

Teiripe Chognaíochta
agus Iompraíochta ar líne

Atreorú le haghaidh
comhairlithe

*Ar an gcéad teagmháil, déanfaidh ár gcásbhainisteoir measúnú scioptha agus má tá sé oiriúnach, déanfar atreorú le haghaidh comhairlithe ghearrthearmaigh.

Cláraigh le haghaidh d'aip folláine:
wellbeingtogether.spectrum.life/login
Cód na heagraíochta: yIVIU17

SMS:
Téacsáil 'Hi' chuig 087 145 2056
WhatsApp:
Téacsáil 'Hi' chuig 087 369 0010
Saorghlao Éire
1800 411 057



Chun níos mó eolais a
fháil **scan an Cód QR**



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

