

LORETO ABBEY SECONDARY SCHOOL DALKEY
2025/'26



REPORT

OF

THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT



ON THE WORKINGS
OF THE SCHOOL

2025/'26



Loreto Abbey Secondary School, Dalkey

Report of the Board of Management 2025/'26 on the Workings of the School

'Our school is a caring Christian community in which pupils have the opportunity to achieve academic excellence and to grow spiritually, emotionally, socially, creatively and physically in a healthy environment'.

Sections 20 and 21 of the Education Act 1988, the School Self Evaluation Guidelines and our ethos document "Continuing the Journey – a Loreto Education", all promote open and continuing communication between the Board of Management and the school community.

This report aims to synthesise the main developments during the school year and complements information contained in the Agreed Report following each meeting and now published on the website. The Board of Management took office on October 15th 2023 and its term expires in October 2026.

1. Members of the Board (15th October 2023 - 15th October 2026)

Trustee Nominees:	Dr Eilis Humphreys (Chairperson) Ms Geraldine Bracken Ms Lorraine Dwyer Mr Jim Wade
Parent Nominees:	Ms Mary Pat McAlarey Mr Conor Murray
Staff Nominees:	Ms Aisling Green Ms Louise Segrave Daly
Secretary to the Board:	Mr Robert Dunne (Principal)

2. Meetings of the Board of Management 2025/'26

Ordinary Meetings:

- 28th August 2025
- 15th October 2025
- 18th November 2025
- 14th January 2026
- 26th February 2026
- 18th March 2026
- 12th May 2026
- 22nd June 2026

Special Meetings:

- 4th September 2025
 - 11th December 2025
 - 7th January 2026
 - 5th June 2026
 - 17th June 2026
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- An Agenda is set by the Chairperson and Principal and is forwarded to each member of the Board.
 - All Board members are obliged to keep confidential matters discussed at Board meetings unless otherwise agreed by the Board.
 - The Agreed Report of ordinary meetings of the Board is published on the Parents' Section of the website and is circulated to the staff and members of the Parents' Association.

3. Enrolment / Staffing / Management

- 762 students were enrolled in the 2025/'25 academic year.
- 41.85 academic staff and 3 full time Special Needs Assistants are funded by the Department of Education and Youth.
- 18 full time staff and 46 support staff are employed by the Board of Management.
- Mr Will Flanagan was appointed as Deputy Principal replacing Ms Gráinne Byrne on her appointment as Principal of Our Lady's School, Terenure.
- Ms Roisín Conlon was appointed as Acting Deputy Principal to replace Ms Marie Breen, who continued on leave until June 2026.
- Seven members of staff were appointed to management positions during the academic year:
 - One Assistant Principal 1 (Permanent)
 - One Assistant Principal 1 (Temporary)
 - Two Assistant Principals 2 (Permanent)
 - Two Assistant Principals 2 (Temporary)
 - One Senior Cycle Development Co-ordinator
- Three staff members retired.

4. Strategic Plan 2024-2028

The Strategic Plan (2024-2028) focused on five key areas for development:

- Characteristic Spirit
- Learning and Teaching
- Staff Development
- Sustainable Operations
- Working with Stakeholders

4.1 (a) Characteristic Spirit

The Board continues to make resources available to support the holistic development of our students in the R.E. / Chaplaincy, Resource, SPHE, Wellbeing and Guidance areas.

- All Junior Cycle students follow the NCCA Junior Cycle R.E. specification. Religious Education is timetabled at Senior Cycle level for all students, with 48 students studying the subject for the Leaving Certificate examination.
- Our Liturgical programme continued this year:
 - The Opening of the Year Mass was celebrated in Dalkey Parish Church by Fr. Lawrence C.C..
 - Our Carol Services in December were beautiful celebrations of the religious message of Christmas.
 - A beautiful dawn service to mark “Darkness Into Light” took place in May 2026.
 - We concluded the year with a Graduation Mass for 6th years, celebrated by Fr. David Brough P.P., in Dalkey Parish Church.
- Mr. Will Flanagan, Deputy Principal, continues to lead the school in a prayerful reflection every morning at 8.50am.
- Retreat experiences were offered for 6th, 5th and 4th Year.
- 5th Years walked the final 115km of the Camino in Spain in June 2026. Our thanks to Ms. Coyne and her dedicated team of staff who accompanied the group.
- 5th years participated in the Dublin Diocesan Emmanuel Concert in the Helix in DCU.
- The Ember Faith Leaders Programme continues to develop, co-ordinated by Mr. Patrick Byrne. This is a Diocesan initiative supported by the Loreto Network and aims to develop student leaders in the area of faith and spirituality. 12 students were chosen for involvement in the programme and assisted in a number of faith development initiatives throughout the year:
 - They attended Ovoca Manor for training facilitated by the Loreto Network.
 - They organised liturgies such as our Ash Wednesday service and distributed ashes to their peers.
 - They produced a very poignant remembrance video montage which formed part of our “In November We Remember Service.”
 - They liaised with the Loreto Sisters resident in Dalkey and researched their ministries, culminating in morning prayers focusing on Faith, Hope and Joy.
 - They created videos celebrating Mary Ward week.
 - They created St. Brigid’s Crosses and distributed them to parishioners in the Church of the Assumption, Dalkey.
 - They were commissioned as Ministers of the Eucharist.
 - They assisted with the Confirmation preparation of 6th Class pupils in Loreto Primary School
 - They collaborated with the Ember team from C.U.S., visiting their school in December 2025 and hosting a return visit in April 2026.

- They attended a Diocesan Renewal Day in DCU in January 2026 and attended their graduation ceremony in May 2026.

The Justice and Peace Group, coordinated by Ms Molly Flood, organised a number of awareness and fundraising campaigns throughout the year including:

- They maintained and updated the Justice and Peace Notice Board
- They represented Loreto Abbey at Justice and Peace meetings organised by the Loreto Network.
- They collected 70 shoeboxes for the Team Hope Shoebox Appeal.
- They collected hygiene and sanitary products as part of the whole school exercise on hygiene poverty.
- They created a video shown to the school at “Dalkey’s Got Talent” promoting awareness of the work on our sister school in Loreto Rumbek
- They produced a global cookbook and organised a variety of events for International Women’s Week.
- Fundraising Events took place for Loreto Rumbek, Focus Point, Dublin Central Mission, various Cancer charities, St. Vincent de Paul and Pieta House.

Green Schools

The Green Schools Group organised a number of very important initiatives during the year:

- Curriculum Programmes continued in 1st Year and 4th Year.
- Beach Clean Ups, Air Quality Surveys, Fast Fashion, Recycle for Rumbek, and the Cycle Bus all contributed to increased awareness among our school community.
- The group used the Dalkey Diary very effectively and included regular articles on topics such as “Be Kind To Bees”, tips for efficient saving of energy at home and advice on minimising Christmas waste.

Guidance

• Outline of Guidance Activities 2025/26

5th & 6th Year Career Guidance Meetings

All 6th Year students had the opportunity to avail of one-to-one guidance meetings with Ms. Shortt or Ms. Brophy throughout the academic year. Each student had at least one mandatory meeting with their Guidance Counsellor and for anyone who chose to have additional meetings, these were scheduled accordingly.

The purpose of these meetings are:

- To support 6th Year students to make informed decisions on their various options available to them following on from the Leaving Certificate.
- To support 6th Year students in the areas of wellbeing and personal development (such as organisational skills, study skills, managing anxiety).
- Supporting 6th Year students in their applications for UCAS, for those applying to University in the UK; RACE (Reasonable Accommodations for the State Examinations) and DARE (Disability Access Route to College).

The majority of our 5th Year students have had one individual career guidance meeting to discuss their career and college options for 2027. These meetings took place between March and May of this year.

CAO Information Evening

A CAO Information Evening, delivered by Ms Orla Brophy, took place on the 13th October 2025 to advise 6th Year parents and guardians on the options available to their daughters following the Leaving Certificate and the CAO application process.

RACE (Reasonable Accommodations at Certificate Examinations)

Each year the RACE applications are processed collaboratively with the SEN Department.

Junior Certificate 2026 saw 16 students availing of accommodations, ranging from spelling and grammar waivers, individual readers, assistive technology, to shared or even individual centres.

Leaving Certificate 2026 saw 28 students availing of these accommodations.

DARE (Disability Access Route to Higher Education)

DARE applications consist of three parts which require collaboration between many parties including Students, Teachers, Parents, Guidance Counsellor, Management and outside professional healthcare bodies. Students eligible to apply for DARE met with their Guidance Counsellor to complete Section B of the Application.

39 DARE Applications were submitted to the CAO (Central Applications Office) for 2026.

UCAS (University Applications to the UK)

UCAS: There were 18 Applications submitted by our Guidance department on behalf of our 6th year student cohort.

Senior & Junior Personal One-to-One Meetings

Our one-to-one personal guidance meetings are available to all students from 1st to 6th Year. Students can request a one-to-one meeting with a Guidance Counsellor. Students can also be referred through the Student Support Team or by their Year Head. In some cases parents/guardians will request a meeting for their daughter. This

service is supported by our Chaplain, Sr. Mary Delahunty.

Formal Testing

Psychometric Testing takes place in collaboration with the Additional Educational Needs Department.

- **126 1st Year students** sat the **CAT4, Level E Assessments** online in September 2025.
- Testing in relation to academic screening, RACE and DARE is done using the **Woodcock Johnson IV, UK and Ireland Edition**. Students are identified through a variety of ways, for example through the AEN (Additional Educational Needs) Department, identified by Teachers, Management and the Guidance Counsellors.

Approximately 64 students, from across all year groups, have been assessed using the **Woodcock Johnson IV for RACE, DARE, Irish Language Exemptions and other screening purposes** throughout this academic year, September '25 to May'26. **4th Year students** engaged with **Cambridge Profile Assessment** in October 2025. This assessment is designed to assist students in identifying the subject areas where they are most likely to perform well in and the careers that may be of interest to them based on these interests and strengths.

122 Transition Year Students had the opportunity to engage with this assessment this year, which was completed online. The results of this assessment were returned to all students in written format, in a report booklet.

A formal debriefing session took place in Killiney Castle, with Ms. Orla Brophy and Guidance Counsellor, Brian Mooney talking parents and students through the assessment results. In addition to this, parents/guardians and students have the opportunity to meet with subject teachers to discuss subject options for the Senior Cycle.

Curricular Guidance (Career Guidance Classes / Guidance for Wellbeing)

- **3rd Year students:** Building on last year's pilot World of Work preparation workshop, our 3rd Year students engaged in a 5-week module on World of Work in preparation for TY Work Experience.
- **4th Year students:** 1 period of weekly Career Guidance was delivered to all classes for the entire academic year.
- **5th Year students:** 10 Career Guidance classes were delivered to all students from March to May 2026.
- **6th Year students:** 8 Career Guidance classes were delivered from September to December

Visiting Speakers

We welcomed speakers from: UCD, Ulster University, TUD, Med Entry prep information, College of Further Education Ballsbridge, Bray institute of Further education.

Careers Fair

On Wednesday, 10th of December, we hosted our largest ever annual **Career and College Exhibition in the Sports Hall**.

Exhibitors involved:

- Aer Lingus
- Apprenticeships DDLETB
- Bray Institute of Further Education
- Dublin City University (DCU)
- Dublin Business School (DBS)
- Griffith College
- IADT
- Maynooth University
- National Ambulance Service
- Sallynoggin College of Further Education
- SETU
- Shannon College of Hotel Management
- TU Dublin
- University College Dublin (UCD)
- UCD School of Business
- Ulster University
- University of Galway
- University of Limerick

This exhibition was attended by all students from 4th, 5th and 6th Year and it took place from 9:00am to 12:00pm. It is a valuable opportunity for our students to engage with representatives from both industry and 3rd Level colleges.

Workshops

Following on from last year's two new workshops we were delighted to complete continue our:

- **Work Experience Workshop for 3rd Year Students** - Transition Year students shared their recent workplace experiences with 3rd Year students. The aim of this workshop is to provide insights into various workplace environments, enhance career awareness and motivate 3rd Year students to prepare for their own placements in 2026/27.
- **Subject Choice Workshop for TY Students** - This workshop was conducted by 5th Year students to support TY students in making informed decisions about their Leaving Certificate subject selection. The aim of the workshop was to provide peer-led insights and practical advice on real student experiences.

Trips

- 5th and 6th Year students attended **Higher Options** in the RDS on Thursday, 18th of September 2025.
- TY students attended the **World Skills Exhibition** in the RDS on Wednesday, 17th of September 2025.

- On the 27th of February our TY Students attended an **Open Day at Bray Institute of Further Education**, showcasing opportunities at Level 5 and Level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Whole School Guidance

- Our Whole School Guidance (WSG) Team brought our updated WSG Plan to the Board of Management for passing in September 2025.
- Our area of focus following the passing of the updated WSG Plan was in the area of **Study Skills**. This initiative will be continued into the academic year 2026/27.

Wellbeing

- Ms. Eva Murry co-ordinates our Wellbeing Group comprised of staff representatives from the PE, CSPE, SPHE and Guidance / Student Support areas. They are further advised by a group of senior cycle students. Throughout the year a wide range of activities were offered to students including:
 - An Induction Programme for 1st Years
 - CARA activities
 - Year Movie Nights
 - Halloween Fun Day
 - Stand-up Week
 - Boating trip for 2nd Years
 - Dalkey's Got Talent
 - Hockey and surfing trips to Sligo
 - RSE Workshop
 - Managing Stress workshops
- Mr. Will Flanagan restructured the Amiga Programme in support of the BÍ Cineálta guidelines.

The Board of Management recognises the importance of providing a comprehensive extra-curricular programme for the holistic development and general wellbeing of our students. The following activities were offered this year;

- Sports – Hockey, Basketball, GAA, Soccer, Rugby, Cross Country / Athletics, gym
- Music – Junior and Senior Choir, Orchestra, Trad Group, Songwriting Club, Musical Theatre.
- Film Club
- Creative Compass for Junior Cycle Students
- Knitting Club
- Art Club
- Lego Club

- Chess Club
- Dungeon and Dragons Club
- Quiz Club for Senior Students
- Photography Club
- Debating
- Young Entrepreneurs

4.2 Learning and Teaching

School Self-Evaluation

- We continued working on the targets set in our School Self-Evaluation (SSE) programme in this our final year of a three-year cycle.
- For this SSE cycle (2023-2026), we focused on four specific areas, with the overarching goal of improving teaching and learning throughout the school:

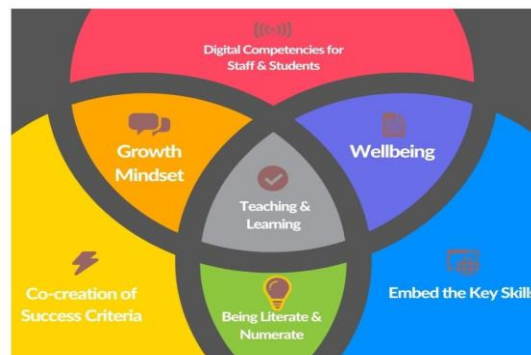
1) Key Skills

2) Digital Learning

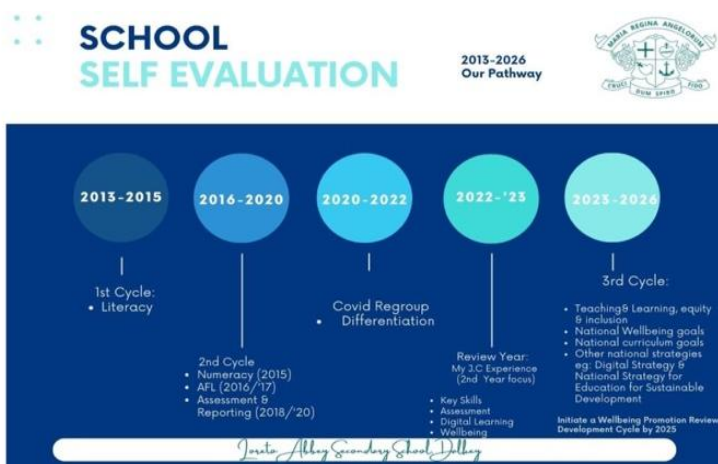
3) Assessment

4) Wellbeing

The elements of our
SSE combine to
enhance teaching &
learning



- We have now completed the 3rd cycle of SSE and are awaiting guidelines for the next cycle



- Following an advisory meeting with a Department of Education Inspector in September, we reviewed our targets to cover all years of the school.
- To do this, we established a renewed *Teaching and Learning Innovation Group* with representatives from all subject departments.
- We met 4 times during the year to discuss SSE goals and other teaching and learning initiatives.
- There have been a number of positive outcomes arising from this year's SSE targets including:
 - 1) Reimagined Teaching and Learning Innovation Group encouraged collaboration between departments
 - 2) Reflection sheets were used by teachers and students in the February exams. They were made accessible and adaptable to be used across year groups and subjects. The main aim was to promote a growth mindset in students. Positive feedback was received from focus groups.
 - 3) Department plans were revised and incorporated elements of SSE. SSE targets were included in the opening page of each plan, with key skills, and active teaching methodologies listed for each year.
 - 4) Teach Meets aligned with our SSE goals. Sessions on growth mindset and homework worked towards the SSE goal of wellbeing.
 - 5) The Key Skills remained visible in our classrooms and via the student journal.
 - 6) To expand on the Junior Cycle key skills aspect of our SSE goal, the key domains of the reformed Transition Year curriculum were included in their weekly reflection that formed part of their portfolio: personal growth, being a learner, civic/community engagement and career exploration.
 - 7) The Digital Passport was completed by 1st year students as an introduction to the digital competencies they will need for CBAs and AACs in future years.
 - 8) Topics such as Assessment, Senior Cycle Reform and Managing Time were discussed at the Teaching and Learning meetings as possible targets for the next cycle of SSE.

In general:

- Academic results are significantly higher than the national average with students surpassing their predicted grades in the State examinations.

- The new Senior Cycle programme was introduced in Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Business in September 2025.
- T.Y. students availed of a wide-ranging programme, including subject sampling opportunities, participation in Work Experience, language exchanges, participation in two musicals, visits to places of cultural interest, lectures / seminars from inspirational speakers, and skills workshops. The programme culminated in a school tour to Italy in late May. The Board expresses it's appreciation to Ms. Aoife McHenry, the T.Y. Co-ordinator, for organising such a stimulating and engaging programme and for ensuring effective communication with parents of the goals and content of the programme through the T.Y. webpage and the weekly column in the Dalkey Diary.
- The Department allocates 87 hours to support students with additional learning needs. The A.E.N. Department, Co-ordinated by Mr. Carl Thompson, prioritises the needs of individual students and decides on how best to support all students, within the resources available.
- Many subject departments organised valuable educational trips linked to the curriculum:
 - Senior Cycle Physics students attended the Tyndall Lecture in UCD and visited Intel in Leixlip.
 - 15 Senior Cycle Science students visited the CERN Centre in Switzerland, organised by Ms. Scott and Mr. Cullen.
 - Senior Cycle History students visited Belfast and participated in a Walking Tour of Dublin. Second Year History students toured the G.P.O. First Year History students had the opportunity to participate in "The Big Dig" archaeology project.
 - Senior Cycle H.E. students attended a Bread Making workshop.
 - Senior Cycle Art students visited Newgrange and the art galleries.
 - Business students visited Butlers Factory as part of a case study and visited the Europa Exhibition.
 - Third Year English students enjoyed a production of The Merchant of Venice in the Millbank Theatre, Dundrum.
 - Third Year C.S.P.E. students visited the Zoo as part of a project on animal welfare.
 - Junior Cycle Music students attended a musical in Bord Gáis Energy Theatre and visited the Rock and Roll Museum.
- The library continues to develop under the guidance of Emily Manning. Our annual book drive was generously supported by parents, and the reconfiguration of the library space has provided an inviting and comfortable setting for reading and personal study. The Accelerated Reading Programme for Junior Cycle students has encouraged greater numbers of students to read for enjoyment. Various activities for World Book Week highlighted the benefits of reading for our students.
- Ms. Emma Hayes accompanied three T.Y. students to the Schools Beyond Regions and Borders (SBRB) conference in the University of Trento, Italy for a seminar on International Relations.

4.3 Staff Development

- Staff attended in-services on the Senior Cycle programme and on Child Safeguarding.
- All teachers are using eight hours available as part of the Croke Park hours for Continuous Professional Development (CPD).
- A number of teachers are engaging in Educational Leadership and Management courses in UCD.

4.4 Sustainable Operations

- Financial management is addressed at every Board of Management meeting. The Board is informed by a Finance sub-committee, chaired by Mr. Jim Wade. Ms. Sheila McWilliams, Mr. Robert Dunne and Ms. Anne Louise O'Donovan, Head of Finance, are members of this group.
- Loreto Abbey is a registered charity and end of year accounts are audited and submitted to the Loreto Education Trust and to the Financial Services Unit of the Department. The accounts for 2024 / 2025 were approved on January 14th, 2025.
- The Loreto Province has offered the Board of Management the use of the Abbey building, with effect from September 2026. The Board gratefully accepted the offer and are now working on a strategic plan to develop the building for school use over the coming years.
- During the school year, a number of infrastructural improvements took place:
 - Phase 3 of the repointing of the stone exterior of the convent building was completed.
 - Repainting of the exterior wall of the Concert Hall.
 - The staff toilets were refurbished.
 - The flooring in the lunch area was replaced.
 - The Lecture Theatre was reconfigured.
 - Disability access to the third floors was improved with the reconfiguration of the stairs and landings.
 - Two classrooms were developed in the convent area.
 - Eight classrooms were repainted.
 - The skylights on the roof of the C corridor were replaced.
 - The sound issue in the Sports Hall was addressed.
 - The gym was refurbished.
 - The roofing in the Concert Hall, the turrets and the convent porch was surveyed and slates and flashing replaced, where necessary.
 - The Convent building was surveyed in preparation for future development.

4.5 Working with Stakeholders

Student Council

- The Board of Management met with the Student Council to discuss their work and their views on their school experience on January 14th, 2026.

Parent's Association

- The Parent's Association, affiliated to the National Parent's Council (PP), meets monthly during the school year and receives an annual grant of €5,000 from the Board of Management for their important work.
- The Executive organised a seminar for 1st year parents and for 6th year parents. Social gatherings took place for individual year groups.
- The Parent's Choir, subsidised by the Board, continues to meet every Monday evening and is an enjoyable social activity for current and past parents.
- The board furnishes an agreed report to parents which is published on the parent's section of the website and through an app.

Past Pupils

- Past Pupil Reunions were hosted in the school for the classes of 1953, 1975, 1996 and 2015.
- A very successful Annual Dinner took place in the Royal Marine Hotel in April, attended by 280 current/past parents and past pupils.

Community

- The Board continues to implement its policy of offering the school and grounds for community use. We, wherever possible, support local businesses and community groups such as Dalkey Book Festival, Dalkey Community Council, Dalkey Parish and the St. Vincent de Paul.
- The Sports Hall is currently rented by 35 groups.

5.0 Child Safeguarding / Bí Cineálta

- The annual review of our Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment, and of our Anti-bullying Policy were undertaken on 28th August 2025. Notifications were forwarded to the stakeholders that the review had taken place.
- Mr. Dunne is the designated Liaison Person and Mr. Flanagan is the Deputy Designated Liaison Person.
- Student-friendly information notifications on Child Safeguarding are posted at all the doors and in all the classrooms.
- ALL staff completed the Child Safeguarding training facilitated by Oide in January 2026.
- The Child Protection Oversight Report is presented to the Board at every meeting where appropriate.
- Consultations took place with the Student Council, general student body, staff, Parent's Association Executive and general parent body during the review of our Risk Assessment for 2026/2027.
- The Bí Cineálta Procedures and Policy were adopted on 23rd June 2025 and information was presented at all assemblies and is posted throughout the school. A report is presented at every Board of Management meeting.

6.0 Policies

- The following Policies / documents were reviewed / amended in 2025/'26

Policy	Date
Code of Behaviour	4 th September 2025 and 22 June 2026
Child Safeguarding and Risk Assessment	28 th August 2026
Amendments to Admissions Policy	4 th September 2025 and 26 th February 2026
Amendments to Bí Cineálta Policy	26 th February 2026
S.P.H.E. Policy	26 th February 2026
R.E. Policy	4 th September 2025
Anti-Bullying Policy and Sexual Harassment Policy (Staff)	15 th October 2025
Whole School Inclusion Policy	14 th January 2026
Lost Property	26 th February 2026
Vetting Policy	12 th May 2026
Health & Safety Plan	12 th May 2026

7.0 Conclusion

The Board expresses its appreciation to the staff for their continued dedication to the Mission of the school and dedication to our students, to our students for their enthusiasm and commitment to school life and to our parents for their support of Loreto Abbey Dalkey over the past year.



Secretary, Board of Management
August 2026