



# Irish Primary Principals' Network Ltd

(A Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a Share Capital)

## Trustees Report

Year ended 31st December 2015

### 1. OVERVIEW

The trustees present their annual report, combining the Directors' report and Trustees' report, and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014 and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the financial reporting standard applicable in the Republic of Ireland (FRS102) hereafter denoted as the Charities SORP (FRS102). The Charities SORP (FRS102) is not yet mandatory in the Republic of Ireland and the Irish Charities Regulation has not yet prescribed accounting regulations for Irish Charities.

In the absence of such prescriptive guidance the Board has adopted the Charities SORP (FRS102) as it is considered best practice.

#### 1.1. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The trustees of IPPN Ltd., who are also directors, at the date of this report and those who served during the financial year together with the dates of any changes are as follows:

- Anna Mai Rooney
- Catriona O'Reilly
- Damian White
- Gerard Ruane
- Gerry Moran
- Micheál Rea
- Pairic Clerkin
- Pat Goff (resigned 28th August 2015)
- Maria Doyle (resigned 1st October 2015)
- Pat Gately (appointed 1st October 2015)

Irish Primary Principals Network Ltd (IPPN) is an independent, professional body for the leaders of primary schools. It is a not-for-profit organisation with a local, regional and national presence and has charitable status. Recognised by the Minister of Education as an official Education Partner, IPPN works with the DES, the National Parents Council, management bodies, unions, education agencies, academic institutions and children's charities towards the advancement of education in Ireland. IPPN designs and delivers continuous professional development programmes and provides practical tools, resources and personal support to over 6,000 Principals and Deputy Principals in over 3,200 primary schools. In addition, IPPN carries out educational research and has completed a number of research publications to date.



The charity's administration and research functions are based in its National Support Office in Glounthaune, Co. Cork. The charity operates under the direction of the Board of Trustees and its CEO, Seán Cottrell, who is assisted in the management of the charity by the President, Maria Doyle and Deputy CEO, Pat Goff. The CEO, President and Deputy CEO are required to attend Board meetings.

Management of the charity and delivery of its services is achieved via a dedicated cohort of 16 employees.

**Key management personnel include the following:**

- Seán Cottrell - Chief Executive Officer
- Maria Doyle - President
- Pat Goff - Deputy CEO
- Angela Lynch - Leadership Support Manager
- Caroline O'Dea - Operations Manager
- Geraldine D'Arcy - Research & Publications Manager.

## **1.2. STRUCTURE**

IPPN supports principals at a local and county level and represents their interests nationally. Our network of principals is structured as follows:

**Local Principals' Support Groups** - Support groups form the main 'cell structure' of IPPN. Principals' support groups are sustained with the support of local Education Centres.

**26 County Networks** - Each County Network typically organises one continuous professional development event per term, i.e. 3 per annum. These CPD events are funded through IPPN nationally and are open to all principals and deputy principals of member schools.

**A 52-member National Council** - 2 school leaders are elected from each of the 26 counties to communicate the key professional issues and concerns of the County Network to the National Council as well as reporting the decisions, policies and activities of the National Council to the County Network.

**Board of Trustees** - elected by the National Council, this group manage the affairs of the organisation through focus groups established to research and develop IPPN policy, good practice and professional guidelines.

## **1.3. VISION, MISSION, VALUES & GOALS**

### **Vision**

Every principal empowered to be an exemplary leader of learning - Every teacher inspired to lead every child's learning.

### **Mission**

To support and represent school leaders - Tacaíocht, Misneach agus Spreagadh.

### **Values**

IPPN is grounded in the values of **trust**, **respect** and **professionalism**.



## **Goals**

Arising from its mission, IPPN's broad objectives and specific goals centre on the task of leadership across a spectrum of issues and activities:

## **Support and Services**

- To provide all school leaders with a continuum of high quality personal and professional development, support, advice and guidance in order to maximise the learning outcomes of every child
- To promote collegiality and professional dialogue and the sharing of best practice throughout the network of school leaders.

## **Representation**

- To provide leadership to school leaders
- To influence change in primary education
- To be the trusted voice for children and their learning.

## **Infrastructure**

- To be financially secure and independent, providing the human and financial resources to maintain our Supports & Services and Advocacy needs
- To diversify funding sources for long-term organisational sustainability.

## **1.4. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the strategic development and governance oversight of the company on behalf of its members. The Board met 8 times during the year and maintains close liaison and communication with the CEO and senior staff members throughout the year.

All new Board members receive induction and training once appointed, which includes familiarisation with the company's operations, management and governance structures. Trustees additionally receive training as required in respect of their role, responsibilities and duties as directors of IPPN.

The present membership of the Board and trustees who served during the year is shown on page 1. None of the trustees received any remuneration for their office or had any financial interest in the company or in any related companies.

The Board has established a number of advisory groups to advise the board on various matters. These groups comprise Board members, Council members and staff. The advisory groups are as follows:

- Governance & Nominations Advisory Group
- Instrument of Governance Advisory Group
- Internal Audit Committee
- HR & Finance Advisory Group
- Position Papers Advisory Group.

## **1.5. ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE**

The following activities constitute much of the ongoing business of IPPN Ltd:

### Membership Supports and Services

- Professional guidance on current leadership and management challenges
- Confidential advisory service for individual members
- Mentoring programme for newly-appointed principals
- Annual Principals' Conference
- Annual Deputy Principals' Conference
- Regional Professional Seminars
- 26 County Networks, each hosting 3 professional development events per annum
- Leadership+ - 6 newsletters per year - 2 per academic term.

### E-Services

- E-scéal - weekly electronic e-bulletin providing professional advice and key information
- [www.ippn.ie](http://www.ippn.ie) - a resource and communication website for school leaders
- [networking@ippn.ie](mailto:networking@ippn.ie) - secure e-mail discussion forum for members
- [www.educationopinion.ie](http://www.educationopinion.ie) - a research tool enabling members to contribute to IPPN policy
- [www.textaparent.ie](http://www.textaparent.ie) - a web-based bulk text message facility for home-school communication
- [www.educationposts.ie](http://www.educationposts.ie) - an interactive web-based advertising facility for teaching vacancies
- [www.textasub.ie](http://www.textasub.ie) - an online facility to recruit substitute teachers by text message.

## 1.6. SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS DURING THIS FINANCIAL YEAR

In January 2015, 1,100 principal teachers attended IPPN's annual conference. Plenary sessions included national and international keynote speakers on the theme 'Daring to Lead'. 12 concurrent professional & personal development seminars ran three times over the two days with a dedicated well-being area provided for all attendees.

Over the course of 2015, IPPN hosted 85 local, regional and national CPD events for school leaders with 2,956 school leader participating.

In November 2015, IPPN hosted a National Symposium '*Emotional Wellbeing – at the heart of school communities*'. An Taoiseach Enda Kenny addressed the event, which was attended by over 500 teachers, school leaders, education agency staff and charities working in the area of wellbeing. The Wellbeing for Teachers & Learners Group was established in December 2015 as a direct result of the symposium. This group brings school leaders, the Ombudsman for Children, the Teaching Council, the Department of Education & Skills (DES) and other education agencies together to progress the idea of placing emotional wellbeing at the centre of the work in all our schools.

IPPN's Membership Engagement Strategy began with our Autumn Meeting programme. It has continued through the Mentor Training Programme with the Centre for School Leadership (CSL), member surveys, World Café-style consultation events and engagement with Deputy Principal Support Groups.

The Centre for School Leadership was officially launched as a partnership between IPPN, our second-level counterparts NAPD and the DES. This innovative and ground-breaking step followed two years of consultation where IPPN was a strong advocate for structured mentoring and coaching for Irish primary school leaders.



Our Leadership Support team assisted school leaders by providing practical supports and resources as well as a coaching service to members where required. 2,887 Leadership Support cases were dealt with by the team.

IPPN is making good progress in terms of compliance with the Governance Code for charitable organisations and undertook a number of projects during the year in relation to compliance.

## **1.7. PRINCIPAL RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES**

The trustees confirm that there is an ongoing process in place for identifying, evaluating and managing the risks faced by the company. The trustees are satisfied that adequate systems of governance, supervision and internal controls are in place and that these controls provide reasonable assurance against such risks. IPPN holds a register of Risk which is reviewed by our Internal Audit committee and acted upon by the Board of Directors through the CEO.

## **1.8. FINANCIAL REVIEW**

The results for the year ended 31 December 2015 as set out are considered satisfactory by the board. The company generated income of €2,229,516 (2014: €1,972,140). Our 2015 accounts show a significant growth in income. The growth in membership fees shows the growing need for the charity's services. Event income grew due to the rise in numbers attending these events and the doubling in the number of events held.

The Principals' Annual Conference and Deputy Principals Conference were the main events of the year. A new event, the National Wellbeing Symposium, held in November 2015 was hugely successful. An increase in commercial income was derived from increased web services and advertising due to redevelopment of the website, a price increase on web services in March 2015 and the overall economic recovery. The costs of these commercial activities also increased due to increase in activity on the sites and the costs of redevelopment. A new sponsorship of the charity commenced bringing the total to three major sponsors of the charity's activities. The commercial income provides the necessary revenue required to operate the charity.

Staff costs increased slightly in 2015 which reflects new pay scales introduced in 2014. The incoming president being retired became part of the payroll which resulted in decreased costs of secondment from the Department of Education and Skills.

The Annual Principals' Conference and Deputy Principals' Conference costs decreased due to a scale-back on international speakers and entertainment. Other event costs rose in line with the increase in the number of events held. Research costs decreased due to the renegotiation of a contract from research provider to a bi-annual service. Public relations costs increased due to the production of a video, made to increase public awareness of the charity. Fixed costs increased slightly reflecting the growth in services provided.

## **1.9. RESERVES AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY**



IPPN has a responsibility to ensure that it uses the funds and resources it receives for its stated charitable purposes. Due to the uncertain nature of our membership, sponsorship and commercial income, we feel it prudent to maintain adequate cash reserves to enable IPPN to 'ride out' a period

of decreased income to avoid a reduction in services or staff numbers. The reserves policy takes into account vital elements in the day-to-day and long-term running of the organisation. The reserves must be maintained at a level to cover any drop in income to cover these vital elements:

- Maintaining long-term payments on the mortgage of its National Support Offices
- As a service provider, IPPN is committed to investing in information technology
- Investment in education research and best practice.

In the event of IPPN's reserves increasing sufficiently, we undertake to significantly increase the volume of professional development programs on offer. At the year end, the company had reserves of €2,722,106.

IPPN has put in place an investment strategy that sets out clearly how it plans to make the best use of available reserve funds in line with charitable purposes. At present, IPPN's commitment to increasing both the quantity and quality of services to principals and deputy principals will, by its nature, have a reducing effect on our surplus.

## **1.10. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS**

The Board of Trustees, after consultation with its members, staff and educational partners, are currently finalising its long-term strategic plan. The company has plans to employ three new staff members to significantly enhance its leadership support service. IPPN will engage on a research project on the subject of 'The State of Irish Education in post-recession Ireland' over the coming year with a number of academics and educators.

### **Auditors**

The auditors Marie T. Walsh & Co, have indicated their willingness to continue in office in accordance with the provisions of Section 380 of the Companies Act 2014.

## **1.11. ACCOUNTING RECORDS**

To ensure that adequate accounting records are kept in accordance with Sections 281 to 285 of the Companies Act 2014, the directors have employed appropriately qualified accounting staff and have maintained appropriate computerised accounting systems. The accounting records are located at IPPN Support Office, Glounthaune, Co. Cork.

On behalf of the board

Damian White  
Director

Páirc Clerkin  
Director

13<sup>th</sup> September 2016