

## PRESS RELEASE

### “OPENING THE SCHOOL GATES WIDER”

#### **Official Opening of St Benedict’s National School and Ongar Community Centre a prime example of the Fingal Schools Model**

Mayor of Fingal, Cllr. Ken Farrell and the Most Reverend Diarmuid Martin will officially launch St Benedict’s National School and Ongar Community Centre on **Friday 17 June 2011 at 11am**. They will be greeted by a guard of honour from the pupils of St Benedict’s National School and 300 invited guests from various state bodies and the local community.

St Benedict’s N.S. is a Catholic Co-educational school which was opened on 30 August 2006 with an enrolment of 58 pupils. Initially the school was located in prefabs in the grounds of Mary Mother of Hope National Schools. After many moves over the 5 years of its existence St. Benedict’s finally moved into this wonderful facility in the heart of Ongar Village on 1 November 2010. It is now a 24 classroom school catering for classes from Junior Infants to Sixth Class. Presently St Benedict’s has an enrolment of 373 up to 3<sup>rd</sup> Class and will reach a pupil population of 700 at full capacity.

Located in the heart of the local community, St Benedict’s National School and Ongar Community Centre opens its gates to the whole community encouraging and supporting personal growth and development for all. This is an excellent and exciting new development which will provide the much needed primary education along with community facilities required by any young fledgling community.

Noreen Behan, Principal, said “While creating outstanding learning opportunities is paramount for St Benedict’s National School, this unique partnership provides state of the art recreational facilities for the children during school hours and provides a multitude of social and recreational opportunities for the wider community by increased access to top class amenities in one single location”.

The shared facility is managed by a board of directors who oversee the day to day operation of the facility on behalf of Fingal County Council. St Benedict's NS and Ongar Community Centre is a prime example of how the Fingal Schools Model can work well to the benefit of the whole community.

**ENDS 13/06/11**

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### **Notes to Editors**

The Fingal Schools Model was developed as a way of fast tracking the delivery of schools and community facilities throughout the county. In 2006 Fingal County Council signed an agreement with the Department of Education and Skills whereby the Council identifies school sites and assists in their acquisition. The saving is re-invested on the site to enhance the facilities being provided to both the school and the local community, thereby resulting in the fast-tracking of modern developments in relatively new areas.