



Seapoint Road Schools

This year marks the 200th anniversary of the formation of the Bray National Schools on the Seapoint Road for both boys and girls.

The head master of the boys school was Mr Cornelius O'Reilly and in three converted cottages on the southern side of Seapoint Road he taught 40 boys with an average daily attendance of 38. The girls school was on the northern side of the Seapoint Road, overlooking the dock and lime kilns.

The system of national education was not introduced until 1830. Prior to 1830 education was provided by the gentry or by public subscription where local communities would fund the teacher's salary and running costs of the school. Chalk to write on slate tablets.

According to a commission of enquiry into education in Bray, the running cost between 1820 and 1834 was £35 per annum. In 1822 a donation of £20 was made to the school. On the last Sunday of July each year an Education Sermon was preached in the Holy Redeemer church and was followed by a collection. If students could afford to pay they were charged 1d per week (Today's equivalent of voluntary subscription).

In 1835 in the 2nd report on Public Instruction in Ireland the commissioners looked at the Education in Bray. They stated that 4 boys had been removed from the school and were placed with another master by whom they might be instructed. The commissioners stated that the Bray Boys National School Number 975 had 89 boys attending and the daily average was 80. The subjects taught were Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. The female school had 140 girls on the roll but the daily average was only 87. Subjects taught were Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. There was also a Sunday School attached to the Holy Redeemer chapel, with 389 children, both boys and girls from Windgates, Old Connaught and Bray would attend for Religious instruction.

The annual rent on the buildings on the Seapoint Road was paid to Mr Langton £10-4s-2d, Mr Higgs was paid £5-1s-8d and Mr Westbrook and Bennet was paid £5-4s-2d

In 1880 the Boys School moved from the Seapoint Road to the Little Flower Hall beside the Holy Redeemer. When necessary a building off Brighton Terrace was used before it was taken over by the Department of Agriculture and Science (the forerunner of Vocational Education) in 1899.

In April 1932 the boys school in the Little Flower Hall moved to a new School on the Vevay Road and in 2001 the school moved up the road to a new purpose built school. The girls school remained on the Seapoint Road until 1901 when a convent school was opened by the Sisters of Charity at Ravenswell called St Philomena's. In 1835 Mr Cornelius O'Reilly who had been head master retired and his post was taken by a Mr Jordan.

