School asks parents to come forward

By ANTHONY GALVIN

PARENTS hoping to send their children to the new secondary school set up on Shelbourne Road to solve the crisis that left 120 children without a school place, have been urged to visit the school this weekend and make themselves known to the management.

The new school expects to take about 60 students - but they don't know which students failed to gain a place in other schools.

The new school say that the Association of Secondary School Principals have not co-operated by giving over the names of those without a school, and the primary school principals who could furnish the names are on holidays.

"We really need the parents to come forward and tell us they are looking for a place," said Brother John Casey, who has been secunded from Sexton Street CBS to the new school.

"Otherwise we just don't know who will be coming here in September."

He said that when the new school contacted the Principals Association they were told that the names of the students who applied for school places had been wiped from the computer data bank - even though over 100 of those students still have not got a school place.

"The secondary principals will not deal with us, and the primary principals are on holidays, so we need to contact the parents directly. Hopefully, they will turn up and meet us over the weekend," said Brother Casey.

Plans for the new school are already well under way. Advertisments appeared this week in the national papers looking for a principal and for a number of other teachers, and the new school will offer a full range of subjects, up to Junior Cert level.

"The Christian Brothers are guaranteeing that the children will be looked after for the senior cycle, and will not be left without a place. But just how they will be looked after has not been spelled out yet," explained Brother Casey.

The new school, Edmund Rice Secondary School, will be situated in St Munchin's National School, Shelbourne Road. .

The school has 10 free classrooms, and one of these will be converted to a woodwork room, while another will become a science lab. That leaves eight rooms free for classes.

"If we take in three classes for the next three years we will be full. We will have 60 students and six teachers this year, which will give a better

● P2

Schools

● FROM P1

pupil/teacher ratio in the city," said Brother Casey.

One worry he has is that the school might be seen as a dumping ground by the other schools for pupils they do not want, but he is confident the fledgling Edmund Rice School can overcome that problem. It is believed that several of the students who did not get places were academically gifted, and had scored well in the common entrance exam.

"The establishment of this school is a good solution to the problem, but there is a danger that it might be seen as a dumping ground by other schools. But the way it is being run, and the energy and resources being pumped into it, should give it a good head start," he said.

The management of the new school will be available to meet with parents on both Saturday and Sunday. On Saturday, Brother Casey and school manager, Brother Paul Scanlon, will be present between 3pm and 6pm, while on Sunday they will be there from 2pm to 5pm. They hope that as many parents as possible will attend.

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ional and health care areas.

The restoration work was undertaken as a joint project by the seven worldwide institutions of the Sisters of Mercy under the auspices of the Mercy International Association. The Sisters of Mercy, who number 15,000 and work in 43 countries, will be formally linked for the first time.

When work is completed, the ar-

to keep the poor.

According to Sister Mary Trainer, executive director of the Mercy International Centre, every effort is being made to restore the building to make it more accessible to the public and make "more visible an ambience of welcome and hospitality to the pilgrim and the people of Ireland."

Fireplaces and bricked-up arched doorways are being uncovered

She points out that the Sisters of Mercy from around the world are committed through the creation of this centre "to contributing to the local economy through the creation of employment opportunities, the use of Irish businesses in the preparation and operation of the centre, and the promoting of Irish tourism through Mercy contacts worldwide."

Catherine Foley

is now at maximum capacity, says Sister Elaine Troy, the principal. She does not anticipate a decrease in numbers applying next year.

St Michael's operates a first-come, first-served policy. While this has worked for the past few years, it looks like Clery's sale with people lining up at the door, comments Sister Troy. Next year, the school plans to use age as a criterion.

Meanwhile, there is an eight-year-old community college in the town which has places available. "The school has a lot of advantages — it is a purpose-built modern school with facilities to match," says Ciaran Flynn, the new principal. He cites image as the main problem besetting the school, saying it achieves good results for the level of students. In addition to Junior and Leaving Certificate courses, it also offers a general VPT course and two CERT courses which he describes as very successful, with a 100 per cent of places filled.

The image problem appears to be a "social" one, particularly in the case of girls, with parents preferring a convent education. While the community college is non-denominational it has a school chaplain and offers religion classes. It has a ratio of about three boys to each girl and so is often seen as a boys' school, says Flynn.

Flynn is determined to tackle the problem of filling the school. He is confident the school's problem is one of image rather than substance, but says if the problem turns out to be a "real" one he'll tackle that too.

Anne Byrne

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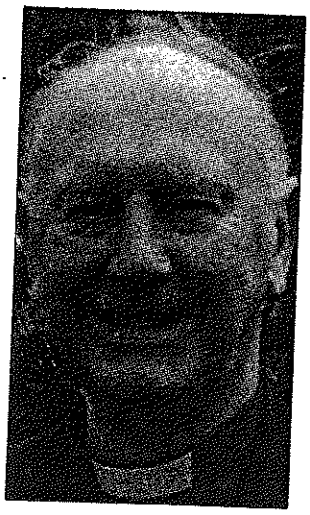

Archbishop Donal Caird: manager of Coláiste Móibhi

tle Irish when they first arrive after finishing at intermediate level.

Apart from Giltrap, the school currently employs two full-time and 10 part-time teachers. Due to cost-cutting by the Department of Education, the school has recently had to cut back on some subjects, such as musicianship.

Catherine Foley

Brothers open new school in Limerick

THE first new Christian Brothers secondary school in more than 25 years will open its doors on Sunday week when the Minister for Education, Niamh Bhreathnach, inaugurates the Edmund Rice College in Limerick.

In a move which will help relieve the dire shortage of secondary school places in Limerick, the college has taken over nine classrooms in a vacant wing of St Munchin's national school in the north of the city. Converted at a cost of almost £100,000, the college has been equipped with new science, art and technology equipment.

The long-standing shortage of secondary school places in north Limerick grew to crisis dimensions this year when 160 students failed to gain enrolment. Some of the shortfall was taken up when another local Christian Brothers school, Ard Scoil Rís, took in an extra class, but that still left 60 pupils without a school to attend this autumn.

These pupils, most of them from Moyross, will now attend the Edmund Rice College. "We felt it was wrong to leave these lads on the street. A lot of other schools are becoming elitist, and so there's no-one to look after them. That's what we were set up for, after all," says Brother Paul Scanlan, manager of the school.

With a principal and five teachers, one of them a Christian Brother, for 60 students, the school boasts an excellent pupil to teacher ratio. The new lay principal is Brian Finn, a well-known Limerick hurler, who comes to the school from Borrisoleigh.

Paul Cullen

INSIDE THIS WEEK

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...atient clinics at the Regional ...o been cancelled, and a Mis... Health Board spokesman ...d the situation at the hospi... ...re only emergencies are now ...en, as "serious".
...accident and emergency ...ent continues to be manned ...ow also hit by emergencies ...e cancelled outpatient depart...

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...while, in the community care ...t Vincent de Paul in the city ... Society of Care at Shannon ...een called in to help accom... basis by the health board with the union committee, and similar arrangements have been made in child care.

Obstetric clinics continued to be held on this Thursday at the Regional Maternity Hospital and at Croom Orthopaedic Hospital, and psychiatric and geriatric services have not been effected.

The situation worsened on Thursday when hospital administrative staff, pharmacists, stores workers and physiotherapists joined the social workers, dental assistants and six community welfare officers in the Limerick area already on strike, following the breakdown of Employer/Labour talks in the early hours of Thursday morning.

...Woodlands House Hotel. On the right is Seamus Doyle, ...forms

Who cares ... local post ...

THIS Thursday night's meeting called by Cllr Tim Leddin to discuss the future of the Ennis Road post office at Lansdowne Stores attracted four people and lasted five min... utes.

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Students at the Hassetts Cross college this week. (LL)

School starts

By DYMPHNA BRACKEN

THE city's newest school, Edmund Rice College, Shelbourne Road, will be officially opened by Education Minister Niamh Breathnach this Sunday at 3pm.

Although located in the same building as St Munchin's primary school, the two schools operate separately—one of the most unusual of such arrangements in the country.

The principal of the new 70-pupil school is Limerick hurler Brian Finn, who formerly taught in Borrisoleigh.

The staff of five teachers includes Brother John Casey who has transferred from the staff of Sexton Street.

The new school was born out of a need to provide school facilities for over 60 children left without places in other city schools.

Ardscoil Ris had taken on an extra first-year class and were not in a position to take extra pupils without adding more facilities.

The Christian Brothers then become involved in the efforts to secure places for the 60 students.

As there were nine empty classrooms in St Munchin's it was eventually agreed with the Minister for Education, Brother John Dundon and the board of management to set up the Edmund Rice College with funding being provided by the Department.

The college is offering a full range of subjects up to Junior Certificate level.

The manager of the school is Paul Scanlon, a former principal of Synge Street CBS and a qualified accountant.

Some of the teachers at Edmund Ignatius Rice College (from left): Brian Finn, Kenneth Kelly, Maria Goodwin, Barry McDonnell, Loraine Hogan and Br John Casey. (LL)

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Parents' fight for education won as new school opens

School principal, Brian Finn. (LL)

Cutting the tape . . . the Minister cuts the tape surrounded by pupils at the new school. (LL)

Students listen to Minister for Education, Niamh Breathnach, at the opening. (LL)

By MAIRE CARMODY

THE people who lobbied for school places for their children were praised for fighting for their rights at the opening of the Edmund Rice College.

Bro Michael Murray, member of the provincial council of the Christian Brothers said: "Congratulations to the people of this area who fought for their rights. We celebrate that today."

He added that, having won the the battle, he would like to thank the public representatives and the local media who had helped them.

The Christian Brother told the pupils last week that they should reach their potential at the school.

"In three years time, the Junior Certificate results for this school will be out - make sure that they are the best results in the country," said Bro Murray.

Meanwhile, Bishop Newman said the Christian Brothers are often criticised on the grounds that their schools inhibit the promotion of free choice, but it has to be recognized that elites are necessary in any balanced society.

"I gather that some people might be inclined to criticise the Christian Brothers on the grounds that schools like this inhibit the promotion of so called free choice schools. That does not necessarily follow. And it has to be recognised, too, that elites are necessary in any balanced society," said the Bishop.

Dr Newman congratulated the Christian Brothers, and wished the school every success.

Opening the school, Minister for Education, Niamh Breathnach, spoke of a boy who wrote to her stating that he was unable to obtain a place in a post-primary school in Limerick since he left primary school in June 1990.

The Minister read an extract from the letter: "I assure you that I do want an education more than anything in the world. I know the road ahead will be very difficult. And because I am just two years ahead of age, the other children will be inclined to pass a few comments. I will take no notice of them because I will be getting an education. And that is what I want more than anything in the world."

Minister Breathnach said that this boy deserved an education. She announced that selective entrance examinations are to be abolished and schools are to set up their criteria giving priority to children in the locality.

After the cutting of the ribbon, pupil, David Mulcahy, presented the Minister with a vase and card which the students made in their art class. Then there was a Mass, celebrated by school chaplain Fr Robert Coffee, with singing by the Corpus Christi Choir.

The new school is located in the same building as St Munchin's primary school, but the two schools operate separately.

The principal of the new 70-pupil school is Limerick hurler Brian Finn, who formerly taught in Borrisoleigh.

Patrick Byrne, Carew Park, is a pupil at the new school. (LL)

Minister Breathnach cuts the tape to open the Edmund Rice College watched by Bro Paul Scanlon and Brian Finn, principal. (LL)

Outing

Limerick student tops in diploma exams

THE Limerick-designed short route to the Diploma in Training and Development, which won a first in Ireland award for a Shannon region participant, is starting again from September 29.

The specialist programme from the Irish Institute of Training and Development has been taken by over 50 training managers and professionals since being re-shaped from a two-year programme into an intensive 11 month course by Plassey Management and Technology Centre.

Now shortened into a programme of lectures on three successive days per month, with two residential weekends and a work-based project, the new course won a first place in Ireland award for the project submitted by Alan Daly of Aughinish Alumina.

Alan, son of Estuary Fuel managing director and former IDA manager in he Mid West, Michael and Mary Daly, said that although he had been away from the educational system for some time, he found the programme most enjoyable.

"It was intensive and challenging but the rewards in both personal and career terms more than justified the effort," he said.

In addition to Aughinish Alumina, other major firms with diploma course students in Limerick in the past include SPS International and Tellabs of Shannon Free Zone; Term-O-Disc and Kostal (Ireland) and the Brothers of Charity who have training and rehabilitation centres throughout the region.

The diploma programme, which is being extended to Dublin this year, covers human resource development theory and practical application; human resource management; organisation theory and behaviour and management principles and systems.

Speeches

THOMOND and Limerick Club of Toastmasters International are holding a demonstration meeting at Castletroy Park Hotel, Limerick, this Thursday at 8pm.

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LIMERICK LEADER

The biggest-selling Mid-West newspaper

MONDAY

ESTABLISHED 1889 | 10 APRIL 1995 | 30p

Body found

BUNRATTY Search and Rescue Service have recovered from the Shannon estuary the body of a County Clare man living in Limerick, Flan McMahon, who had been missing for nearly a month. He was originally from Labasheeda. The body was found, yesterday

City school full status

By EUGENE PHELAN

EDUCATION Minister Niamh Breathnach announced a huge boost for the city's Edmund Rice College at the weekend revealing that she was "committed to giving it full status."

At the Labour Party conference the Labour Minister confirmed the good news for the 110 boys attending the new secondary college which was established in 1992 with a Junior cycle only.

Minister Breathnach confirmed that she intended visiting the school at the weekend but the death of Bishop Jeremiah Newman upset her schedule.

Weather

THIS afternoon is expected to brighten up to allow some sunny periods towards evening. Clear spells at first tonight with mist or frost in places, but cloud will increase later in the night, bringing misty conditions. Tomorrow morning will be misty with some light patches of rain or drizzle, but it will die out by noon

Men get big jobs says study

Michael Noonan, Minister for Health.

By PATRICIA FEEHILY

The report, "Barriers to Women's Promotion in the Midland and Mid

tern of inequality."

Culture and organisational procedures are seen

women. "In many cases it is seen as unhelpful and in some cases actually hos-

trative world," and felt that they had little access to

information about health board policy.

Rice school set to close

By MIKE DWANE

THE schoolbell will ring for the last time at Edmund Rice College in August 2005, as the Department of Education phases out the north's dog school.

No first years were taken on at Edmund Rice this year, but the current second and fifth year pupils will be allowed to sit their [illegible] exams at the school.

Efforts are ongoing to try and [illegible] locate the remaining boys when the school [illegible], while staff will negotiate their position with the Department over the [illegible] months.

"Myself and all the staff are disappointed after all the time, effort and commitment went into it," said Brian [illegible] [illegible].

"It's unfortunate that the Department didn't see fit to keep going but enrolments [illegible] down and that's the [illegible] it's going nationally," said.

The school on Shelbourne Road was established in 19[illegible] in response to an emergency need to find places [illegible] students who could [illegible] be catered for in other schools.

St Munchin's GBS National School agreed to lease classrooms for the boys and Edmund Rice College was [illegible].

The Department of Education insist the school was always [illegible] as a temporary [illegible] to an emergency [illegible].

This temporary status meant that the school was not developed to the standard normally available to students in other schools and its small size meant that it did not attract the kind of funding and staffing levels required for a wide curriculum and long-term stability.

Changing demographic trends in Limerick mean that many schools can't get the numbers any more and Mr Finn is optimistic the space will be there for his charges next year.

"We would be concerned, but hopeful, that other schools in this part of Limerick will be able to accommodate the students after we close," he said.

St Nessan's, St Munchin's and Ard Scoil Ris would be the most obvious choices for the boys, most of whom come from northside districts such as Moyross, Ballynanty, Thomondgate and St Mary's Park.

Many of the students secured apprenticeships in various trades, while some graduates went on to make their names in computers, engineering and even the world of fashion.

And unsurprisingly for a school whose principal is a former inter-county hurler, sports formed a big part of the extra-curricular activity.

"Despite our small size, we have always had a very good track record in participating in school sports in Limerick. We played all the usual team sports but many of the pupils were very good at equestrian sports," said Mr Finn.

Brian Finn, principal Edmund Rice College, Hassette Cross, with teachers Eithne Lyons and Bresge Kelleher, and pupils Johnny O'Donoghue, Brian Gulligan, Gary O'Brien, and Stephen O'Brien (LL)

Pat Cox is honoured by Poland

TRÍONA NEILL

LIMERICK [illegible] MEP Pat Cox received a major award in Poland for his role in [illegible] the last stage of Enlargement.

The enlargement will see Poland, along with the nine other states in Europe become full members on May 1.

Organised by Poland's leading business organisation, the [illegible] was presented to Mr Cox, president of the European Parliament, at a [illegible] in the Royal Castle [illegible], last Saturday.

Mr Cox has frequently visited Poland and the other nine states over the past two years, campaigning to move on the expansion of the EU.

During his trip to Poland, he visited the place which had the hardest struggle for democracy in Poland, the Gdansk shipyard.

He thanked the Polish people for the respect they had shown him.

He said it was a great honour for him as an Irish person that the addition of Poland to full EU membership would officially take place at a ceremony in Dublin.

Call for State cash to end fuse charges

By GEORGE KEHAN

[illegible] meeting.

According to Ald Kennedy, the [illegible] with an [illegible]

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