

Media workshop for school leaders

Principals' and Deputy Principals' Conference


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Media Workshop for School Leaders

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Overview

1. Understanding the power of the media
2. Engaging with the press
3. Press release/statement
4. Crafting a strong message
5. INTO support





Why engage with the local media?

- Local media is a very powerful channel of communication
- Cost effective
- Allows you to engage with wider community
- Helps build trust
- Can help with fundraising/recruitment/retention
- Examples?





National vs. Local

- 3.1 million people in Ireland listen to radio every week
- Irish people are more likely to listen to a local radio station instead of a national one – 56% to 44%
- 78% of adults surveyed trust their local newspaper





How does local media work?

- Editor and Deputy Editor
- Reporter and Regional Correspondents
- Sports Editor and Sports Journalists
- Photographer
- Production
- Support staff





Engaging with the press

- Responding
- Reacting
- Proactive






Engaging with the press – key principles

Be cautious

- Assume every contact you have with a journalist is 'on the record'.

Be responsive

- Always respond to media requests as soon as possible, whether it's a text, phone call or an email?
- Immediate response acknowledging receipt and confirming you are processing request.

Tell the truth

- Always!



Engaging with the press – key principles

Don't comment on everything

- Remain calm. Think strategically. What do I want to say? What can I say?

Confidentiality counts

- Make sure to explain legal and statutory confidentiality provisions you are bound by.
- Difference between 'no comment' and 'the school is precluded from commenting...'

Educate journalists

- Take time to explain processes and procedures which the journalist may not fully understand. Most journalists are not subject experts.



Proactive – Is my story newsworthy?

Timeliness

- Stories get old in a hurry. Think of your story as a baked good that's best served fresh.

Proximity

- People want to hear local stories.

Impact

- Does it matter? Does your story pass the 'so what' test?



Proactive – Is my story newsworthy?

Human interest

- Unusual? Different? Novelty?

Prominence

- People are more interested in famous people. Is there a big name involved? Big locally?

Conflict

- Traditional formula 'good news is no news' doesn't apply locally. Local pride.



Press release/statement

Style

- Match the publication
- Short sentences (8-10 words)
- Answer key questions in first paragraph

Make journalist's life easy

- Keep it brief
- Write objectively
- Include release/statement in email body
- Get someone else to proofread



Is your message strong enough?

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Is this topic likely to be of interest to the local community?
- Does the topic affect the local community?





Components of a strong media message

- Consistent
- Brief
- Ear-worthy
- Audience-focused



Types of media messages

- The Fact/Result message
- The Problem/Solution message
- The Advocacy or Call to Action message



How INTO can support you?

INTO Press Team

- David Geary, Head of Communications
- Síne Friel, Communications Official
- Mandy Drury, Press Office
- Maxine Cros, Press Office



How INTO can support you?

Advice

- The team can assist you in managing any potential or current media issues.
- We can advise you most effectively when involved in a situation from an early stage.
- Talk through a response.

Draft template messages

- See pack for some templates on common issues.



How INTO can support you?

Help prepare you for a media interview

- Whether you have done an interview before or not, it's always useful to talk through what you plan to say.

Brainstorm ideas to help you publicise activity you are keen to promote

- Has your school an exciting story to tell?



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Press Release

A press release is typically **proactive** and used to convey new information or make announcements.

Press Release

Ballysomewhere NS

Some town, Co Somewhere

XX September 2019

Headline

Intro - If there's a one-line summary of your story, include it in italics below the headline.

Key information in first paragraph: Who? What? When? Where? Why?

More details/further information in later paragraphs. Leave a space between each paragraph to make the press release easy to read.

Don't make the press release too long or no one will read it. There should be space to add a couple of quotes at the end without the main text going on to a second page. If you are including photographs to go with the story, make sure you have permissions to use them.

Keep the language simple and clear! Don't use a long word if you can use two short ones instead. A sixth class pupil should be able to understand it easily.

ENDS////

More information on this item from:

David Geary, INTO Press Office on 01 804 7736 or dgeary@into.ie

Síne Friel, INTO Press Office on 01 804 7744 or sfriel@into.ie

Notes for Editors:

Give any information that might help an editor here. A short piece about your school or a bit of background to the initiative or activity you are promoting, if appropriate.



Press Statement

A press statement is typically **reactionary** and used when the school needs to respond to an event(s) that have occurred.

Press Statement

Board of Management of XX National School

Ballysomewhere, Co XX

XX September 2019

The Board of Management, staff and pupils of XX National School are deeply shocked and saddened at the tragedy that took place today resulting in the sudden and untimely death of a young pupil in the school.

“We learned this morning of the death of one of our pupils,” said principal teacher Mary Murphy. “This is a terrible tragedy for the family, the school and our community. We are deeply saddened by these events. Our sympathy and thoughts are with the family and friends at this terrible time.”

Ms Murphy said the focus of the staff at this time was on the pupils in the school who are trying to come to terms with the loss of a young friend. “We will help the children to the best of our ability. We have requested the support of the National Education Psychological Service in this and have implemented our critical incident management plan.”

To allow the staff to focus on the children, we appeal for privacy and will make no further comment at this time.

The school has been open to parents, to support them and to offer them advice and guidance.

ENDS///

More information from INTO Press Office on XX XXXXXXXX



Interview preparation

Points to consider

What do you want to say?

Make some notes about what you want to talk about. You are doing this interview for a reason. What are you trying to convey? Jotting down your key messages ahead of time will help you to stay on topic during the interview

Key questions

Think about questions the interviewer is likely to ask. What would somebody want to know about this topic? If you can, listen to examples of the interviewer's previous interviews, this can give you an idea of the approach he/she tends to take and help you to consider the questions he/she might ask.

Sound bites

Sound bites work really well on television and radio. If your interview gets edited or previewed, a good soundbite is often used. Spend a bit of time before the interview to jot down potential soundbites/oneliners that could potentially be used in your interview.

Anecdotes

We all love stories. Is there a short anecdote that you can use to get your point across? Anecdotes or real examples will help people connect with your story much more easily than dry facts will.

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