Dear Parent

**FOUR STEPS TO HELP –SUICIDE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION WORKSHOPS**

We have invited staff from Youth Suicide Prevention Ireland (www.yspi.ie) to visit the school to give a presentation to some Transition, 5th and 6th year classes.

The Four Steps to Help Programme is a simple introduction to suicide prevention and awareness information which has been approved by the charity’s expert advisors as appropriate to ages 16 upwards. The talks focus on four steps: Watching, Showing, Asking, Helping. More information can be found at http://schools.yspi.ie

Step 1: Watching

This step focusses on raising awareness of the suicide warning signs and encouraging participants to watch out for behaviour changes in their friends and family members.

Step 2: Showing

This step focusses on showing friends and family members that they can discuss any concerns with their friend or sibling, and they can turn to parents and trusted adults for support and advice.

Step 3: Asking

This step focusses on simple techniques for asking someone how they are feeling and encouraging them to feel safe to talk about their concerns.

Step 4: Helping

This step provides guidance on how to help someone you are concerned about and focusses on getting assistance from a trusted adult or directly from a medical professional.

The workshops are designed to increase awareness of mental health issues and assist in the early detection of issues of concern as well as suicide prevention; and also to provide information on the support and resources available to anyone who is concerned about suicide or is concerned about a friend or family member. The workshops emphasis three main points: that talking about suicide makes suicide less likely; that if someone is thinking about suicide it should never be kept a secret; and that suicide is 100% preventable.

Due to the nature of this subject matter we do understand that some parents may not wish their child to attend these workshops particularly if your child, or family, have experienced bereavement or have been affected by a suicide in the last 12 months.