

Knocknacarra Educate Together NS
Board of Management Meeting
23rd June 2021, 19.00 (Google Meet)

Present: Paul Adams (chairperson and patron nominee), Maggie Hall (patron nominee), Liz Daly (female parent nominee nominee), Aneil Rawat (male parent nominee), Louise Shields (community nominee), Elaine Keane (community nominee, Vivienne Kelly (teacher nominee) and Matt Wallen (principal and secretary)
Paul chaired the meeting.

May Minutes

The minutes from the May meeting were approved.

Principal's Report

Enrolment

- There are currently 190 pupils enrolled in seven classes.
- The majority of our new infants visited the school last week, and an online information session for parents was organised. We will liaise with families of children joining older classes as well.
- There are a few new vacancies to fill in some senior classes.
- Our projected enrolment is 220 for the 2021-2022 school year.

Staffing

- Advertisements for four positions in the school have been posted with Friday as the deadline for submitting applications.
- Interviews will take during the first full week of July.
- Class allocation will be finalised and shared with parents as soon as possible.
- We have had no response to our application for an exceptional review of our SNA allocation. We will make contact again with the NCSE.

Attendance

- Attendance continues to be very good, though a number of families are finishing early due to visiting family members. Year to date, excluding the building closure, attendance has been 93.8%, which is slightly above-average compared with previous years. Twenty-four children have perfect attendance. Eleven children have missed 20 days or more, the majority because they are or were abroad for a period of time in the year.

Curriculum Development

- Áine has been working with the staff to complete a revision of the Plean Gaeilge. It should be ready for review by the Board in the autumn.
- The focus of our School Self-Evaluation for the coming year will be to continue the plan related to maths teaching, and we will review that curriculum plan in the autumn as part of that process.

Policies

- A draft Parental Involvement Policy has been discussed at a PTA meeting and distributed to parents.
- The Additional Education Needs Policy is under review and more time is required to complete this properly. It will be ready for review by the Board in the Autumn.

Building

- After a tendering process, an architect was chosen to complete a report for an Emergency Works grant for the roof. His initial inspections are complete, and the draft report should be ready soon.
- We have had no response yet from Educate Together regarding our plans for the afterschool. A follow-up email will be sent seeking clarification.
- A plan for traffic management will be considered over the summer following recommendations made by parents who have looked at options.

Misc. Events/Information

- The PTA-sponsored raffle raised over €1900 for the school. It also helped us learn how to organise credit-card payments via our website which we now can apply to other uses.
- The final stage of our Creative Schools project, the coding project, has proved challenging but we hope to complete the project by the end of the week and will request the balance of the grant.
- Unfortunately, our Creative Clusters application that we completed with Galway Educate Together Secondary School and three other primary schools was unsuccessful.
- Our application for the first Green Flag was submitted and we received a positive initial response. A visit will be organised for the final part of the assessment, possibly before the end of the school year.
- Sports Fitness Ireland will return to the school once more for Box Exercise on 25th June.

- Standardised testing in English spellings, English reading, Irish and maths were completed.
- End-of-year reports were written by teachers and are available to parents via Aladdin Connect. End-of-year reports for children receiving support for additional learning needs will be distributed to parents early next week.
- The school will participate in the Summer Programme for children identified by the school as benefitting from attending. It will take place for two weeks in July. Padraic is organising the programme. We have been given authorization for two groups. Parents have been contacted to indicate if they would be interested, and we are looking for teachers and SNAs to participate.
- The giant inflatable obstacle courses were well-received by all the children. Special permission was granted by our insurer, and we fulfilled all safety conditions as requested. Next Tuesday an ice cream van will visit the school.

Financial Report

- Budget targets are being met.
- The next two months will require significant spending to prepare for the new school year.

Standardised Test Results

The Board reviewed the aggregate standardised test results. This was the first time they had been administered in two years. Results in both literacy and maths were improved despite the closures of the school building, a testament to the efforts of staff, children and parents. There was a slight decline in Irish results, directly linked to the challenges of teaching Irish during the periods of distance learning. This will be closely monitored over the coming year.

Parental Involvement Policy

The Board reviewed a draft Parental Involvement Policy that had first been discussed at a Parent-Teacher Association online meeting and then distributed for feedback to the entire parent body. The Board ratified the policy.