

**Knocknacarra Educate Together NS**  
**Board of Management Meeting**  
**16<sup>th</sup> September 2015, 19.30**

**Present:** Louise Shields (chairperson and patron nominee), Maggie Hall (patron nominee and treasurer), Edward Joyce (community nominee), Waqas Khawaja (male parent nominee), Áine Ní Chuinneagáin (teacher nominee), Matt Wallen (principal and secretary)

**Apologies:** Lorna Siggins (community nominee), Vajeeha Ali (female parent nominee)

Louise Shields chaired the meeting.

**May Minutes**

The minutes from May were ratified with minor changes.

**Principal's Report**

**Enrolment**

- There are currently 50 students enrolled, 28 in junior infants and 22 in senior infants.

**Staffing**

- Vivienne was appointed as a shared resource teacher. She works approximately 9 hours in our school per week. She also works in Galway Educate Together NS, Scoil Iognáid and Castlegar NS. A timetable has been organised.
- Our general allocation hours are being addressed by one visiting teacher on Friday (Fiona) from Mervue Boy's NS as well as two job-sharing partners (Clodagh and Annette) from St Annin's NS in Roscahill who are in the school parts of the day on Wednesday and Friday.
- Ann Courtney was appointed as a part-time special needs assistance in the school (0.83). Her hours match the infant day.

**Attendance**

- At present, the attendance has been very good, with an average of 96% as compared with 92% last September and 89.5% overall for the previous year.

**IT**

- A laptop was purchased for the learning support teachers. Another laptop was purchased for the senior infant classroom to operate the interactive whiteboard.

**Building Concerns**

- To prepare for the afterschool service, many changes were made in the kitchen area including the addition of a cooker, a separate hand-washing basin, an extractor fan, linoleum for part of the floor and new paint that is washable.
- After much difficulty, we have lodged an application to reduce the electricity capacity, which will greatly reduce our bills. In the process I was able to negotiate a slightly more favourable rate.
- Bin collection has been arranged. We will not have a regular collection. Instead, when the bins are full, we will ring and they will be emptied the following day. This will keep costs very manageable.

**Curriculum**

- Yearly schemes are in progress for the various subject areas in both classes.
- The process of developing a Plean Scoile for the big three subjects (English, Irish and Maths) will be completed this year. Other subjects will follow.
- Both classes have resumed Aistear time as well as other structured play activities throughout the day.

**Other Policies/School Planning**

- Drafts of the Code of Behaviour (including an Anti-Bullying Policy), Attendance and Critical Incidents Policies have been completed.
- A three-year plan for writing other policies is ready for consideration.

**Misc. Events**

- The Polish School has begun using the premises on Saturdays. A formal agreement has been drafted and is ready to be signed.
- The afterschool programme has been implemented, led by Jenni Hynes. Interest is growing.
- The afterschool clubs will resume next week: music, visual arts, capoeira and basketball.
- A coffee morning will take place in the school in aid of Galway Hospice on Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> September from 12.00 to 13.00. All are welcome.
- We have plans for the seniors to participate in at least one Baboró event. The juniors will visit the Teddy Bear Hospital later this year. Both classes will visit Barna Woods in October.
- Matt and Áine attended a seminar last night on play-based pedagogy.
- Vivienne will be completing the Mata sa Rang course, an excellent programme to help us prepare for our first-class maths teaching as well as support the learning in our current classes.
- Matt, Áine and Vivienne will be attending the Educate Together Ethos Conference in November.

### **Financial Report**

- The budget targets continue to be met. Some additional expenses outside the budget have been incurred to set up the onsite afterschool programme.
- There have been some delays regarding securing reduced capacity for our electrical connection. This will greatly reduce our electricity bill each month once the process is completed.
- The Polish school has begun renting the premises on Saturdays. A formal long-term agreement will be signed after a three-month trial period. Rent will be paid at the end of each month as previously agreed. The Polish school will furnish proof of their insurance. They will also be asked to confirm that garda vetting and good practice regarding child protection are in place.

### **Policies Ratification**

- The Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy was ratified. The Critical Incidents and Attendance Policies were also ratified.
- A change was made regarding the Health and Safety Policy to account for the installation of a cooker in the school. The revised policy was ratified.
- The three-year plan for policy development was agreed.

### **Accommodation Update**

It was agreed that Matt will write to the Department of Education for an update regarding plans for long-term accommodation for the school. Matt will also liaise with the builders and Department of Education regarding the glass that remains in some places around the premises.

### **Training for the Board of Management**

Some members had difficulty completing the registration process for the online modules from Educate Together. As the Board is nearing the end of its term, it was agreed that the training would be postponed until the new Board is in place.

### **Constitution of the New Board**

- The patron and teacher nominees will remain the same once the new Board is constituted.
- Elections for parent nominees for the new Board will take place before the October mid-term break. Nominations will be sought, and then a paper ballot will be distributed to each family.
- Community nominees will be chosen by the six members in November.
- It has been proposed that the new Board signs a memorandum of understanding outlining the commitment and responsibilities associated with membership of the Board.