Knocknacarra Educate Together NS
Board of Management Meeting
9th March 2026, 19.00

Present: Paul Adams (chairperson), Emily King, Sarah Gundy, Ali Donald, Catherine Emerson and Matt Wallen (secretary)
Apologies: Jennifer Noonan, Ciara Jordan

January Minutes
The minutes from the January meeting were approved.

Principal's Report
Enrolment
- There are currently 206 pupils enrolled.
- 24 junior infants have accepted places for the coming 2026-2027 school year.
- Any vacancies in other classes will be filled at the beginning of May.

Attendance
- The attendance percentage year-to-date has dropped 91.2%.

Staffing
- A student teacher is working in senior infants and will later teach in 2nd Class.

Curriculum Development
- A revised Handwriting Policy is ready for consideration by the Board.
- The PE curriculum is completed and ready for consideration as well. The SESE and Maths curriculum plans have been reviewed and need minor formatting to complete. A review of the Learn Together curriculum plan is nearly complete, and a minor review of the English plan is also scheduled to be completed before the end of the academic year.

Policies
- A comprehensive review of the Child Safeguarding Statement has been completed including a survey of both parents and children, extensive consideration by the staff of the risk register and the writing of a child-friendly version by the Student Council in accordance with the revised Child Protection Guidelines.

Building
- Extensive work has been completed by Martin, our caretaker, related to the redesign of one courtyard as a sensory garden. Planting will likely take place in April and furniture and other aspects will be addressed then too.
- The sensory spaces and gross motor room will be installed soon as the design has been finalised, measurements have taken place and the details of each room have been confirmed. Additional electrics work has been completed to prepare the rooms.
- The fascia at the apex of the main roof has been replaced. Further repairs are being considered and priced.
- A key pad, camera and intercom and related door releases are in the process of being installed to ensure security in the school. Both main doors now have keypads, and Claudia or anyone else in the main office will be able to communicate with visitors and grant access from within the office. Two additional cameras have been added to the modular build for security.
- Matt will be moving his office from the current location to the former learning support room. Additional meeting space and storage will be added to that space. Matt's old office will become a nurture room and flexible learning space.

Misc. Events/Information
- The pupil-led basketball competition during yard time was completed. Well done to the 5th and 6th class referees who led the tournament.
- A family-friendly talent show was held in February and was very well attended.
- The annual Spring Fair has been scheduled for Saturday, 25th April. Raffle prizes are being finalised. The PTA has been meeting regularly to plan for the event.
- The school choir performed well at the Ennis Choral Festival, scoring 86 and just three points behind the first-place choir. The choir will present a short concert for parents at the end of the month.

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Signature Date

- Several children represented the school at a swimming event in early February, and three children qualified for the national competition.
- Our trivia teams participated in the Credit Union Quiz, with our senior team placing second, just one point behind the first place team.
- Plans are underway to organise hurling lessons for all classes.
- Twelve children will represent the school at a chess tournament on Wednesday against other Educate Together schools in Connacht. Representatives of our Student Council will also attend a joint session with the student councils of other Educate Together schools.
- A smaller chess team will participate in a tournament at the Ardilaun Hotel at the end of the month.
- Matt attended the annual Educate Together Principals' Conference this past week.
- Four representatives of the School Participation Section of the Department of Education and Youth visited our school. They consulted with the members of our Student Council as well as representatives of the other pupil-led committees on how schools can enhance the voice of the child in primary schools through the establishment of Student Councils.
- The STEM Committee organised a range of activities in the halla last week for all classes to mark Engineers' Week. Several parents visited classes to share their work in engineering and science over the past couple of weeks. For example, 4th and 6th Class visited Silver Strand to learn more about marine science research.
- Seachtain na Gaeilge will be marked this week and next with a tráth na gceist, PE lessons in Irish, maths lessons in Irish, a disco, a day to wear green and other activities.
- The school celebrated World Book Day last week with activities about books as well as a dress-up day. The Junior Infants visited Dubray Books last week to hear author Maguerite Tonery.
- A new afterschool club to learn to play the bodhrán commenced last month.
- The school will be closed tomorrow to facilitate staff development related to the new Primary Curriculum Framework.
- The new hot meals provider has been operating in our school for the past month. The response from pupils has been positive. A survey to parents by the provider has been distributed.
- Matt, two parents and Siobhán O'Higgins met last week to begin a new project to teach about consent to all ages in the school. The first step will be surveys for teachers and parents followed by consultation with past and older pupils.
- The junior and senior infants visited the Teddy Bears' Hospital at the University of Galway in February. 2nd Class also went to the University for the Healthy Heroes event.
- Lucía, a teacher trainee from Spain, is working in a different classrooms.
- Junior Infants continue to work with an artist, Pater Bradley, as part of the Teacher-Artist Partnership programme.
- A number of children submitted entries to the Texaco Art Competition, which was facilitated by the Creative Schools Committee.

Financial Report

- Budget targets are being met. Significant spending related to the sensory spaces remain unspent.
- The accounts were certified and submitted to the FSSU on time.

Policies for Review

The Board ratified the comprehensive revision of the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment. The Board approved the PE Curriculum Plan, noting the equipment inventory needs to be confirmed. The Board also approved the revised Handwriting Policy.

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Signature Date