

Knocknacarra Educate Together NS
Board of Management Meeting
14th December 2022, 19.00

Present: Paul Adams (chairperson and patron nominee), Liz Daly (female parent nominee), Louise Shields (community nominee), Vivienne Kelly (teacher nominee) and Matt Wallen (principal and secretary)

Apologies: Aneil Rawat (male parent nominee), Maggie Hall (patron nominee) and Elaine Keane (community nominee)
Paul chaired the meeting.

November Minutes

The minutes from the November meeting were approved.

Principal's Report

Enrolment

- There are currently 214 pupils enrolled in eight classes.
- The enrolment period for new pupils is open but closes on the 6th January.
- A very successful Open Evening for prospective families took place on 7th December. Also, a number of families are making individual appointments to view the school.

Attendance

- The attendance percentage to date is 91.4%. Illness, particularly in two classes in the past two weeks, has effected attendance. Six children have more than 20 absences. The attendance is being monitored closely for two families. 23 of children currently have perfect attendance.

Curriculum Development

- In addition to the ongoing school self-evaluation process related to ethos, the staff have discussed areas to focus on for the balance of the year in response to mitigating any lasting effects of the school closures during the pandemic. The staff has decided to focus on handwriting and practicing and promoting positive relationships in the school community.

Policies

- The review checklist for the Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy that was reviewed at the last meeting needs to be completed.
- The policy on Pupil Committees is delayed but will be ready for the Board in the new year.
- The Admissions Policy requires revision as directed by the Department to include our school planning area as well as a statement of cooperation with the NCSE.
- The policies on Afterschool Activities and Substance Use are ready for review with minor changes.
- It is proposed that a community meeting involving the board, pupils and parents take place on a Sunday afternoon in January to start the process of creating the next five-year school plan. This will be complemented with work during the school day involving pupils and staff.

Building

- Work is ongoing related to the heating system. It is functional, but a new timer system and hopefully thermostatic rad valves can be fitted in the new year.

Misc. Events/Information

- The World Children's Day event was positive and led to lots of attention through media appearances on Flirt FM and in the City Tribune.
- Assemblies and potlucks with parents are taking place this week, and so far it has been wonderful to have gatherings like this for parents again.
- Congratulations to the School Ambassadors who did a fantastic job at the Open Evening. The praise from parents who visited was noteworthy.
- Many thanks to the teachers for their efforts during the parent-teacher meetings and to the parents for attending. We had 100% participation either in person or through phone calls.
- Congratulations to 5th Class who have been selling hot chocolate to fund their school tour. They were so successful they made more than required and will be donating a significant amount to charity.
- The school received fantastic new circus equipment from Amélie and Galway Community Circus to help us teach science concepts and circus skills.

Signature

Date

- There will be a fundraiser on Tuesday in aid of Crumlin Children's Hospital, and we will have a whole-school assembly.
- New afterschool clubs will be organised soon to begin in the new term.

PTA Report

The PTA held an AGM in November. Claire King will continue as chairperson. Aga Nowosad-Kelly will be vice-chairperson. The secretary will be rotated. The PTA kindly organised volunteers for the Open Evening and the potlucks. A date was set for the Spring Fair, Saturday, 13th May.

Financial Report

- Financial targets are being met.
- A one-off Cost of Living Grant was received by the school from the Department.
- The 2021-2022 accounts will be sent to an accountant for certification.

Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy

The Board completed the required checklist for the policy that was ratified at the previous meeting.

Admissions Policy

Two substantive changes were made to the Admissions Policy to fulfil requirements set out by the Department of Education. As a school created to fill a demographic need, we are obliged to include the school planning area in the policy. This includes most of Galway and beyond and will have little to no effect on our admissions process as the vast majority of the applicants are living locally. The second change was a commitment to cooperate with the National Council for Special Education if asked to open a special class. The two changes were agreed, and the policy will be sent to Educate Together for approval before it's ratification by the Board in the new year.

Substance Use and Afterschool Activities Policies

The two policies were reviewed and ratified with modest changes.

Planning for Consultation regarding the School Plan

It was agreed to have a community meeting on Sunday, 22nd January inviting parents, staff, children and Board members to attend and contribute to a consultation process for our new school plan. It will take place from 13.00 to 15.30. The Board will not meet in January.

Signature

Date