



Maynooth Educate Together NS September Newsletter 2019

Dear Parents

Welcome back to Maynooth Educate Together National School to commence yet another school year. The staff and I are looking forward to teaching your children and working with you in the course of the year.

We start our new school year with a growing school community. We have recruited new and additional staff, we have enrolled two Junior Infant classes and we welcome some newcomers to classes throughout the school.

We also have lost a member of staff to a school in the west of Ireland. Naos Connaughton has taken up the position of Principal of a school in his native Roscommon. We will miss Naos greatly. Naos made a huge contribution to our school, both in the classroom and with the many initiatives he pioneered and was involved in. He was very involved in sport in the school and has worked on our Active Flag project. Naos was popular with staff, parents and pupils. We wish Naos great success in his new teaching position and we thank him for his contribution to our school. The teaching position vacated by Naos will be filled by open competition in response to

advertisement. In the meanwhile, he is being replaced by Suzanne Moran, who is teaching on our Support team.

We have also lost Naomi Burke, who was our shared Support teacher. We thank Naomi for her work in the school and we wish her well as she moves on in her teaching career. She has been replaced by Marcella Maher, who is currently teaching First class.

Finally, we have recruited an additional member of staff: Elizabeth Foley will teach on our Support team for this school year. She is shared with two schools in Leixlip also.

We are delighted to welcome Hilary, our school secretary, back to school after a long illness. We wish Hilary well for this school year.

Also, Pamela Brunton SNA has returned from maternity leave, so welcome back to Pamela also

The children are settled back to work now. Most pupils have all of their school books and thank you for this.

Our new school building is nearing completion and we look forward to moving over in the coming weeks. We will inform you when we have a definite timeframe for the move.

We will continue with the arrival and dismissal routines as established in the last school year. Please see details set out below in this newsletter. We ask that parents adhere to these practices to ensure the easy flow of traffic through the school ground each day. If your child can walk or cycle, please encourage this as this will reduce the traffic on site. Martin, our school caretaker, will monitor traffic daily

Please do not park your vehicle on the grounds of the Gaelscoil. Likewise, we do not expect parents from the Gaelscoil to use our parking facilities.

Please feel free to introduce yourself to your child's teacher and if you wish to make an appointment to meet with the teacher please contact the school at schoolsecretary@maynoothet.ie to arrange a mutually suitable time. Similarly, if you wish to meet with me at any stage, please contact Hilary and arrange a date and time.

Marie Hand. School Principal.

2019-2020: School Staff

Principal: Marie Hand

Deputy Principal: Elaine Phelan

Special Duties Post Holder: Aimee Egan

Special Duties Post Holder: Angela Langan.

Class Teachers:

Clare Dooley: Junior Infants

Elaine Phelan: Junior Infants

Catherine Collins Senior Infants.

Angela Langan/Sinead Courrell: Senior Infants.

Marcella Maher: First Class.

Noel Carey: Second Class.

Mary Quinn: Third Class.

Robert Leonard: Fourth Class.

Aimee Egan/Noreen Keane: Fifth Class (shared post)

Thomas Treacy: Sixth Class

Stephanie Mc Cormac : Junior ASD class

Robert Potter: Senior ASD Class.

Support Teaching team:

Claire Dixon

Eoin Mac Domhnaill

Suzanne Moran

Elizabeth Foley

Special Needs Assistants:

Pat Cannon/Cristina Onofreiciuc

Alison Monaghan

Joan Eley

Anne Downes

Eileen Neary

Pamela Brunton

Ann Weigel Bus Escort

School Secretary: Hilary Kellett.

School Caretaker: Martin Maher.

Dates to remember:

The 2019/2020 **school calendar** can be found on the school website www.maynoothet.ie. Just click on the Parents tab on the homepage and click on school calendar. The calendar is also included in the school homework journal.

Please see below the calendar of school events for the coming school year.

School Calendar of Events 2019/20

September	October
18 th – 24 th Languages Week	14 th – 18 th Maths Week
Green Schools Active Schools	24 th Spooky Walk Dance
November	December
11 th – 15 th Science Week	19 th Winter Concert & Fair
19 th & 20 th Parent –Teacher Meetings	

January	February
20 th – 24 th Friendship Week	11 th Internet Safety Day
March	April
2 nd – 13 th Seachtaine na Gaeilge	2 nd Autism Awareness Day
Prep for St. Patrick's Day Parade	23 rd World Book Day
	29 th New Parents Evening
May	June
School Tours	17 th School Reports
6 th New Junior Infants Visit	18th & 19th Senior Sports Days 22 nd & 23 rd Junior Sports Days
18 th – 30 th Standardised Testing	24 th Graduation
Blue Star Programme Date TBD	

Our School Website www.maynoothet.ie is a communication tool between school and home and will be updated regularly. We will also communicate to parents via email and text sent from our school database and also our monthly newsletters.

ePayments of school Payments :

On our school website we have a link on our parents page to facilitate online payments to our school. This is a facility which is common in other schools. This Aladdin ePayment system is available to parents/guardians of children in our school.

Our school uses the Aladdin software service for administrative purposes and the ePayment system will give you access from an internet browser on your computer, phone or tablet to make secure payments to the school using your credit or debit card. The purpose of the ePayment system is to facilitate the easier payment of school money collections for parent/guardians and to reduce the amount of cash and cheques being sent into our school in line with recent central bank directives.

Aladdin uses state of the art security to safeguard information entered by you and the school and data is stored and processed in strict compliance with Irish data protection laws.

Going forward, when money is due for any school activity that is relevant to your children, you will **receive a text/email message** containing your **payment access link**. This will bring you to a parent payment page which will contain all payments requested for all siblings in a family. When you have completed your payment, you will be issued with a reference number. You will also receive an email receipt which will contain details of the transaction and reference number. Please quote this reference number in any queries you may have as regards this payment with the school.

On the parents page of our website www.maynoothet.ie you will see an epayments badge. If you click on this badge, you will be directed through the process.

We hope that you will find the Aladdin ePayments facility useful and that it is a very successful system for all. The School Secretary will welcome any feedback or questions you may have.

Update of parent email addresses and mobile phone numbers:

You will receive a copy of your contact details as recorded on our Aladdin School Information system. Please return the information slip, indicating either that the details are correct or alternatively make the necessary changes. Our ePayment system is dependent on email addresses so it is crucial that our database contains the current addresses and numbers being used by you.

Additionally in this school year as part of our environmentally friendly actions we will discontinue sending home printed school newsletters and instead we will send it to you by email and it will also be posted on our school website.

Child Safety. We have in place procedures to ensure that your children are safe at school and we constantly review these procedures. Our school gate is closed each morning at 9.00am and remains closed until 12.45pm. Children are supervised at playtimes and pupils have been instructed to stay off the grass along the roadside perimeter fence and not to engage in conversation with passers-by.

Children walking home unaccompanied/ Dangerous Play: We encourage children to walk to and from school if possible. It is important that our pupils do not engage in dangerous play on the way home from school ie pushing and shoving each other on to the road. This is foolish and dangerous behaviour. All children are

encouraged to report any such behaviour if they witness it. We ask that you reinforce this message from home.

Pupil Expenses letter:/ Book Rental: in the coming days you will receive a request for the payment of pupil expenses with an accompanying breakdown of how this money will be spent.

- **Expansion of School Book Rental Scheme**

The Board of Management is committed to continuing our School Book Rental Scheme as this provides a significant reduction in the outlay that parents incur in purchasing school textbooks. A great number of school books have been taken off the school booklist e.g Gaeilge books, English readers, History, Geography and Science books.,and atlases. These books are provided for pupils through our book rental grant. These books must be well looked after and students are not permitted to write on them, as they will be used for a number of years. Books damaged or lost by students must be replaced by the student. In order to fund the scheme **Parents are requested to pay €10 rental per child for these books. We will send a text of request for this payment shortly.**

- **Pupil Expenses:** Each school year parents/guardians are asked to contribute to the cost of consumables, registrations and licences that relate directly to specific expenses and costs associated with your child/children attending our school. A letter outlining the proposed expenditure of the monies pupil will be sent home to you. You will receive a text/email message containing your access link. This payment will be conducted through our Aladdin epayment system. If you prefer, you may send the payment to the

school office., however we encourage everyone to pay via the online payment system.

Allianz Pupil Insurance: In recent years we have bulk purchased pupil insurance at a reduced rate. We will bulk purchase insurance again this year. Your payment of this insurance is included in the €50 pupil expenses that we request is paid for each pupil in our school.

Other Important School Information

Nut Allergy Awareness

We currently have children with nut allergies attending our school. To ensure that children with a nut allergy are protected from an unintentional exposure to nuts we do not permit nuts or nut products in lunch boxes ie nutella, peanut butter, nutty bars etc. If you are in doubt as to the ingredients of a product, please do not include it in the lunchbox. Thank you in advance for your co-operation with this very serious issue.

School Attendance (As per our school attendance policy)

Maynooth Educate Together NS recognises the direct link between school attendance and pupil progress. Therefore we promote good attendance throughout the school year and request that all absences from school are explained. Parents are requested to provide the class teacher with a written explanation for all absences.

- **Attendance:** Annually we report all absences to Tusla, the Statutory Educational Welfare Services. We also submit a referral to Tusla where we have a cause for concern over a student's attendance. We work closely with families where there are genuine difficulties re school attendance and we request that all parents keep us informed of these difficulties.
- **Absences : All absences must be explained in writing.** Please use the forms which have been given to pupils to explain absences to your child's teacher. Otherwise please send in a written note. This note should be sent to the class teacher on the day the child returns to school. As these notes are filed and remain in the school we ask that parents do not write the note in the school journal. A separate note works best.
- **School text re: unexplained absences:** At the end of each calendar month we will audit the absences. A text will be sent to parents to provide a written explanation for all unexplained absences. When class teachers receive this written explanation, the absence will be recorded as explained.
- **Notification of late arrivals:** Parents will also be contacted monthly if children are repeatedly late for school with a specific request that children be brought to school punctually each morning. Significant time is lost by pupils arriving late to school.
- **Assembly:** Pupils will enter the school via the main door and will assemble each morning on the school yard behind the school building. This yard is supervised from 8.20am

each morning. At 8.30am children will be collected from these lines and brought to their classes by their teachers.. The children will gather in the **main hallway** on wet mornings.

- **Drop and Go:** There are now a large number of cars entering the school grounds in the morning. Can we request that parents who drive to school to drop off your children and go, thereby reducing the congestion in the school grounds.
- **Roll Call:** Each morning, the roll call will be taken at 9.30am. Any child not present at school by 9.30am will be marked absent.
- **Dismissal:** We will continue the dismissal practices and times of the last school year.
- **Infants** will be collected from the front of the school on dry days and from the front hallway on wet days. **Junior Infants** will be dismissed at 1.00pm and **Senior Infants** at 1.10pm. We ask that children are collected promptly.
- **Classes 1st to 6th:** pupils who walk, travel by bus or cycle to school will be dismissed **from the front hall at 2.00pm**. All remaining pupils may be **collected from the ASD yard at 2.10pm**. We ask that children are collected promptly.
- **Permission to leave school unaccompanied** by parent/guardian: All pupils who wish to travel home from school unaccompanied, must provide the class teacher with a signed permission slip. These permission slips have been sent home with the children for signing.
- **Children leaving early or arriving late:** Parents are required to sign out children when collecting them during

school hours and sign them back in if returning to the school during school hours.

- **Sick children:** if your child is sick, do not send them to school. Many infections are spread by children coughing and sneezing in the classrooms ie droplet spread or airborne spread. Sometimes it is better to keep children home for a day or two.
- **School Entrance:** Our school reception office is located in Room 8, adjacent to the entrance hall. Our School Secretary will deal with all queries from this office. All visitors to the school are required to sign in at Reception.
- **Parking:** We request your continued co-operation with our parking arrangements, thus ensuring that our school buses will be able to access the bus parking areas each morning. Martin, our School Caretaker, will continue to supervise this area in the mornings. Parents are asked to be mindful also at the pedestrian crossing area, to drive slowly and to avoid parking on the crossing areas. Pupil safety is paramount and we require the co-operation of everyone to ensure this.
- **Early arrivals:** It has come to our attention that some children are arriving in the school yard early in the mornings. The school does not accept responsibility for students before 8.20am.
- **Child Protection Policy:** The Designated Liaison Person is Marie Hand. The role of DLP is to accept reports of child protection concerns and to report these concerns to the Health Services Executive.

- **Administration of Medicines:** Administration of Medicines is not permitted without the approval of the Board of Management. This applies also to children self-administering eg. inhalers. Students should not carry an inhaler or medication to school in their schoolbag. Please familiarise yourself with the procedures set out in our school policy which may be viewed on the school website. If you have any questions or queries, please speak to the class teacher or the Principal, Marie
- **Homework:** Class teachers have informed parents on the expectations for homework in this school year. Homework should be completed to a high standard and please keep teachers informed if homework is creating difficulties for your child.
- **School Policies:** All school policies, curricular and organisational are available in hard copy from the school office.
- **Parent/Teacher Communication:** In the interests of your child's education, it is essential that all parents/guardians establish a good and consistent communication relationship with the child's class teacher. If you wish to speak to your child's teacher please contact the school to arrange this meeting. Please inform the teacher of anything that may affect your child's schooling. Please do not engage in lengthy communications with class teachers in the school yard. Teachers are responsible for their classes on the yard.
- **Notes to Teachers:** Children need to inform the class teacher of all notes written by parents into the school

journal, as teachers do not routinely check each child's journal on a daily basis.

- **Healthy Eating Policy:** Please ensure that your child has a healthy lunch each day in accordance with our Health Promotion Policy. This policy may be viewed on the school website and is also available in hard copy from school reception.
- **Educate Together Journals:** Each year, Pupils have received their homework journals from the Educate Together Head Office. These journals are produced to a very high standard and contain useful information for parents. Please ensure that you check that your child is writing down the assigned homework each day. This journal contains the calendar for the school year.
- **Aistear:** *in this school year we plan to expand the delivery of the Aistear programme in both our infant classes. The national Council for Curriculum Assessment has published: Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework. Aistear is for all children from birth to six years of age. It can be used in the whole range of early childhood settings including in infant classes in primary schools. Highlighting the fact that children learn many different things at the same time, the Framework uses four interconnected themes to describe the content of childrens learning and development: **Well-being, Identity and Belonging, Communicating and Exploring and Thinking.** Aistear highlights the critical role of play, relationships and language for young childrens learning, In doing this, it provides a guide to using play, interactions, partnerships*

with parents, and assessment to help childrens progress in their learning and development. In the course of the school year, our Infant teachers will organize play areas to complement the theme currently being taught in the classroom. A variety of play areas will be used to engage children and to cater for different learning opportunities. A number of resources will be purchased by the school for these play areas, and parents may at times be asked to contribute to our resource bank for a particular theme.

School Library: As our library books are packed up and ready for the school move, we will not commence the weekly library until after the move to the new school.

Afterschools sports club Our teachers have sent home application forms for the afterschools club. Please return these forms as soon as possible if you are interested in securing a place.

For the attention of parents of 5th and 6th class pupils:

Relationships and Sexuality Education: As in previous years Mary Glynn, **RSE facilitator**, will meet with parents of 5th and 6th class pupils on **Tuesday October 8th** in the school at 8pm. She will outline the RSE programme that she will teach to the 5th and 6th class pupils. The programme will focus mainly on the Busy Bodies booklet. On **Tuesday October 15th** she will teach the puberty section of the RSE policy to 5th class children. On **Thursday**

October 17th^h she will spend the day with **6th** class pupils, teaching them the puberty, relationships, conception and birth elements of the programme. *It is very important that parents attend this meeting and also that parents familiarise themselves with the Busy Bodies booklet which will be sent home. This programme may be viewed online also. Please return the Busy Bodies booklets to the school after the Halloween break.*

- **Junior Infants Photos:** on September 19th , County Photos will visit our school to take the school photographs of the Junior infant pupils
- **Flute lessons:** Next week Eoin will commence Flute lessons. He will send home application forms tomorrow. There are 3 places available in his current class. Lessons will take place each Wednesday after school. Please return forms promptly if you wish to acquire a place. Last year this class was a great success.

Parent Volunteers: The Board of Management encourages parents to volunteer in the school in a number of areas e.g. school library, school outings and trips, paired reading, in-class support in curricular areas, school events etc. We look forward to further expanding this volunteering in this school year. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Marie, School Principal, or your child's class teacher.

All parents volunteering must be Garda Vetted by the National Vetting Bureau through our patron body Educate Together . Please contact Marie, Principal, for the Garda Vetting forms. Please note that when completing the application forms, parents must specifically indicate the area of activity in which they want to volunteer and may not commence volunteering until they have their Garda vetting status confirmed by the School Principal.

We encourage all parents to come to the school to share aspects of culture, food, crafts, traditions, language etc. with our pupils. Children learn so much from these visits and it brings their book learning to life. Please let your child's teacher know if you would be willing to share your culture with the class.