



Maynooth Educate Together Newsletter

November/December 2019

School Move: I have some wonderful news to share with you all this morning. We are on the MOVE! Yesterday afternoon the new school building was handed over to the patron body Educate Together, who in turn handed the school keys to Paul and I. I am sure that you are all really looking forward to seeing the new building, and you will get that opportunity when we return from the Christmas break. The Department of Education and Skills has granted us a 2-day closure for the move, so the school will close on January 7th and 8th. That means that we return to our current school building on January 6th for our last day here. Then the school will close for 2 days ie Jan 7th and 8th(Tuesday and Wednesday). And on Thursday morning all pupils will return to the new school. The Department has awarded us a grant to facilitate the move and we have engaged the services of a moving company. So these are indeed exciting times. I take this opportunity to thank you all for your patience in recent months. The oversight and the handover process is a

protracted one. However, I am sure that you agree that it is important that everything is in order and that we are confident that our school building is a top class facility. And it is.

Thank you all for your support of the school and staff in this school year. I wish you all a very happy holiday and I look forward to seeing you all in 2020.

Marie Principal

Dates to Remember

- Christmas Holidays – December 23rd-January 3rd (inclusive) School reopens January 6th.
- School move closure: January 7th and 8th.
- Primary Language Curriculum Closure – January 17th

Christmas Concert – 19th December

We have a very limited Christmas Concert this year, due to the upcoming school move next month. The relevant classes have been notified of relevant times. If you wish to bring your child home with you after their class performance, please ensure to inform their teacher and sign them out in the Attendance Book in Hilary's Office. Thank you for your co-operation with this.

Visiting the School: All Parents and Visitors to the school must report to the Secretary or Principal. **Parents are NOT permitted to go directly to classrooms.** All children must be signed into the Attendance Book (located in the office) if they arrive in school after 8.45am. If leaving the school before home time, they must also be signed out. Thank you for your co-operation.

Visit to Maynooth Lodge Nursing Home: On Monday 16 December our Junior Infant Classes, accompanied by 3 guitarists from 6th class, visited the local nursing home. Dressed in their reindeer hats and Christmas jumpers they entertained the elderly residents who were delighted with the little visitors. Thank you to Maynooth Lodge for their wonderful welcome, and for providing both children and staff with refreshments. Sincere thanks also to James Mullally Coach Hire (Maynooth), who provided the bus free of charge to the school.

Blue Flag Programme: 5th and 6th classes travelled into Dublin for a tour at Dublin Castle – the original seat of power in Ireland. Pupils are currently writing to our MEPs and inviting them to visit the school to discuss the European Union and specifically addressing the issue of climate change.

Bebra's Math Challenge: Our pupils from 3rd-6th classes took part in the national Bebra's Math Challenge Competition in Maynooth University on November 11th. Great scores were won by many of our pupils and we now await confirmation of finalists for the second round of the competition in May.

Froebel Students: We currently have 2 students from Froebel College on a long-term placement in our school. Stephanie and Emma are both 4th year students and have been assisting in Special Education teaching since November. In the new year they will commence class teaching practice placements, Stephanie in 2nd class and Emma in 4th class. We thank both girls for their work and wish them success in their teaching practice placements.

Spooky Walk Success: Sincere thanks to the PTA for their organisation of the spooky walk, which was a great success.

Volunteer Parents: A number of parents are volunteering in the school at present with paired reading and assisting with classroom activities. Sincere thanks for their support.

Also, a number of parents have volunteered to accompany our pupils on trips from the school. Without this support we could not provide these trips, all of which are of huge educational value. So, very sincere thanks to all volunteers who have walked with our pupils, or travelled by bus on a school outing.

A very sincere thanks also to all parents who created a holiday atmosphere for the children in the last 2 weeks. Santa arrived, totally unexpectedly, and the excitement was super. The decorations and the trees set a lovely festive atmosphere and provided the perfect background to the class performances. So thanks to all parents who helped in this holiday season.

Parent/Teacher Meetings: These will be held in February. We will notify parents of timetables in the New Year.

Football & Active Flag: This year has been a very active year for the school, so far this year we have taken part in athletics competitions, football competitions and we have been encouraging active travel to the school. The Active Flag Committee have been championing '*The Twelve Exercises of Christmas*' with all classes in the school doing a new exercise every day up until the Christmas break.

Recently both our 4th class boys and girls played in the FAI Futsal Competition in Celbridge. Both teams played really well and represented the school admirably. It was their first experience of competitive sport in primary school.

We have many exciting sporting events and activities planned for next year, we will be having a rugby coach in January and children will get to play in a tag rugby Blitz with other schools in February. We will also be taking part in Junior Park Run again and have more athletics and football competitions to look forward to in the New Year. We will be partitioning the yard to encourage more varied sporting activities during break time, as well as a *talk while you walk* pathway where children who do not wish to partake in sporting activities can instead choose to chat to friends while they walk/run around the yard.

In early 2020 the Active Flag Committee will be sending out parent and child surveys to determine how we can encourage even more activity in the school, this is also a necessary step in the school obtaining our Active Flag.

Primary Language Curriculum School Closure: The DES has granted all schools a 1-day closure for staff PDST facilitated workshop on the primary language curriculum in the coming school year. Our workshop will take place in the school and will take place on **January 17.**

Whole School Evaluation Revisit: on Wednesday October 9th an inspector from the DES visited the school as a follow up to our Whole School Evaluation which took place in 2017. The school was found to be fully compliant on a Child Protection Check. Also, good progress was recorded in the areas of Communication and Differentiation and Assessment of Learning. The inspector acknowledged the huge work that has been done in the school in the area of Gaeilge and she advised that the school move forward and complete our updated whole school policy in this school year.

Junior Infant Enrolment: Places in our Junior Infant classes for September 2020 have been offered. A meeting will be held on the evening of April 29th with the parents of all incoming Junior infants.

Board of Management News

The Board of Management for Maynooth Educate Together 2019-2023 is as follows:

Patron Representatives: Paul Croghan
Elizabeth Bracken

Teacher Representatives: Marie Hand
Elaine Phelan

Parent Representatives: Carol Connolly
Jonathan Hough

Community Representatives: Geraldine O’Kane
Eddie Tobin

The Board of Management will hold monthly meetings on the 3rd Wednesday of each month.

PTA News - December

This term has felt different to previous years, the whole school have been in a holding pattern waiting to find out when the move will happen. Due to space restrictions and uncertainty about the dates we had to postpone our Scholarly Book Fair and in December the decision was made to cancel the Winter Fair and Concert.

While this has been disappointing for staff, students and parents we fully appreciate the difficulties the School has been dealing with and we know that the wait will be worth it in the long run.

That is not to say that we haven't been busy!

In November we went through the Parent Nominee Process for the Board of Management positions. We were delighted that Jonathon Hough was ready, willing and able to go forward again as Male Parent Nominee and we had two very capable Female Parent Nominees step up to the plate. Thank you to Liz Wilson and Carol Connolly for doing that. Thank you to everyone who returned their votes and congratulations to Carol for securing the nomination in the end. The good news is that as Liz is a parent of children in Junior Infants, there will be at least one more opportunity for her to go forward for the position in 4 years.

Thank you to everyone who completed the Road Safety Survey. Our Deputation to Kildare County Council was very well received and we are looking forward to hearing from them in February regarding the next steps; initial plans, public consultation and hopefully a fully safe R405 before the end of 2020!

Last week there was a very special visitor due to the School on Friday morning. There was a BIG rush to get a few decorations up so thank you to Carol, Carol and Daniela for making that happen. He visited each class and gave the children a small gift which was funded by the PTA. A special thanks to Liz and Keith Bracken for contacting the Man of the Moment and to Liz Wilson for keeping him company on his travels around the school.

This week our Junior Infants and the Guitar classes went to the TLC Nursing Home to perform for the residents. We know they brought great joy to the room so well done to all!

We would like to take this opportunity to wish the whole school community a fun and festive break and we look forward to some news about the move in 2020.

Thank you as always,

The PTA Committee