



## Maynooth Educate Together NS Newsletter October 2020

**Dear Parents, I wish you all a Very Happy Halloween.  
Keep safe and have fun!**

**Halloween School Events:** On Friday October 23<sup>rd</sup>, our pupils dressed up in their Halloween outfits. There was great excitement as the children paraded their outfits. The school walk took place on our school grounds. It was a pale substitute for our usual Spooky Sponsored Walk, but nevertheless, it was enjoyed by all.

**6<sup>th</sup> Class Pumpkin Competition:** Our 6<sup>th</sup> class pupils took part in a pumpkin competition. The end products were amazing. The winners of the competition were: 1<sup>st</sup>: Adam. 2<sup>nd</sup>: Karina 3<sup>rd</sup>: Ryan. Well done to all.

**Covid-19:** Very sincere thanks to you all for your continued co-operation with our Covid-19 measures. To date our school procedures have been successful and our school environment is safe for us all. We look forward to the coming weeks up to our Christmas break. Please do keep your child/children at home if they feel unwell or have any symptoms of a cold or a flu. They should return to school when these symptoms have cleared up. Also, please do inform me if your child is being tested for Covid-19.

**October update on building works:** Building works on the second phase of our school building are continuing and we are very happy with the rate of progress. The Department of Education and Skills have provided us with two prefabs to address our accommodation issues until completion of the second phase of the building. These prefabs are nearing completion and we hope to access them in the coming weeks.

**Pupil Expenses letter:** a letter from the Board of Management requesting payment of €50 per pupil for expenses, is being sent along with

this email. This letter outlines the expenditure covered by this payment. We request that this payment is paid in the coming weeks. This payment may be made via our ePayments link on the parents page of our school website [www.maynoothet.ie](http://www.maynoothet.ie).

**Book rental:** We have in recent years taken a number of books from the school booklists, and have purchased these books using our book rental scheme. The books are as follows: our English and Gaeilge readers, graded English and Gaeilge reading schemes, and our History, Geography and Science books. Children have the use of these books throughout the school year and return them to the school at the end of the school year. This scheme needs annual reinvestment, due to our growing pupil numbers and also natural wastage and replacement needs.

**We request that parents pay a fee of €10 per pupil for annual book rental. Again, this payment may be paid via our online epayments, which is accessed via our parents page on our school website.**

**Epayments of School Payment:** The link on our school website parents page to facilitate *online payments* to our school is a permanent feature of this page. This is in response to being frequently asked about such a facility which is common in other schools. We strongly encourage all parents/guardians to use this epayment system to make school payments.

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.

### **Payment Process:**

- Payment is set up in school office. This is an individual pupil payment.
- School notifies parents of payment.
- Parents go to [ePayment icon](#) on payments section of Parents page.
- Enter your email address and click send. You will **receive a text/email message** containing your **payment access link**.
- This link will bring you to a payment page which will contain all payment requests for all siblings in a family.
- Once 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.*

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

### **Update of parent email addresses and mobile phone numbers:**

Please contact the school office if you have changed your email address or mobile phone number.

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

**Bereavement:** We extend our condolences to Pamela Brunton, our Special Needs Assistant, on the recent death of her Mum. May she rest in peace.

**School inspector Covid-19 check-up:** Helen Ní Dhuinn is our school inspector has conducted her school visit (virtual). She asked about our return to school and the successes and challenges we have experienced. She elaborated on the curriculum guidelines that were issued to schools, which placed the emphasis on Literacy, Numeracy, SPHE and PE. She encouraged the promotion of staff and pupil wellbeing, and oral language

lessons to provide the children with the language to describe and speak about life in these Covid-19 times. Providing our children with the language and the opportunity to use this language, is a major component of enabling children to cope with these difficult times.

**Additional teacher:** have been granted an additional permanent mainstream teacher for this school year. I am delighted to announce that Marcella Maher has been appointed to this permanent position. Marcella taught 1<sup>st</sup> class last year and she was on a 1-year contract in our Special Education team since September.

We will fill her vacated post in the coming weeks.

**School Photographer:** has visited the school and taken the photographs of our Junior Infants. These photographs will be purchased directly from the photographer.

**PE Equipment:** we have purchased some additional PE equipment, which will be used on the school at daily yard time, and also at PE classes.

**Fire Drill:** we have conducted a fire-drill, which was successful, with the entire school. This fire-drill will be conducted termly, with the classes being practiced in an orderly evacuation from the school and making their way to their class assembly point.

**PTA Christmas Card Initiative:** the PTA have organised this Christmas Card initiative as a school fundraiser. Thank you for your support with this initiative.

**Intel Solar Panels:** Intel organised a photo op on the school grounds to launch its Schools Solar Panel initiative. Robert Potter, our Green Schools co-ordinator, and some of the Green Schools Committee, took part.

**Parent-Teacher meetings:** will be held virtually this year, using Microsoft Teams. We will inform you of the date in the coming weeks.

**Remote Learning Plan:** we are currently drafting a Remote Learning Plan, so we will be prepared for a school closure, should it happen. All classes are set up on Microsoft Teams, and junior classes are also set up on Seesaw. We will also use Zoom. This Learning plan will inform parents of how we will deliver the curriculum in a lock-down situation. We will circulate this plan in the coming weeks.

**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 i.e. nutella, peanut butter, nutty bars etc.** 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 email the class teacher with an explanation for each absence.

**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 students' 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.

**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.

**Parent Volunteers:** Due to the Covid-19 restrictions, we are unable to avail of parent volunteering within the school in this school year.

**Parent Concerns:** If you have any concerns regarding your child's education, I encourage you to contact me or your child's teacher as soon as possible. Issues brought to our attention at an early stage are very

often sorted quickly and satisfactorily. Good and constant communication is very important as we work as partners in the education of the children in our students. Contact School Principal: [principal@maynoothet.ie](mailto:principal@maynoothet.ie).