

# Principal's Report to Parents Following the Board of Management Meeting on Tuesday Sept 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023.



## Staffing Update

Teaching and Learning is under way in the school with staff and pupils working diligently. We have sixteen mainstream class teachers, three ASD special class teachers, two EAL teachers, two Supply Panel Teachers and seven teachers on the SET team. The pupils are also supported by eleven kind and caring Special Needs Assistants.

## Whole School Evaluation of Leadership and Learning (WSE-MLL)

The Principal gave an overview of the WSE process to the Board. The WSE will take place in the school on October 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. The Inspectors will visit classrooms, talk to the SEN Team, Leadership Team, Parents' Association, and the Board of Management. Surveys have been sent to Parents and Teachers, and the children will complete their survey on Tuesday.

## Testing

Both first classes were assessed using the PM Benchmarking Kit to establish what level individual pupils will start reading at and how the literacy groups will be formed for Literacy Lift Off which started this week. Junior Infants were given a short individual assessment and senior infants the Two Peas Phonological Awareness Assessment. First to Sixth classes are completing a Spelling assessment (SWST) now to establish any spelling patterns that are not fully consolidated by the pupils. The Quick Phonics Screener was used with first and second classes. The information from these assessments will inform teaching and learning in the coming weeks/term.

## Activities for the term ahead

The schedule of activities is in operation and a copy of the schedule sent to parents.

## NEPS Psychologist

This year Ms. Annette Corkery has been appointed as our school psychologist. Annette has already been in touch with us in relation discuss the work and service she will provide for the coming year to the school.

## School Breaktimes

The supervision schedule for the year has been organised and agreed by the Board.

## Pupil Safety Walking to School

Parents and PA members have concerns re. pupils walking to school as cars are parking on yellow lines and the entrance/exit to housing estates. Texts sent to all parents re. safe parking and care of pupils coming to school. The Board have asked all parents to be vigilant when driving pupils to school and to park safely. The Board also requests that parents do not park in the small car park at the front of the school as pupils from the ASD classes are brought to school and collected by car/bus and there should be no children or parents in the car park for health and safety reasons.

## Anti-Bullying Policy and Review

The Board completed the annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation by the school using the 'Checklist for Annual Review of the Anti-Bullying policy and its Implementation'. Notification of this is attached for all parents and staff on behalf of the Board. No incidents of bullying behaviour have been reported to the school since the last Board of Management meeting. The Board also ratified the updated Anti-Bullying Policy.

## Réalta

Our third ASD class is up and running and all three classes and new pupils are settling well with their SNAs. Integration has commenced commensurate with the needs and abilities of the children.

## Policies for Discussion and Ratification

The following policies have been updated and/or developed and were ratified by the Board:

- Dignity at Work – New - following input by all staff, both teachers and SNA.
- First Aid - New
- Mobile Phone - Updated
- Student Teacher and Transition Year Policy - New
- Acceptable Use Policy (Updated)
- Protected Disclosures Policy – New

The following Special education policies have also been updated as there have been changes in practice and personnel, an additional bus run and an additional ASD class.

- Additional Educational Needs Policy - Updated
- Réalta: Autism Spectrum Disorder Policy - Updated
- Bus Escort Policy - Updated
- Special Needs Assistant (SNA) Policy
- Intimate Care Policy – Updated

## Child Safeguarding Policy

The Board of Management formally adopted the revised procedures for child protection (*Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools - Revised 2023*) which came into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023 (Circular 0036/2023). The school's child safeguarding statement was updated in light of revised templates and signed by the Chairperson. The Board also reviewed the Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment and completed the revised Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement. The notification regarding the Board of Management's review of the Child Safeguarding Statement is attached to this email.

## School Self-Evaluation.

The Principal updated the Board in relation to the development of the Maths School Improvement Plan, the ongoing implementation of the Literacy Plan and the revitalising of the Gaeilge School Improvement Plan. Details of our School Self-Evaluation were included

in an email to parents last week. Our new SSE focus for 2023 – 2027 is in the area of wellbeing as this area was highlighted by staff in the discussion of key priorities for the school prior to the advertisement of the AP1 position.

### **Staff Meeting and Croke Park Meetings**

A staff meeting was held on August 28<sup>th</sup> and September 8<sup>th</sup> to discuss the beginning of year organisational matters and to introduce new staff members to SNI routines and procedures. Croke Park meetings are scheduled for Thursdays during the year. All mainstream staff have a Yellow Folder with the Curriculum grids/plans for the coming year and key organisational policies and schedules. Yellow folders are available in the staffroom for SEN/EAL Teachers. Susan Quain from PsyClass Ireland presented a workshop for all staff on 'Autism, Anxiety and the Calm Connected Classroom' and left a pack of useful resources to support classroom practice.

### **New Primary Maths Curriculum**

The Board discussed Circular 0039/2023: *Primary Maths Curriculum for Primary and Special Schools – Implementation and Support*. The school will explore and become familiar with the new curriculum during the 2023/2024 school year and will work towards implementation of the curriculum from September 2024. Training will be provided for the Principal and Post Holder in October. All schools will be assigned a school closure date from November 2023 to June 2024 to explore the Primary Maths Curriculum with and Oide professional learning leader.

### **Medical Register**

The Medical Register for pupils with medical care plans has been updated. This is located in the staff room so that all staff are aware of pupils who may need urgent medical attention. This information will also be included in the folder of information to be given to class teachers and also new/substitute teachers and Special Needs Assistants (as appropriate) who will be working with a child. A letter will be sent to all families whose children are on the medical register in the staff room.

### **Parents' Association (PA)**

The Principal reported on the Parents' Association AGM that took place in the school last Tuesday, September 19<sup>th</sup>. Details were sent to parents in last week's email. The Board also thanked Orla Murphy for her support and work as Chairperson of the PA for the past five years. A reminder of the new PA Committee:

Chairperson: Ber Alcock Earley  
Assistant Chairperson: Linda Monahan  
Secretary: Marie Shortt  
Assistant Secretary: Emma Hanbidge  
Treasurer: Jenny Maguire  
PRO: Una Kenny and Sandra O'Brien.

## **Summer Programme**

The school summer programme for pupils with ASD and additional needs was very successful. Fifty-five children attended the programme which ran for two weeks in both July and August.

## **Heartfelt Thank You**

On behalf of the staff of SNI, the Principal thanked all members of the Board, and in particular, Catherine Burke, the Chairperson for all her support of the school and work on our behalf over the past four years. The wisdom, advice and support from the Board of Management has been greatly valued over the past four years.