

STEPASIDE ETNS

SEPTEMBER 28TH 2026



STEPASIDE
Educate Together
National School



PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

There has been lots of start-of-year organisation happening behind the scenes, but classes are now settling nicely into their routines and the school is well and truly back in full swing. Over the past few weeks, every class has enjoyed their class meeting mornings, which have been a great success.

Plans are already being made for our Focus Weeks throughout the year, and, of course, Halloween planning is beginning to creep in too! 🎃 We have also held our PAC AGM and the first Board of Management meeting of the new school year, so there has been plenty happening across all areas of school life.

It has been a really positive start to the year, with lots more to look forward to over the coming weeks and months. We hope you enjoy catching up on everything that has been happening at SETNS in this newsletter!

Have a great week ahead,
Leona.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 1st Oct: Admissions opens for Junior Infants 2027/2028
- 1st Oct: Flu vaccine day in school
- 15th and 16th Oct: PAC Halloween Costume Swap
- 22nd Oct: 3rd & 4th Class - Halloween Safety Garda talk
- 23rd Oct: JI Admissions closes
- 23rd Oct: Hallowe'en Sponsored Walk

ADMISSIONS FOR 2027/28

Our Annual Admissions Notice is now published on the school website. This includes essential information and important dates relating to admissions for the following school year.

Admissions process for Junior Infants 2027/2028 begins 1st October, admissions process for Stepping Stones begins on 25th January and for other year groups on 4th April.

Alongside our Admissions Notice is our Admissions Policy. This policy has been updated to now include a requirement from the Department of Education in relation to an eligibility letter from the NCSE referring to admissions for Stepping Stones.

Please see the website for more info

Links to:
Admissions
Policy.

& Admissions
Notice

Please refer to Admission Policy and Notice for detailed information.

Applications made for the incorrect class/year will not be considered.

[CLICK HERE to apply for 2026/2027 mainstream classes \(Late Application\)](#)

Before contacting our busy office, please fully read our Admissions Notice and Admissions Policy below for detailed information.

[Admissions Policy](#)

[Admissions Notice 2027/2028](#)

[Code of Behaviour](#)



Pre-Enrolment
Application Form



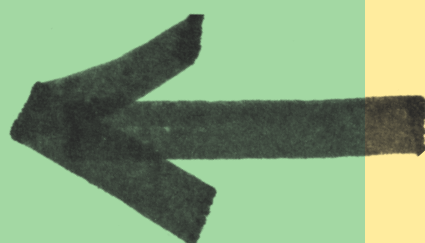
Admissions Policy



Annual Admissions
Notice



School Planning
Area Map



CHOSEN CHARITIES 2026/2027



Thank you to everyone who took the time to vote for our chosen charities for the year.

While every charity on our list is incredibly worthy of support, one of the lovely things about our annual vote is that, over the years, we get the opportunity to share our school community's fundraising efforts among many different organisations and causes.

We are delighted to announce this year's chosen charities and look forward to supporting them throughout the school year. We will keep families updated on the different events and initiatives taking place and let you know where the funds raised are being donated.

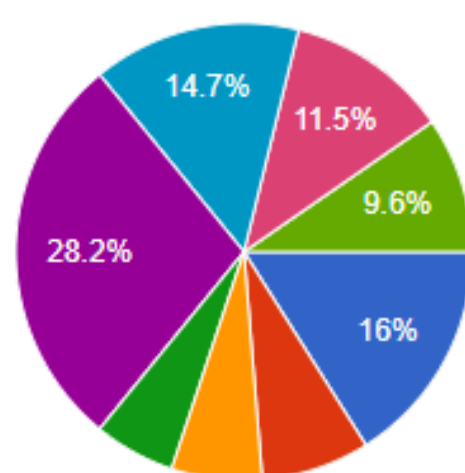
As always, thank you so much for your continued generosity and support of our school's fundraising efforts.

Local Charity: Laura Lynn Children's Hospice
International Charity: Unicef

Please vote for one local (Irish) charity.

156 responses

 Copy chart

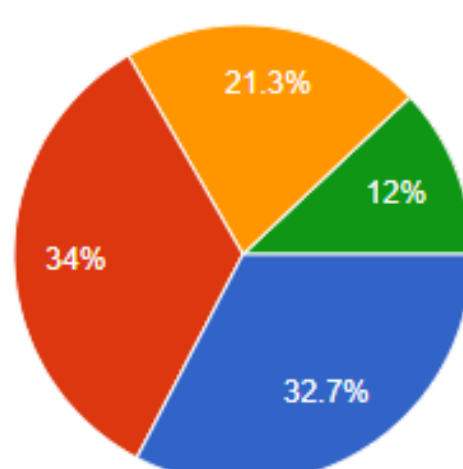


- Irish Cancer Society <https://www.cancer.ie/about-us>
- Barnardos <https://www.barnardos.ie/about-us/>
- The Simon Community <https://www.si...>
- Alzheimer Society of Ireland <https://alz...>
- Laura Lynn Children's Hospice <https://...>
- Children's Health Foundation <https://w...>
- ARFID Advocacy Ireland. <https://arfida...>
- Make a Wish Ireland <https://makeawis...>

Please vote for one International charity.

150 responses

 Copy chart



- Unicef <https://www.unicef.org/what-we-do>
- Irish Red Cross <https://www.redcross.ie/>
- RNLI <https://rnli.org/>
- Concern Worldwide <https://www.concern.net/>



LIBRARY UPDATE



We have been delighted to welcome the children (and staff) back to the library over the last few weeks and see the excitement of the children about the books. We have a wonderful comfy new couch and have added to our shelving capacity to accommodate our growing collection and make the books easier to find.

We will definitely need more helpers so if anyone is interested in giving a few hours per week please ask Magda/Nathalie about Garda Vetting for the Librarian position and we would be delighted to welcome you.



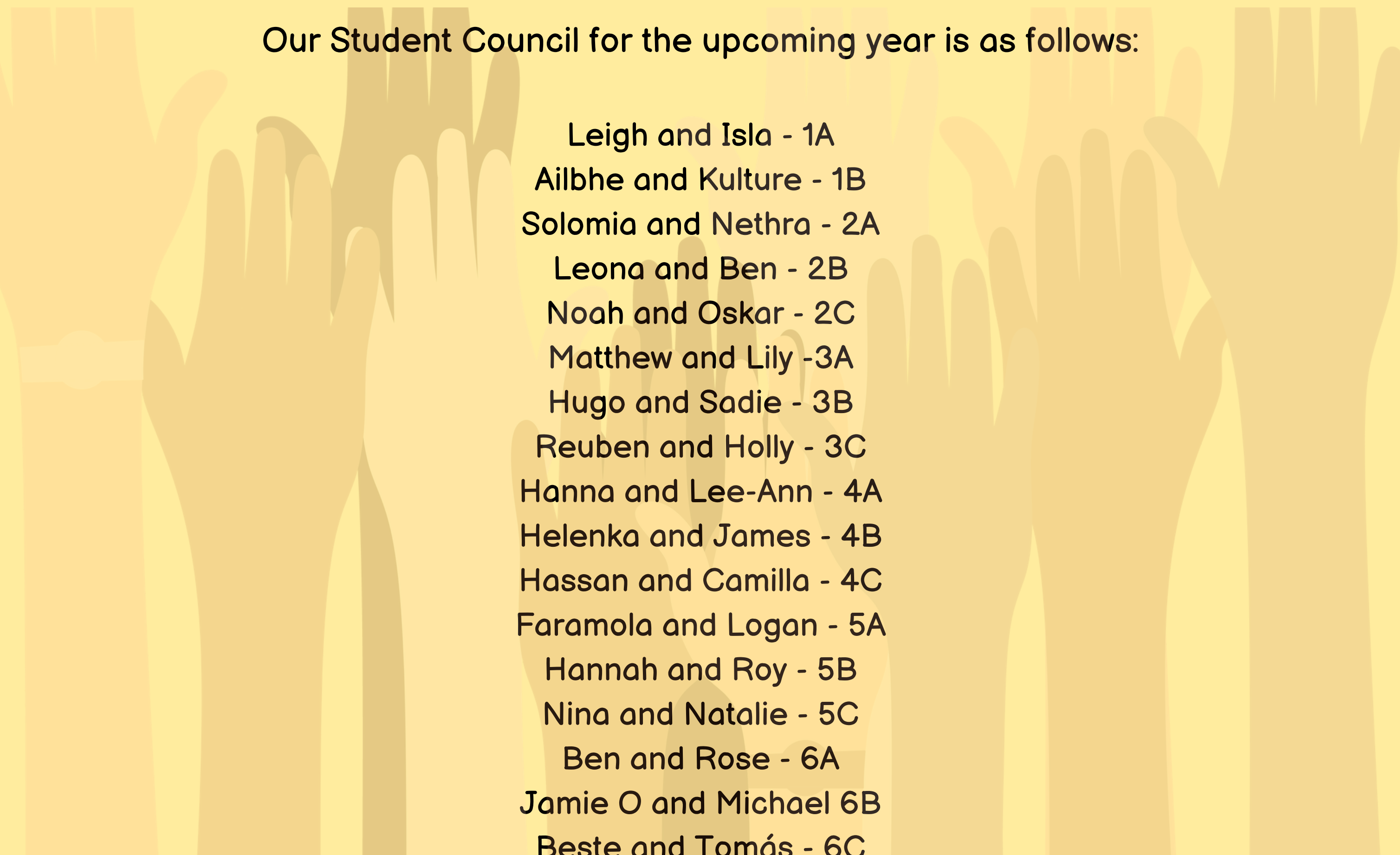
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF DEMOCRACY

The International Day of Democracy was held the 15th of September. It reminds us to consider the state of democracy around the world and reflect on what democracy means within our own country.

The day links nicely with our school elections for our student council. In preparation for our elections, the teachers delivered lessons on democracy and children had the opportunity to put themselves forward for election. Many children delivered great speeches to their peers outlining how they would make a good class representative.

The student council (our school Dáil) for this year 2026/2027, will consist of class representatives from 1st Class to Sixth Class and Stepping Stones. Nearly every class has now elected two students represent their class. While all these children will be members of our school Dáil for the year, they will only attend student council meetings for one school term. Well done to all students who put themselves forward for the role.

Our Student Council for the upcoming year is as follows:



Leigh and Isla - 1A
Ailbhe and Kulture - 1B
Solomia and Nethra - 2A
Leona and Ben - 2B
Noah and Oskar - 2C
Matthew and Lily - 3A
Hugo and Sadie - 3B
Reuben and Holly - 3C
Hanna and Lee-Ann - 4A
Helenka and James - 4B
Hassan and Camilla - 4C
Faramola and Logan - 5A
Hannah and Roy - 5B
Nina and Natalie - 5C
Ben and Rose - 6A
Jamie O and Michael 6B
Beste and Tomás - 6C

Stepping Stones Senior will send a representative to each meeting, to be shared amongst the students on a month to month basis.



SWIMMING

Swimming lessons have begun in Third class for two of our classes and will continue into November and December for 3C. The children will attend swimming lessons for 6 weeks, each Monday.

All children in Third Class will have the opportunity to attend swimming lessons during the year. Swimming lessons are held in Loughlinstown DLR Leisure. Swimming is part of the Primary School Curriculum and is an important life skill.



SCHOOL CLOSURES - PLEASE READ

We would like to give families advance notice of a number of school closure dates which have now been added to our school calendar.

Three of these closures relate to the enactment of the first specification of the new Primary Curriculum. This year, our school has been assigned ongoing support through Oide. An Oide facilitator will work directly with our staff on two of these days to support us in planning for and leading curriculum enactment in the area of Wellbeing, which includes Physical Education (PE) and Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE).

A third closure day will be school-led, allowing our staff to build on this work together and continue our whole-school planning for the new curriculum.

In addition, there will be a separate school closure for Language Awareness training, as outlined below.

Please note the following closure dates:

November 6th 2026

February 24th 2027

April 21st 2027

June 2nd 2027

We appreciate that school closures require families to make alternative arrangements, so we are sharing these dates as early as possible to allow plenty of time for planning. All dates have also been added to the school calendar.

Thank you, as always, for your understanding and support as our staff undertake this important professional learning and prepare for the implementation of the new Primary Curriculum.

CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT AND RISK ASSESSMENT

Stepaside ETNS would like to inform you that the Board of Management have now adopted the 2025 Child Protection Guidelines in full, and have updated our Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment. You will find hard copies of the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment as well as the Child Friendly Safeguarding Statement displayed at the main entrances to the school, in all classrooms, the staff room and support rooms. This is also available on our website [here](#). Notice of the annual review will be posted on our website also.

Thank you for your continued support.

BÍ CINEÁLTA FEEDBACK

Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to contribute to our ongoing review of our Bí Cineálta Policy.

We have received a significant amount of thoughtful and constructive feedback from parents and guardians, staff, our Board of Management and the Neurodiversity Subcommittee of the PAC.

The Board felt that all of the feedback received was extremely valuable and worthwhile and rather than rushing the review process, we want to ensure that each contribution is given proper consideration.

This feedback is now being reviewed and will help inform further changes to the policy, with a revised draft to be brought to our next Board of Management meeting for consideration.

It is very important to us that all voices within our school community are heard and valued as part of this process. Over the coming weeks, we will also be gathering student voice, ensuring that the experiences and perspectives of our pupils contribute meaningfully to the review.

Ultimately, we want our Bí Cineálta Policy to reflect the practices, supports and approaches that happen every day in our school. It should be a live, working document that continues to develop alongside the needs of our school community.

A CRACKING START FOR OUR GAELIC TEAMS!

A huge congratulations to both our boys' and girls' Gaelic teams, who have had a cracking start to the year, with both teams securing a win in their first game of the school year! A big thank you to Luke, Richie and Stephen for all the time, energy and enthusiasm they give to coaching our teams. We are very excited to see what the year ahead brings for both our girls and boys!

We also really appreciate the support of our parent volunteers, particularly in providing lifts to and from pitches. We will always try to give as much notice as possible when looking for volunteers. At times, there can be a delay in confirming pitch locations or the number of children who can travel as part of a squad, but we will continue to share information with parents as soon as we have it so that we can plan together and give as many children as possible the opportunity to take part.

As part of our fundraising plans this year, we also hope to work towards providing school jerseys for all teams representing SETNS, including Gaelic, soccer and other extracurricular teams such as chess and maths.

Well done to all our boys and girls. You should be very proud of yourselves. We certainly are! 🌟

**Next fixture: Girls team - Wednesday 30th Sept
3:00pm in Naomh Olaf's**



EVERY LITTLE HELPS!

A huge thank you to everyone who popped a blue token into the Stepside ETNS box in Tesco Dundrum over the summer! We were delighted to hear that all those tokens added up to a very generous €478 for our school.

A special thank you to parent and PAC member Becky, who put our school forward for the Community Fund and took the time to get everything organised. We really appreciate it!

Thank you, as always, to our wonderful school community for getting behind us.



Payment confirmation

A confirmation email will shortly be sent to you confirming these details -

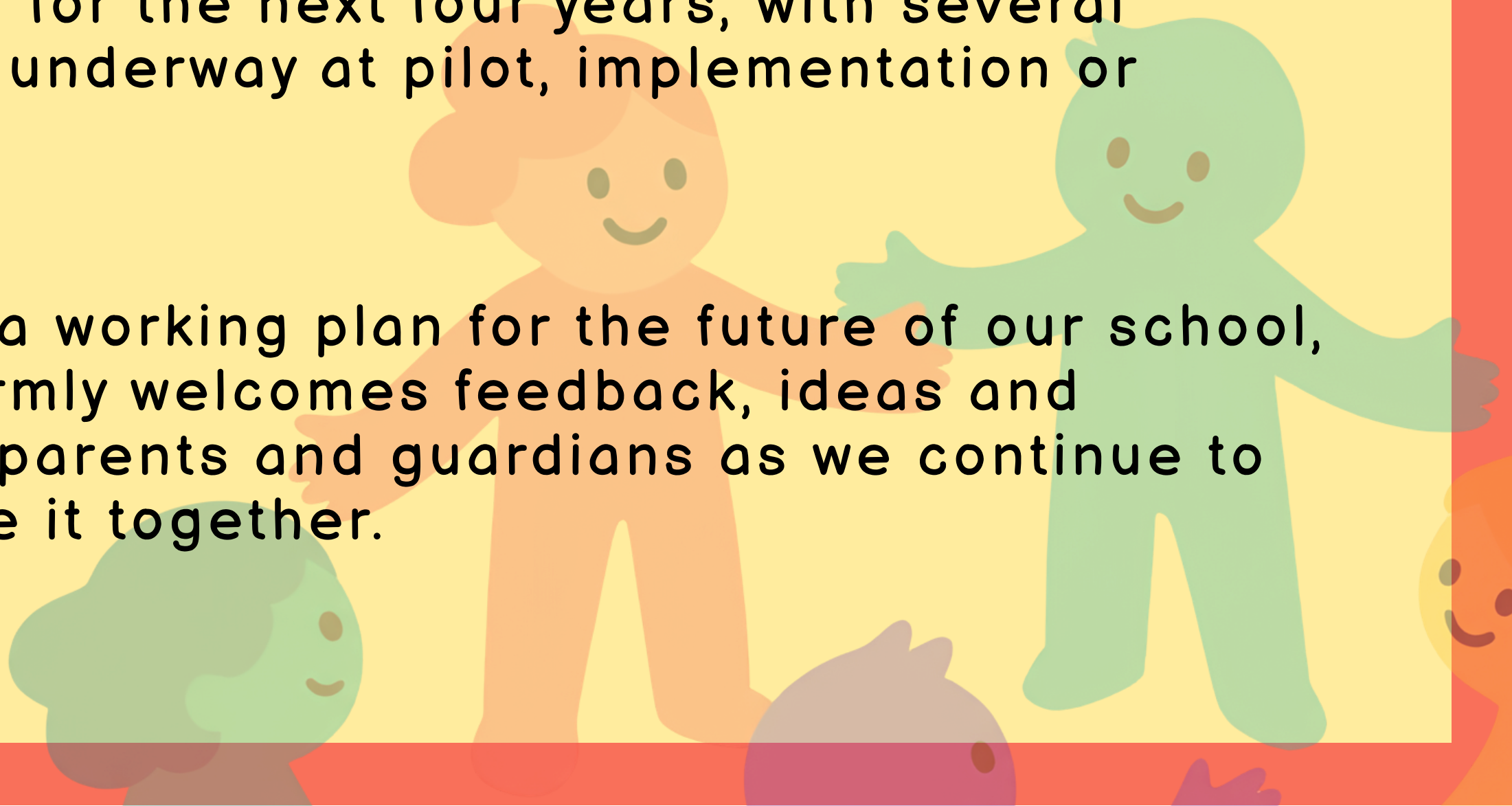
Payment reference	TESCO
Payout amount	EUR 478.00

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT - 4 YEAR PLAN

On the following page, we are pleased to share the Board of Management's Draft Four-Year Plan for our school.

There is lots to take in! The plan reflects the many priorities we have identified for the next four years, with several initiatives already underway at pilot, implementation or embedding stage.

This is very much a working plan for the future of our school, and the Board warmly welcomes feedback, ideas and suggestions from parents and guardians as we continue to develop and refine it together.



Four Year Strategic Plan 2026 – 2030

A shared plan for a vibrant, inclusive and sustainable school community

“Kind People, Strong Learners, Brighter Futures”

Be Kind
Bí Cineálta

Be Inclusive

Be Curious

Be Your Best

Our Vision

An inclusive, equality-based school where every child is valued, supported and empowered to learn, belong and make a positive difference in our community and beyond.

Our Values

Equality | Respect | Inclusion | Kindness | Collaboration | Curiosity | Sustainability

Strategic Priority (Linked to PIEW)	2026/2027 P (Pilot / Prepare)	2027/2028 I (Implement)	2028/2029 E (Embed)	2029/2030 W (Review / Grow)	Key Outcomes (by 2030)	Lead Responsibility
 Teaching & Learning Wellbeing Curriculum Enactment (Priority 2026/27)	- Audit current practice - Staff CPD and planning - Pilot Wellbeing curriculum approaches in selected classes	- Whole-school implementation of Wellbeing curriculum - Integrate with SSE and assessment approaches	- Embed consistent practice across all classes - Share effective practice and pupil voice	- Review impact and refine - Explore next steps (e.g. links with SPHE, RSE, wider school initiatives)	A whole-school culture of wellbeing, with consistent curriculum enactment and positive impact for all pupils.	Principal Wellbeing Team All Staff
 Teaching & Learning Whole-School Mathematics Plan	- Finalise and launch updated Maths plan - Support staff in Primary Maths Curriculum enactment - Use assessment to inform support and progression	- Implement consistent approaches across all classes - Develop problem solving and mathematical thinking - Monitor teaching, learning and assessment practices	- Embed practices and share effective methodologies - Strengthen assessment and tracking - Showcase pupil learning	- Review impact of plan - Update in line with curriculum developments - Plan next cycle of development	High quality, consistent maths teaching and learning with improved confidence, progression and outcomes for all pupils.	Maths Post Holder Principal All Staff
 Outdoor Learning Classroom	- Finalise design and resources - Establish outdoor learning space - Initial staff CPD and planning - Pilot outdoor learning experiences	- Regular use across classes - Develop a progression of outdoor learning opportunities - Integrate with curriculum areas and wellbeing	- Embed outdoor learning as a regular feature - Share practice and develop resources - Link with local environment and community	- Review impact and sustainability - Explore further development (e.g. biodiversity, climate action)	A well-used, sustainable outdoor learning space that enhances curriculum enrichment, wellbeing and environmental awareness.	Principal Outdoor Learning Team Buildings Committee
 Inclusion High Quality Support for All Learners	- Consolidate inclusive practices - Continue development of autism class provision - Review allocation and use of support resources - Staff CPD (e.g. autism, AEN, CPI)	- Implement high quality, inclusive teaching strategies - Strengthen use of Continuum of Support - Build staff capacity and share practice	- Embed inclusive practices across the school - Monitor impact on pupil outcomes and wellbeing - Strengthen transitions	- Review and refine provision - Explore future needs (enrolment, resources, training)	An inclusive school where every child's needs are understood, supported and valued.	Principal Inclusion Team All Staff
 Leadership & Communication	- Streamline internal and external communication - Clarify roles and responsibilities - Develop leadership opportunities for staff and pupils	- Implement agreed communication systems (e.g. Aladdin, website) - Develop middle leadership roles - Strengthen pupil voice	- Embed clear communication practices - Review effectiveness with staff, parents and pupils	- Evaluate and refine - Plan next cycle of leadership development	Clear, consistent and effective communication and distributed leadership across the school community.	Principal Deputy Principal ISM Team
 Buildings & Resources	- Progress outdoor learning build - Address priority maintenance and health & safety items - Plan for future space needs	- Continue phased maintenance and improvements - Review use of spaces (including library, sensory and regulation areas)	- Embed sustainable practices - Explore future accommodation needs in line with enrolment	- Evaluate and plan next phase of development - Ensure long term sustainability	A safe, welcoming and well-maintained school environment that supports high quality learning.	Principal Buildings Committee BoM
 Community Links & Partnerships	- Strengthen links with local community, creches and secondary schools - Develop partnerships (e.g. Microsoft, local businesses) - Promote school through open nights and communications	- Grow meaningful community partnerships - Develop opportunities for pupil leadership and citizenship	- Embed community engagement across the school year - Build on partnerships to enrich learning experiences	- Review impact and identify new opportunities - Celebrate and share community links and achievements	A strong, connected school community with meaningful partnerships that enrich learning and opportunities for all pupils.	Principal Community Links Team BoM Parent Association

“Working together to ensure every child belongs, learns and thrives.”

Stepaside Educate Together National School | 2026 – 2030

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MATHEMATICS INSPECTION

From 9th to 11th September, we welcomed two inspectors from the Department of Education Inspectorate to Stepaside ETNS for a Level 1 Curriculum Evaluation in Mathematics.

As part of the evaluation, the inspectors first reviewed the school's compliance with key requirements relating to Child Protection and Bí Cineálta. We were very pleased to receive confirmation that the school was fully compliant in these areas.

The main focus of the three-day evaluation was then on teaching, learning and assessment in Mathematics, and on the learning experiences of children across our school. The inspectors visited more than half of our teaching staff, including teachers in mainstream classes, Special Education Teaching (SET) and our autism classes. They also met with focus groups of pupils, giving our children an opportunity to share their experiences of learning Mathematics and their views on what is working well in our school.

While we are still awaiting the publication of the official report, the feedback received at the conclusion of the evaluation was hugely positive, and we are incredibly proud of the work taking place across our school.

There can be a little wait between an inspection and the publication of the final report. Once received, we will share it with our school community, and the report will also be published by the Department of Education on the gov.ie website.

The Board of Management would like to sincerely thank our entire staff for the positive and professional way in which they engaged with the Inspectorate throughout the three days. It was particularly rewarding to receive feedback that reflected the commitment, planning and good practice that we see taking place in our classrooms every day.

We would also like to say a big well done and thank you to our pupils, particularly those who took part in the focus groups and welcomed our visitors so warmly. We are very proud of you all!

SENIOR INFANTS SEPTEMBER RECAP!

We have had a fantastic start to the year in Senior Infants! The children have settled into their new classes so well, working hard, making new friends and getting to know their new routines. We have been busy with lots of learning, play and creative activities, including plenty of fun art. Senior Infants A have started GAA, while Senior Infants B have begun gymnastics.

We have also met our new buddies for the year and are looking forward to lots of special activities together. It has been a busy and exciting September, and we are looking forward to all the learning, fun and adventures ahead!



SENIOR INFANTS SEPTEMBER RECAP!



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BOARD OF MANAGEMENT AGREED REPORT:

- The Board were delighted to hear of the recent Maths inspection feedback received by the school and awaits the official report in due course. The Board wishes to acknowledge the positive feedback from the Inspectorate and praise the hard work of the staff and children involved.
- Congratulations to Claire, Niamh and Jess on the birth of their gorgeous babies over the last number of months! Also a big congratulations to Anna on her recent wedding
- The Board welcome the new staff joining us this year: Michelle (5A), Sean (5B), Sally (6C) Róisín (SET) and Caelen (SET).
- The Board are also delighted to welcome back familiar faces Emma, Olivia, Eva, Leonie, Luke and Anna. These fixed term contracts were ratified by the BoM.
- The Board welcome the return of the Music Generation programme in 1st and 2nd class this term. This will continue to 5th and 6th class later in the year.
- A huge congratulations to our Gaelic stars - both boys and girls teams represented our school so well at local matches since the beginning of the year. Both teams coming back with their first win of the season. Well done to all the pupils and their coaches Luke, Richie and Steven.
- Thank you to Anna for establishing a lunchtime Choir for pupils of 5th and 6th class. This is a fantastic opportunity for our pupils.
- The Board are working on a draft 4 year plan which will be shared. Feedback is welcome from parents/guardians and community members.
- The Board wishes to thank those who contributed feedback on our Bí Cineálta Policy. A large amount of feedback is now to be considered. An updated draft policy will be shared with our school community in due course
- The Board have now officially adopted the following policies:

Child Protection Procedures 2025 - Child Safeguarding Statement and
Risk Assessment
Working Together Policy 2024