



**Holywell Educate Together National School  
Board of Management  
Annual Report 2023/24**



## **Outgoing Board of Management Members 2019/2023**

Chairperson	Denis Brennan
Treasurer	Carolyn Barnes
Secretary	Maria Boyne
Teacher Nominee	Mark Lawless
Parent Nominees	Paul Murray Federica Andriani
Community Nominees	Vincent Connolly Gráinne Mc Kenna

The Board of Management held the final meeting of the current Board term on 04/10/23

## **New Board of Management Members 2023/27**

Chairperson	Denis Brennan
Treasurer	Carolyn Barnes Secretary Maria Boyne
Teacher Nominee	Claire Roe
Parent Nominees	Johnathan Harris Emma Walsh
Community Nominees	Ken Duffy Gráinne Mc Kenna

The Board of Management held five meetings of the new term of the Board this school year, 01/12/23, 31/01/24, 13/03/24, 01/05/23 & 12/6/24

## **Child Protection in Holywell ETNS**

Roles & Responsibilities:

Maria Boyne: Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

Cathal Manning: Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLDP)

Revised Child Protection Procedures Aug. 2023 adopted by the Board. Child Protection Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment reviewed and amended in October 2023 Anti-bullying Policy reviewed in October 2023.

## **Policy Development & Review**

- Child Protection Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment reviewed and amended.
- Anti-bullying Policy reviewed.
- Communication Policy in Holywell ETNS
- Draft Amendment of Admissions Policy to include catchment area criterion, following input from working group and student council.
- Positive Behaviour Policy

- Dignity in the Workplace
- Dress Code Policy
- Smart Phone Opt- Out Policy
- School Improvement Plan on Well-Being
- New Parent Teacher Guardian Association Constitution formed

Thanks to all the members of the school community who took part in the work

### **School Ethos & Child Centred Education**

- The Board of Management continues to support and help families. Examples of this are:
- Funding of lunches through the 'Lunch Bag' school lunches company in Term 1 & 2
- Waiving of school fees & costs of school trips for specific families
- Establish payment plan with families for private assessments
- Fund art therapy for students as a Trauma Informed School • Fund the Nurture Schools programme in the school

The Student Council were elected this year under the guidance and support of Assistant Principal Erica Hogan. Student Council members for 2023/24 are;

**Alexine/Bronwyn's Class:** Harry Grogan/Harry O Connor

**1st:** Alice Keogh / Carla Hategan

**2nd:** Ryan Goulding

**3rd :** Sadhbh Curran

**4th:** Oyu Tselmeg/Millie Butler.

**5th:** Rebecca Capone

**Mark R 6th:** Suzie O'Neill

**Mark B 6th :** Sabina Beirth

**Josh 6th:** Ewan Doorly Perez

Members of the Student Council visited the Dáil in December 2023 and ran a cake sale in aid of Dog's Trust and the Laura Lynn Hospice Foundation.

The Student Council held an Easter raffle which raised over €500, this was donated towards the purchase of a plaque for a story chair, in memory of former colleague Michelle Mc Keown.

Holywell ETNS participated in the third year of the Nurture School Programme which offers support for children who might be experiencing anxiety or trauma in their lives. The Programme is subsidized by Educate Together and Dublin City University.

'Rainbows' support group for students experiencing bereavement or separation also resumed this year afterschool. The programme is managed by Eimear Heron.

The annual 'Winter Concert' took place in December and 'Holywell's Got Talent' took place in June in person, over two sittings.

Well-being is part of the school Improvement Plan, which also complements the Department of Education's Well-being Policy Statement and Framework for Practice. The school received in-school support from Oide (support service for teachers).

The school continued to provide weekly support to specific children in our school with qualified arttherapist, Andrea Clare Plunkett. Student play-therapist Sinéad Kiernan also worked with students in the school as part of her practical experience.

Parents of children in our autism classes held a coffee morning on 17/10/23, Junior Infants parents came to a coffee morning 06/12/23 & we welcomed Senior Infants parents to a coffee morning on 14/02/2023

Erica arranged baking with all 1<sup>st</sup> classes and parents in March.

Parents and guardians have been invited into monthly assemblies to celebrate our core values from February 2024.

Teacher-led after-school clubs also resumed last September, offering students a chance to participate in clubs based on sport, cookery, crafts, baking, science, music etc.

The school is embedding the practices as a 'Restorative Practice Learning Community' in how it deals with conflict and behaviour management.

The school held in-person Parent Teacher Meetings in late November 2023.

We held the Junior Infants Play Date & Information Session for new parents on May 17<sup>th</sup> 2024.

### **School Achievements**

The school library relocated to the ground floor. It was officially opened by Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Roderic O'Gorman, in November 2023. Sincere thanks to staff members Stuart Purcell, Jean Reddy & Mairéad Nally for all their hard work in organising the area.

The school applied for the Gaelbratach award in recognition of the efforts made by students and staff in speaking Irish and in the promotion of the Irish culture in the school. The Coiste Gaeilge/Irish Committee was led by Saidhbhín Mulchrone, Fiona Murray, Mairéad Nally, Niamh Nic Gearailt, Stuart Purcell, Alison Lynch, Mark Brennan, Amanda Appleby, Sarah Markham & Alexine Greene. Various activities and events were organised in the school throughout the year, culminating with the big celebration of Seachtain na Gaeilge/Irish week where we held a céilí mór and welcomed the musicians from Craobh Sheán Teacy of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann.

The school was successful in its application for the hot meals programme. From April 8<sup>th</sup>, all children are eligible to have a hot meal daily at school. Glanmore Foods is the school supplier.

Photography company 'County Photos' visited the school in September to photograph all students and the children in the pre-school.

All three 4<sup>th</sup> classes attended the creative writing workshop 'Fighting Words' in the City Centre 6<sup>th</sup> class students visited the Hugh Lane Art Gallery in town.

Tours & Outings

Annual school tours took place this year, with the following venues being visited:

Junior Infants- New Grange Farm

Senior Infants- Red Mountain Open Farm

1<sup>st</sup> Class- Navan Adventure Centre

2<sup>nd</sup> Class- Let's Go Tours', Gormanston College

3<sup>rd</sup> Class-'Let's Go Tours', DCU

4<sup>th</sup> Class- 'Alive Outside', Kilruddery

5<sup>th</sup> Class -'Emerald Park'

6<sup>th</sup> Class--'Emerald Park'

Autism Classes- 'Dino Live' exhibition and Mc Donalds

Children in the autism classes visited 'Bounce and Beyond' on two occasions, as well as 'Fun Galaxy'. Each class also completed a six week block in Corballis Farm Horse Trekking and Therapeutic Riding Centre.

60 6<sup>th</sup> class children also went to the Donegal Gaeltacht in Rann Féirste in May, accompanied by staff members Martina Reilly, Mark Brennan & Joshua Jacob,

The 'Big Dig' also visited the school in the spring and worked with first and second classes.

In April, the school held Active Week, to incorporate the targets for the Active Flag renewal. It also held the annual school walk around Holywell. Sports Day also took place on June 11<sup>th</sup>, on the school grounds for the junior classes and on Holywell pitches for the older students.

We held the 6<sup>th</sup> class graduation ceremony on June 21<sup>st</sup>, with a formal ceremony and a disco and pizza for the students.

Football teams in soccer and GAA were re-established for boys' and girls' teams, as well as a girls' basketball team. Various tournaments and competitions were entered in the various school and Fingal Leagues.

Thank you to teachers Elaine Guerin, Michael Davitt, Sarah Markham, Órla Mc Weeney, Dermot Kelly and Mark Brennan for volunteering their time with the children.

### **New Developments at Holywell ETNS**

The planned extension of the autism classes remains with the Technical Team in the Department of Education's Building and Planning Unit since January 2024. This will be the fourth year that the fourth autism class will be accommodated in the former school library.

We were very fortunate to have a second teacher in the school, Louise Ryan awarded as a certified 'Reading Recovery' teacher. This is a specific literacy programme for the early intervention of students who show difficulties in reading in senior infants.

The school has also been awarded two additional Assistant Principal II positions in the school's Leadership and Management Team. These appointments will be made in the new school year.

We welcomed the opportunity to avail of free taster classes from Back Street Dance Company, as well as complimentary trips to 'Bounce and Beyond' for our students in the autism classes.

The school will run the school-based Summer Programme for Children with Additional and/or Complex Needs for the first two weeks of July. Also for the first time, the school will run the summer programme

for children at risk of educational disadvantage. Thanks to all staff members involved, in particular Eileen Gamble, programme manager and Erica Hogan for organising the second programme.

### **Curricular Development**

The New Primary Maths Curriculum

On May 10<sup>th</sup> the school closed for one day to facilitate teacher training in the new Primary Maths Curriculum. The school will close again next year for another day for additional training.

The school experienced a reduction in half a position (12.5 hours) with the new Special Education Teacher allocation. The school appeal the allocation and was awarded an increase of 12.5 hours from the review.

### **Continual Professional Development**

The Board of Management has invested heavily this year on staff training and upskilling with the following courses completed:

Managing Behaviours of Concern- David Ruddy & Siobhán Allen

Dignity in the Workplace- Pádraig Mc Cabe

An Ghaeilge sa Scoil (le haghaidh an Gaelbhratach)

Supporting autistic students in our school –Shaun Greville

The Revised Learn Together Curriculum'- Vera Shanahan- Educate Together Education Officer

Restorative Practice on a whole staff level and one-day intensive course- Michelle Stowe, Connect RP

Introduction to and use of Microsoft Word- ANAs

Tusla E- learning Course in Child Protection

MAPA Training- Therapeutic Crisis Intervention Training (Train the Trainer training & refresher training)

Understanding Behaviour Seminar- NCSE

Friends for Life Training- NEPS

Post-graduate Diploma in Inclusive and Special Educational Needs- A member of the Teaching Staff

Level 6 Diploma in Inclusive School Support- The National Training Programme for Special Needs

Assistants- Two ANAs on staff

### **Staffing**

Teachers

Career Breaks 2023/24

**Aoileann Quinlan**

**Ronan Mc Donnell Aedín Hayes**

Job-share arrangements 2023/24:

**Alexine Green & Bronwyn Kelly**

**Amanda Appleby & Cillian Rogers Louise**

**Lynch & Fiona Victory**

Special Needs Assistants

Job-share arrangements 2023/24

## **Mandy Johnson & Lisa Gilmartin Cronagh Connolly & Yvonne Sweeney**

We said goodbye to teachers Sarah Howard, Sinéad Mc Cutcheon, Eva Dowd, Natasha Keane and Kevin Morris who are teaching in the UAE and Australia. Long term SNA Andrea O'Connor resigned to take up a teaching role in an autism class.

### **Parent Teacher Guardian Association & Parental Involvement**

Sharon Roche, Jill Gallagher and Lorraine Byrne have returned to the PTGA. Joshua Jacob is also the teacher representative on the Association

The PTGA ran the 'Christmas card' appeal, as well as a giving a full week of their time to run the Annual Scholastic Book Fair (a special thanks to Lorraine).

A bumper disco was held by the PTGA in the hall at St. Patrick's weekend for the children and was a huge success.

A Gardening club for parents was established, as well as yoga classes were also organised for parents by Erica in the community centre.

Tony McKay, pharmacist, and father of Conor & Beau, volunteered with his wife Cronia, to administer the flu vaccine to students whose parents gave their consent.

Continuation of the Holywell ETNS Parent's Faith Formation Committee led by Róisín Kelly.

Thanks to all our parents & grandparents who kindly came to read to the infants, participate in Maths week activities, and who dishes for multi-cultural day in the junior classes.

### **Remembering Michelle Mc Keown- Page**

Members of the staff took part in the VHI Women's Mini Marathon to fundraise for the Kevin Bell Repatriation Trust. The charity supported our former colleague Michelle Mc Keown- Page's family after her sudden death, while on honeymoon in Spain in April 2023. They raised just over €2000 for the charity. Thanks to everyone involved. The children also participated in a football tournament, The Michelle Mc Keown memorial cup in her honour. We are also working on a garden area in her memory.

### **Thank You/Míle Buíochas**

On behalf of the Board of Management of Holywell Educate Together National School, I would like to thank the incredibly talented and dedicated staff in the school, teaching and non-teaching staff for the wonderful work they do daily in the school. Despite there being a chronic shortage of trained teachers in the education system, the teachers in Holywell ETNS have always put the needs of the children first, helping out in whatever way they could to support the children.

A sincere thanks to all the parents & guardians in the school for supporting the work of our staff here in the school each day.

We would also like to thank the PTGA members who as volunteers, with families and responsibilities of their own, are always willing and enthusiastic to support the school in anyway they can.

We would like to wish everyone in the community of Holywell ETNS a safe and restful summer and look forward to an exciting school year for 2024-25.

**School re-opens on Wednesday August 28<sup>th</sup> at 8.30am.**