

Newtownmountkennedy Primary School Annual General Meeting
12th October 2015 - 7.30pm Senior School Hall

Opening Prayer by Mrs Dempsey

Mr Hugh McDaid (Chairperson of the Board of Management) welcomed parents, staff, Board of Management members and Parents' Association members to the meeting and thanked everyone for coming.

Mr McDaid introduced the Board members

Apologies were received from Paul O'Riordan.

Mr McDaid stated that the school is doing reasonably well and thanked parents for their continued support of the school.

Principals Report

Thank you to everyone for attending the meeting and supporting the school.

New Board of Management:

- The current Board was established in 2011, as the Board runs on a four-year term this is the last meeting of current Board.
- The Board consists of six Board Members (two patron's representatives, two parents' representatives, the school principal and the teacher's representative. In addition two community representatives are nominated, once the six members have been appointed.
- Mr McDaid will continue as Chairperson and Patron's representative, Fr Daly, the new Parish Priest, will join as the second patron's representative. Mrs Dempsey and Ms Cheevers will also continue. Two parents (one mother and one father) must be nominated tonight and will then go forward for election by the parents.

Annual Report:

- The School Annual Report has been published and is available at request in the school offices.
- The Report contains the Board of Management report, Principal's Report, Parents' Association Report, ASD Report, Test Results, the School Improvement Plan and the School Self-evaluation report.
- Some of the contents will also be available on the school website.
- Test results will not be published on the website.
- We are pleased with Literacy and Gaeilge results this year and Maths will be the focus for this school year.

School Self-Evaluation and WSE:

- The school completed a WSE (Whole School Evaluation) in November 2012.
- The inspectorate visited over a number of weeks in November and December 2012 and the school received a positive report.
- Mr Leo Kilroy (Inspector) visited last Thursday to check that we have been following the recommendations from the WSE.
- Three general recommendations had been made and these involved – teaching methods (to include a greater variety of teaching methods, greater collaboration, using outdoor space etc.), Assessment for Learning (children reviewing their own learning experiences) and School Self-Evaluation.
- With regard to school self-evaluation we are ahead in this process and have completed Literacy, Numeracy, Gaeilge and Oral Language.
- This year we are evaluating specific numeracy topics as identified from detailed analysis of standardised tests. The Junior School will focus on the topic of TIME during the month of November, while the Senior School will focus on the topic of LENGTH in January.

- If any parents are interested in getting involved, they may link with Ms Hurley to form a focus group.

UCD School of Education

- The school has become involved in a research programme with UCD School of Education.
- The aim of this research is to support the school in the teaching of maths while looking at the effect of social settings on educational achievement.
- This is a European project with schools in Ireland, the United Kingdom, Greece and Cyprus involved.
- The project is being coordinated by Ms Cheevers in our school.

Swimming Programme

- Swimming is becoming an issue.
- Do parents still want the school to offer a swimming programme and if so, what classes?
- The cost is based on 44 mainstream and 6 ASD children attending.
- However, we are not getting this level of interest, which means the school is subsidising the balance.
- In addition, supervision has to be arranged for those children not swimming as the class teacher accompanies the swimmers.

Carambola Lunches

- The Department of Social Protection funds this scheme.
- A recent survey indicated that there had been overpayments to some schools. However, we experienced an underpayment last year and were down over €4,000 on our school lunch funding. This money will be covered through Carambola and will not be taken from school funds.
- Some families are going against school policy by opting out of the Carambola scheme and the School Lunch Policy.

Infection

- We would ask that parents are mindful about sending children to school if they are sick or have infections.
- There are children in our school with compromised immune systems who are vulnerable to infection.
- Please inform the school if your child has an infectious condition e.g. scarlet fever, impetigo, head lice etc.

Home School

- Ms Hurley is our Home School Community Liaison Coordinator.
- We would like to acknowledge the great work she does.
- There are a number of committees and courses for our parents to avail of.
- Anyone who is interested in volunteering in the school or classrooms may contact Ms Hurley for further information.

Capital Works Project:

- The new school building is to involve a 20-classroom school. This will be made up of 16 mainstream classrooms and 4 ASD classrooms.
- It will not be a single-campus building but will have 8 classrooms in the Junior School and 12 in the Senior School.
- The options for the Senior School are to either extend the current Senior building or build a new building on the top pitch.
- The design has not yet been decided but the money has been set aside and the Department are keen to proceed with the project.
- The architect and design team are working on the project but there have been issues regarding the site.
- We hope to have more definite news soon.

Parent Teacher Meetings:

- These will take place on Thursday 22nd October from 2p.m. to 5p.m. in the Community Centre.
- School will close for students at 1.40p.m.
- This is an opportunity for parents to discuss their child academic, social and emotional progress in school.
- It is also a chance for 5th and 6th Class parents to discuss secondary school options and transition with their child's teacher.

Early Intervention Class for Children with Autism

- The Board was asked by the Department to open this class for children with autism aged between 3 and 5 years.
- The class opened with six children in September and already has a waiting list.
- The class is staffed by teacher Louise Healy and Tess Lane and Carol Wholohan (SNAs).
- Many of the children in the class were only recently diagnosed with autism.
- They are making excellent progress already and their parents are very happy to have them in the school.
- Unfortunately, these families are without services and the children are not receiving the Speech and Language, Occupational Therapy and Psychology intervention they need.
- It is very difficult to access these supports and we are dependent on those services available through school such as NEPS and our ABA consultant.
- Many accommodations had to be made for the Early Intervention classroom to ensure it was ready for the children when they started.
- A grant of €6,000 was given from the Department however this doesn't cover the full amount needed.
- It is estimated about €12,000 was spent upgrading the room and resources.

Fundraising

- It had been decided to invest last year's fundraising into I.T.
- Eight iPads were bought for the Junior School.
- 30 Samsung tablets were leased with Primatabs for the Senior School.
- These Samsung tablets come preloaded with apps which are relevant to different curricular areas.
- Networking and WiFi is a big issue in Primary schools across the country.
- The Junior School network has been boosted and seems to be working, however the Senior School is still experiencing difficulties with the Network and WiFi.
- Funding is a huge issue with schools – the capitation grant received covers insurance, heating and lighting and does not cover any extras.
- Perhaps we should be canvassing politicians for additional assistance.
- Images art exhibition – the school will be taking part in this fundraising activity this year. Children create their own picture that is then framed and exhibited. Parents may then buy their child's picture at a cost of €10, €2 of which goes to the school. Perhaps we could have a cake sale on the evening of the exhibition to make extra money. This will take place at the end of February.

Communion & Confirmation

- Our school is based on a Catholic ethos and Paul Thornton, Parish Worker, works from parish end to support the school and families in the sacramental programmes.
- Confirmation will take place on 29th April.
- Communion will take place on the 4th May.
- There will be two Communion masses this year – 10a.m. (Ms Nolan's Class) and 12p.m. (Mr O'Brien's Class).
- There will be a series of meetings for both Communion and Confirmation parents during the year.

Calendar

- The school calendar will be issued shortly.

- This will include a photo of your child's class and important dates for year.

Website

- www.newtownprimary.ie
- This website is kept updated by Ms O'Connell.
- Parents are encouraged to check the website regularly for any school news and information.

Treasurer's Report

- There was an income of €335,000 this year.
- Following expenditure there was a surplus of €2241.
- A donation of €15,000 was made to the school, this is being used to upgrade the Junior School playground.
- A double payment of the ABA grant for the Centre for Children with Autism was made to the school, as it had not been paid in the previous year.
- Major expenditure includes electricity, gas, oil, swimming and tours.
- Swimming lessons have been subsidised due to the poor uptake.
- School trips such as the cost of buses to sports events and/or theatre trips are subsidised as the Board wishes to give all children the opportunity to take part in these events.

Parents' Association

- Mr McDaid acknowledged the important role the Parents' Association plays in the school.
- He stated that the Board of Management listens to the Parents' Association report every month and takes great interest in the work they do.
- The Board has agreed that Mrs Dempsey or Mrs Keyes should attend P.A. meetings.
- The WSE inspectors were very impressed with the involvement of the P.A. in the school.

Parents' Representatives for the BOM:

- Mr McDaid thanked those parents who have served on this Board of Management, Mr Tom Doyle (parent of Ciara in 6th Class) and Mrs AnneMarie Kelly (Parent of Cian in 4th Class).
- The process for nomination of parents for the new Board involves nominating and seconding parents. A postal vote then takes place to elect the new representatives.
- Mrs Dempsey explained that parent representatives become part of the school governing body.
- Board meetings are held once a month and parent representatives will report to the Board on issues from the Parents' Association.

Parents' Reps nominated at this AGM were:

<u>Mothers</u> -	Rachel Dwyer	<u>Fathers</u> -	Garrett Donnelly
	AnneMarie Kelly		Guy Garrett
	Michelle O'Toole		David Wheatley
	Gráinne Donnelly		Leo Doyle
	Emma Murphy		Shane Murphy

This concluded the Board of Management presentation at the A.G.M. and Mrs Dempsey introduced the members of the Parents Association to make their presentation.