



Blessington Educate Together NS

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Introduction

Below is a summary of discussions from our recent Board of Management Meeting.

Recent and Upcoming Events

- Swimming each Thursday – Hazel, Birch and Ash Rooms.
- Children from 2nd to 6th class attended a Ficheall Chess Tournament in Kilcullen – 2nd February.
- There was a Dáil visit for the Ash Room – 9th February.
- Pancake Tuesday happened on 21st February. The PA very kindly made pancakes for over 90 children!
- Science Blast – Ash Room – March 1st.
- Book Fair – begins March 2nd, for one week.
- Abbey Theatre – March 6th – Ash and Elm Rooms.
- FAI Soccer Blitz - March 8th – some pupils from the Ash Room.
- BETNS Table Quiz at the Avon Rí – March 9th.
- Dúlra Forest School Visit – March 10th.
- Seachtain na Gaeilge – March 13th – 16th.
- Library – March 20th.

Staffing

Claire has been appointed to our management team in an assistant principal position alongside Lynn and Jonathan.

Class allocations for 2023-24 will be announced shortly to children and families.

Curricular developments, staff training and policy updates

Music Generation – Progressing well across all classes. Fernando has come in to teach infants to 3rd class. Kevin is teaching ukulele for 4th to 6th class.

There was an In-School Therapy visit from Elizabeth, our OT, to observe and advise on movement breaks on 18th January.

Jonathan and Lynn attended an In-School Therapy Showcase event on February 8th. Potential to explore Lego therapy and sensory circuits next year.

Primary Language Curriculum Training – Webinars 6 and 7 undertaken on January 23rd

RSE Training for Jonathan and Claire was cancelled due to substitute crisis.

Jonathan engaged with webinars around Assessment of Needs and legal issues for schools on January 23.

Jonathan to attend the Educate Together Principal Conference on 2nd and 3rd March.

Work on the following policies and plans continues and will be sent to parent/guardians for feedback and will be then ratified by the Board at our next meeting –

- Revised Admissions Policy
- School Strategic Plan 2022-25
- Integration Policy
- Gaeilge Plan
- English Plan
- Revised Learn Together Plan
- Revised SEN Policy

Afterschools and Camps

An email was sent and information was posted on our Facebook page about signing your child up for Junior Einsteins. This will be an afterschool activity. Junior Einsteins are also looking to run a camp during the spring/Easter break.

<https://junioreinsteinsscienceclub.com/>

Discovery Playtime will be running spring/Easter and summer camps.

<https://discoveryplaytime.ie/pages/summer-camps>

Dúlra Forest School may run an afterschool activity. Details to follow.

School development and building works

Permanent Extension – The Design Team, QS, and various engineers are now in place and a meeting occurred on February 21st. A first draft design was submitted for a two-story extension to be located to the side of the school where the current basketball court is now. This will include two autism classes, a mainstream classroom, an activity space, a sensory room, a staffroom, offices, ancillary rooms, a new basketball court and further external play areas.

Progress has been made with a temporary mainstream classroom and we are awaiting the Department to sign-off.

Finances and Resources

We continue to purchase learning resources for the children.

The Board has funded some bus journeys to the Chess Tournament in Kilcullen and the FAI Blitz for example.

Over €1000 has been allocated for our outdoor classroom.

Parents Association

The PA met on February 28th to continue planning for the Table Quiz on March 9th. Our PA can be contacted at pa@betns.ie

Student Council

Our SC discussed and voted on a new logo for BETNS. The process involved all classes designing logos and coming up with a school motto. Each class voted for their top three. These were then viewed and discussed by the SC and a winner chosen. This was sent to a graphic designer who created the logo above. The children and staff are very proud of the final product.

The SC's next meeting will look at outdoor classroom furniture before we purchase in time for spring.