



# Blessington Educate Together NS

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Roll number 20242M  
Charity number 20139407

*20<sup>th</sup> September 2023*

## *Introduction*

Below is a summary of discussions from our first Board of Management Meeting in September 2023.

## *Pupils*

We now have 99 pupils attending BETNS. The pupil number has almost doubled in the last four years.

We will have an Open Day for prospective pupils for 2024-25 on October 19<sup>th</sup>.

## *Child Protection and Safeguarding*

A review is currently being undertaken and an updated child safeguarding and risk assessment will be emailed and available on our website in the coming weeks – [www.betns.ie](http://www.betns.ie)

## *Recent and Upcoming Events*

- Library – October 9<sup>th</sup>
- Open Day – October 19<sup>th</sup>
- Cumann na Bunscoile Cross Country – October – Date TBC

## *Staffing*

- Emma McGahey is our Infant Teacher (The Oak Room).
- Lynn Steed is our First and Second Class Teacher (The Elm Room). Lynn is also the Deputy Principal.
- Fiona Lyons is our Third and Fourth Class Teacher (The Willow Room).
- Claire McDermott is our Fifth and Sixth Class Teacher (The Ash Room).
- David Glynn is our Special Education Teacher.
- Éadaoin Brennan is our Autism Class Teacher (The Hazel Room).

- Nombulelo Mawuli is our second Autism Class Teacher (The Birch Room).
- James Sullivan, Miriam Kelly, Dorothy Maguire, Glynis Cains, Niamh Direen, and Lydia Conlon are our Special Needs Assistants.
- Pauline Merrins is our School Administrator.
- Jonathan Kinsella is our Principal.

### Substitute Cover

Due to the shortage of substitute cover and to maintain supports for children that require it, we will split certain classes if a substitute teacher is not available. Therefore, children from the Elm, Willow and Ash Rooms will bring workpacks to other classes if we cannot access a substitute teacher. Jonathan and David will substitute for teachers in the Oak, Hazel and Birch Rooms if a teacher there is absent and no substitute teachers are available.

### *Board of Management*

Our current Board of Management has the following members. We're currently looking to add community representatives to the Board. If you know anyone in the Blessington area who may be interested please let us know.

- James – Chairperson
- Geraldine – Treasurer
- Jonathan – Secretary
- Fiona – Teacher Rep
- Phil – Male Parent Rep
- Nila – Female Parent Rep
- Ruth - Community Rep

### *Parents Association Committee*

Thank you to those who have expressed an interest in joining the PA Committee. New Committee members will be drawn from lots soon and notified. The PA Committee can be contacted at [pa@betns.ie](mailto:pa@betns.ie)

### *Curricular developments, staff training and policy updates*

- Music Generation to be commenced shortly.
- Lizzy's Friends Training September 19<sup>th</sup> – explores emotional regulation for children.
- In-School Therapy OT Visit September 22<sup>nd</sup> – looking at the classroom environment.
- IPPN Meeting – 26<sup>th</sup> September
- Lámh wholeschool training – 27<sup>th</sup> September

### Policies ratified by the Board

These policies are available on our website and have input from the Board of Management, school staff, Parents' Association Committee.

- Admissions Policy
- Admissions Notice
- Integration Policy
- Administration of Medicines Policy
- Communication Policy

## School planning for 2023-24

- Jonathan to undertake Oide Leading Digital Learning Training as part of our School Self Evaluation Plan (SSE). This is the starting point of creating a Digital Learning School Plan.
- Claire and Lynn are beginning the process of creating our Wellbeing Plan which will be another aspect of our SSE.
- Fiona will look at the strands of the History Curriculum, especially those from 3<sup>rd</sup> class onwards, to create an accessible guide ensuring a broad range of topics are covered within the curriculum.
- Training will begin this year for the new Primary Maths Curriculum.

## *Afterschools and Camps*

- Dulra Forest School is running for Infants between September 25<sup>th</sup> and November 6<sup>th</sup> on our grounds.
- Junior Einsteins having a free tester on September 25<sup>th</sup> for all ages. This will determine if it goes ahead.

## *School development and building*

- Permanent Extension – We are awaiting on a report from our Design Team, QS, and various engineers. This will then be submitted to the Department. Once they sign off on it the school applies for planning permission.
- New Temporary Modular Mainstream Classroom – This is now the Ash Room for our 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> class pupils.
- Bicycle and Scooter Shelters have been installed at the front of the school – a reminder to drive slowly and carefully in this area.

## *Finances and Resources*

- The Free Book Scheme Grant, funded by the DE, has meant parent-guardians have not been required to purchase schoolbooks and copies.

During the summer, the Board have purchased the following -

- The school was deep cleaned in July.
- IT purchases included five tablets for our Hazel, Birch and SEN Rooms. A Wifi point was connected in the new Ash Room. An Interactive Screen was relocated to the Ash Room while a new Interactive Screen was purchased for the Oak Room. A new laptop was purchased for the Elm Room.
- Furniture was purchased for the Ash Room and other classes.
- New BETNS School Sports Kits, designed by our Student Council, were delivered in September.

We will be looking to raise money this year for Sensory Room resources and upgraded school furniture. This will be updated after further meetings with

## *Student Council*

A new Student Council will be formed this September. The members will meet with Jonathan monthly to discuss the management of school and to identify school improvements from the children's perspective.