



# SCOIL FIONNTÁIN NAOFA

## Agreed Report of the Board of Management 26th June 2023

**Living Our Ethos:** Johnny Watson as Religious Education Co-ordinator reported on this heading:

- The pupils in 2nd to 6th Class had a final ceremony on 30th May to mark the end of their recitation of the rosary which took place on a weekly basis for the month of May. Our Parish Priest Fr. Paddy Byrne bestowed a blessing on all in attendance at the ceremony. Reciting the rosary for the month of May was a meaningful experience for the pupils and the weekly services were very much child/pupil led. Many thanks to Mairéad Malone and Kay Downey for overseeing the experience.
- Ms. Burnell's Junior Room pupils decorated the church with art relating to the Sacred Heart for the month of June. Board of Management members agreed that this was a nice addition to the church and that it was a positive departure seeing additional links being made between the school and the church. The plan going forward is to assign each classroom a particular month and a liturgical celebration or feast day therein and to decorate the church accordingly with pupil artwork.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

Monthly income and expenditure reports for the month of May 2023 using the FSSU income and expenditure template were circulated to Board of Management members.

Expenditure over the Summer months: School books will be paid for during the Summer months at a cost of €5,312.87

**Principal's Report:** The Principal's Report to the Board of Management was given by Barry Whelan:

### **Child Safeguarding:**

- The Child Safeguarding Oversight Report was given by Barry Whelan;
- The Annual Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment will be undertaken at the next meeting of the Board of Management at the end of August prior to the return to school for the school year 2023-2024. A year will have elapsed at that stage since the statement and risk assessment was last reviewed;
- Pupils in 3rd to 6th Class are being surveyed using Google Forms regarding Child Safeguarding matters and the data gathered will inform the annual review of the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment as referred to above;

- Feedback on the revised/reviewed Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment will be sought from Board of Management members, staff and parents prior to the annual review and ratification of the statement and risk assessment at the Board of Management meeting at the end of August;
- Barry Whelan will review the school's Whole School Plan for S.P.H.E over the Summer months as two years have elapsed since it was last reviewed and a draft copy of the reviewed policy will be sent to the different stakeholder groups as referred to above for their input and feedback.

### Anti-Bullying

- An Anti-Bullying Report was provided for the Board of Management by Barry Whelan;
- Restorative Practices will be rolled at a whole school level on return to school in the Autumn.

### Literacy and Numeracy Returns

- Literacy and Numeracy returns (STen scores for 2nd, 4th & 6th Classes) have been submitted to the Department of Education via the Esinet portal;

### New Primary Curriculum

- An information sheet from the Department of Education for parents regarding the New Primary Curriculum was sent to all parents last week.

### PDST Support for the Primary Languages Curriculum (PLC)

Michelle Ní Fhaoláin from the PDST Primary Languages team visited the school on Monday, 19th June as a follow up to the sustained support for the Primary Languages Curriculum that we received in the school year 2021-2022. This advisory visit involved a review of the implementation of the Whole School Plan for English over the course of the last year since its ratification at the end of August 2022. This review was undertaken with Mrs. Kris Cahill (Assistant Principal 2) who has overall responsibility for English as a subject area. Michelle Ní Fhaolain also provided advice and guidance to Mrs. Cahill with regard to the SSE Process for English. Michelle provided advice to all teachers on modhanna múinte etc. for Gaeilge as a subject area to coincide with the review of our Whole School Plan for Gaeilge and development of the SSE Report and School Improvement Plan for Gaeilge.

### GDPR Guidelines for Parents

Last week parents were forwarded a link to '*Guidance for Children on their Data Protection Rights*' from the Data Protection Commission

<https://www.dataprotection.ie/en/dpc-guidance/childrens-data-protection-rights>

They were also directed to view our revised Data Protection Policy on the school website

<https://shanahoens.weebly.com/data-protection-policy.html>. This policy was ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting on 29th May.

### Pushkin Award

5th & 6th Class were awarded a Pushkin Award for their engagement with/in the Pushkin Trust Programme for the school year 2022-2023. The overarching theme of the programme in the school year 2022-2023 was '*Reforestation of the Imagination*' and the pupils in 5th and 6th Class worked collaboratively and cooperatively to explore this theme using an integrated and thematic approach to learning. Participating in the project was an extremely worthwhile endeavour for our pupils and high levels of engagement, imagination and creativity really came to the fore in their learning. The school is very grateful to have been given the opportunity to participate in and engage with the Pushkin Trust programme for the first time in 2022-2023 and we were delighted to be awarded a Pushkin Trust award in recognition of our efforts.

### Curious Minds Gold Award

Following the national awards ceremony which took place virtually on Friday, 16th June, we were delighted to be one of only four schools in Laois to be awarded a Curious Minds Gold Award for deep engagement with STEM learning and teaching for 2022-2023. All classes in the school including our Sonas Class worked towards achieving the award this year.

### Blue Star Award

5th & 6th Class were awarded a Blue Star Award for the second year in a row following their participation in the Blue Star Project on the E.U. They studied the E.U in an integrated and thematic manner through different lenses including the Historical (World War 2), the Geographical (Italy), Cultural and Creative, Institutional and through celebration of Europe Day on 9th May with a visit from Minister of State in the Department of Foreign Affairs Seán Fleming.

### End of Year Reports

- End of Year Reports issued to parents via Aladdin Connect on Friday, 16th June giving parents a window of one week prior to closure for the Summer holidays to make contact with class teachers if they wished to discuss any matters pertaining to their child's report;
- 6th Class Passports have been forwarded to the respective secondary schools together with the NEPS Post-Primary Transfer Forms where relevant;
- The report card information video from the NCCA was also forwarded to parents;
- The sheet on STen scores for parents from the NCCA accompanied all reports from 1st to 6th Class;

### Blast Artist in Residency

Following the submission of an application by Barry Whelan to Laois Education and Support Centre for a '*Blast Artist in Residency*' for the school year 2023-2024, we were informed last week that our application was successful. Under the artist in

residency programme, an artist will work with us for 20 hours in the new school year (A reminder that our local history and heritage themed mural was completed under the '*Blast Artist in Residency*' in the school year 2021-2022). The Blast residency will be fully funded. Our proposal for next year centres around exploring the theme of biodiversity through the medium of clay and Mrs. Cahill's 2nd to 4th Class pupils were selected as the class to work as part of the residency.

### Say Yes to Primary Languages Sampler Module

Following an application that we submitted to the Department of Education, we were fortunate to be selected to participate in the '*Say Yes to Languages*' module which will allow us to engage the services of a tutor to teach French to 3rd to 6th Classes for a period of eight weeks in term 3 of the school year 2023-2024. This module will be fully funded by the Department of Education and participation in the programme will give us a great opportunity to engage with modern foreign languages in advance of the teaching of same becoming part of school life from 2025 onwards (as part of the New Primary Languages Curriculum). Johnny Watson is currently liaising with tutors from the approved list issued by the Department of Education.

### Active Schools

Johnny Watson organised a very active sports day for all classes on Tuesday, 20th June. High levels of engagement were evident across all classes. Eleanor Merriman provided yoga lessons for all classes on Wednesday, 21st June and high levels of interest and engagement were once again evident.

### Green Schools

As part of the work on biodiversity, Kris Cahill organised an interesting moth study for all classes last week. This was set up overnight in the school grounds.

### IT Infrastructure for Pupils

The following IT equipment for pupils was purchased from the proceeds of the Parents' Association Fashion Show Fundraiser at the end of March (The procurement process i.e seeking three quotations was followed by the school)

#### Laptops and Charging Trolley:

Purchased from PC Peripherals in Dublin

- 10 Acer Laptops: €2720.76
- Joey 30 unit charging trolley: 1529.25

Total Cost: €4250.01

#### Samsung A8 Tablets:

Purchased from Telfords Electrical Portlaoise:

- 5 x Tablets: €179 each (€895 in total)
- Protective Tablet Case: €29.99 each (€149.95 in total)

Total price for tablets and cases: €1044.95

Total cost of ICT equipment including laptops, tablets and charging trolley: **€5,294.96**

In addition to the original laptops that we had in the school, we now have 16 laptops for pupil use in the school which is excellent.

Many thanks to the Parents' Association for organising the Fashion Show Fundraiser to fund the purchase of the IT equipment and to Mr. Watson as IT co-ordinator for organising the purchase and set-up of the equipment.

#### Sonas Class/Summer Programme

Our Sonas Class is now full with three new pupils starting in the new school year. Two of these pupils are currently availing of the Summer Programme in the school which commenced on 26th June and the remaining pupil will start with us in the Autumn (29th August).

#### Pilot Programme of Counselling Supports for Primary Schools

We have been selected to participate in a Pilot Programme of Counselling Supports for Primary Schools in the school year 2023-2024 which is being organised by the Department of Education. Barry Whelan will attend an information session webinar about this on 27th June.

#### 6th Class Graduation

Graduation for our outgoing 6th Class took place on Thursday, June 22nd. 6th Class went on an outing that morning to 'Roll and Bowl' in Portlaoise and McDonalds. Their graduation ceremony took place at 2p.m that afternoon in Shanahoe Community Hall and refreshments were provided afterwards by the Parents' Association.

#### Appointment of SNA

Interviews will take place this week for a Fixed-Term Part-Time SNA Position to cover one half a job share arising from Ms. Tracy Lalor job sharing in the school year 2023-2024..

#### Fire and Security Systems

A new fire alarm panel was installed in the office and all fire alarm sensors around the school were checked and serviced by Oxley Security at the end of May/beginning of June. The fire alarm is now also connected to a monitoring centre. Oxley Security also reconnected a CCTV camera that had been damaged during the building works on the Sonas Room. Our security/intruder alarm system has also been upgraded.

#### Community Support Fund

Following an application that was submitted by the Parents' Association on our behalf, we have been awarded €3,950. (full grant) under the Community Support Fund to purchase a basket swing for our soft playground area. Barry Whelan

followed the procurement process as part of this application and sought three different quotations for the basket swing. Backyard Adventures Ireland Ltd. in Naas came back with the most favourable quotation i.e €3,950. They installed our current playground structure last Summer. Barry Whelan will liaise with them in the coming days regarding the installation of the swing.

#### School Band at the National Ploughing Championships

Barry Whelan was contacted by Margaret Connaughton from the National Ploughing Association (NPA) inviting the school to play at the National Ploughing Championship which will take place in Ratheniska at the end of September. The school has accepted the kind invitation.

#### **School Self-Evaluation (SSE):**

Barry Whelan reported on this heading:

- Gaeilge: Data was analysed and judgements were made by the staff in relation to the data that had been gathered as part of the 'Gathering Evidence' stage of the SSE process for Gaeilge as a subject area. Barry Whelan will formulate the SSE Report and School Improvement Plan for Gaeilge over the Summer months and this will be in place for return to school in the Autumn. This work will be done in conjunction with the review and redevelopment of the Whole School Plan for Gaeilge which Barry Whelan is currently working through. The Whole School Plan for Gaeilge will be in place for the return to school in 2023-2024 (Johnny Watson will assume overall responsibility for Gaeilge as a subject area on return to school in the Autumn and Barry Whelan will assume overall responsibility for Special Educational Needs).
- Maths: The School Improvement Plan for Maths and the targets and actions for improvement therein were reviewed by the teaching staff at their meeting on the 13th June. This was done in tandem with the review of the standardised test results for Maths (Sigma-T) for 1st to 6th Classes. Increased/further emphasis will have to be given to developing pupils' problem solving skills in the school year 2023-2024. Barry Whelan will revisit the school improvement plan for Maths over the Summer months and early in the school year 2023-2024 in line with the roll out of the new Primary Maths Curriculum.
- Science: The School Improvement Plan for Science and the targets and actions for improvement therein were reviewed by the teaching staff at their meeting on 13th June. The target of achieving a Curious Minds Gold award for the school year 2022-2023 has been achieved. Barry Whelan will review the School Improvement Plan for Science.
- English: Teachers reviewed the whole school results for English Reading (Micra-T) at their staff meeting on 13th June. Kris Cahill has gathered the evidence relating to the areas of focus for SSE in English. Mrs. Cahill is currently in the process of analysing and making judgements in relation to same and this will be done in collaboration with the in school management

team and staff. The SSE Report and School Improvement Plan for English will be in place for return to school in the Autumn;

- **Digital Learning:** (a) Identifying the Focus (b) Gathering the Evidence-Pupil and Parent Surveys and (c) Analysing and Making Judgements for SSE for Digital Learning has been undertaken by Johnny Watson and the Digital Learning Plan will be in place for return to school in the Autumn.
- **Wellbeing:** In line with the provisions of the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework from the Department of Education, Johnny Watson will commence the 'Gathering Evidence' stage of the SSE Process for wellbeing on return to school in the Autumn.

### **Standardised Test Results:**

Cumulative Standardised Test Results (in bar graph form) for 2022-2023 for English Reading (Micra-T) and Maths (Sigma-T) for 1st to 6th Classes were presented to the Board of Management by Barry Whelan. The school based results were compared with national norms. The Board of Management was very happy with the overall results and Chairperson Micheál Delaney commended the teachers for their work over the course of the year.

### **Summer Programme**

Johnny Watson reported on this heading. He outlined that the Summer Programme had gotten off to a great start on the 26th June and that a range of learner experiences were planned for the two weeks of the programme to tie in with the overarching theme of '*Building Confidence and Connections*'.

### **Organisational and Administrative Policies: Intimate Care and Toileting Policy**

The school's '*Intimate Care and Toileting Policy*' was presented to the Board for ratification by Johnny Watson. The policy has been in place for one year now and it was therefore timely to review it having reflected on its implementation. Feedback and input to inform the review of the policy and the implementation of same during the school year 2022-2023 was sought from staff, parents and the Board of Management. A copy of the '*Intimate Care and Toileting Policy*' can be accessed here <https://shanahoens.weebly.com/intimate-care-and-toileting-policy.html>

### **AOB**

Under the heading of AOB, Chairperson of the Board of Management Micheál Delaney reported that he had attended an information meeting organised by the Education Secretariat in the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin in Mount St. Anne's in Killenard last week. The purpose of the meeting was to outline the advent of the new Boards of Management which will come into effect on 1st December 2023. Further guidance regarding the new boards will issue from the diocese on return to school in the Autumn.

**ENDS**