



Whitecross N.S. Board of Management Annual Report 2022-2023

This report is issued in line with the requirements of the Education Act.

Board Members:

Chairperson – Diarmuid Everard
Treasurer – Paddy Prendergast
Secretary – Patrick Doran
Teacher Nominee – Nicola Finnegan
Parent Nominee – Karen Quinn Markey
Parent Nominee – Richard Kelly
Patron's Nominee – Fr. Brendan Ferris
Community Nominee – Georgina Brangan

Ethos

The school had a visit from the Diocesan Inspectors on the 23rd March 2023.
First Penance was held on the 28th March 2023.
Confirmation was celebrated on the 27th February 2023.
First Holy Communion was celebrated on the 22nd April 2023.
The Grow in Love programme is being taught in all classes.

Child Protection

Designated Liaison Person: Patrick Doran
Deputy Designated Liaison Person: Sarah Jane Kirwan
A Child Protection Oversight Report was presented at each meeting of the Board in accordance with DES guidelines.

Parental Involvement

The Parents Association Committee is Valerie Sheridan (Chairperson), Caroline O'Neill (Secretary) & Barry James (Treasurer)
Meetings of the Parents Association took place each term. The PA organised a Clothes Recycle, Pupil Accident Insurance, the First Communion Party, 6th Class Graduation Party, rewards for mediators, playground equipment and rewards for classrooms.

Staffing

The school employs 25 teachers, 7 SNAs, one secretary and a part-time caretaker.
There was one job share teaching arrangements in place.
L. Shields was appointed to a permanent teaching position.
There were seven teachers appointed to temporary teaching positions.
S. O'Callaghan was appointed to a temporary SNA position covering a maternity leave position.
T. McGinty was appointed as Caretaker.
Y. Lundon was appointed as Bus Escort.
M. Calvey was appointed to work in the Infant After-School Club.
J. Bell was appointed to the position of Assistant Principal II.

Policy Development

The Board ratified the following Policies:

- Child Safeguarding Statement (annual review)
- Anti-Bullying Policy (annual review)
- Assessment Policy
- Learning Support Policy



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- Geography Policy
- Annual Admissions Notice
- Admissions Policy
- Environmental Sustainability Policy
- Career Break Policy
- Job Share Policy
- Reconstitution of Classes Policy
- Internet Acceptable Use Policy
- Digital Learning Plan
- Drama Policy
- Music Policy
- Gaeilge Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- RSE Policy
- Stay Safe Policy
- Substance Use Policy

School Inspectorate Visit

DES Inspector Sinead Patton visited the school on the 15th September for an incidental inspection. The Inspector assigned to the school this year was Diarmuid Dullaghan.

DES Inspector, Diarmuid Dullaghan visited the School in the final term for Self-Evaluation advisory visit on Wellbeing with the senior In-School Management team.

Curricular Development

School staff continue to implement the School Self-Evaluation plan for Maths. The staff have identified Wellbeing as the next focus for SSE. A SSE report on Wellbeing was drafted. The focus of the Wellbeing SSE Improvement Plan will be identified in term one next year.

Sustained school support on the implementation was received from PDST. Three visits from PDST facilitator, Jacinta Murphy were received.

All staff engaged with the final webinars of the Primary Language Curriculum.

A substantial amount of Croke Park hours was spent on curriculum policy review resulting in the review of Gaeilge, Music, Drama, PE, RSE & Stay Safe policies.

Health & Safety

Fire drills were undertaken and new Fire Assembly points were identified. Each classroom has a designated fire assembly point. Training was provided to staff in basic First Aid and using the defibrillator. Safety, Health & Welfare audits were undertaken throughout the school building and school grounds in term three.

Building Projects

There are a number of items for completion and snagging in the school building. Regular meetings have taken place with the builders and design team to address these.

Permanent Extension

The school was approved for a permanent extension to accommodate the three ASD classes. A new Design Team was appointed and plans are ready to be submitted to the Department for approval. Extensive surveying was undertaken of the entire school site. The cost of this surveying was approved by the Department.

ASA Application

As a result of the change in the Pupil-Teacher Ratio within the Staffing Schedule, the school was required to appoint an additional mainstream class teacher for September 2023. An ASA application for an additional two classrooms was submitted to the Department.



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Parking

The Board of Management wish to thank St. Finian's Diocesan Trust and Julianstown Parish for the continued use of the church carpark. The use of this carpark ensures the safety of all children entering and leaving the school each day.

Treasurer's Report

The financial management of Whitecross N.S. is conducted in strict compliance with Department of Education requirements. The Board of Management ensure the accounts are certified annually (School Year: September – August) by a certified chartered accountant. At each Board meeting a comprehensive financial report of all income and expenditure since the previous meeting is presented by the Treasurer to the Board for discussion and analysis. The close monitoring of expenditure is necessary as income continues to be limited to DES funding and therefore requires prudent financial management. O. Tiernan, School Secretary looks after the day-to-day administration and computerisation of accounts with great efficiency.

The Board are closely monitoring expenses to determine the exact running costs of the new school building. There have been significant increases in the cost of insurance, maintenance contracts, light and heating. The Board expressed concern about the cost of cleaning the school as the Covid Cleaning Grant is no longer available. The Board subsidised recorder lessons for second class pupils and music lessons for infant classes. The Board also subsidised the cost of buses to all sporting fixtures. There was an alarming increase in the cost of buses and as a result the Board will need to discuss with the Parents Association what plan can be put in place to assist with this cost and ensure that the school can still enter the same competitions.

Extra-Curricular Activities

The following activities took place this year:

Irish Dancing – A. McFadden

Music Project – Maria Shiel

Homework Club – N. Finnegan

Sports Club – N. Murphy & R. Morrissey

After-School Club (Infants) – School run

Community Links

The Board wishes to acknowledge the wonderful support it receives from the local community in the form of input from various groups who help the school out on a regular basis, enriching our school programme and enhancing and maintaining our school grounds. The Board wishes to thank Julianstown Tidy Towns Committee for planting trees on the public lawn outside the school. This support is very much appreciated.

Special Events

The school celebrated the retirement of Ms Noelle Timmons in October 2022 and the retirement of Ms Deirbhile O'Rourke in June 2023. The Board wishes to acknowledge and thank both of these teachers for their hard work and dedicated service in Whitecross N.S.

On the 18th November 2022, the school was officially opened by the School Patron, Bishop Tom Deenihan. The opening of the new school building was celebrated by the whole school community, former staff members and the design team.

In concluding our Annual Report for 2022 - 2023, the Board of Management wishes to acknowledge the commitment of staff, the support of the parents/guardians and the enthusiastic co-operation of the pupils who work together to make the school a safe, happy and secure learning environment.



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Míle Buíochas to all who helped make this year such a positive and productive one in Whitecross N.S. Many thanks to everyone who helped make our official opening of the new school building a very special and memorable day.