

Annual Board Report Bennekerry N.S. 2020-21

Introduction and Overview

Bennekerry N.S. is a co-educational catholic school. The school's enrolment presently stands at 413 pupils. We have 23 teachers comprising of an administrative Principal, 16 class teachers and 6 Special Educational Teachers, one of whom is shared with Bishop Foley National School. Ms. Tonia Cleary is the Principal, Ms. Lourda Griffin is Deputy Principal and Mrs. Aoife Rice is Assistant Principal 1. In addition, the school has three Assistant Principal 2 post holders, Mr. John Dennehy, Mrs. Patricia Bowe and Ms. Deirdre Tomlinson. Bennekerry N.S. has two Special Needs Assistants, Mrs. Zelma Lennon and Mrs. Adrienne Connor, a part-time caretaker, Mr. Kevin O'Sullivan and a full-time secretary, Mrs. Deirdre Mullins. This year the BOM employed an aide to assist with additional cleaning and sanitization during the school day as well as with opening and closing of gates, directing pupils and assisting with supervision as breaktimes were split and pupils were expected to stay within pods and bubbles at all times.

Mission Statement

Bennekerry National School is a co-educational, Catholic, primary school which strives to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and addressed.

While B.N.S is a school with a Catholic ethos, it also has due recognition for all other religions.

Bennekerry National School will strive to promote, both individually and collectively, the professional and personal development of teachers through staff development programmes.

Bennekerry National School will encourage the involvement of parents through home/school contact and through their involvement in the Bennekerry N.S Parents Association.

Bennekerry will endeavour to enhance the self-esteem of everyone in the school community, to imbue in the pupils respect for people and property and to encourage in them the idea of being responsible.

Bennekerry National School will promote gender equality amongst the teachers and pupils.

Déanfaimid iarracht Gaeilge a labhairt.

Board Members & Number of Meetings

Edmund Burke (Chairperson) Tonia Cleary (Principal & Secretary), Deirdre Tomlinson (Teachers' Nominee), Fr. Tom Little (Patron's Nominee), Niall Rennick (Treasurer & Community Nominee), Vivienne O'Neill (Community Nominee and Safety Officer) Paud O'Dwyer (Parent Nominee) and Colleen Scully (Parent nominee)

The Board met seven times this year.

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Staffing:

Ratification of appointments based on interviews held on 16th July 2020

Daniel Curry (fixed-term career break)

Róisín Lanigan (fixed-term career break)

Amy Collins (fixed-term jobshare)

Chantelle Coakley (fixed-term maternity)

Laura Birney (fixed-term maternity)

Margaret Byrne (fixed-term maternity)

Orla Maher (fixed-term parental leave)

Aisling Salter (fixed-term special Covid-leave)

Initiatives supported by the Board

Educational Projects:

- Curriculum requisites purchased: Four Digital Smartboards for classrooms, Maths materials for classrooms, 12 new ipads including charging station and subscription to management system. €10,000 worth of English Curriculum books for book rental scheme, equipment for Aistear to the value of
- New model for SEN allocation implemented in Bennekerry N.S.
- Webinars on "Cyber-Bullying and Safe use of the Internet" for all pupils from 4th-6th class
- Staff sharing of skills, gymnastics lessons led by more experienced members of staff and observed by teachers with less experience
- GAA coaching facilitated outdoors

Whole/Part Staff CPD/Training

- Training on use of ipads with Kieran Lowe from CompuB
- Eoin Stakelum facilitator from PDST CPD with select group on G-Suite and Ipads
- Completion of Droichead process with 4 new members of staff
- TUSLA e learning on Child Protection completed by all staff
- Six members of staff completed a First Aid Course on June 21st 2021
- Implementing the Primary Language Curriculum

Extra-curricular activities and School Celebrations:

- Planting of crocus bulbs with 6th class
- Vegetable planting
- Witch-walk at Halloween and "decorate a door" project
- Christmas draw
- Recording of Christmas song done in a socially distanced manner with 6th class
- Seisiún athluthchleasaíochta ar Zoom

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- Winners of Comórtas Ealaíne Féile an Earraigh
- Graduation Ceremony and Ceremony of Light combined for 6th class (parents were able to view this via the webcam in the Church)

Religious ceremonies:

- The First Holy Communion for one of our 3rd class groups which had had to be postponed was held on Sunday 4th October. Two separate ceremonies were held so that we could comply with Government guidelines for Covid-19.
- The pupils in 6th class joined in preparation ceremonies for Confirmation which were held in the St. Mary's Cathedral via zoom.
- The 6th class pupils also joined in the diocesan retreat via zoom
- The 2nd class joined in the Diocesan Penitential Service in Preparation for the Sacrament of First Reconciliation on Thursday 18th March

Improvements to facilities:

- Procurement and set-up of new PC in secretary's office
- Set up of epayment system through Aladdin
- Set up of Office 365 and Microsoft Teams
- Repairs to roof
- Painting of exterior section at front door
- Additional locks fitted to help prevent use of facilities outside of school hours
- Procurement and installation of hand sanitizer dispensers
- Procurement of hand sanitizer
- Marking of new entrance and exit routes to take account of Covid-19
- Procurement of bark mulch to create new pathways because of Covid-10
- Procurement of stencils and paint to mark standing points and correct distancing
- Procurement and installation of steel shed for suitable storage of chemicals and cleaning equipment
- Repairs to faulty window fastenings
- Marmoleum on corridors, staff room, secretary's office and 12 classrooms sealed
- Repairs to playground
- Repairs to toilets and handbasin
- Updating of coms room
- Regular maintenance of Fire-safety and Intruder Alarm systems
- Monitoring of cracks in school building
- Improved signage to include signage for Covid-19
- Provision and installation of new Evacuation Assembly Point signs

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- Upgrading of track around pitch
- Repair and maintenance work on All-Weather Pitch
- Installation of more suitable sanitizer dispensers
- Continuous of Health and Safety issues in Playground and completion of necessary repairs

Policies and procedures reviewed and ratified by the Board:

Covid-19 Policy Statement	August 2020
Covid-19 Risk Assessment and Response Plan	August 2020
Covid-19 Communications Plan	August 2020
Covid-19 Procedures for BKNS	August 2020
Environmental Cleaning Plan	October 2020
Admission Policy	October 2020
Update to AUP Policy	October 2020
Update to Data Protection Policy	October 2020
Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk assessment (review checklist completed)	March 2021
Anti-Bullying Policy (review checklist completed)	March 2021
Updated Covid-19 Response Plan	March 2021
Update to Safety Statement and Risk Assessment	June 2021

Policies/items to review next year:

- Circular 70/2018
- English Plan
- Gaeilge Plan
- Maths Plan
- Assessment Policy
- Maths
- Anti-Bullying Policy (Review Checklist)
- Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment (Review Checklist)

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Standardised Tests:

These were administered in all classes from 1st-6th during the weeks 10th -21st May. The average results in Bennekerry N.S. for Numeracy and Literacy were.....

Sigma T- (Maths) Standard Score 110 (75th percentile)

New Drumcondra Reading Test Level 1 Screening – Standard Score 105

New Drumcondra Reading Test Level 2 – Standard Score 102 (50th percentile)

New Drumcondra Reading Test Level 3 – Standard Score 104 (61st percentile)

Confirmation:

The Board has met its obligations in respect of Child Protection & Anti-Bullying procedures.

Tonia Cleary is the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Lourda Griffin as Deputy DLP.

The Board has reviewed Standardised Test Results and Pupil attendance returns during the course of the year.

Total number of days lost through students absence in the entire school year up to and including the date the school closed was 3055 (excluding the working from home periods) while 29 pupils missed over twenty days.

The school accounts for 2019-20 have been certified.

Conclusion

The Board wishes to acknowledge the commitment of staff, the support of the Parents' Association and parents/guardians, and the enthusiastic co-operation of the pupils who strive to make our school a centre of excellence in Catholic primary education.

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Continuing Professional Development Courses Undertaken By Staff During Summer 2020

- Classroom management
- Learning through play 2020
- Teaching and learning in the Early Childhood setting
- Fostering Emotional Resilience & harmony in the classroom
- Learning through play 2020 x 2
- Office 365 for Education x 8
- Scared Kids- Helping children cope with anxiety .
Classroom Management .
- Maths Problem Solving & Literacy through the Arts 2020.
- Eportfolio and other tools
- Intro to Irish Sign lang and Deaf Awareness.
- Strategies to promote teacher wellbeing.
- Catholic Education - Whats the point?
- Calm bootcamp
- Eportfolio and other tools
- Scared Kids - Helping children Cope with Anxiety x 3
- Teaching Junior Classes
- Promoting Wellbeing
- Teaching, supporting and including pupils with Sen in the classroom
- Nature for Wellbeing and Learning

Professional Development undertaken by staff throughout

2020-21 school year

- Múineadh na Gaeilge sa bhunscoil
- Forbairt teanga le spraoi

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- Numeracy: Developing good practice in mathematics teaching
- Supporting students with special educational needs
- Virtual orienteering for P.E. and geography
- Engaging students with SEN with technology
- Signs and symptoms of different special educational needs
- Creating a safe place in an unsafe world
- NEPS: Effective intervention for struggling readers
- Rahoo: Diversity and Inclusion in the classroom
- The Literacy Channel: Phonological Awareness
- Tralee education centre: Developing Emergent Handwriting skills
- Rahoo: Fostering Emotional Resilience in the Classroom
- Barnardos: Learning environments in the Early Years
- Drumcondra education centre: Developing positive mental health in children in the school setting
- Féilte
- Collaboration to Support SEN Students in the Distance Learning Setting
- Supporting Students with Literacy and Numeracy Difficulties
- Dyslexia- Helping students access the curriculum
- Supporting Unmotivated Students
- Support for Newly Appointed SET's.
- SEN- Anxiety and Wellbeing
- Online Resources and Apps for Literacy
- Playful Literacy
- Preparing for Literacy-Practical Strategies
- Literacy in Context
- Refreshing the Read Aloud
- Managing Challenging Behaviour
- Collaborative Play for ASD and ADHD
- A Closer Look at The Science of Reading

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- Using Playdoh to enhance classroom learning
- Regulation in the Classroom
- Sensory Processing Differences-effects on behaviour and learning
- Emergent Handwriting
- Phonological Awareness
- Sensory Processing in Autism
- 5 Step Pathway to the Inclusion of Autistic Students
- Facilitating Social Skills in Schools
- An Leabhar Oibre Mar Áis
- Introduction to Autism
- Autism and Pathological Demand Avoidance
- High Frequency Word Instruction
- Online Literacy Learning
- Understanding Behaviour NCSE May 11th, 12th, 13th 2021
- Managing Challenging Behaviour Joe Lynch Clare Ed Centre May '21 Webinars
- Preparation for Teaching and Learning NCCA April '21
- January- April 2021 Website Development Certificate Carlow IT
- Virtual Orienteering for Primary PE and Geography Feb'21 Clare Ed. Centre
- Embedding Digital Technologies in Primary Maths Feb '21 Clare Ed. Centre
- Dysregulation to Regulation Feb'21 Clare Ed Centre/Marino Institute of Education
- Ag labhairt, ag léamh, 's ag spraoi sa bhaile!"- Marino Institute of Education Jan'21
- Remote Learning Webinar by Simon Lewis - Education Support Centres Ireland (Jan' 21)
- Reframing Challenging Behaviour - Wexford Education Centre (Nov' 20)
- Purple Pen Orienteering Software - Orienteering Ireland/RTGO (Nov '20)
- Jump into STEM: Integrating PE, Science and Maths (MIC/UL Nov '20)
- NEPS Effective Interventions for Struggling Readers Webinar 1, 2 and 3
- The Literacy Channel - Phonological Awareness Webinar
- Preparing for Literacy - Practical Strategies for Infant Teachers

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- Carlow Education Centre- Seesaw webinar
- Carlow Education Centre- Back to school-.supporting pupils with SEN
- Carlow Education Centre- Supporting students on return to school
- Kilkenny Education Centre- Collaboration to Support SEN Students in the Distance Learning Setting Webinar
- Keeping VHR Children Connected - Ideas to help teachers connect with and engage VHR students while they are away from the classroom
- Wexford Education Centre- ILSA - Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs in the Mainstream Classroom (Primary)
- NEPS Literacy Webinar Series- Words Their Way
- PDST Word Study
- Kilkenny Education Centre- Supporting the EAL Students Going Through the Silent Phase: A Differentiated Approach
- PDST Supporting Motivation in Literacy
- Seesaw for SEN
- NEPS Effective Intervention for Struggling Readers
- SEN Webinar Suite Webinar #3 – Supporting Students with Literacy and Numeracy Difficulties
- Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) Remotely Webinar
- Galway Education Centre- Exploring the Wellbeing Framework In Primary Schools
- Cork Education Centre- Creating a Whole School Well-Being Policy
- Diocesan webinar prior to school return - 15th August 2020,
- Limiting your Liability as Primary School Reopen - Mason Hayes and Curran August 2020
- Changes to Section 29 Appeal, Why you Need to Review Your Code of Behaviour – Mason, Hayes and Curran July 2020
- Re-opening Schools: Practical Issues for Primary and Secondary Schools - Mason Hayes and Curran
- Diocesan webinars 9th and 23rd September
- Wellbeing – What’s Expected of You- Dr. Deirbhile Nic Craith October 2020

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- Custody and Guardianship Issues for Schools -Mason Hayes and Curran. October 2020
- Diocesan webinar 20th October
- Substitute Teachers – Employment Matters -Conditions of Employment and Leadership Section INTO Nov. 2020
- Legal Industrial Relations and Equality Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015 Reasonable Accommodation December 2020
- Diocesan webinar 9th December
- Schools in the Current Covid-19 Context Jan. 2021
- Remote Education, the legal and technical challenges for Primary Schools – Mason Hayes and Curran
- Framework Plan for Phased return to School including Supplementary Programme Feb. 2021
- Engaging Activities for Live Zoom Check-Ins - Le Chéile 20th January 2021
- GDPR webinar Mason Hayes and Curran 20th January 2021
- Soft Skills for Principals in the Current Covid-19 Context Feb 2021
- CPSMA Zoom 17th Feb 2021
- “The Negotiation of the Language Learner Identity and the Practice of Language Exemptions” Mary Caitlin Wight DCU
- Diocese webinar on Tuesday 9th March
- Child Safeguarding webinar CPSMA 18th March 2021
- Pupil Matters – Legal, Industrial Relations and Equality Section INTO March 2021
- The Appointment Procedure for teachers and SNAs CPSMA webinar 22nd April
- “Reconfiguration of Health Service Intervention for children with Development Delay/Disability in Carlow “ HSE webinar 21st April
- “Effective Interventions for Struggling Readers :Assessment Wexford Ed. Centre led by NEPS 27th April
- “Preparation for Teaching and Learning” NCCA Information Event on 27th April
- “How to Present and Organise a Webinar and How to Make your Webinar Interactive” 29th April

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- “ECSI and Microsoft” 29th April Wexford Ed. Centre
- “Crisis Management for Primary Schools” – Mason Hayes and Curran “- May 5th
- “Cognitive Behaviour Therapy Skills for Children-an Introduction” 6th and 13th May
Wexford Ed. Centre
- “Managing Our Schools- A Legal Perspective” 11th May -Mason Hayes and Curran
- “CSL COACHING - PRIMARY PRINCIPALS LEADERSHIP through UNCERTAINTY” 11th May
- “Preparing the School Budget for 2021/22 & Financial Update for Primary Schools”
(FSSU) 19th May
- “Challenging Behaviour in the Primary School” Kilkenny Education Centre 19th May
- Training with Diocesan Office on Admissions, Employment, Redeployment and other
issues
- “Supporting Regulation in the Classroom 24th May Wexford Ed. Centre
- “Emotion Coaching” delivered by NEPS psychologists 27th May Kilkenny Ed. Centre
- “Child Protection Procedures for Primary Schools” 1st June – Mason Hayes and Curran
- NEPS Emotional Effective Interventions for Struggling Readers x2 Webinars (Assessment
& Evidence Based Interventions)

This report was agreed by the Board of management at their meeting on 28th October 2021. It will be made available to the Parents’ Association and will be posted on the school website so that it is available to all parents and staff.

Signed:  (Chairperson B.O.M.)

Date: 11. 10. 2021