

**Board of Management Agreed Report 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

The Board welcomed the appointment of its new Chairperson, Finn Ó Murchú, who has served as Community Nominee to the Board up until now.

The Board formally extended congratulations to SNA's Anita McCarthy and Hilary Egan who each gave birth to baby boys earlier in the year. *Saol fada agus breac-shláinte chugaibh.*

The Board also welcomed the re-establishment of the Committee of the Parents' Association and has approved various initiatives proposed by the PA to promote parental involvement in their children's education.

The last few months have seen many significant changes announced, most notably the launch of the Primary Curriculum Framework. The Primary Curriculum Framework will shape the work of all primary and special schools for the coming years. This is the first curriculum framework for primary education in Ireland. Under the framework, schools will have a dedicated structure underpinning learning, teaching and assessment. It is designed to cater for all primary and special schools and sets out the vision and principles for a redeveloped, modern curriculum.

Also, the Free Primary Schoolbooks Scheme in primary schools will remove the cost from families of funding schoolbooks for children. Parents will no longer be required to make any contribution towards the cost of schoolbooks, including the cost of any workbooks and copybooks. Where the funding allows, some related classroom resources may also be provided by schools under the new scheme and the school will communicate with parents in relation to the scope of the scheme in our school.

The school's new website will be live soon.

The Board formally reviewed the school's Health & Safety Statement and Child Safeguarding Statement. The importance of capturing our students' voices on these and other important matters will be a focus for the school's development. However challenging it may be to capture the opinions of minimally verbal children, the Board believes very strongly that their views count.

The school continues to develop links and hosted its first TY work experience student from Carrigaline Community School. Megan Whyte, ETBI's Educational Policy and Development Officer, visited the school to learn better how to provide suitable learning materials for special settings for ETBI's ethical programme "Goodness Me, Goodness You". Our new Department Inspector Shirley Murphy has also visited and like many of her colleagues in the Department is very understanding of the challenges faced in special schools like ours. The school is also involved in the NCCA's consultation on the Level 1 and 2 Learning Programmes which we provide in the Senior Section of the school.

The school continues to receive excellent professional support from our regular Behavioural advisor in the NCSE, and there are plans for further support on the Autism Good Practice Guidance for Schools and the Primary Language Curriculum. The school also secured training for four staff on the SCERTS model, a research-based educational approach and multidisciplinary framework that directly addresses the core challenges faced by children and persons with ASD and related disabilities, and their families. Also one of our teachers secured a place on the 5 Day TEACCH training delivered by the University of North Carolina in co-operation with the NCSE.

## Carrigaline Community Special School

The Board was also updated on proposals being considered through funding the staff secured from the Arts Council, which may include:

- a workshop for staff on the teaching of drama with music for children with disabilities
- an Art therapy one hour workshop for each class in the area of messy play and sensory art and a workshop for staff on how to teach this
- a block of creative dance workshops
- an African drumming workshop for students

The Board was also updated on a recent meeting between Cork ETB and the HSE on Adult Day Services. The HSE will be providing an information session in the school in the coming weeks for all parents. It is also hoped that further clarity on the provision of therapy supports provided to special schools will be available shortly.

The Board also formally welcomed Edie our Community Dog to the school. She has already proven herself to be a valuable staff member and has already had a hugely positive impact.