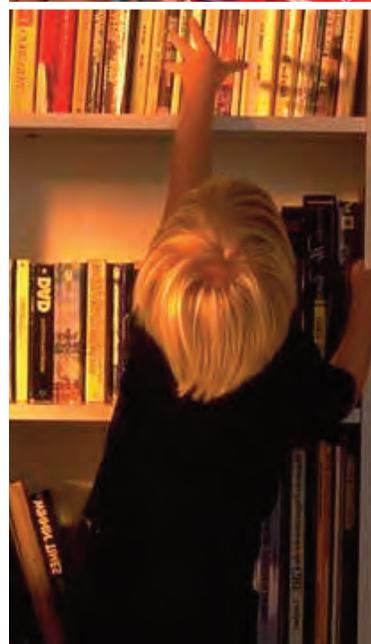


welcome



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Esker Educate Together National School

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Letter of Welcome

Dear Parents/Guardians,

On behalf of our board of Management and the staff of the school, I would like to welcome you to Esker Educate Together National School. I hope that you find this booklet useful as you prepare to send your child to our school. It is intended to provide you with an introduction to all aspects of school life.

I would like to welcome you and your children to our rapidly developing school. We hope to get to know you, our parents, as well as we get to know your children. We, as a staff, intend to work very closely with you, our new parent body, over these first exciting years in our new school building. Together we hope to develop a warm, friendly and inclusive atmosphere and a vibrant school community with the joint aim of providing the best possible education for all the children in the school.

A high level of parental involvement will be a feature of our school. This of course requires a commitment from you as a parent to become involved in the life of the school. We know that once you become involved here, you will realise the value of this for yourself, your child and our school. Be assured that you will always be welcome.

I look forward to getting to know you and your children,
Colette Kavanagh
School Principal

A Typical School Day



9.20am	School opens
9.20-9.40 am	Assembly time
9.40-11.00 am	Teaching and learning
11.15-11.30am	Morning lunch break and free play
11.30-12.45pm	Teaching and learning
12.45-1.10pm	Lunch break and free play
1.10 pm	Teaching and learning
2.00pm	Junior and Senior infants go home
3.00pm	First to Sixth Class go home

Children will be accepted into the yard at 9.10am where they will be supervised until class teachers collect them from their lines at 9.20am.

IMPORTANT DATES.

- The new school year opens on **Monday September 1st, 2014 at 9.20 am**
- For the first two weeks from **Monday 1st September – Friday 12th September** all Junior Infant classes will go home early at **12.20 pm**
- From Monday **September 15th** all infants go home at **2.00 pm** which is the usual closing time for the rest of the year.



The School Year

School Year 2014 - 2015

School opens on Monday 1st September 2014 at 9.10 am.

There are three terms in each school year. This year they are:

Term 1	1st September '14 – 19th December '14
Term 2	5th January '15 – 27th March '15
Term 3	13th April '15 – 30th June '15

There are also mid-term breaks in each term. October Break, 27th October – 31st October inclusive.

February Break, 16th - 20th February inclusive.

A detailed calendar of exact dates is included in this pack. It may also be viewed on our website eskeretns.ie

School Books and School Materials Bill

Booklist

Enclosed in this welcome pack there is a book list which outlines the books that your child will need for September.

Most of the books that your child will be using are in our book rental scheme. The remainder of the books (those that are on the booklist) must be purchased by you and are available at Abtree Bookshop in Superquinn Shopping Centre.

Materials Bill

The materials bill outlines how much you have to pay to the school. Most of the parents have already paid this fee of €95 in their deposit to the school.

Please make your payment to the class teacher in the first week of September if you have not already paid this fee.

This deposit covers book rentals and the material costs for this year.

School Personnel

Colette Kavanagh	Principal
Tom Costelloe	Deputy Principal & Home School Liaison Teacher

Mainstream Class Teachers

Robert O'Brien	6th Class (Green)
Evan Henegan	6th Class (Red)
Paula Murphy	5th Class (Green)
Noeline Morgan	5th Class (Red)
Leah Burke	4th Class (Green)
Liz Lehane	4th Class (Red)
Fiona McGreevey	3rd Class (Green)
Grainne Ring	3rd Class (Red)
New Appointment	2nd Class (Green)
Niamh Gallagher	2nd Class (Red)
New Appointment	1st Class (Green)
New Appointment	1st Class (Red)
Emma Jacob	Senior Infants (Green)
Gemma Stokes	Senior Infants (Red)
Aoife Burke	Junior Infants (Green)
Karen Morrissey	Junior Infants (Red)
Deirdre Kelly	Learning Support / Resource Teacher
Grace Jordan	Learning Support / Resource Teacher
Rebekah Connolly	Language Support Teachers
Carmen Aguiella	
Catriona Ryall / Mary Day	Special Needs Assistants
Jayne Homan / Jenny Longworth	
Suzanne Dunne	School Secretary
Barry Molloy	Caretaker

I would like to take this final opportunity to welcome you all to this school and hope that you and your child have a very rewarding and fulfilling time with us in Esker Educate Together National School.

Colette Kavanagh - Principal

Helping your child in Junior Infants

There are many ways in which you can help your child to settle into and enjoy school life and, in particular, their year in Junior Infants.



- Write their name on their coat, bags, books, lunch boxes, flasks, clothing etc.
- Teach your child how to take off and put on his/her coat, and how to open and close zips, buttons, buckles and laces.
- Show your child how to use and flush the toilet properly, and how to wash their hands properly.
- Encourage your child to share their toys and to tidy up after playing.
- Choose a lunch box and flask that are easily opened.
- Give some thought to lunches. Peeled oranges for example, are easier for your child to manage. Set yoghurt may help to avoid spills
- Talk with your child about how they are getting on in school.
- Read stories with your child in the language of the family and in English (if different)
- Do their words and reading when they start to bring them home.
- Encourage good behaviour
- Come to the meetings or workshops arranged by the school for parents.

The most important thing that you can do to prepare your child for school in the next couple of months is to read stories to him/her every day and to practise nursery rhymes, either in the child's home language and / or English.

What is an Educate Together School

Educate Together is a national organisation of the Educate Together multi-denominational schools in the Republic of Ireland. There are now over 68 Educate Together schools in the country and this figure is growing. The schools are fully recognised by the Department of Education and Science. They are non fee-paying and they operate under the same rules applying to all national schools.

Where did the name Educate Together come from?

The name 'Educate Together' was carefully chosen by the national organisation to reflect the coming together of children and families of different faiths and beliefs, from different social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Educate Together schools are open to all children on a 'first-come-first-served' basis, although some changes are expected to this policy in the coming year. All parents will be informed of any changes to the school's enrolment policy.

Religion

Educate Together are legally prevented from favouring any particular religion or thought system over another. We provide a programme of information about major religions and thought systems. We look at the similarities and the differences between religions. We also provide religious education programmes based on morality, human rights and responsibilities, ethics and good citizenship. We do not prepare children for sacraments or religious events but we are committed to making school facilities available to parents who wish to organise doctrinal or religious instruction to their children outside of school hours.



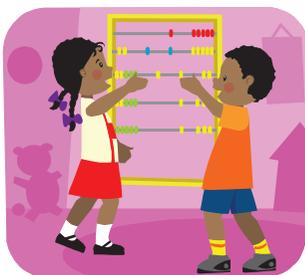
We ask you as parents to read our ethos statement and to sign that you understand its contents and support the Educate Together ethos of our school.

All parents are requested to sign our Ethos Statement before enrolling their child.

Ethos and Core Principles

Esker Educate Together NS, like all multi-denominational schools in the Republic of Ireland, is founded on four core principles:

1. **Multi-denominational** - children of all creeds and none have equal rights of access, and the social, religious and cultural background of each child is equally respected.
2. **Co-educational** - the school is open to boys and girls on an equal basis. Every effort will be made to ensure that girls and boys are actively integrated, and sexual stereotyping is avoided, both in attitude and teaching materials.
3. **Child-centred** - the school aims to establish an environment which encourages, nurtures and facilitates each child so that they will explore their full range of abilities and work towards realising their highest potential.
4. **Democratic** - the school will be run by management committees which are democratically elected and run, and the involvement of all parents is sought and encouraged. Children are encouraged to become involved in school structures through their representatives on the Pupil Council.



Uniform

We have no school uniform in Esker ETNS but would recommend that your child wears comfortable clothing. For infants in particular we ask that you teach your child to take off/on his/her coat and how to open and close zips, buttons, buckles and laces. Zips are preferable to buttons and elasticised clothing is ideal.

Health Matters

Like most other primary schools, the Esker Educate Together School is under the administration of the Health Service Executive. Childhood vaccinations and screening tests for sight, hearing and dental problems may be offered to your child whilst attending the school. You will be asked to sign a consent form before any health test or intervention.

If your child has a particular problem in any of these areas, they can be referred to the Health Centre for treatment.

Head Lice

No matter how careful you are about your child's hair, there is still a chance that it can become infested with head-lice if he/she comes in contact with other children. It is part of school life!

Please check your child's hair regularly. It is very important that you inform your child's teacher immediately if you find head-lice, as they are highly contagious. We will immediately notify all parents to check their children's hair.

Health Problems

If your child has a particular health problem such as allergies, asthma, diabetes etc., you should advise the school. The school should be made aware of the name and address of your family doctor.

If your child needs medication on a regular basis you may need to make special arrangements for this. As a general rule teachers should not be involved in the administration of medication to pupils. However, where a teacher must become involved the following procedure should be adhered to:-

1. The teacher must obtain authorisation from the Board of Management to administer the medication.
2. The Parent(s) should write to the school management requesting permission for the teacher to administer the medication enclosing details of the procedure and indemnifying the teacher for same. This request must be in writing for school records.
3. In cases where a child has a chronic illness the parents will be asked to fill out a Chronic Illness form which will give the school the necessary information on what to do in the event of a medical crisis with your child.

Parental Involvement

Parents have a range of talents, abilities and skills that have the potential to enrich and extend the educational opportunities provided for the children. In line with the principles of multi-denominational education, parents may participate in and make a valuable contribution to the school at every level, including:



- Going forward for election to the Board of Management
- Becoming a member of other committees e.g., a Parents Association, or a School Community Development committee
- Fundraising
- Participating in working groups
- Giving time to share a hobby, skill or interest during school hours in association with class teachers and the Principal
- Helping the Principal and Teachers with extracurricular activities, school outings, art, library etc. whenever possible.
- Gardening
- Suggesting and getting involved in interesting projects for the children.

If you wish to become involved in any of the above please make yourself known to the principal, the class teacher or any member of the Board of Management.

Code of Behaviour

The Code of Behaviour at Esker Educate Together has as its basic tenet, a respect for each child as an individual; it aims to foster a positive atmosphere in which every child can learn, develop and reach his/her full potential. The Code of Behaviour enables teachers and pupils to work in a well organised environment where acceptable patterns of behaviour are followed and where self-discipline, based on tolerance and respect for everyone, is fostered. A copy of our Code is included in this pack and we ask that you read through it and complete the form signing that you have read and accept our policy. The Code of Behaviour and other policies are on our school website eskeretns.ie.

School Management Structure

Esker Educate Together School will operate under the Rules for National Schools which are drawn up by the Minister for Education (www.education.ie). The Department of Education and Science (DES) provides a percentage of funding and pays teachers' salaries. The DES Inspectors monitor the implementation of the curriculum in the school.

National schools are managed by a Board of Management which is set up according to Departmental guidelines with elected parent and teacher representatives, nominees of the Patron and members from the wider community. In the case of Esker ETNS our first Board of Management was appointed in December 2007. Our second Board which runs for 4 years was constituted in December 2011. The Board is responsible for the appointment of teachers and of other staff and for the day-to-day management of the school including heating, cleaning and maintenance of the building. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that the finances necessary for running the school are available. As outlined above, the DES provides a percentage of funding and the Board of Management must provide the remainder of the costs. This money is raised in a variety of ways, including regular fund-raising by parents.

The Board of Management

Chairperson	Peggy Masterson
Community Rep.	John Coleman
Community Rep.	Marie Reilly
Parents' rep. (Male)	Jacky Zhang
Parents' rep. (Female) & Treasurer	Sandra Russe
Teachers' Rep.	Tom Costelloe
Principal	Colette Kavanagh
Roll Number	20274C

Absences

- All absences must be explained to the class teacher in writing or through direct communication with the class teacher. From 1st class up parents may fill out reason for absence in their child's homework diary.
- As a school we abide by the Education and Welfare Act 2000. Under this act if a child is absent for more than twenty days a report must be sent by the school to the Child & Family agency.
- We urge parents not to book holidays or trips abroad during term time. This practice has a very bad effect on the education and well-being of your child in school and is very disruptive of your child's learning.
- Please read the booklet "Don't let your child miss out" which is enclosed in this pack for further information.

Communication

- It is important for you as parents, for your child and for us at Esker Educate Together to have good communication with each other. If you have any queries, problems or concerns regarding your child please contact your child's teacher to make an appointment to meet him/her. It is not always possible for a class teacher to meet you 'on the spot' so in order for both teacher and parent to get the most out of such a meeting please contact the school in advance so arrangements can be made to free up the teacher to meet you and give you the attention and the privacy you may need.
- When making an appointment please indicate to the nature of your concern so that the teacher can be prepared to deal accurately with the issue.
- In addition, if there is a change in home circumstance (illness, separation or anything that you feel may affect your child) please let your child's teacher know. We assure you of our utmost sensitivity in the matter.
- Please check your child's school bag regularly as important information is sent home through the school bag.
- Text-a-Parent: Urgent information is communicated to your nominated mobile phone. It is your responsibility to supply us with this number, if you are unable to do so you will not be included in this service. Remember to let us know if you change this number so that we can update our records.
- Newsletters, information for parents, class photographs and school gallery are all available to be seen on our website eskeretns.ie

The Curriculum

The curriculum of Esker Educate Together School, like that of all Primary Schools in the Republic of Ireland, is laid down by the Department of Education and Science.

Esker Educate Together School aims to create a warm and stimulating environment so that each child may work towards realising his/her highest potential. Parents, children and teachers are on first name terms, which aims to create a relaxed and informal atmosphere for everyone. In co-operation with parents, the school will work to instil feelings of self-confidence, self-awareness and self-respect in the children.

Within the parameters of the Primary School Curriculum, the objectives are as follows:

- The achievement of academic excellence for each child according to his/her individual potential.
- The promotion of cultural enrichment.
- There are 12 subjects in the curriculum that are taught at every level in the school. All subjects are taught in this school.

THE CURRICULUM

12 subjects:

- English, Irish, Maths
- History, Geography, Science (SESE)
- Music, Visual Arts, Drama (Arts Education)
- Physical Education
- Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE)
- Religious Education (RE)

All subjects taught at all level

Copies of the Primary School Curriculum available at www.ncca.ie and public libraries