



Claregalway  
Educate Together  
NATIONAL SCHOOL

Claregalway Educate Together N.S.  
Lakeview,  
Claregalway,  
Co. Galway.  
H91 F5EH

Tel. 091 798356  
email: [info@claregalwayet.ie](mailto:info@claregalwayet.ie)

## Annual Board of Management Report to Parents 2025-2026

### 1. Chairperson's Welcome

Dear Parents,

In keeping with our policy of sharing knowledge of the work of the Board of Management and all issues dealt by it during the year, attached is the report that summarises this. We hope it will ensure that all families feel fully included and are aware of how the school is faring in terms of educational provision, policies, finance and future plans.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all families and members of the Board of Management for your unstinting support of the school and the staff over the past school year. It is certainly an honour and a privilege to lead such a wonderful school community.

Yours sincerely,

*Catherine Joyce*

Chairperson BOM

### 2. About the Board of Management

The Board of Management works on behalf of the school community to support the effective governance of the school and to ensure that the school operates in accordance with Department of Education requirements, the school's ethos and all relevant legislation. The Board's role includes oversight of educational provision, financial management, policy development, health and safety, safeguarding, staffing and strategic planning.



### Board Membership (2025–2026)

Board Member	Role
Catherine Joyce	Chairperson / Patron's Nominee
Sonya Mc Garry	Patron's Nominee
Aoife Winston	Principal / Secretary to the Board
Chunyang Akturk	Mother's Nominee
James Bermingham	Father's Nominee
Damien Stenson	Teacher's Nominee
Jim Noone	Community Nominee
Helen Bacci	Community Nominee

The Board met **five times** during the academic year to review school priorities, oversee governance responsibilities and support ongoing school development.

Meetings were held on the following dates:

1. 02.10.25
2. 27.11.25
3. 12.02.26
4. 23.04.26
5. 18.06.26

### Key Areas of Board Oversight

- Governance and compliance
- Health and Safety
- Buildings and facilities
- Financial oversight and legal governance



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- Recording and administration of Board business
- Sharing an Agreed Report with the parent body following BOM meetings via School Updates/Newsletters.

The Board would like to thank all members for their time, expertise and commitment in supporting the continued development of the school and the educational experience of all pupils.

### 3. School Overview

The 2025–2026 school year marked a particularly significant milestone in the life of Claregalway Educate Together National School as we celebrated **20 years since the school first opened its doors on 5th September 2005.**

From beginnings with just two staff members and 29 pupils, the school has grown into a vibrant and inclusive learning community while remaining rooted in the values that shaped its foundation: respect, belonging and ensuring every child has the opportunity to thrive.

Today, Claregalway Educate Together NS is proud to support **221 pupils and 159 families**, continuing to provide a welcoming, child-centred educational environment where every member of the community feels seen, valued and included.

#### Enrolment and Staffing

At the end of the school year, the school community consisted of:

- 221 pupils enrolled
- 9 mainstream class teachers
- 2 special classes
- 3 Special Education Teachers (SET)
- 1 part-time English as an Additional Language (EAL) teacher
- 7 Special Needs Assistants (SNAs)
- 4 bus escorts
- 1 school secretary
- 1 caretaker
- 1 principal



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The Board acknowledges the dedication, professionalism and care shown by all staff members throughout the year. Their commitment ensures that Claregalway Educate Together NS continues to be not simply a school, but a thriving, inclusive and connected community where children are supported to learn, grow and flourish.

Celebrating twenty years provided an opportunity for the school community to pause, reflect and appreciate all that has been achieved together while also looking forward with confidence and ambition to the years ahead.

### **School Branding and Identity**

During the 2025–2026 school year, the school undertook an exciting project to develop and launch a **new school brand identity**.

This work was about much more than creating a new logo or visual style. It provided an opportunity to reflect on who Claregalway Educate Together NS is today and how the school wishes to present itself into the future, while remaining deeply connected to the values and community that have shaped the school over the past twenty years.

The refreshed identity includes a **new crest inspired by the nine arches of Claregalway**, symbolising connection, belonging and place while also reflecting ambition and looking forward with confidence. Alongside this, the school introduced a refreshed visual identity across communications and launched a **new school website**, creating greater consistency, accessibility and connection with families.

This development supports clearer communication with the school community and reflects a modern, inclusive and forward-looking vision for Claregalway Educate Together NS.

## **4. Teaching, Learning and School Improvement Priorities**

Throughout the 2025–2026 school year, the school focused on a number of significant areas of development designed to strengthen teaching and learning, support pupil wellbeing and ensure continued improvement across the school community. Wellbeing and Inclusion



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Supporting pupil wellbeing remained a key priority throughout the year. Alongside a continued focus on attendance and belonging, the school maintained restorative and inclusive approaches to supporting positive relationships and student voice. Work also continued in partnership with Educate Together to explore opportunities for strengthening pupil participation through initiatives including student leadership and student council development.

### Primary Mathematics Curriculum (PMC)

A major priority this year was the continued implementation of the **new Primary Mathematics Curriculum**. Staff engaged in ongoing professional learning and collaborative planning to support the introduction of the curriculum and to further develop high-quality mathematics teaching across all classes.

Key areas of focus included:

- strengthening pupils' **mathematical thinking, reasoning and problem-solving skills**
- increasing opportunities for children to **talk about and explain their mathematical thinking**
- developing a stronger focus on **mathematical language and vocabulary**
- using **team teaching, station teaching and hands-on approaches** to support engagement and attainment
- promoting **open-ended tasks and real-life mathematical experiences** both inside and outside the classroom.

### Child Protection and Safeguarding

This year also saw the implementation of the **revised Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2025)**. The Board and school leadership prioritised ensuring that all statutory requirements were fully embedded into school practice.

Actions included:

- review and updating of school safeguarding procedures and documentation
- staff training and professional development in relation to child protection responsibilities
- ongoing review of policies and procedures to ensure alignment with national requirements



- maintaining a strong culture of safeguarding, student voice and wellbeing across the school community.

Safeguarding remains a central responsibility and the Board continues to review compliance annually.

### DEIS Plan – Targets and School Improvement Actions

The school continued implementation of its **DEIS Three-Year Plan (2023–2026)** with a strong emphasis on ensuring that plans remain visible in classrooms and reflected in day-to-day practice — *“plans in action, not plans on paper; every teacher, every classroom, every day.”*

Key actions and developments this year included:

- strengthening **whole-school literacy approaches**, including structured phonics, reading instruction and targeted support for pupils requiring additional intervention
- continued support for pupils accessing **English as an Additional Language (EAL)** through inclusive and targeted interventions
- maintaining a strong focus on **attendance, engagement and belonging**, including regular monitoring, parent communication and promoting positive attendance habits
- continued investment in **positive school culture and wellbeing initiatives**, including restorative approaches, pupil voice and inclusive practices
- strengthening **partnership with parents** through communication, opportunities for involvement and supporting participation across school life.

These priorities continue to guide school improvement and ensure that all children are supported to achieve, participate and feel a strong sense of belonging in Claregalway Educate Together NS.

### Next Steps

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement and meaningful curriculum implementation, the school has successfully **applied to participate in support for the enactment of School Social and Environmental Education (SEE) during the 2026–2027 school year.**



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This next phase will support the school in embedding and evaluating the implementation of the **Primary Mathematics Curriculum and the Primary Language Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile** in a reflective and sustainable way. Through the SSE process, staff will work collaboratively to gather evidence, review practice and identify priorities that strengthen teaching and learning outcomes for all pupils.

## 5. Student Wellbeing and Safeguarding

Supporting strong attendance remains an important priority for the school as regular attendance supports children's learning, wellbeing, relationships and sense of belonging within the school community.

Overall attendance for the 2025–2026 school year remained strong at **93.9%**, representing a slight increase on the previous year (**93.8%**).

Attendance remained consistently positive across the year, with monthly attendance ranging from **91.1% to 96.5%**, reflecting the continued commitment of families to ensuring children attend school regularly.



## Reasons for Absence

During the school year, a total of **2,203 absences** were recorded.

Reason for Absence	Number
Illness	874
Holiday	526
Other	490
Urgent Family Illness	142
Unexplained	171

Of the total absences recorded, **171 absences (7.8%) were unexplained**. The school continues to work in partnership with families to ensure absences are recorded accurately and promptly through Aladdin and to support good attendance habits from an early age.

The school continues to implement actions outlined in the DEIS Plan to support attendance, including regular monitoring of attendance patterns, communication with families and promoting a positive school culture where children feel connected, supported and eager to attend school each day.

The Board acknowledges the continued efforts of pupils, parents and staff in maintaining positive attendance and supporting children to engage fully in school life.

### Punctuality and Attendance Patterns

In addition to full-day absences, the school continued to monitor patterns of **late arrival and early collection**, recognising that these can have a cumulative impact on children's learning experience and sense of routine.



During the 2025–2026 school year:

- **14,804 minutes** of learning time were lost through **late arrivals**
- **20,049 minutes** were lost through **early leaving**
- This represents a combined total of **34,853 minutes**, equivalent to approximately **581 hours** or **almost 97 full school days of learning time**

While individual instances may arise for understandable family, medical or logistical reasons, cumulative lost instructional time can impact:

- continuity of learning and classroom routines
- access to key teaching and assessment activities
- social connection and participation in class life
- children's confidence and readiness for learning.

The school continues to encourage punctual arrival and limiting early collection wherever possible, while working in partnership with families to support attendance patterns that maximise children's opportunities to participate fully in school life.

## **6. Child Safeguarding and Anti-Bullying**

The Board of Management completed its annual review of the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment in line with statutory requirements. The Board is satisfied that the school continues to implement the required child protection procedures and that safeguarding remains central to all aspects of school life.

The school also completed its annual review of the Anti-Bullying Policy and continues to implement procedures in accordance with national guidance and the school's commitment to creating a safe, inclusive and respectful learning environment for all children.

Confirmation of both reviews was communicated to the school community through school updates and the relevant documentation remains available to parents via the school website.



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## **7. Facilities, Resources and Infrastructure**

Building works and maintenance continued throughout the year, with ongoing upgrades to the school environment. Investment included the extension of the astro area and continued improvements to facilities.

ICT and learning resources were further developed through investment in Chromebooks, iPads and charging trolleys to support teaching and learning.

Health and safety remains a priority. All risk assessments are up to date. The school has also increased its investment in solar panels, bringing capacity to 100, supporting sustainability and energy efficiency.

## **8. Financial Overview**

The Board continued to exercise careful financial oversight to ensure resources were directed towards educational priorities, school improvement and maintaining high-quality learning environments. The school also benefited from community and external support during the year, including sponsorship funding towards Le Chéile and targeted grant funding for equipment and school development initiatives.

## **9. Partnership with Parents and Community**

- ongoing sharing of agreed reports following BOM meetings
- consultation with parents on policy development (Code of Behaviour, Admissions, Homework)
- Parents Together support for school projects
- continued communication through newsletters and website updates
- Support of PT events and initiatives



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## **Community and Strategic Development**

Alongside supporting day-to-day school operations, the Board continued to focus on long-term school development and community connection. During the year, work progressed on preparations to mark the school's 20th anniversary celebrations, providing an opportunity to reflect on the school's journey since opening in 2005 and to celebrate the contribution of staff, pupils, families and the wider community.

## **10. Governance and Policy Review**

During the year, the Board of Management reviewed and ratified a number of key policies and statutory procedures including the revised Code of Behaviour, Admissions Policy (Special Class), Acceptable Use Policy, Photo Consent Policy and Homework Policy. The Board also formally adopted the Revised Child Protection Procedures 2025, approved the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment, completed the Annual Child Protection Checklist and completed the annual Bí Cinealta/Anti-Bullying review process.

## **11. . Acknowledgements**

As another successful school year comes to a close, the Board of Management would like to express its sincere appreciation to everyone who contributes to making Claregalway Educate Together NS such a positive, inclusive and thriving school community.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our dedicated staff team for their professionalism, care, creativity and commitment to providing high-quality learning experiences and supporting every child to reach their full potential.

To our pupils, thank you for the enthusiasm, kindness, curiosity and sense of community you bring to school each day. Your energy and willingness to learn continue to shape the character and spirit of our school.



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We warmly thank parents and families for your continued trust, partnership and support throughout the year. Your engagement in school life, communication, fundraising efforts and encouragement of children's learning play a vital role in the success of our school community.

We also wish to acknowledge the contribution of Parents Together, volunteers, Board members, community partners and supporters whose generosity of time, expertise and practical support enriches school life and helps create opportunities for our pupils.

As we celebrate twenty years of Claregalway Educate Together NS, we recognise that everything achieved has been made possible through the collective efforts of our school community working together in support of children.

Thank you for helping make Claregalway Educate Together NS a place where every child feels welcomed, valued and supported to thrive.

Roll Number: 20211B  
[www.claregalwayet.ie](http://www.claregalwayet.ie)

