

2011 ANNUAL REVIEW

EDUCATE TOGETHER'S YEAR



WHAT A YEAR!

Educate Together has had an eventful 2011. We have made some real progress and now have even firmer foundations for further growth. The change in government created a new momentum in the education sector and the new Minister's drive for reform is very encouraging.

Our network has developed strongly. Two new schools opened, three new school buildings and four extensions were received. At least four more new school buildings will be delivered in 2012 and we have high hopes for success in the twelve primary applications we submitted to the Department of Education and Skills. Most importantly, 2011 marked our formal recognition as a second-level patron and we have five active campaigns for second-level schools to open in 2013/14. Educate Together continues to grow strongly. We now have more than 14,000 pupils attending schools and over 950 teachers employed.

All of this success has only been possible due to the fantastic support of our parents, teaching staff, principals, volunteers and all those who give so generously of time, energy and finances to sustain our work.

Thank you all for your wonderful support over the past year. The whole team in the national office look forward to working with you in 2012!

Paul Rowe, CEO, Educate Together



Educate
Together

NEW SCHOOL DEVELOPMENTS



Extensions to our schools

As part of the Department of Education's investment programme in expanding the capacity of schools in high growth areas, four Educate Together schools were extended. Lucan East, Bracken and Galway all received new classrooms. Aston Village in Drogheda has new buildings for its two streams and a new ASD unit.

Two New Schools!

Educate Together opened two new schools in September. Powerstown ETNS opened in the temporary buildings that formally housed Tyrellstown ETNS on the south side of the estate and will be provided with permanent accommodation here in a joint campus with a gaelscoil.

Blanchardstown West, located at LittleSPACE, Clonee, opened in the temporary accommodation in which Castaheany ETNS started life. *Both schools are doing well and we wish their principals Helena Regan and Fergal Collins and their teams every success for the future.*



School Building Handovers

Educate Together took possession of three brand new school buildings in Donabate, Tyrrelstown and Swords. All of these schools were located in prefabs for many years and were bursting at the seams. The build quality and standard of resources in the new buildings are high and they will be great assets to their communities long into the future. All these developments are associated with new shared community facilities.

MAKING CHANGE HAPPEN



5 Priorities for Election 2011

The general election in February presented Educate Together with an opportunity to push its education priorities across the political spectrum. Our campaign sought protection of education budgets, retention of SNAs, delivery of parental choice, a commitment to innovation in education and new permanent buildings for our schools. We succeeded in having our policies endorsed by all political parties and commitment to formal recognition at second-level became a key point of the programme for government agreed after the election.

Expanding the online network

Educate Together has seen huge growth in our online presence this year. 2012 will see us continue to embrace social media platforms in bigger and better ways, so keep an eye out for us on Facebook, Twitter & YouTube! Updated daily, the [Educate Together Facebook Page](#) allows our network to share content online. We've also been tweeting, so if you like your updates on the Irish education sector short and to the point, follow us [@EducateTogether!](#)

Produced monthly, the Educate Together School Newsletter showcases all the latest from our schools, as well as important initiatives going on at National Office level - straight to your inbox! Email info@educatetogether.ie to sign up!



Advocating on behalf of our schools

Educate Together is an active advocate on educational issues both to government and other influencers in the educational sector. We make regular contributions to national media and represent our network in national and international forums. In 2011 Educate Together made submissions to the Forum on Patronage and Pluralism, the Teaching Council, the Oireachtas Select Sub-Committee on Education and in relation to Ireland's UN Universal Periodic Review.

SUPPORT FOR OUR BOARDS

Farewell to our 2004 - 2011 Boards

A significant milestone was passed by many of our school Board members in 2011 as they reached the end of their terms. *Their dedication, generosity of time and spirit and expertise have all been of huge value to our schools - they have our lasting gratitude.*

Educate Together's national board of directors also grew as we welcomed Mary O'Rourke, Ferdinand Von Prondzynski and Simon Bradshaw as new members.



Director Brendan Kehoe, RIP

Educate Together keenly felt the loss of a friend as well as a board member when Brendan Kehoe passed away in July. Brendan was nominated as a Director by Dalkey School Project and joined the Board in May 2010. Our thoughts are with his family.

New Online Training for Schools Boards

As we say farewell to past board members we welcome a new cohort of volunteers for the next four year term.

To get them off to the best possible start, the Leadership & Governance team have established a whole new set of Board of Management Training modules. Courses are delivered online and you can register through the Educate Together website.

Ethos Evaluation

The Ethos Evaluation programme, commenced under Molly O'Duffy's management, will be further rolled out in 2012. A large number of schools have registered for the process and returned data. Our new Ethos Support Officer, Emma Grainger, is moving the programme forward. This is an important initiative for Educate Together as it helps the whole organisation to stay true to our ethos whilst innovating and developing programmes.



SUPPORTING THE NETWORK

Educate Together Day, 28th October 2011

And what a day it was! On October 28th, thirty seven Educate Together schools, from all parts of the country, got into the spirit and took part in the Educate Together Day celebration. Coming so close as it was to Halloween, fancy dress parties were all the rage in a number of schools. but games days also proved popular. Great imagination was shown by all the schools participating and the children, staff and parents really got into the spirit of the event.

All staff from the National Office were out and about, visiting schools in their areas and the reaction to the postings on Facebook and Twitter was huge. Our sincere thanks to all who took part.

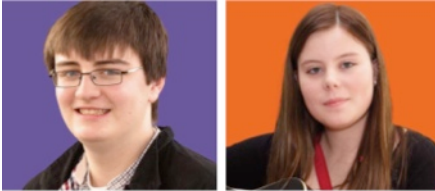
CELEBRATING EDUCATE TOGETHER DAY IN STYLE!



PROGRESS AT SECOND-LEVEL

Educate Together a second-level patron!

Delivering on a promise made at the 2010 AGM, new Minister of Education and Skills Ruairi Quinn, announced the formal recognition of Educate Together as a Second-Level patron at the 2011 AGM in Gorey. This was huge moment for all our members and supporters who had been campaigning on the issue for 10 years. The announcement received widespread media coverage on national television, radio and press and we trended on Twitter for the first time!



An Educate Together second-level school

Enabling your child to achieve their very best



2011 campaigns to open the first Educate Together second-level schools!

Having come so close last year, Educate Together was ever more determined to achieve success in 2011. In June the Department announced new locations for second-level schools. Educate Together has active campaigns for a number of these areas and will make formal applications to open schools in Drogheda, Greystones, Lusk and Dublin 15 for the 2013/14 round. Campaigns for schools opening from 2015 are also active.

Our first ever second-level camp opened its doors!

At Easter Educate Together, in association with Bridge 21, ran its first Second-Level Camp for primary students. Sixteen pupils from Educate Together schools took part. The camp was designed to give participants an insight into how new teaching and learning approaches would work in practice. The children worked together in small learning groups, collaborating as teams through a series of scenarios. Feedback was very positive.



PROGRESS AT SECOND-LEVEL

Re-imagining Learning Conference 2011

Educate Together hosted a significant international conference on curriculum integration in May. Held in association with the University of Limerick and the NCCA, the conference attracted national and international contributors such as John Portelli (University of Toronto), Emer Smyth (ESRI), John Lawlor (Trinity College), John Hammond (NCCA) and American educationalist Karen Rectanus (North Carolina).



Curriculum of Life Workshop with John Portelli

Professor John Portelli from the University of Toronto presented to a workshop on the Curriculum of Life hosted by Educate Together in partnership with the School of Education Studies, DCU. Undergraduate students, teachers and educationalists all participated in a lively, informative and thought-provoking event that provided participants with a fascinating insight into the Curriculum of Life concept. Further information is provided on Educate Together's website.



Looking towards 2012...

We believe that 2012 will be a landmark year for Educate Together. We expect the announcement of our first second-level school and hope to announce a number of new primary schools around the country. The Patronage Forum will have published its findings which could have significant impact on the number of and rate of school transformations. There will be new legislative initiatives on school enrolment policies and the education and training boards will commence operation. Educate Together will continue to support its school network and will add five new buildings by year end. Exciting times indeed!

