Educate Together

Education & Support



news

For Educate Together teachers and boards of management

Summer 2019



WHAT'S INSIDE: Principals' Conference 2019; Teaching About Traveller Culture; Survey Results; Student Showcase; Ethos Evaluation & much more





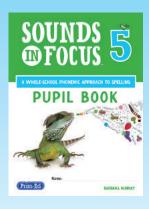
CHOOSING OR YOUR BOOKLIST

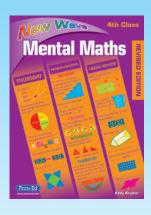
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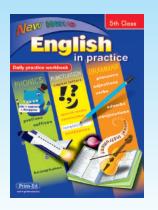
Ideal for a multi-grade classroom

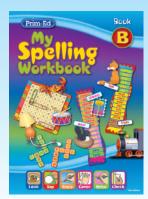
The pupil books for 1st to 6th Class feature the same Sound Unit on the same page. This makes it easy to teach the focus sound to the whole class, then direct pupils to work on the same Sound Unit with words and concepts appropriate to their level.

New Wave Mental Maths

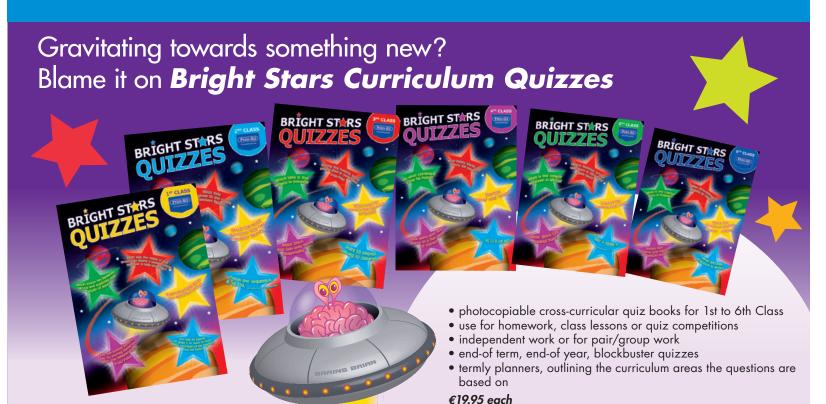
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New Wave Mental Maths Online - enabling teachers to display the questions presented in the pupil books on an interactive whiteboard. Answers will also be available to view at the click of a button.





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Educate Together's Annual Principals' Conference

Deirdre O'Donoghue, Governance Specialist

Educate Together's Annual Principals' Conference was held in Galway on the 4th and 5th April. There was a packed agenda, with talks on school leadership, Ethos Guidelines and School Selfevaluation, Resources for Ethical Education and Learn Together, and Child Protection Guidelines. There was also a presentation from Folens, on both the Starlight and Explorers resources. 48 principals attended, from both primary and second-level.

Jen Cummins (Chairperson, Board of Directors) and Paul Rowe (CEO) gave the opening address. Paul announced that he will step down from his position as CEO in February 2020, and was given a standing ovation for his achievements.

We did a 'PrincipalMeet', with presentations from five principals:

- Claire Matthews, Firhouse ETSS (Restorative Justice)
- Aoife Kelly-Gibson, Malahide Portmarnock ETSS (Fashion the Identity, Gaiety School of Acting project)
- Simon Lewis, Carlow ETNS (Digital Cluster, Learn Together Resources)
- Colm O'Connor, Cork ETSS (Using Jotform to save admin time)
- Triona Golden, Ennis ETNS (Positive Behaviour Strategies)

The keynote speaker was Shane Martin, who gave a talk on the subject of 'The Resilient Leader', which was entertaining, inspiring, and full of useful anecdotes around how to survive, and even enjoy, being a leader.

It's hard to explain properly the value of the two days for principals. It is the only Principals' Conference that gives both primary and second-level principals a chance to get together and share experiences, concerns, solutions, hopes and realities. Maybe some quotes from the principals themselves might give a better idea of the conference. Here's what principals have to say about it:

'Great support and solidarity, lots of sharing and networking.'

'Fantastic opportunity to meet colleagues and share practice. Very supportive network.'

'Thanks so much. I always come away from this conference feeling refreshed, motivated, and energised!'

'Would absolutely recommend! The highlight of the vear!'

'Yes, 100%. So many positive, like-minded people. Great advice and ideas on offer. So supportive. I feel refreshed and re-charged.'

'Re-invigorating, re-connecting with self, ethos, the Educate Together family.'

'Conference was excellent. A very good balance of professional and personal areas covered.'

We are always open to hearing your ideas for this conference. Contact deirdre.odonoghue@ educatetogether.ie

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Teaching about Traveller Culture

Catherine Kavanagh, Carrigaline ETNS

Travellers were officially recognised in 2017 as Ireland's only indigenous ethnic group. However, there is very little reference to, or discussion of, Travellers in Irish education. Through volunteering with a Traveller homework club, I have seen firsthand the challenges faced by this community. I've also come to recognise their rich cultural heritage and the sense of pride members of these communities have in their cultural identity. I wanted to explore these issues under the Equality and Justice strand of the Learn Together.

Using the KWL Approach

I began with a KWL (Know, Would like to know, Learned) chart. It was the first time that the 'K' column was completely blank! This is in no way a poor reflection on the class, who are very inquisitive and civic-minded. Rather it can be seen as a reflection of society in general where there is a lack of knowledge and discussion of Traveller issues.

When preparing my lessons, I contacted Pavee Point who are a national advocacy group for Travellers. They said there are very few educational resources that include reference to Traveller culture. One book they did recommend was Maggie May's Day which was produced in 2018 by the Travellers of North Cork. It tells the story of Maggie, a young Traveller girl and includes illustrations and a glossary of Cant, which is the Traveller dialect.

Building Connections and Empathy

The class were able to compare similarities and differences between Maggie May's life and their own, building connections and empathy. Using Maggie May as a reference, we discussed exclusion and I introduced the children to the 9 Grounds of Discrimination, one of which is that you cannot legally be discriminated against on the basis of membership of the Traveller community.

Maggie May mentions sharing stories and there is a rich tradition of storytelling in Traveller culture. I came across a custom where Traveller women swapped buttons with one another and sewed them onto their clothes as a reminder of making

this connection. Using this idea as a stimulus, the class brought in buttons and traded stories for ownership of these buttons. The activity was repeated many times over the course of a couple of weeks and the children developed guite the button collection as well as learning lots about one another. It was also great for oral language.

From my own experience with the homework club I know what a huge part animals play in Traveller culture. In class we spent some time learning about animal welfare, particularly horses and donkeys. We even adopted a donkey from The Donkey Sanctuary in Cork. We had a class vote for a name and came up with Roma.

By the end of our lessons the children had a very full 'L' column and a sound understanding of the Traveller community which they used to create a wonderful display for the school Ethical Education board.

The Maggie May ebook and many other resources are available in the Educate Together Resource Bank.



Global Citizenship Education Student Showcase 2019

Orla Sadlier, Communications Officer



The Global Citizenship Education Student Showcase 2019, an initiative led by students from Educate Together's nationwide network of second-level schools, took place on Tuesday, 9th April at Kishoge Community College, Lucan. The showcase served as an opportunity for students to exhibit and share projects and initiatives they have undertaken in their schools in the area of Development Education and Global Citizenship with their peers. Students also explored ideas around active citizenship and consumption via student-led discussions and workshops.

Challenging Stereotypes and Encouraging Independent Thinking

Development Education (DE), also known as Global Citizenship Education, is an educational process aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of the rapidly changing, interdependent and unequal world in which we live. By challenging stereotypes and encouraging independent thinking, DE helps students critically explore the root causes of global justice issues and how they interlink with our everyday lives. Global Citizenship Education forms an important part of the Ethical Education Curriculum, a subject unique to Educate Together schools.

Presented through a World Café style, each participating Educate Together school showcased their work on Development Education in an array of innovative ways – multi-media presentations, interactive demonstrations, and displays of artwork.

'Climate change and global inequality are issues my generation is becoming increasingly aware



of' said one student presenting at the showcase. 'I think events like the showcase today are really important because they give us students a chance to come together, share ideas, learn from each other and to see that we can take a stand on these problems and make a difference.'

Some of the presentations on display included topics such as Ethical Consumption and Production, Upcycling and Repurposing, and Gender Equality and Climate Change. Participating schools included: Hansfield ETSS, Stepaside ETSS, Clonturk Community College, Ballymakenny College, Bremore ETSS, Kishoge Community College, Celbridge Community School, North Wicklow ETSS, Malahide/Portmarnock ETSS, Limerick ETSS, Sandymount Park ETSS and Firhouse ETSS.

The Global Citizenship Education Student Showcase was proudly supported by Educate Together and funded by Irish Aid's Worldwise Global Schools, Ireland's national Development Education programme for post-primary schools.

Sparking Creativity

The showcase also provided an opportunity to explore Educate Together's unique model of post-primary education in action. In Educate Together second-level schools, subjects are taught through cross-curricular projects that spark the creativity of students. Educate Together at second-level is about more than preparing students to sit State exams: the schools have moved away from 'teaching to the test' towards a truly integrated school experience.

Transgender Awareness in Educate Together Schools

Sandra Irwin-Gowran, Education & Support Manager



Earlier this year, I was asked to make a presentation to TENI's (Transgender Equality Network Ireland) first education conference on the theme of Transgender Awareness in Schools. Prior to coming to work with Educate Together I had done extensive work in the area of LGBT awareness in the education sector through my role in Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN). This included writing Being LGBT in School: A Resource for Post-Primary Schools to Prevent Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying, which was developed on foot of the 2013 DES Anti-Bullying Guidelines for schools and included a section on how schools can support students who are transgender.

In preparation for the presentation at the conference I initiated a survey of all Educate Together schools. The response rate was exceptionally high, possibly one of the highest the national office has ever received in relation to a questionnaire. The response alone tells us that our school communities are engaging closely with gender and transgender issues on a regular basis and are ensuring Educate Together schools are truly places where no child or young person is an outsider.

In asking people to complete the anonymous survey I gave a commitment to providing an overview of the collated responses, as follows:

 92 individuals from Educate Together schools completed the survey (roughly half were school leaders and half teachers) – a quarter were second level and ¾ primary schools.

- 71% reported that there was either good or very good transgender awareness in their school; the remaining stated that there was a basic level of awareness;
- Over half stated that there were students who are gender variant or who identify as transgender in their schools (definitions were provided as to these terms).
- Respondents reported that 39 of those children were aged between 5-11; and 40 were aged 12-18 years old.

In general there was a very high level of acceptance of transgender and gender variant children in respondents schools, however there respondents also frequently questioned the depth of understanding that exists across the school,

"In general staff and students are very inclusive and non-judgmental and adopt a matter of fact attitude. However, some staff have been very honest about their lack of understanding of related issues and would welcome more support" (Second-Level School Leader)

"[They are] accepted by most but definitely not understood in particular by parents of child's peers" (Primary School Leader).

Notwithstanding the variance in awareness referred to, 4 out of 10 respondents reported that staff members have attended training on trans issues. As there is no official DES provision for such training, this indicates that Educate Together schools are proactively seeking this out. Quite a number of schools had done whole-school sessions on trans and LGBT issues.

 Respondents were asked to indicate what measures their school has in place to support transgender issues and identities: 80% indicated that they don't have specific measures, but deal with LGBT identity or diversity in general terms. Others address it informally in the classroom and school environment when it arises and others have books, posters and participate in Stand Up Anti-Bullying Week.

- One respondent noted how they had to deal with the negative attitude of a sports coach. Use of toilet and changing facilities was also an issue in some schools and a few respondents referred to pressure from home to use labels in relation to their child.
- A question on the survey addressed the importance of positive role models and whether there were openly LGBTQ+ members of staff, it's not surprising perhaps that there is a higher than usual presence of such staff in Educate Together schools 19 respondents stated that there were openly LGBTQ+ members of staff, 33 responded that there were none, a number of these responded that they were there, just not 'out'. Interestingly there were a small number of respondents who indicated that they didn't consider such role models to be significant in a school setting.

Finally, the survey asked what supports the school needs in order to better support trans students. The responses clearly demonstrate a need for:

- Education and training involving all members of the school community
- · Suitable programmes, resources, books, etc.
- Guidance on practical issues; guidance for management and on policy
- The need for the curriculum to be updated to be inclusive
- · Learning from good practice in other schools

For further information, guidance and support contact www.teni.ie and to access 'Being LGBT in School' see www.education.ie

Thank you to the 92 respondents who completed this survey – we will be taking your feedback into account as we plan our CPD programmes and provide resources to schools.

Education & Support Newsletter Survey: New Look on the Way

Earlier this term we carried out a survey with the Educate Together Network of schools on different aspects of this Newsletter. We wanted to find out the extent to which teachers use this Newsletter and what content they find most useful and what they'd like to see more of in the future. This newsletter is intended to support teachers in the area of Ethical Education/Learn Together. The Education & Support team produce it once per term with the aim of providing space for teachers to share stories of how, and what, they teach in their Ethical Education classrooms; it's also an information portal around CPD and other events that we hold throughout the year.

As a result of the survey we are heartened to know that the newsletter is valued within the Network and the majority of people do read it, if you're now reading this you're one of those! We would, however, love to ensure that every teacher has access to it, reads and contributes to it through stories, photos, resource and classroom ideas, etc. So, we plan to make continued improvements to it.

Over the summer we will be re-vamping the newsletter and developing it as both an e-publication and a hard copy printed newsletter – this will allow teachers to opt in to their preferred reading option, it will hopefully also reduce the print-run and our carbon footprint in the process.

Finally, we'll have new sections, a new look and a new title – we'll also be announcing the results of the competition we ran to come up with a new title. Watch out for the next issue – you might even have content that you'd like to share?

Please send your articles, stories, photos, etc to james.mcglynn@educatetogether.ie

Ethos School Self-Evaluation

Many readers will be aware of previous work carried out by Educate Together on school ethos evaluations and Quality Frameworks. Through the funding that we've received from Salesforce.org, we have been able to reignite projects to complete this earlier work, including through the development of an Ethos School Self-Evaluation process.

The Centre for Evaluation, Quality and Inspections in DCU has been contracted by Educate Together to carry out this work. The project is being led by Dr. Shivaun O'Brien, who is doing the bulk of the work. Over the past few months, she has developed draft Quality Standards along the same format as Looking At Our Schools. The current draft is based on interviews that were carried out with current and former staff in the National Office and also through a focus group with members of the Educate Together Board of Directors. Following this there were two consultation meetings held in Dublin and Cork which involved principals, teachers, parents, students and Board members from 10 primary and second-level schools. Feedback received at these meetings has also been incorporated into the current draft.

The Draft has now been circulated to all Educate Together school communities for feedback. We would encourage all school communities to give us feedback on this important document.

Why a school ethos evaluation is important

The Network now comprises 97 schools and that number will grow to 109 this September; it is more important than ever that we establish a clear picture of the lived Educate Together ethos in each

Quality Framework for Ethos Evaluation

Guidelines

and Tools for SSE

School Self-Evaluation Process Ethos Quality Standards &

Educate Together Charter

Statements of Effective Practice

school, whether primary or second-level. This will not only allow schools to self-evaluate against the 4 pillars of the Educate Together Charter (Equality-based, Co-educational, Learner-Centred and Democratically Run), it will also help the national office to evaluate the supports that we currently offer and tailor them to be more effective to our members. The Evaluation Framework will align with the Guidance being developed for schools so they will be completed as complementary resources.

Would your school like to be a pilot school?

We are also taking expressions of interest from schools who would like to be involved in the pilot of the implementation of the self-evaluation framework. These schools will be supported through the self-evaluation process and this represents a great opportunity for your school. If you'd like to find out more or sign your school up please contact sandra.irwingowran@educatetogether.ie

More Potential Savings through Group Insurance Scheme



As Educate Togethers' recommended Insurance Partner, Brady Insurance now have 42 schools signed up to the new Group Insurance Scheme. The more schools we have signed-up, the greater our bargaining power will be for stable premiums and reductions in the future. For further information or to sign-up please contact claire@bradyinsurance.ie or call 01 5676797.

To speak to someone in the national office about this contact bridget.dawson@educatetogether.ie

What Does the Educate Together Charter Mean in **Practice: Developing Guidance for Schools**



My name is Aoife Blood and I have recently been appointed to the role of Ethos Guidance Officer. My role involves drafting Guidance that will be available to schools and teachers - painting a picture of the ideal Educate Together school.

It is our hope that this online resource, when complete, will be a handy reference for teachers and school leaders, as they establish and maintain a school that is true to the values outlined in the Educate Together charter. It will be structured in sections broadly corresponding to the pillars of the Educate Together charter, for schools to access at their convenience.

While it will be a useful resource by itself, these guidelines will also complement an Ethos Self-Evaluation Tool, which is currently under development by Dr. Shivaun O'Brien, of DCU's Centre of Evaluation, Quality and Inspection. This tool will be an option that is available to schools that choose to conduct their annual SSE process

in the area of ethos. Its aim is to streamline the SSE process in the area of ethos, making it easier for schools to approach this sometimes complex area. Shivaun has already held consultation events involving a number of Educate Together schools. and this month, is sharing her work to date with all Educate Together schools for feedback.

My initial focus in the compilation of guidance, is the democratic aspect of Educate Together schools. I have gathered recommendations of good practice from various interested bodies, as well as from earlier Educate Together literature and international guidelines documents. I also hope to visit schools to gather examples of the excellent practice taking place in Educate Together schools, and to showcase some of these as models of the great work going on across our network on a daily

If you have thoughts on topics that could be included in the Ethos Guidance, or would like to share an example of good practice you have seen in your school or elsewhere, please contact me at aoife.blood@educatetogether.ie

Erasmus+ LITTLE Project

We are in the final stages of our Erasmus+ LITTLE project and currently working on completing the final output which is a paper with the working title of 'The Case for Ethical Education - Bridging the Gap Between Practice and Policy in Europe'. The paper is targeted at education policy makers and practitioners at EU, national and school levels. It sets out five key recommendations arising from the LITTLE project as to how Ethical Education can bridge the gap between policy and practice and thus contribute to the achievement of the EU vision of education for all.



In order to bring this paper to the attention of policy makers there will be events in each of the four project countries (Ireland, Italy, Croatia and Slovenia). The Irish event 'Meet Your MEP Dublin Constituency Candidates' revolved around the EU European Elections and involved many of the Dublin candidates. Chaired by Dil Wickremasinghe a panel discussion took place on how Ethical Education can promote an inclusive Ireland and European Union. The event was held on Friday, 17th May, 2019 in Central Dublin.

For more on this project and to access the online course and Teachers Guide see www. educatetogether.ie/teachers/guide/ or contact sandra.irwingowran@educatetogether.ie

Want to develop your knowledge and skills in Ethical Education?

This year Educate Together is running two online summer courses.

Both courses are EPV-Approved. Enrol by registering for an account on our Moodle page, http://learning.educatetogether.ie and following the instructions onscreen

Summer Courses for Primary Teachers!

Facilitating
Pupil Voices and
Active Citizenship

Facilitating Pupil Voices and Active Citizenship

July 22nd - August 16th

Course Content: Educate Together schools have always been to the forefront in encouraging and affirming pupil voices. This course examines how schools can do even more to give children, by far the most important stakeholder in primary education, a say in those hugely formative 8 years of primary school. The course also addresses strategies to nurture a culture of active citizenship, student councils, student-centred learning and how to reach out to those quieter, less assertive perspectives.

Suitability: Teachers with an interest in encouraging and affirming pupil voices.



Ethical Education in Educate Together Schools

Ethical Education in Educate Together Schools

July 1st - 28th/July 29th - Aug 23rd

Course Content: This course examines the social and historical background to multi-denominational education, the development of an Ethical Education curriculum and the four, individual strands of the Learn Together. It is filled with ideas and resources and highlights curriculum links at every turn.

Suitability: This course provides a great basis for learning more about the Educate Together movement and specifically, the Learn Together Ethical Education for Primary Schools.

Second-level Ethical Education Art Competition

Orla Sadlier, Communications Officer

2019 saw Educate Together's first ever second-level art competition and exhibition. As well as creating an opportunity for our students to engage creatively with their Ethical Education curriculum, this competition was run to find nine student-created images which could be made into posters representing each strand of the curriculum and hung in every existing and future Educate Together second-level school!

The competition garnered almost 100 entries from across nine schools. Guest judges, installation artist, Aideen Farrell, and fashion designer, Zoe Redmond, along with Educate Together's own Second-Level Education Officer, Laura Dooley, & Project Officer, Orla Sadlier were blown away by the creativity, talent and engagement evident in all of the entries.

A prize-giving for the winning entrants and exhibition of their 12 entries was held at the Science Gallery, Dublin. Along with the students themselves, many of their parents, guardians, siblings, friends and teachers were also in attendance!

Competition results

Strand 1 – Values: Students explore what is of value to them and what has influenced this. The concepts of morality, principles, facts and opinions are also examined.

Winner: Kate Prokopcenko – Celbridge CS

Strand 2 - Making Moral and Ethical

Decisions: Students apply five approaches to Ethical Decision Making (Utilitarian approach, Rights approach, Fairness or Justice approach, Common Good approach, Virtue approach) and consider different ethical dilemmas using these approaches.

Winner: Ériu Dalton - Stepaside ETSS

Strand 3 - Beliefs and Worldviews: Students investigate different ideological standpoints and religious beliefs and identify how these might impact on an individual's worldview.

Winner: Jaslin Chera - Kishoge CC

Strand 4 - Different Teachings and

Perspectives: Students study a number of texts, myths and narratives and consider how these may have influenced human behaviour and thought.

Winner: Alicia Grozavu - Kishoge CC

Strand 5 - Diversity in Ireland: Students explore diversity in a local and national context and think critically about the experience of minority groups in Irish society, particularly experiences of discrimination.

Winner: Ian Lorenz Silva - Kishoge CC

Strand 6 - Migration: Students develop an enhanced awareness of the language associated with migration; discover how migration has had an impact on Ireland and; critically analyse how the media reports migration in different contexts.

Winner: Nabilah Mohammad - Hansfield ETSS

Strand 7 - Power and Participation: Students reflect on and assess the power and decisionmaking processes in their school.

Winners: Elliot Greene, Fea Maher & Greta Whipple Sandymount Park ETSS

Strand 8 - Gender Equality: Students research, debate and reflect on issues related to gender equality in national and international contexts.

Winner: Jasmine Laokhunthot - Sandymount Park **ETSS**

Strand 9 - Global Citizenship

Education: Students increase their knowledge of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and take action in relation to at least one of them. Students work together to achieve a Green Schools Flag, Yellow Flag or WorldWise Global Schools Passport Award for the school.

Winner: Rabiya Zubayraeva - Kishoge CC



Strand 1 - Values



Strand 2 – Making Moral and Ethical **Decisions**



Strand 3 - Beliefs and Worldviews



Strand 4 - Different Teachings and Perspectives



Strand 5 - Diversity in Ireland



Highly Commended:



Education

Strand 6 - Migration



Strand 7 - Power and **Participation**



Strand 8 - Gender Equality

Ellen Grey – Kishoge Community College

Eve Wilson - North Wicklow ETSS

Jodie Chalkey - Kishoge Community College

GDPR and school events

With GDPR as a backdrop the Data Protection Commissioner has published new guidance to schools in relation to photography at school events: see www.dataprotection.ie. Here is a summary.

Parents and families taking photographs - the household exemption

A lot of the time, families taking photos at events such as school plays or winter concerts are done with no intent to post or publish the photos formally. This type of activity falls under the 'household exemption' under the GDPR, which provides that the GDPR does not apply when a person processes personal data (for example, a photograph of someone) in the course of a purely personal or household activity, e.g. with no connection to a professional, business, official or commercial activity. Photographs taken by parents in this circumstance do not come within the School's data protection policy, and the school are not considered to be the data controllers of this media.

Some schools ask parents/family not to take photos at school events out of a sense of concern regarding data protection. It is valuable to note that there is nothing under the GDPR prohibiting people from taking photos at events that are open to the public. It should also be noted that the 'household exemption' can include social

networking, and the publishing of photos at these events online is not strictly prohibited under GDPR legislation. However, if a photo also contains images of other children, common sense and common courtesy should still apply if a parent requests that the photo be taken down.

Official photography at school events

The 'household exemption' does not apply to schools themselves taking photographs at their events. In this instance, schools are acting as data controllers and GDPR applies, i.e. they must have a legal basis to process the personal data (e.g. take and store photos), and they must provide clear and concise information about what it is that they are doing with this personal data, how long they will be keeping it for etc. The rules under which they take this media should be the same as those which they follow throughout the rest of the school year, as set out by the school's data protection policy.

The Data Commissioner's piece recommends a 'balanced, common sense approach' to ensure that the rights of the individual are respected, while also ensuring that school events can still be captured and celebrated.

Further information can be found on www.dataprotectionschools.ie

Folens Publishers Rebate to National Office FOLENS



This month the National Office received a rebate of €18,022 from Folens

Publishers as a result of Educate Togethers' partnership with the company. Educate Together schools that purchase books and literarcy resources directly from Folens receive a discount on their order. Last year the combined total of that discount to Educate Together schools amounted to €29,500.

In addition to this discount to schools, for every order that an Educate Together school places directly with Folens, the National Office receives a percentage rebate. Over the past 3 years of this partnership the national office has received a total of €42,662. The company has also sponsored the Ethical Education wall planner and conference. This contribution to the work of the National Office is enormously important in helping us maintain services to schools, we are delighted that Folens have agreed to continue this partnership for another

Folens are also very keen to receive feedback on their products, representatives of Folens attended the recent Principals Conference in Galway where they distributed sample resources, including a new reading series from Cambridge. They would love to receive feedback on this series, you can send your feedback or any questions related to this scheme to sandra.irwingowran@educatetogether.ie





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- Quick and easy reporting for accounts analysis



North Wicklow ET Secondary School App - launched September 2018

Some of our Primary School App clients:













