

# EDUCATE TOGETHER



## 2020 Annual report

First day at school in Cherrywood ETNS





## 2020 CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

2020 was an exceptional year for everyone, with highs and lows and plenty of learning. We were delighted to start the New Year with the appointment of Dr. Emer Nowlan as CEO. No-one could have anticipated quite the challenges this year would bring. There was a necessary organisational restructure and we were very sad to say goodbye to a number of committed staff. This then coincided with Covid-19 and all the changes that that entailed. Emer, the national office team and the whole Educate Together Community rose to the challenges and the results of 2020 speak to their tenacity and commitment to delivering Educate Together's mission.

Covid-19 has had an enormous impact on everyone. In schools the stress on students, teachers, principals, Additional Needs Assistants and other staff members as well as parents has been immense. School leaders have had to balance the competing tensions of ensuring safety measures are implemented, managing pupil and staff anxiety and parental concerns, and moving to remote teaching and learning.

Throughout the year Educate Together school communities came together as a network to support each other: sharing information, resources and ideas to support remote learning and management, and providing strong peer support. The team in the office worked intensively to support schools and to ensure that their voices were heard at national level. Most of all we worked together to ensure the best possible engagement and support for students, with a particular focus on our most vulnerable.

Demand for Educate Together schools continues to grow unabated. We opened five new schools in 2020 in Dublin and Cork, and supported three successful campaigns for Educate Together schools which will open in 2021 in Dublin and Wexford. It is fantastic to be able to respond to parental demand, but challenging when demand cannot be met.



## 2020 CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT (continued)

Winning patronage of a new school is just the beginning of a long journey towards establishment, securing permanent accommodation and embedding the Educate Together ethos. Educate Together receives just €15,000 from the government to establish a new primary school. The real cost is multiples of this. We are grateful to our many supporters and our established school communities for making new school openings possible so that more families can access equality-based education.

Educate Together is defined by our Ethos. It captures our values, is an expression of our guiding purpose in education and should permeate every facet and decision of a school. 2020 saw the publication of the Ethos Quality Standards, School Self-Evaluation Tool and guidance platform for schools. This is the culmination of work over a number of years, with funding from Salesforce supporting a contract with DCU to develop the standards and tools, and the employment of Aoife Blood from Citywest Educate Together NS during 2019 and 2020 to draft the guidance documents and coordinate the work. Thank you to our supporters and everyone who contributed to these immensely valuable resources.

In October the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) published research on Educate Together second-level schools, which evidenced the significant contribution these schools are making in Irish education.

The findings demonstrated the successful delivery of the the model of education envisioned, with a focus on positive relationships, promotion of active citizenship, as well as student-centred and active learning approaches.

In November we launched the 'Nurture Schools' programme. This is an exciting initiative that is highly innovative in the Irish context. The concept of nurture in education recognises that students' wellbeing is inextricably linked to their engagement with school and resulting academic outcomes.

By supporting twenty-five primary and second-level schools to become Nurture Schools over the next two years, we aim to improve the engagement and school experiences of the most vulnerable students in our network, ensuring that every child can participate in school life and reach their full potential. The project, which is funded by Salesforce, will also allow us to gather evidence about trauma-informed approaches and influence practice across our network and nationally.

Educate Together is a charitable organisation and has to raise a third of its operational income every year from donations from individuals, companies, trusts and foundations. This is required to meet the demand for new schools, so that more families can access equality-based education, to support our new and existing schools to develop and manage the various hurdles of accommodation, staffing and growth, and to provide necessary resources for ethos and Ethical Education as a school patron.

## 2020 CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT (continued)

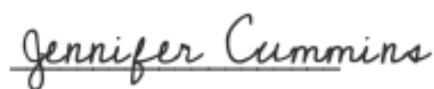
We are very appreciative of our schools' membership subscriptions, which provide the core funding for the organisation, and for schools' participation in our One Day Together annual fundraising day. We are very conscious that schools themselves are underfunded, and need parents' contributions for their own running costs.

2020 saw an improvement in the funding provided by the Department of Education to Educate Together, with new grants being provided to appoint a Buildings Officer and to support work we are doing with Education and Training Boards (ETBs) to develop partnership schools. The positive and supportive engagement we have had with officials and their recognition of the work that we are doing is warmly welcomed.

We are thankful that our vision of inclusive education is recognised for its valuable contribution. Our investment in Ethos from 2018 to 2020, the ESRI research and our recently launched Nurture programme (2020-2022) are examples of the work that philanthropy has funded. Our work in 2020 has been supported by our members, supporters, the Department of Education, WorldWise Global Schools, Mason Hayes and Curran, Paypal, Folens, Brady Insurance, Ireland Funds, Barcapel Foundation and in particular Salesforce.

2020 has been a remarkable year for Educate Together. As Chair, I am very proud of what has been achieved. On behalf of the Board, I wish to extend our gratitude to the staff, past and present. I would like to recognise Dr. Emer Nowlan, our CEO, for her leadership and offer my thanks to all who are supporting Educate Together. I would also like to thank my colleagues on the Board of Directors and the members of the sub committees for giving so generously of the time and expertise.

The values we hold dear and the qualities of education that we espouse are going to be needed by our children as the impact of Covid-19 becomes more apparent in the years ahead.



Jennifer Cummins  
Chairperson



# STRATEGIC GOALS

2019-2021



## Quality & Capacity

Strengthen the network and shared values across Educate Together schools.

Strategic Objectives:

- Improve the processes and systems in place to support quality in Schools (recruitment, governance etc).
- Support, promote and continually develop Educate Together ethos.
- Review and refine our CPD to support implementation of the Ethical Education curriculum.



## Leadership

Be a leading voice for innovation and reform in education, continually striving for wider system change in Irish education.

Strategic Objectives:

- Advocate for enhancements in Teacher Education.
- Establish Educate Together as a leader of school communities of practice.
- Continue to support and pioneer innovation in education and implement good practice in 21st century teaching and learning.
- Advocate and work with educational stakeholders for systemic reforms to improve the provision of education in Ireland.



## Growth

Increase the number of Educate Together school places at primary and second-level

Strategic Objectives:

- Implement a sustainable plan to increase our capacity to keep pace with parental demand for Educate Together schools and seek investment and partnerships accordingly.
- Focus on improving the State support for Educate Together.

## 2020 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

In a new remote working environment, Educate Together overcame huge challenges and adapted its operations to work steadily and productively through 2020, achieving all the company's core objectives and targets, and providing intensive support to our network of schools during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Educate Together successfully opened five new schools in 2020, three at primary and two at second-level, providing an additional 3,000 equality-based school places when these schools are fully established.

- Cherrywood ETNS, Cherrywood, Dublin
- Owenabue ETNS, Carrigaline, Cork
- Rathcoole ETNS, Rathcoole, Dublin
- Goatstown ETSS, Goatstown, Dublin
- Harold's Cross ETSS, Harold's Cross, Dublin

By the end of 2020, there were 33,000 pupils accessing equality-based education in 114 Educate Together schools (95 primary and 19 second-level).

Educate Together has opened a total of 27 new primary and 19 new second-level schools over the past seven years.

Educate Together published Ethos Quality Standards in 2020, along with an Ethos School Self-evaluation (SSE) Tool and guidance platform. The guidance platform is the first of its kind to be published by a patron body in Ireland: [ethos.educatetogether.ie](https://ethos.educatetogether.ie).

Educate Together successfully implemented the Education (Admission to Schools) Act and approved more than 100 equality-based admissions policies in 2020.

The Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) published research in 2020 which showed how Educate Together's second-level schools are successfully implementing an equality-based, inclusive and student-centered ethos, highlighting the significant contribution these schools are making in Irish post-primary education in terms of innovation and reform.



Happy faces in Balbriggan ETNS



Celebrating diversity in Galway ETSS



## 2020 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS (continued)

All three applications Educate Together made for patronage of new schools in 2020 were successful. As a result, new second-level schools will be opened in 2021 in Gorey, Co Wexford and Blackrock / Booterstown, Co. Dublin, and a new primary school will open in Sallynoggin / Killiney, Co. Dublin.

Educate Together signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Wexford Waterford Education and Training Board (ETB) in 2020 which will allow for a new 1,000 pupil post-primary school to be established in Wexford Town. Supported by the Department of Education, this builds on work already underway with City of Dublin ETB, transitioning two schools to become CDETB/Educate Together partnership schools.

Educate Together was nominated as an LGBT+ Ally at the 9th Annual GALAS awards in February 2020, for decades of work ensuring inclusion for LGBT children, families and teachers.

As a company and a charity, Educate Together strengthened its governance structures in 2020. Board and sub-committee membership was enhanced and diversified, a new risk register was introduced and the Charities Governance Code was successfully implemented.

A warm welcome back to school in Kildare Town ETNS



First day at school  
in Cherrywood ETNS







## 2020 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS (continued)

Funding was secured from Salesforce in 2020 for an innovative two-year Nurture Schools programme across 25 Educate Together schools. The programme will improve outcomes for students at risk of educational disadvantage through developing social and emotional skills and relationships.

Educate Together secured funding to appoint a Buildings Officer for the first time to support schools in relation to their accommodation. This is an important resource to address accommodation challenges faced by new and developing schools.

Educate Together member Gaelscoil an Ghoirt Álainn in Cork finally moved into their permanent building in February 2020, after more than 20 years in temporary accommodation. And in November Grace Park Educate Together National School moved into their beautiful new building situated at the historic DCU All Hallows Campus in Drumcondra in Dublin.

Above: Educate Together CEO Emer Nowlan hands over the keys to Grace Park ETNS acting principal Caroline Mee and chairperson Ciara Savage. Below: the new school building



# 2020 MEDIA COVERAGE

## Irish Examiner

**From Carravaggio to Warhol these Cork kids have put their own spin on arts masterpieces**

From Carravaggio, to Frida Kahlo, to Andy Warhol, one Cork primary school has put its spin on modern masterpieces down to a fine art.



Carrigaline National School Quarantine Art Project - Students asked to recreate famous and classical works of art.



EDUCATETOGETHER.IE

"Children with additional needs are being utterly let down" - Educate Together

## 'Ethnic diversity matters' in Irish classrooms

Updated / Saturday, 6 Jun 2020 08:36

RTÉ News



Alex Mbowous teaching her class at Canal Way Educate Together School back in February



THE IRISH TIMES

IRISHTIMES.COM

Educate Together secondary schools 'more diverse' than others, finds ESRI study

## TELLY TEARS Virgin Media viewers 'in tears' over Big Year in Big School as Pablo struggles on first day without English

VIRGIN Media viewers were "in tears" tonight watching the new documentary series following Junior Infants in school.

Big Year in Big School began tonight and one student in particular made people at home feel emotional.



It was a big day for Junior Infants class in Drogheda

## Echo LIVE.ie

**Cork mother worries for formerly conjoined twins as they return to school**



Returning to school at Middleton Educate Together, Co Cork are Benhaffal twins Hassan and Hussein Benhaffal wearing their facemasks. Covid-19 coronavirus global pandemic 2020. Pic: Larry Cummins.



## 2020 MEDIA COVERAGE

### Irish Examiner View: Educate Together schools symbolic of a changing Ireland



Middleton Educate Together National School opened in September 2017.




EDUCATETOGETHER.IE

New State-of-the-art Building for Grace Park Educate Together National School - Educate Together

**Echo** **LIVE**.ie

### Preparations in place ahead of opening of Cork's newest Educate Together school



Independent.ie 

### The great outdoors: Teachers map out a plan for 'forest' classroom



Outside: Margaret Burke, of Riverview Educate Together NS in Greenhills, Dublin, is seeking funding for a new outdoor class area. Photo: Steve Humphreys



#VoteEducateTogether

[bit.ly/VoteET2021](https://bit.ly/VoteET2021)

YOUTUBE.COM

Lenny Abrahamson Supporting #VoteEducateTogether

Oscar-nominated Irish film director Lenny Abrahamson is suppor...

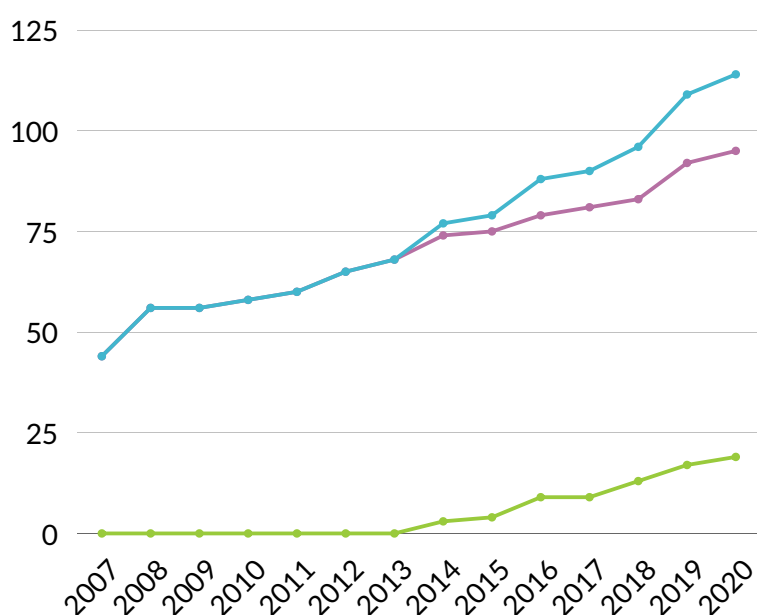
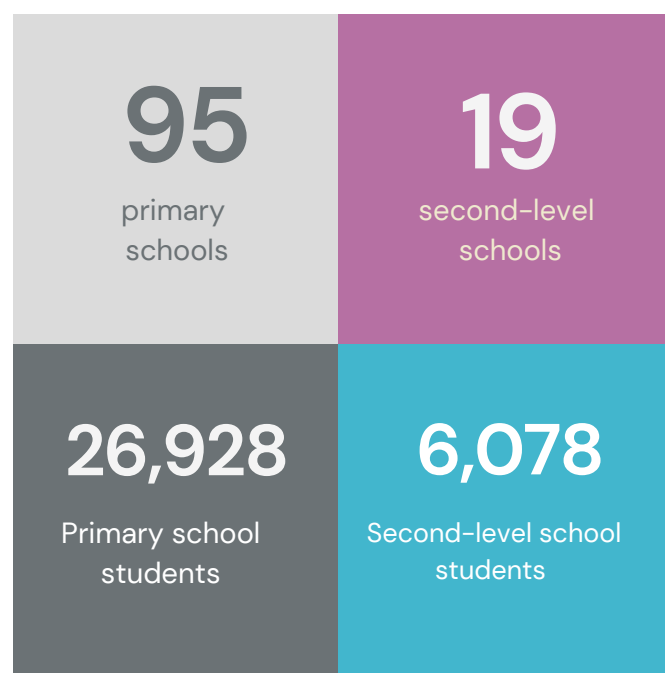


### Study of Educate Together second-level schools provides a positive outlook for the sector



## 2020 AT A GLANCE

- 14 principals appointed
- 6 deputy principals appointed
- 336 teacher appointments approved
- 62 ANA appointments approved
- 273 Board members trained
- 2 successful summer courses
- 164 independent assessors approved
- 1,045 Gara Vetting applications processed
- GV corrections reduced by 10%
- 20 schools piloted Ethos SSE Tool
- 25 schools in Nurture Schools Project
- 47 schools in temporary accommodation supported



### The Educate Together school network 2007 - 2020

Total schools  
Primary schools  
Second-level schools

**5**  
new schools  
in 2020

Cherrywood ETNS, Cherrywood, Dublin  
Owenabue ETNS, Carrigaline, Cork  
Rathcoole ETNS, Rathcoole, Dublin  
Goatstown ETSS, Goatstown, Dublin  
Harold's Cross ETSS, Harold's Cross, Dublin

# Membership activities

## Supporting member schools

Educate Together supported and represented its members intensively in 2020 – providing core services and maintaining phone and email availability throughout the year and representing its primary members at more than 50 stakeholder and consultation meetings as their management body.

The national office also took steps to improve supports to our schools by introducing a new system for tracking calls, recruiting a volunteer principal adviser, appointing a Buildings Officer and moving towards an online vetting service.

In 2020 the Member Support service addressed issues related to enrolment, school finances, HR, disciplinary processes, staffing and recruitment, data protection, accommodation issues, including fire safety and buildings, bereavement, parental complaints, custody, set up of Parents Associations, and provision for children with Additional Educational Needs (AEN / SEN).

The national office provided nine training sessions for boards of management of Educate Together primary schools, with 273 board members receiving training in 2020.

Board of management training, new principal induction and board induction sessions and meetings were successfully adapted to online formats during the pandemic, as were lectures.

The Annual Educate Together Principals' Conference was held in Galway in March 2020 and was attended by 68 primary and second-level principals. An Induction Day was held for new principals in July, covering topics such as Ethos Guidance, Leadership, Finance and Recruitment.

## Annual General Meeting

Educate Together's Annual General Meeting (AGM) took place on 9 May 2020. For the first time in the organisation's 40-year history, the meeting took place on an online platform rather than in an Educate Together school building. The reality of physical distancing imposed by Covid-19 restrictions led the members to take the decision to postpone debating and voting on motions.

At the AGM, Educate Together welcomed eight new national (primary) schools and four new second-level schools into membership, bringing its total number of members to 117 (107 schools and 10 independent patrons).



## Management body activities

Educate Together acts as management body for its member primary schools. During 2020 it collaborated closely with primary education partners including other management bodies, teacher and parent organisations to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic. In this work it represented, supported and advised its members in relation to schools closures and reopenings, and in relation to the management of infection and control measures introduced in response to the pandemic.

## Representation

Educate Together represented its member schools through various forums, meetings and submissions in 2020 including:

- Meetings with Minister for Education and the Minister for State for Special Education
- Submissions to the Joint Oireachtas Committees on Education and Covid-19
- Primary Education Forum
- Department of Education Covid-19 Stakeholder Groups
- Department of Education Strategy Statement 2021-23 Consultation
- Teacher redeployment and mobility consultations
- NCCA Primary Curriculum Framework
- Children's Rights Alliance network meetings
- Irish Traveller Movement Yellow Flag Steering Committee
- Irish Network Against Racism network meetings
- Kids Against the Cuts campaign meetings



North Wicklow ETSS teachers

## Communities of practice

Educate Together provided support to a number of communities of practice in 2020, including the Ethical Education Teacher Professional Network and the Educate Together Guidance Counsellors Network. New communities of practice were established for the Nurture Schools programme and the Second-level Principals and Deputy Principals Networks also continued to meet during the year.



## School patronage activities

Fourteen principal and six deputy principal appointments were made across the network in 2020. Appointments for 336 teachers and 62 additional needs assistants (SNAs) were approved and 164 independent assessors for teacher recruitment panels were appointed. Four new boards of management were established at primary and second-level and two boards of management grew from a four-person to eight-person size. Thirteen patron nominees were appointed, with seven appointed as chairpersons.

## Initial Teacher Education

Educate Together continued to provide extensive input to Bachelor of Education and Professional Master of Education elective courses in Mary Immaculate College of Education, Marino Institute of Education and Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education during 2020 with all provision being adapted to an online format from March 2020 onwards.

This work is funded by the Department of Education and is aimed at addressing the historical and ongoing imbalance towards denominational religious education in primary initial teacher education.

## Garda Vetting

Educate Together is the authorised body for Garda Vetting for its primary schools. In 2020 1,045 Garda Vetting applications were sent to the National Vetting Bureau. By providing additional guidance and training to schools, corrections were reduced to 31% from 42%, increasing the efficiency of the process.

## Ethos guidance

Educate Together led on innovation in school ethos in 2020, through the development of the first Ethos Quality Framework for Educate Together Schools. This includes a practical, step-by-step guide for School Self-Evaluation in Ethos areas, and an attractive and user-friendly dedicated online Ethos Guidance platform for members. The Ethos Guidance website is a support for school leaders, teachers and board members, dealing with a variety of issues that come up in the daily life of the school. Login details are available from principals.

Ethos Guidance Platform Educate Together

What are you looking for?

Equality-based Co-educational Learner-centred Democratically-run Ethos SSE

Guidance on the Educate Together ethos

An online resource for Educate Together schools, to support the implementation of Educate Together's unique equality-based ethos.

I need guidance on

Equality-based Co-educational Learner-centred Democratically-run

## School accommodation

The national office appointed Educate Together's first Buildings Officer in 2020 to support our schools in relation to accommodation, with funding from the Department of Education. Against the challenging Covid-19 backdrop, support and representation were provided for 47 schools in temporary accommodation during the year, with 27 in urgent need of additional accommodation for August 2020.

Nine new leases/license agreements and one prefab rental agreement were signed for Educate Together schools in temporary accommodation in 2020. Educate Together currently has 47 schools in Ministerial-owned buildings and is working with the Department of Education and other patrons towards agreeing a lease for these buildings.

## Admissions

Considerable work was required in 2020 to implement the further commencement of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018. The national office approved new admissions policies for more than 100 schools that Educate Together is patron or joint patron of ahead of the September 2020 deadline, ensuring that policies and school practices are in keeping with legislation and regulations, as well as our equality-based ethos. The national office is continuing to provide support to schools on this transition.

Since most Educate Together schools are heavily oversubscribed, the question of equitable admissions policies remains a topic for regular discussion in the organisation. A number of motions on the topic will be debated in the context of the 2021 Annual General Members Meeting.

## Ethical Education

Curriculum development in Ethical Education was ongoing at primary and second-level in 2020 (see Research and Development).

The development and promotion of resources for teaching Ethical Education also continued, with a particular emphasis on resources for remote teaching and learning.

A new user-friendly online platform - **It.educatetogether.com** - for hosting primary level Learn Together Ethical Education resources was completed in 2020; with thanks to the principal of Carlow Educate Together NS who developed this on a voluntary basis. New resource packs on the Environmental Impact of Single-use plastic, funded by PayPal, were launched in December and made available to primary and second-level schools.



Distance learning at North Bay ETNS

## Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Following intensive provision of Teacher Continuing Professional Development (CPD) across the Educate Together network in 2018 and 2019, which saw 600 teachers accessing training in Ethical Education and Restorative Practice, activity in this area was reduced in 2020, impacted by school closures resulting from Covid-19.

Induction in Ethical Education was provided to teachers in the five new schools that were opened, as well as the two Community Colleges which are developing as Educate Together / CDET partnership schools.

Educate Together again secured funding from WorldWide Global Schools for the development and promotion of Global Citizenship Education, which aligns closely with Ethical Education. Activity in 2020 under this grant included:

- Whole-staff CPD for Educate Together schools on Ethical Education and Global Citizenship Education
- Webinars for Educate Together principals on embedding Global Citizenship Education
- Teacher CPD on new resources addressing the Sustainable Development Goals and in particular the impact of Single-use Plastics.

Two Department approved online summer courses were provided in 2020, focusing on Ethical Education and on Student Participation and Active Citizenship. Of the cohort completing the Postgraduate Certificate in Ethical and Multi-denominational Education in DCU in June 2020, three students opted to continue their studies at diploma level. This post-graduate course, which Educate Together developed in partnership with DCU in 2012, aims to deepen understanding of Ethical Education in the school context.

## Research and development

### ESRI second-level research

The Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) published research in 2020 which showed the significant contribution Educate Together's second-level schools are making in Irish post-primary education. The research found that Educate Together second-level schools are successfully delivering the model of education envisioned in the organisation's 2009 Blueprint for Second Level Schools, including a focus on positive relationships, promotion of active and responsible citizenship, student-centred and active learning approaches

### Main findings:

- More diverse on average than the typical Irish second-level school.
- Strong culture of respect at the core of relationships between students and teachers, supported by the use of restorative practices.
- Teaching practices are student-centred and make extensive use of active learning methodologies and technology.
- Students reported that learning about ethics mattered for their lives, in and out of school.
- Focus on active and responsible citizenship.



## Nurture schools

The Educate Together Nurture Project launched in December 2020 and aims to improve outcomes for students who experience educational disadvantage through poverty or other barriers. The concept of Nurture in education recognises that students' wellbeing is inextricably linked to their engagement with school and resulting academic outcomes. This innovative project brings together Educate Together's most disadvantaged schools from primary and post-primary levels and supports them to develop as communities of practice. 25 schools were recruited to participate in the project in 2020.

## Review of the Learn Together Curriculum

Educate Together continued its review of the Learn Together Ethical Education curriculum in 2020. The purpose of this review is to bring the curriculum, which was first published in 2004, up to date and to ensure that it is accessible and comprehensively presented for all teachers to use in their classrooms. During 2020 the survey and teacher focus group elements of the review were completed, with these being switched to online format as a result of Covid-19 restrictions. This review will be completed in 2021.

## Senior Cycle

Educate Together commissioned University College Dublin to conduct a review of the Senior Cycle Ethical Education curriculum which the national office has developed in collaboration with our developing second-level schools over the past three years. This work, which is funded by Salesforce, continued through 2020 and will be finalized in 2021.

## Operations

### Organisational restructure

2020 commenced with an urgent need to restructure the national office of the organisation in line with secure funding. This was brought about by the ending of a number of substantial projects in 2019. This restructure took place between March and July and resulted in a reduction in staff from 23 to 13 (Whole Time Equivalents). The focus in the coming year is to build back up to meet the demands of our schools and communities.

### Internal systems

With the restructuring of the organisation and the impact of Covid-19, 2020 brought the quality of internal systems and use of technology into sharp focus. As well as supporting staff to move to remote working and strengthening channels of communication, improvements were also made to our administration and IT systems and a review of our financial system completed.

- An external consultant was engaged to conduct a review of financial systems in December 2020, with recommendations to be implemented in 2021.
- An internal HR team was established and a number of policies were reviewed with oversight from the HR Subcommittee of the Board, including a comprehensive Covid-19 Policy and guidance on Remote Working.
- Internal communications within the national office and with member schools were significantly improved during 2020, with full advantage taken of new opportunities for remote meetings and events.
- IT - The organisation benefits from generous grants of software licenses from Microsoft, Salesforce and Teamwork.

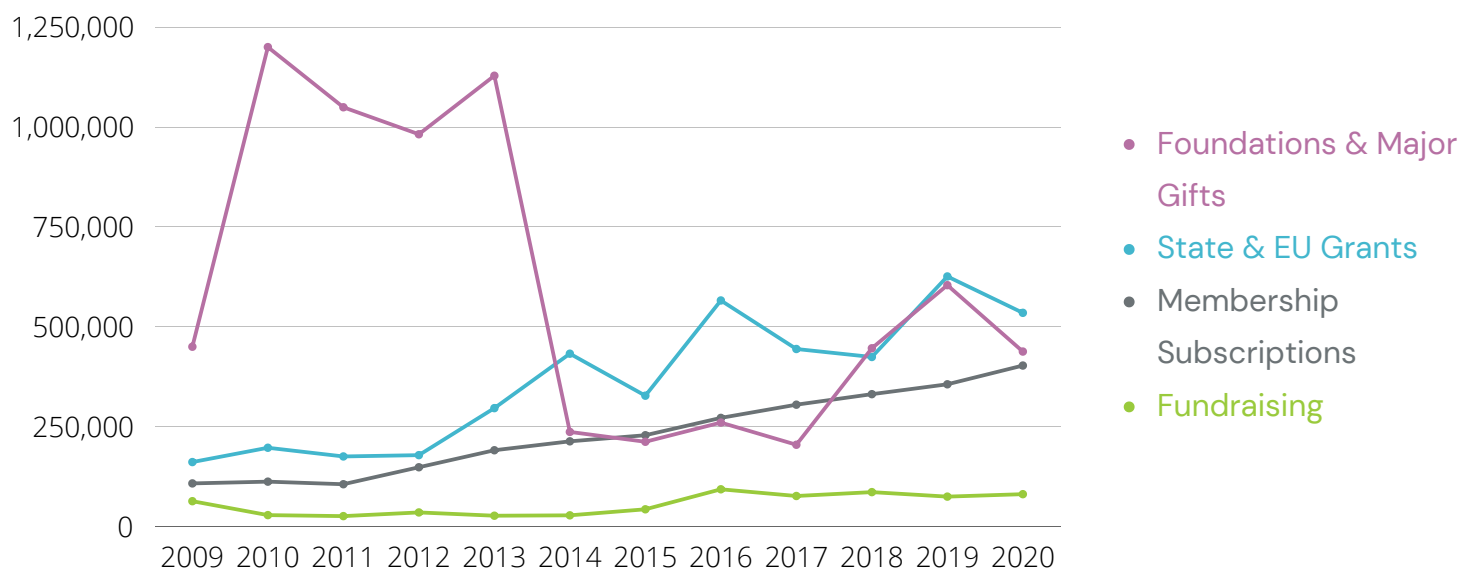


## Fundraising

As a charitable organisation, Educate Together is required to raise at least one third of its income through fundraising, trading and service delivery each year. In 2020, as well as the €336,000 provided by Salesforce for our 2020 – 2022 Nurture Project, it was necessary to raise a further €150,000 through donations from individual, community and corporate donors and trusts in order to continue operations. Despite the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic and restrictions, by the end of 2020 we were able to reach this goal, and we are hugely grateful to all our donors and funding partners for their support in this challenging year.

Partnerships with Bradys Insurance and Folens Publishers in 2020 continued to achieve savings for Educate Together schools and income for the national office in 2020. We are very grateful to Brady's and Folens for their ongoing support in 2021, and to the schools that participate in these schemes.

Educate Together is a registered charity. Our work is funded through a mixture of government and other grants, membership income, and fundraising.



# Challenges

## Covid-19

Due to projects that ended in 2019, a major organisational restructuring had to take place in the first quarter of 2020.

This was swiftly followed by Covid-19 which further limited the organisation's capacity to generate income through sales and fundraising. Several roles were made redundant, and remaining staff were placed on temporary reduced working hours for six months of the year. Cashflow had to be managed tightly throughout the year. However, despite the challenges and reduced capacity the work went on and the team found new ways of representing and supporting our school network in 2020. By the end of the third quarter it was possible to secure some new funding from Salesforce and from the Department of Education and return the remaining staff team to normal working hours.

## School accommodation

An ongoing challenge for new and developing schools is the length of time they are required to spend in temporary accommodation. ESRI Research published in 2020 highlighted the negative impacts of temporary accommodation on students and on school leaders and because Educate Together has opened more than half of all new schools that have been opened in Ireland in the past ten years, our sector suffers disproportionately from this systemic problem. Despite having opened 33 new schools in the last 5 years, only two Educate Together schools moved into permanent school buildings in 2020. At the end of the year, 47 Educate Together schools remained in temporary accommodation. In addition 13 schools in permanent buildings continue to face significant challenges as a result of defects and disruptive remediation work.

The national office worked to improve its support for these schools in 2020, and will continue to advocate for improvements in the systems for planning and building schools so that planning begins earlier and good quality permanent buildings are delivered sooner.

## Supports for children with additional needs

Educate Together is proud to have a reputation as a diverse and inclusive school network, welcoming students from a range of backgrounds and supporting every child to reach their full potential. Research conducted by the ESRI in 2020 showed a higher proportion of students with additional needs in our post-primary schools than the national average and Educate Together national schools have a higher proportion of specialist Autism classes than other sectors (43% compared to 10%).

Educate Together schools have identified deficits in the supports currently provided for children with additional needs in mainstream classes. Insufficient staffing (Special Education Teachers and Special Needs Assistants) and a lack of therapeutic supports place enormous pressure on teachers and school management as they strive to meet the needs of their students. Challenges are exacerbated for developing schools, who often cater for more students with additional needs with less resources, while also dealing with the challenges of operating in temporary accommodation.

Educate Together raised this issue during 2020 with the Department of Education and with the Minister for Special Education and will continue to advocate for more and better supports for students with additional needs.



## Board of Directors

### Formal Statement by the Board of Directors on Governance

The Board of Directors of Educate Together is committed to the following principles of good governance, in accordance with the Charities Governance Code: advancing charitable purpose; behaving with integrity; leading people; exercising control; working effectively; being accountable. More information can be found at:

[www.educatetogether.ie/about/governance](http://www.educatetogether.ie/about/governance)

### Formal Statement by the Board of Directors on Fundraising Principles:

We at Educate Together are fully committed to achieving the standards contained within the Statement of Guiding Principles of Fundraising. We commit to doing this by: maintaining good fundraising practice; providing high levels of accountability and transparency to our donors and prospective donors from the public; providing clarity and assurances to you about how we spend your money.

## National office staff changes

During 2020, a number of staff members left the Educate Together national office. We are very grateful for their contribution, and wish them all well in their future endeavours:

Adelaide Nic Chárthaigh, Anne Marie Hughes, Aoife Blood, Bridget Dawson, Hannah Ingle, Laura Dooley, Louise Byrne, Liz Martin, Niamh McGarry, Orla Sadlier, Paul Rowe.

The national office also welcomed Emer Nowlan as CEO and two new part-time volunteers joined the team in September 2020: Rita Galvin as member support volunteer and Gary Doyle as board support volunteer.

## Attendance at Board meetings 2020

	ATTENDED	OF	%
Jennifer Cummins	11	11	100%
Danny Haskins	11	11	100%
Emma Lane-Spollen	11	11	100%
Colm O'Connor	10	11	91%
Richard Woulfe	10	11	91%
Siobhan Mortell	9	11	82%
Aidan Clifford	10	10	100%
Martina Von Richter	7	9	78%
Caitriona Hand	5	6	83%
Robert Cochran	3	6	50%
Renate McIntyre	3	6	50%
Aine Clancy	5	5	100%
Colm Ó'Cuanacháin	5	5	100%
Doris Abuchi-Ogbonda	3	3	100%
Matt Wallen	3	3	100%
Theresa Burke	1	1	100%

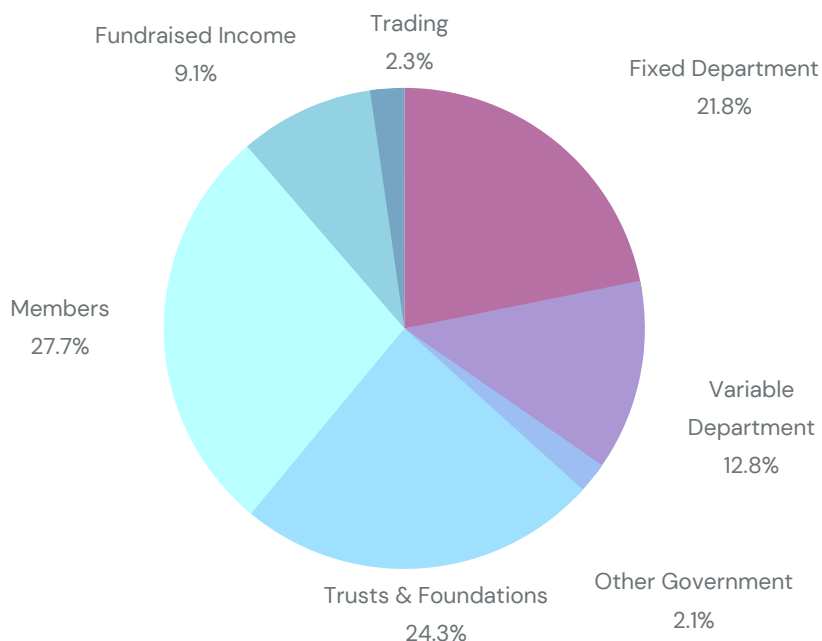
# Finances

For detailed information on the organisation's finances in 2020, see our audited Financial Statements at: [www.educatetogether.ie/about/reports](http://www.educatetogether.ie/about/reports)

The Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP - [www.charitycorp.org](http://www.charitycorp.org)) and include detailed information about the company's accounting policies, as well as Statements of Financial Activities (SOFA), Financial Position and Cash Flows.

Educate Together's core funding comes from membership subscriptions and grants from the Department of Education. In 2020 this made up less than half of the organisation's funding, leaving half to be raised through fundraising, trading and additional grants and payments for services. Like many charities, Educate Together faced considerable financial challenges in 2020 and it was necessary to reduce expenditure in line with income and restructure the national office. We are very grateful to all our funders for their support in 2020.

## Educate Together's income in 2020:



The class of 2020 in Kishoge Community College



# 18%

of children in Educate Together primary schools are supported through the Delivering Equality of Opportunity (DEIS) scheme

Drogheda ETSS students



# 36%

of Educate Together's schools have integrated specialist facilities for children with additional needs



Learning in nature in Owenabue ETNS





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Together

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