**Report to the Board of Management**

**Academic Year 2021-2022**

**Introduction**

This report covers the school academic year of 2021-22. It was presented at the Board of Management meeting on 15/06/2022.

**Ethos and links with ERST**

As an ERST school we are committed to implementing the teachings of Blessed Edmund Rice into our teaching and learning experience. Our Ethos Coordinator, along with members of the religion department and facilitate this through the following activities with the support of the whole staff.

Eddie Bourke, Co-ordinator of Ethos Development with ERST and Billy Lynch with Schools Support Services with ERST, in to the school to give our Student Prefect Team and Senior Cycle students training on the running of a Student Council. To commemorate the Feast Day of Edmund Rice a special day a prayer service was held to honour such an inspirational man and remember the work that he did during his lifetime.  In our Religion classes, we looked back on the life and work of the Blessed Edmund Rice. We remember the massive contributions he made to education and the less fortunate. Celebrating this Feast Day allows our school community to reflect on our value of education and helps us to continue his mission by being faithful to Christ and following his example of inclusion and kindness.

In May, our first years travelled to Callan to visit the birthplace of Blessed Edmund Rice, founder of the Christian Brothers and Presentation Brothers. The boys listened to stories of humble beginnings while touring the house that Blessed Edmund once lived.

6th Year students & their parents were in attendance at their Graduation Mass on Thursday, May 26th in Edmund Rice Secondary School. A beautiful ceremony celebrated by Fr. Patrick Cahill (School Chaplain) enhanced by music & singing befitting a special occasion. An opportunity for the boys to look back & remember the different stages in their second level education that brought them to this milestone. We would like to thank the past and present staff who assisted in the preparation for the day, Will and Cormac for their musical talents on the night, student council representatives for looking after the refreshments and Angela Comerford for her the beautiful cake.

The school would like to acknowledge the 5th and TY students for their continued participation in the local mass in St. Nicholas' Church. Under the guidance of Noel Casey, these students have read in pairs at Mass.

**Incoming First Years**

On Friday the 27th of May and Wednesday the 1st of June, we held subject taster afternoons for our incoming first years. Students travelled from their feeder schools to get their first taste of subjects such as Science, Woodwork, Art and PE in secondary school. Accompanied by their student council leaders, they enjoyed examining onion cells under microscopes, assembling their own coat racks, drawing sketches and enjoyed a competitive game of soccer. A thoroughly enjoyable afternoon, we look forward to seeing them all in September.

**Exams**

The Exam Coordinator establishes an orderly, secure and healthy environment and timetable for all in-house exams. The Exam Coordinator manages challenging and complex situations in a manner that demonstrates equality, fairness and justice. He liaises closely with the SEN Department to ensure a commitment to the inclusion of all students. The in house exam coordinator facilitated the timetabling of the summer exams following the appointment of the post in April, this had been previously completed by the Deputy principal. We wish our Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate the best of luck in their exams.

**Academic**

The SSE and JCT Coordinators have both engaged with school self-evaluation as a structured process with a focus on improving teaching, learning and assessment. He works with the Principal and Deputy to ensure that improvement plans are put into action on a whole-school basis, leading to measurable and identifiable improvements in learner outcomes. The JCT Coordinator has overseen the implementation of the new Junior Cycle Curriculum across all subject departments and has attended CPD in this area. This year, the JCT Coordinator oversaw the planning and implementation of the school-based Junior Cycle assessment. The SSE Co-ordinator facilitates the setting up of our First Year Book Rental scheme also.

**Charity and Social Awareness**

Students and staff were involved with following charities and social awareness campaigns:

* Members of our Young Saint Vincent de Paul & the Student Prefect Team have been selling tickets before & after school each day to raise funds for St. Nicholas Conference SVP Carrick-on-Suir.
* On the 13th of December, our Student Prefect Team members presented gifts to Martina Cronin for children residing in Bridgewater House, Carrick-on-Suir this Christmas. Members of Young SVP also presented a cheque (150 euro) proceeds of a copper coin collection held in the school.
* The kindness and generosity of our school community was evident again this year as our students, teachers and parents contributed generously to the Hope Christmas Shoe Box Appeal.
* Multicultural Awareness Week was celebrated in the school in order to celebrate the diverse and inclusive community we have in the ERSS. Classes were invited to research various different countries, investigate their national flag and languages. Students made posters to display around the school with greetings in the various languages. Students from Spain, El Salvador and Poland, took over classes to teach their native language. A highly enjoyable experience for all Students.
* Well done to Oscar Geoghegan (6th year) on his nomination for the Lions Young Ambassador of the 21st Century Award. This programme is a competition that recognises young people (between the ages of 15 and 19) for their outstanding community service involvement, leadership accomplishments and communication skills.
* On Friday, November 19th our students and staff were encouraged to wear ODD socks to school, to show that we are all the same but different. Donations received were forwarded to Belong To.
* Thomas Smith, (TY) has been selected as the winner of the Tipperary area Rotary Youth Leadership competition. The Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) is an intensive leadership experience organised by Rotary clubs and districts where you develop your skills as a leader while having fun and making connections.
* Much needed supplies such as nappies, baby food and hygiene items will be sent.€590 was also raised through our blue and yellow day. This will greatly benefit those in crisis. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Ukrainian people at this difficult time. Our 1st years raised the Irish flag for Flag Day 2022 and also raised the Ukrainian flag to show support for the people in Ukraine during this difficult time. The 1st years also attended Mass to celebrate St Patrick's Day

**SEN**

The SEN Department lead by the SEN Coordinator, manages the human and physical resources, so as to create and maintain an environment which contributes to improving outcomes for the marginalised learner. The SEN Coordinator builds relationships with parents/guardians, other schools and outside agencies to respond to the evolving needs of the learner. The SEN team lead by the SEN Coordinator, worked with students from all year groups throughout the year in terms of teaching and learning. A very important aspect of our school is to ensure all students get the best educational experience possible for them. The SEN team alongside management and the SNA have worked tirelessly to facilitate learning support needs and apply for the needed accommodations for the Junior and Leaving Certificate exams.

**Middle Management**

Presently we have 8 posts – 3 at API level, 1 Coordination and 5 at APII level. All post holders will be issued with the Statement of Roles and Responsibilities in line with DES Circular 0003/2018, to be signed by each post holder. The current MLM structure enables the development of the leadership skills and capacities of post holders. AP reports are available in the office.

**Child Protection**

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Ms. Majella Gleeson (Principal) and the Deputy DLP is currently Ms. Linda Barry Deputy Principal. All teaching staff are mandated persons. Anti-Bullying policy has also been rigorously adhered to within the school.

**Health, Safety and Welfare**

Teachers are mandated to record and submit any incidents that occur under their watch in the accident and incident book. All incident forms are filed and held in the Secretary’s office.

The Student Support Team continue to do excellent work in identifying and caring for vulnerable students. Monthly meetings are held are facilitated by the Guidance Counsellor Mrs. Aileen O’Keeffe and the work of the teachers involved has been tremendous.

Other agencies the school have maintained contact in order to safeguard the safety of our students are as follows.

1. Tusla – regarding Child Protection, Family Conferences and Attendance.

2. NEPS – Educational Psychological Assessments and Friendship Programme and information to our Pastoral Care Team on Student Support Programmes.

3. CAHMS – Behavioural and psychiatric support.

4. NCSE – Applications for Special Education Needs.

5. Feeder Primary Schools – Student passports.

6. NEWB – reporting absences and attendance initiative.

**Wellbeing**

The Health and Safety, Child Protection, Code of Behaviour, Pastoral Care, Student Support and for that matter, all school policy is aimed at providing a safe and caring community where we can all reach our full potential. DES expects all schools to have a whole school Wellbeing Plan developed under an SSE umbrella over the next term Ms. Shaw, Wellbeing Coordinator will look at developing and implementing the plan. 1st Years partook in a Wellbeing Workshop on the 6th of May ran by BrainBox which saw them assess their first year here in Edmund Rice Secondary School and look to 2nd and 3rd year, topics included study skills, friendships and online safety.

**Student Support and Pastoral Care**

The Forbairt scheme under the guidance of Ms. Hickey, was introduced with our First-Year students as it affords them the opportunity to talk to a staff member and check in with an adult in school on a regular basis. 1st years got the opportunity to participate in this programme this year.

The school’s Guidance Counsellor Mrs. Aileen O’Keeffe is doing great work checking in with each student and making them aware that he is there to talk whenever needed. All 6th year students had the opportunity to meet with the Guidance Counsellor prior to completing the CAO form.

**Student Empowerment and Voice**

The Students’ Council operated within the school. It continues to be a well-run organisation that makes a valued contribution to the day-to-day running of the school. Ms. Mulcahy supports this committee along with past staff member Noel Casey, their commitment to the empowerment of student voice is highly appreciated. The council attended online training with the student council coordinator in the school Ms. Mulcahy, hosted by Dr Domnall Fleming of the School of Education in UCC in order to prepare the council of the year ahead. In Christmas held a Christmas movie day for the first years. The have supported and represented the school at Parent Teacher meetings, First-Year Assessment and Subject Taster Afternoon. Our incoming student council for 2022-23 showed great initiative and work ethic in their organisation of the first ERSS Activity Day in May, an thoroughly enjoyable day for all.

**Parents Association**

The Parents’ Association of the ERSS have put great time and effort into organising and securing some fantastic prizes for our Easter Raffle. We raised €2778. Many thanks to the Parent Council 2021/2022 for kindly purchasing our new school banner, a backdrop to use when acknowledging & celebrating student success & achievement at E.R.S.S.

**Digital Learning and Information Technology (I.T.)**

We secured a third trolley of laptops to supplement our existing two in order to facilitate ICT in our classrooms. The laptops have proved invaluable this year in particular their use in assisting the 2nd and 3rd Year students in their CBA completion. The school uses Office 365 and teachers upload notes and resources to Teams and OneNote to facilitate the teaching and learning to the highest standard

Each classroom was fitted with a new set of speakers this year also.

**Sport and Extra curricular**

This year, we were lucky to have many sporting opportunities available for the students with great successes in football, hurling and soccer.

Our First Year team reached the last 8 at Munster A level which was an exceptional achievement for these young boys. Our Under 15 team reached the final of the Munster Minor Trophy and the semi finals of the Munster Minor A Cup. Bobby Norris, Zack Tobin, Darragh Reade and Henry Kirby are all involved with the Waterford Schoolboys team in the All Ireland Final later in June. Best of luck to all. Our Under 17 team reached the semi finals of the Munster Junior Trophy. Shane Cronin was involved with the Waterford Under 16 Schoolboys team, picking up a Munster title.

Our Senior team reached the last 8 of the Munster A Cup. All our teams excelling in Munster Schools soccer. The big success this year was entering teams in every grade possible this year. We played in the Tipperary 1st year hurling blitz, the U14 Rice Cup and the Westcourt Cup. Our U15 hurlers played in the Hennessy Cup and the Munster Championship, narrowly losing the Munster Quarter Final.  Our U16.5 hurlers lost by a point in the Munster Semi-Final. Our U17 hurlers went very close to qualifying for the County Final and showcased the emerging talent in the school. All in all, GAA is in a good place in our school and the level of commitment from students has been fantastic.

We are very lucky in our school to have so many talented players. Along with that talent, the players are willing to train after school and over Mid-term breaks to help our school compete at the highest levels. The culture in the school towards GAA is excellent and it has been hugely supported by management and all the staff in school. A special mention must go to all teachers who volunteer to train a GAA team in our school. We have a fantastic team of teachers who are helping to build positive relationships with students through a shared passion for GAA. With a committed team of teachers and students, we look forward to a promising 2022/2023 season for GAA in the ERSS.

This year also saw the success in other sports such as Basketball and swimming. Cathal O'Brien, First Year Student,, represented ERSS and the Munster Schools Squad in the Irish Schools Interprovincial at the National Aquatics Centre on Sunday the 20th of March. He achieved a new PB in the 100m Breaststroke & was part of the Munster Relay Team finishing 3rd behind very strong teams from Leinster and Ulster. Our First and Second Year Basketball team saw their debut in recent months. Another fantastic opportunity for our students to develop their sporting talents within our school. The teams made the short journey to Comeragh College this term, while the result did not go our way, it was a well worth experience for our students to participate. We look forward to building upon this momentum in the years to come.

In May, staff and students in ERSS were delighted to hold our inaugural Activities Day. Throughout the day we saw some very competitive games of volleyball, tug-o-war, table tennis basketball and dodgeball. Along with displaying great talent and skill in the 100m sprint, long puck, shot put, crossbar challenge, penalty shootout and the board game station. In the sunshine, staff and students enjoyed an ice cream. After lunch the teachers and 6th year students took to the pitch for a fiercely competitive soccer match, before we commenced the medal presentations. Congratulations to the winning teams on the day. Thank you to all students and staff members who participated during the day, especially Mr McBride and the members of the 5th Year student council who facilitated this fantastic event.

**Green Schools:**

Our Social Justice Committee and Green Schools worked in a collaborative way to tackle the environmental and social issues our planet faces. The Green School’s committee under the leadership of Ms. Moylan. Many thanks to our TY and 2nd Year students for helping us to plant trees, hedges and flowers in the hopes of promoting biodiversity in our school. Thank you to our Green Schools Coordinator Ms. Moylan and our caretaker Ray for facilitating the great work.

Our TY students got involved in Climate Action Week by watching the film “The True Cost”, a film highlighting the true cost of fast fashion and the harsh conditions endured by the workers in Bangladesh. Afterwards, they embarked on a litter picking excursion to maintain a clean environment for all. The students have pledged to raise awareness around the school. Students had been watching climate change documentaries throughout the week and are engaging in activities in some subjects. Our Green Schools committee meet regularly to come up with more ideas on how to raise awareness.

The ISSN group along with the Green committee have made great progress with their Plant a Planet initiative. They sold €800 worth of trees which are hopefully being planted over St. Patricks weekend. These are not just beautiful additions to any garden but will add value to their home, provide homes for wildlife and remove carbon from the atmosphere. The Plant a Planet project was entered into The Young Environmentalist Award and we have just learned that we have reached the semi-final stage which will take place at the end of March. The students will present their project via zoom to a panel of judges and answer questions on their initiative. A fantastic project and achievement. 4 students involved with the Irish Schools Sustainability Network and the Green Group visited Dublin in May to meet up with other students involved in the network from Ardscoil na Mara, and Rossbrook schools.

As part of the Green Schools' sustainability project, members of the school community were asked to collect bottle caps in order to recreate the infamous Starry Night by Vincent Van Gough. The Green Schools Committee under the skilful watch of Ms. Shostack, Ms. Moylan and Ms. Wheatley produced a fantastic sustainable piece of art that now hangs proudly in the open area. As part of Bike Week last week in the ERSS and we encouraged students to cycle to school or to car pool. We had a competition for students to cycle and the winners won a voucher from Outfield Sports

**Incoming First Years**

We were delighted to welcome our incoming first years into our school on the 26th of March , for their Entrance Assessment Test. They were greeted by 5th and 6th year mentors and enjoyed a tour of the school, allowing them a taste of what they will experience in September. 6th class pupils completed their Tests while making time to enjoy a soccer and basketball match with their mentors in the lovely weather.

**Careers**

On the 2nd of November, participants from third level institutions, training courses, as well as local business and industry, joined us here in the school, meeting with senior cycle students. The fair was held in designated classroom with small group sessions, so students had the opportunity to meet with experts in various fields.

Students took part in College Awareness Week on the 26th of November, investigating different college prospectuses and partaking in a Teacher-Student College Q&A. Many thanks to our staff for sharing their career paths with our students. 5th year students, accompanied by their teachers Ms. O’Keeffe and Ms. Hickey visited Carlow Institute of Technology Open Day in November.

As part of their career guidance programme, sixth year students attended a most informative talk with Ann McBride from TUS, Ireland’s newest University. A Big thank you to Ann for taking the time to meet with our students.

On the 29th of March, some interested Senior Cycle students completed the SOLAS Safe Pass course in the ERSS. Students will have a Safe Pass qualification for working on construction sites and beginning relevant apprenticeships. Thank you to Declan from ‘Work Safe’ for delivering a very relevant and enjoyable course. On the 1st of April, 6th Years attended the WIT open day with Ms. O’Keeffe and Ms. Barry and some TY students who completed the TRY engineering day in WIT.

During this term we held mock interview our sixth year students as part of their Career Guidance programme. All of our students were thrilled to have had such a professional true to life experience and received invaluable feedback from the panels on CVs and interview technique. Thank you to Cathy Mullins, Susan Dunne, Fiona Hennessy, Ken Lee, John Tobin, Tony Fitzgerald and Breda Fitzgerald. Comments from our interviewers: ‘Very bright students’ ‘A really lovely group of young men’ ‘A credit to their school’. ‘I would hire these boys in the morning’ (Ken Lee-Leetherm) Well done, the future is bright! We look forward to hosting this event on an annual basis

**Transition Year**

The TY Coordinator works in collaborative partnership with the Principal and Deputy, to encourage teachers to develop and extend their teaching, learning and assessment practices, and to share practices that have proven successful at improving students’ learning. She has worked with both students and staff to ensure that all TY students enjoyed a wide array of activities and that their learning outcomes were met. Many thanks to Ms. Moylan, Mr. Molloy and Mr. Foran who assisted the TY Co-ordinator throughout the year.

The Transition Year Class of 24 students enjoyed a number of activities this year including Go-Karting, kayaking along the River Suir and life-saving CPR training, a law workshop, pumpkin carving, bowling, AWARE training, puppet making, CV workshop and Public Speaking Workshop , presented by Mr. Alan Devine. This was followed by a visit from the Irish Defence Forces. An enjoyable and informative day for the boys. Many thanks to Alan and the members of the Defence Forces for taking the time to visit the school. Our TYs also enjoyed a trip to Clonmel IMC Cinema at the end of March, accompanied by Ms. Kirwan. They thoroughly enjoyed a viewing of the new Batman.

TYs also took part in an ART BLAST initiative, where they brought ancient Irish Myths and Legends to life through the medium of shadow puppets. An excellent, interactive experience that saw their creativity and artistic skills flourish. TYs accompanied by Ms. Geary and Mr. Cuddihy cycled the picturesque Blueway.

On Tuesday the 31st of May, at the ERSS, we gathered as a school community to bring the Transition Year programme to a close. This important year bridges the gap between the Junior and Senior Cycles and provides an opportunity to enrich and develop the student’s educational experience. Throughout the year, they have developed their character and become more self-confident. A sincere thank you to the year head Mr Carroll, to the teachers of Transition Year and to the many external personnel and agencies who have made this year a success. Each of our TY students received their Certificates, presented by former Deputy Principal Mr. Myles Mitchell.

There are many students who have contributed to the continued success of the Transition Year Programme. We acknowledge and celebrate all your hard work over the last year and your participation though our Gradam O’Fearaíl Award. Nominated students this year were: Shane Cronin, George Culleton, Andrew Phelan and Eoin Reid. The winning student was Patrick O’Neill. The winner of our award for Academic Excellence and student of the year was Adam Lonergan.

This award is to acknowledge the student’s academic efforts and dedication to their studies. We would like to acknowledge all nominees for this prestigious award: Patrick O’Neill, Noah O’Shea, Eoin Reid and Thomas Smith. Our winner for Sports participation and most improved was Shane Cronin. Our TY students made a presentation to Ms. Holden, their Home Economics teacher. Ms. Holden has accommodated the boys in Scoil Mhuire and they thoroughly enjoyed their time learning many delicious recipes.

**Spanish Students**

This year ERSS were joined by two brothers from Spain this year, Roman and Mateo. They settled in to life in Carrick on Suir quickly and became part of the ERSS family. Throughout the year they have been involved in all aspects of school life, particularly sport with both brothers representing the school in soccer. In May, we said goodbye to Roman and Mateo as they return to Spain. Fond memories and great friendships remain still. We look forward to opening the doors of our school to students from other countries such as Spain in September.

**School Extension**

Edmund Rice Secondary School is pleased to announce that approval has been granted for a 4 million euro development to the school in Carrick on Suir. This exciting new development will consist of a brand new Construction Studies/Wood Technology Room, Technologies Preparation Room, Graphics Room, Art/Craft Room, SEN Central Activities Space, 2 Classrooms, Practical and Multi Activity Rooms plus all associated accommodations and more. A 1326 m² development to compliment our existing school, this is fantastic news for our school community as we look forward to a very bright future in the ERSS.

**Public Relations**

The PR Officer is helping to build and maintain constructive relationships, through effective and regular communication with all school partners using a range of media, including a regular update of the school’s social media platforms. The PR Officer is supported by a team of teachers each facilitating the promotion of the school on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and the production of seasonal online digital newsletter.

Dermot Keyes, past pupil, member of the B.O.M. and deputy editor of the Waterford News and Star visited the school recently and met with many teachers and students. A feature based on his meetings & interviews were published in Waterford News and Star. ERSS is also proud to feature multiple publications of E-Síol. Aileen Hassey of the Nationalist also came to the school in April, to interview students about their experience in ERSS. This was feature in the front page of the paper and a two page editorial in the Nationalist.

**Awards Night**

Our annual Awards Night took place on the 31st of May. These awards highlight the success of our students and their great achievements in 2022. We were honoured to have an number of special guests presenting awards: Mr Myles Mitchell (former Deputy Principal), Eddie Burke (ERST), John Power (Carrick Credit Union), Mr Tom Larkin (BOM) as well as School management, Teachers & Year heads. Well done to all students that received awards.

**Sports Awards**

You will struggle to walk through our school without seeing a student with a hurley, soccer ball, football or basketball in their hands. Sports is the fabric of our school life here. We have many talented sportsmen in our year groups and last night we recognised those that have shown not just talent but also determination and dedication to their sporting disciplines.Thank you to our coaches presenting the awards, and special guest Michael Whelan. Michael is a former student, minor hurler and a fantastic role model to all those trying to achieve excellence in their sports.

**To conclude**

It has been a pleasure to compile this report reflecting on the school year, here in ERSS and I would like to thank management, staff, parents, students and the wider school community for their participation in all aspects of the school this year.

Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

