



Educate
Together

New Educate Together Schools 2016 - Press Pack



2016 will be an historic year for Educate Together as it opens four national schools and five second-level schools. The opening of nine schools is the second highest number of schools opened in Educate Together's history. The growing number reflects the desire and determination of families in these communities to establish schools where all children are welcomed regardless of social, religious or cultural background.

Three of the new national schools will open in Dublin: Broombridge ETNS in Cabra; Grace Park ETNS in Drumcondra and Riverview ETNS in Dublin 12. In Mayo, Castlebar ETNS will open in Castlebar town.

This September, there will be 81 Educate Together primary and nine second-level schools in Ireland. This press pack contains information on our new schools opening August/September 2016. If you have any further queries, please contact the Educate Together communications team: **01 429 2500**.

2016 New Primary Schools

Broombridge ETNS and Grace Park ETNS will open in response to growing demographic demand for school places. The Department of Education and Skills invited applications for these schools earlier this year and patronage was granted to Educate Together as a result of overwhelming parental preference.

Broombridge ETNS, Cabra, Dublin 7 - Opening Thursday 1st September

Broombridge ETNS will open in its permanent accommodation in a 16 classroom building on Bannow Road with Aisling McQuaid as Principal. Gerry McKevitt, Regional Development Officer for Educate Together:

'It is fantastic that we can open Broombridge ETNS in its permanent accommodation in a new building. Unfortunately this is an exception. Year after year Educate Together opens schools in temporary accommodation which leads to uncertainty which is not ideal for a developing school. Educate Together hopes that opening in permanent accommodation will become the norm in the future.'

Grace Park ETNS, Drumcondra, Dublin 9 - Opening Thursday 1st September

Grace Park ETNS will be based temporarily in the ground of ChildVision on Gracepark Road while permanent accommodation is being sourced. Principal Marcus Wynne:

"I am honoured to be appointed as Principal of the Drumcondra/Marino Educate Together National School and I am looking forward to collaborating with the wider community. It will be a very proud day for all the supporters and start up committee to open our doors to our first Junior Infant class in September 2016."

Sylvia McLoughlin, School Manager of Grace Park ETNS:

"I've been part of the campaign for over 4 years and the support from parents and the community has been amazing. We've all worked so hard for an Educate Together School in our area and it wasn't an easy straight-forward road. That makes it more exciting to be finally opening our doors and welcoming our first Junior Infants. It's a huge asset to our community and I am proud to be a part of it."

2016 New Divestment Schools

Both Riverview ETNS and Castlebar ETNS open as part of the divestment process under which Church and State premises are reconfigured to provide for plurality of school patronage. The process is the result of surveys conducted in 2011/2012 by the DES as part of the Forum for Patronage and Pluralism and these schools will join 8 other schools 'divested' to Educate Together since 2013.

Castlebar ETNS, Mayo - Opening Wednesday 31st August

Castlebar ETNS was originally scheduled to open in 2015 but both Educate Together and local parents believed that the building offered would not suit the needs of families in the area. However in the intervening twelve months the Department of Education and Skills has worked closely with Educate Together to identify a more appropriate premises. Castlebar ETNS will open in temporary accommodation in the centre of Castlebar Town. Principal Sarah Calvey:

"Castlebar Town is a growing and changing, diverse society and the opening of Castlebar ETNS will provide choice to parents when selecting a school for their child.. We hope to breathe life back into this historic building and to become involved with local community groups in the enhancing of Castlebar town."

Riverview ETNS, Dublin 12 - Opening Thursday 1st September

Based in the former St Peter's National School in Limekiln Road, Riverview ETNS is one of schools that has been 'divested' to Educate Together from the Archdiocese of Dublin to provide choice of school patronage to families in the surrounding community. Nikki Murphy, parent:

"I feel very lucky that my son Reuben can attend an Educate Together school in the community. I've no doubt he will be happy and enjoy learning in Riverview ETNS. There is no doubt either that Riverview will be another hugely popular and over-subscribed Educate Together school in south Dublin. Hopefully there will be lots more to follow."

Background on Divestment

In 2011, the government-appointed Forum for Patronage and Pluralism surveyed 28 areas to ascertain what types of local schools parents wanted. The idea was that in these areas a Church-run school would be 'divested' to alternative patrons in an attempt to provide more choice for families.

Of these 28 areas, 25 chose Educate Together and parents began to hope that their children would not be forced through lack of options to attend denominational schools at odds with their belief. They began to hope that their children would have the choice of an education in which all children, regardless of religious, cultural or social background would be welcomed and accommodated. These are the hopes that are reflected in the ecstatic reaction to the opening of Riverview ETNS this year, that greeted the announcement of Tuam ETNS and New Ross ETNS last year, Malahide Portmarnock ETNS, Trim ETNS, Tramore ETNS and Newtownwhite ETNS in 2014 and Canal Way ETNS, Dublin, in 2013.

However, progress towards reconfiguring existing schools and buildings into centres of equality-based education has been slow in many other areas. A new cohort of parents in in these areas are clamouring for the Educate Together schools that were promised three years ago.

Minister for Education Richard Bruton has committed to 400 multi- and non-denominational schools by 2030. Talks have already begun in the 18 areas that were promised reconfigured schools. Educate Together has proved time and again that once greenlit, our staff can open new schools around quickly and effectively. It is time to reinvigorate the divestment process, to reconfigure schools in these areas and to deliver on Government commitments made in 2013.

Parents should not have to be beholden to any religious institution for the vindication of their right to a state-funded education for their children. Educate Together provides a model that accepts and treats all children equally and will continue to lobby for a true alternative to the virtual monopoly held by religious patrons in Irish education.

The establishment of a national network of Educate Together schools that guarantee equality of access and esteem to all children is the solution.

2016 Second-Level Schools

2016 will be an historic year for Educate Together as it opens five second-level schools: Bremore Educate Together Secondary School in Balbriggan; Clonturk Community College in Whitehall, Dublin (in partnership with City of Dublin ETB); Cork Educate Together Secondary School; North Wicklow Educate Together Secondary School and Stepside Educate Together Secondary School. This is the highest number of second-level schools that Educate Together has opened in one year and is testament to the confidence placed in Educate Together by both the DES and families.

Paul Rowe, CEO of Educate Together:

"Educate Together is fresh to Irish second-level education but is not just offering something that is a natural progression from its national school ethos. The Ethical Education curriculum has been developed on how we live as global citizens in the modern world; it investigates the challenges and possibilities of contemporary life in a way that is original and enterprising. The enthusiasm of teachers, parents and students has been astounding and Irish second-level education needs this energy if it is to offer students a path of learning and living that chimes with the modern world."

Bremore ETSS, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin - Opening Monday 29th August

Bremore Educate Together Secondary School will be based on the grounds of St George's National School while its permanent accommodation is constructed on an adjoining site on the Naul Road. It is hoped that the school will move into its permanent accommodation in 2017. Kathy Jones, Principal:

'I look forward to a successful exciting new future for all of our students. The opening of this Educate Together Second Level School in Balbriggan is a result of many years of campaign work by parents and members of the local community and I am honoured to be the first Principal of the school. I am looking forward to working with the school community to encourage all of our students to achieve their full potential.'

Clonturk Community College, Dublin 9 - Opening Monday 29th August

A partnership between City of Dublin ETB and Educate Together, Clonturk Community College will open in Plunkett College, Whitehall Road, Dublin 11. Principal Susan Campbell:

"Student belonging and participation in school life are important values for me and so I am looking forward to working with parents and the wider community to create a positive, caring and innovative learning environment where students feel challenged and supported to fulfil their potential."

Amy Mulvihill, New Schools Manager at Educate Together:

'Clonturk Community College is a really exciting development in the educational landscape of Dublin City. Allying the progressive visions of both Educate Together and City of Dublin ETB, Clonturk Community College will offer students a welcoming, nurturing environment where they will flourish academically and personally in an atmosphere of respect and understanding'.

Cork ETSS - Opening Monday 29th August

Cork ETSS will share the campus at Nagle Community College on a temporary basis.
Principal Colm O'Connor:

"The opening of CETSS represents a new departure in education in the Munster region. The school, which will be democratic, student-centred, co-ed and equality-based, will be in keeping, both with best practice in international educational thinking, as well as with the values of a rapidly evolving Irish society. We hope that this will be the first of many schools of this kind in the province as it offers greater choice to parents."

North Wicklow ETSS - Opening Monday 29th August

North Wicklow Educate Together Secondary School will be temporarily based in the former Presentation Brothers school on Putland Road in Bray. Jonathan Browner, Principal of North Wicklow ETSS:

'It will be incredibly exciting to lead a school which celebrates diversity, equality and excellence. Many parents have worked long and hard to make the dream of North Wicklow ETSS a reality so it really is an honour to have been chosen for this role.'

Niall Wall, Educate Together Regional Development Officer:

The story of North Wicklow ETSS is the story of a group of parents who shared a dream of an Educate Together secondary school for their children and all children in North Wicklow. It is story of their persistence through disappointments and setbacks and of a journey that ended far from where it began. But most of all it is a story of triumph that comes to a joyful end – and a beginning – when North Wicklow Educate Together Secondary school will open its doors.

Stepaside ETSS, Co. Dublin - Opening Monday 29th August

Stepaside ETSS will be temporarily based in grounds of DLSP Rugby Club.
Barbara Mulhall, Principal:

'This is the fulfillment of a lifetime's ambition for me and I look forward to commencing work in February and engaging with students and families towards building a wonderful school community in Stepside ETSS'.

Educate Together's assessments suggest that a national network of approximately **300** Educate Together National Schools is now needed, making up just **10%** of the primary education system. **30** Educate Together second-level schools are also needed, to correspond with the growing number of equality-based primary schools in Ireland. Educate Together is working towards the day when **every** family can access an **equality-based** Educate Together school.