



A Message from the Principal



A Chairde,

Today marks the last day of State Examinations for our students and as I come to the end of my first year as Principal of Malahide Portmarnock ETSS, I want to say what a privilege it has been to join this wonderful school community. Thank you to our students, staff and parents for your support during a time of change. Getting to know our students has been a privilege. They are exceptional young people and a credit to the staff and parents of the school.

From the outset, the Mission Statement has guided me, and it has been remarkable to see it truly lived out in daily school life. Our values of Community, Collaboration and Creation are visible everywhere. They shape how we learn, how we work together and how we support one another.



We teach students that our Values light the Way and that RESPECT guides everything we do in the school. This was most evident to me at our recent Sixth Year Graduation. It was an emotional occasion and gave a real sense of what this school stands for. It showed the strength of relationships, the care for students and the pride in our community. As the students leave the school for the last time today we look forward to welcoming them back in August for their results and wish them every success in the next step of their journey.



A Year of Change and Progress

This year has been about getting to grips with our new school building. Getting the keys one day before we opened was not ideal but the building was worth the wait. It is the culmination of many years of hard work on the part of Aoife, Anne and the Board of Management who worked tirelessly to get the building over the line. It is a fantastic space and the positive impact on learning is already clear. We are still learning how best to use it. Though some works will take place over the summer. Next year, for the first time in many years, we will return without building changes.

The graduation and award ceremonies marked the first occasions for us to hold a large gathering of our school community in our wonderful new PE Hall. I look forward to many more occasions where we can come together as a whole school. Now that we have a physical building we are looking forward to building the school community and focusing on having more events where the whole school community can come together.



Highlights from the Year

Some of my personal highlights from the year are:

- Working with the Student Council and Parents' Association to create our first official communications protocol – it gave me a chance to see our ethos in action
- The introduction of hot food in the canteen by Food Village – thank you for the staff of Food Village and to the co-operation of students for making it such a success!
- The wonderful Talent Show in March – watching the students perform was one of the standouts of the year – we can't wait to see how the Team does with a musical production.
- Culture Day – the Transition Year Students and Student Council organised another wonderful showcase event to celebrate the diversity within our school.
- The numerous trips by classes and clubs to competitions, learning experiences, quizzes and cultural events have greatly added to the learning that happens in the classroom.
- A year of achievement– the successes are too numerous to mention – between all Irelands, Leinster Golds, Maths successes, high academic results, CTYI participation, Gaisce Silver and Bronze medals, national ballet performances, international sailing, the breadth of achievement from students is astounding – we are working on creating more 'shout outs' so that the whole school community can celebrate with us.
- The Sports Day – the opening of the Waterside gate is such a positive for our school community – it will shorten commute times, make the walk to school safer for students and importantly allow us to access the pitches.
- The Whole School Evaluation was a very valuable experience, we are happy that the inspector recognised the inclusive and supportive nature of our school and commented on the incredible relationships between everyone in the school community.
- Successful Summer Provision programme in our new building for the first time – the programme ended on Friday and the students worked hard on the theme of 'Building Confidence and Connections'

There are so many other School highlights which can be read about in the MPETSS Express, created by our dedicated Newspaper Club team who meet during lunch every week.



Supporting Our Students over the Summer

Students have experienced both challenges and celebrations this year. We thank our pastoral team for their ongoing care and support. We are delighted to be able to welcome a second Guidance Counsellor to our team for next year.

Congratulations to all students on their exam results. We encourage students to take time to reflect on their results, whether that is to celebrate achievements or to plan for improvement. Reflection is the key to success.

If support is needed over the summer, services are available locally:
<https://crosscare.ie/services/crosscare-youth/swords/>

Being at home full time can be a little challenging for everyone. Parents may also wish to explore our short Restorative Practice at Home videos: <https://vimeo.com/showcase/7457792> for advice on building relationships and dealing with conflict.

One of the major benefits of JAMF Safe Internet on school iPads is that it DOES operate on the iPad over the summer months. This internet filtering removes access to Social Media, Gambling and other adult sites and blocks lots of gaming sites also. We ask families to take time to check that appropriate safeguards are in place and that young people are using devices safely. If there are any issues with school-issued devices, please contact Wriggle Connect Home for support.

There is much discussion in the media around social media and digital technologies. We strongly encourage all parents to stay informed and familiar with the platforms and tools young people are using. Keeping up to date is an important part of helping our students stay safe online. Parents can access helpful guidance and up-to-date advice through Webwise: <https://www.webwise.ie/guides-parents/>

We encourage all students to take a proper break and enjoy time offline. Joining your local library is a great option over the summer: <https://www.librariesireland.ie/services>



Staff & Community Updates

- Congratulations to Thomond Ní Ghoill on her appointment as permanent Deputy Principal.

- Welcome to Fiona Murphy new secretary and Brian Satelll our new caretaker two welcome additions to our amazing ancillary staff. The school would not run without the hard work of the team.
- Welcome to new Board Chair Holly Howell
- Sincere thanks to Amanda Downes for her service to the Board since 2018 and for the legacy she leaves – this school is proof that community led action works
- Best wishes to Conor Finnegan, Eoghan Mason, Melissa Perez Sanchez and Katie Groarke on their moves closer to home and to Meg Kenny on her travels for the year.

Looking Ahead to 2026/2027

Some of the key developments planned for next year include:

- Introduction of Leaving Certificate PE and Leaving Certificate Home Economics
- An expanded Transition Year programme, including our first TY Musical
- A new Digital Skills and Citizenship course for First Years
- Continued growth in student leadership opportunities, including Gaisce and YSI
- A key principle of our Restorative Practice approach is that we celebrate the “Sparkles” – the positive moments and achievements in our lives. We encourage students to share these with their tutors, and we welcome parents letting us know about the good things happening for their young people.
- We are also keen to ensure that our school calendar reflects the diversity of our community. If there are celebrations you would like recognised, please share them here. We will work with the Student Council early in the new term to plan a calendar of events:
<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/4n7bB1axWb>
- Our library space is now almost ready. New furniture has arrived and our library team are looking forward to getting started on filling the shelves early and building a strong reading culture across the school.
- The Per Cent for Art Scheme is now open. We encourage our school community to share this widely. It is a great opportunity to enhance our new building and create a space that reflects who we are as a school. All information is available on www.mpetss.ie
- We are currently working on updating the school website to improve access to information for parents and students.

Important Information for the return to school:

- Provisional School calendar is attached
- First Years return: 27th August
- Full details on return to school will be shared later in the Summer.
- Reduced school building opening hours over the summer due to building works Contact: office@mpetss.ie for appointment
- Teaching staff are now on leave – any communications via the app will be dealt with in September – contact the office@mpetss.ie for any urgent student requests.
- Please ensure you are connected to the school app and update it before the return to school.
- Please update school devices etc. to help student prepare for the year ahead. Ensure your e-books are downloaded. E-Books for 1st Years will be downloaded by Wriggle to their iPads and ebooks for all other years will be distributed on our return to school.

- Any schoolbooks from third years on book rental should be returned to the school immediately.
- There are some medications left in the building which have not been collected. These will be kept until the return and then handed back to parents / guardians. A new medical form must be filled in each year if your child requires medication in school (available through the app).



Finally, thank you for making my first year in MPETSS such a positive experience. I look forward to welcoming everyone back in August and building on the successes of this year. Wishing you all a safe and enjoyable summer, take time to enjoy the sparkles!

Jean-Marie Ward, Principal