Supporting Parents
Supporting Children

National Parents Council Primary **Annual Review 2020**

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Registered Name
National Parents Council – Primary

Directors
Laurence Keaveney (Chairperson)
Massimiliano Boccalari
Miriam Brandt
Pirooz Daneshmandi (resigned 26.09.20)
Hilary Lawrence (resigned 26.09.20)
Aisling Lawton
Damian Murray
Derek O'Leary
Dermot O'Riordan (resigned 26.09.20)
Patrick Ryan
Avril Byrne (appointed 26.09.20)
Sonya Ryan (appointed 26.09.20)
Tara Sherlock (appointed 26.09.20)

Company Secretary
Áine Lynch

Registered Office
12 Marlborough Court
Marlborough Street
Dublin 1

Auditor
KPMG
Chartered Accountants
1 Stokes Place
St. Stephen's Green
Dublin 2

Bankers
Bank of Ireland
Walkinstown, Dublin 12

Solicitors
Arthur Cox Solicitors
Earlsfort Centre
Earlsfort Terrace
Dublin 2

Charity Reference Number
CHY 10547

Registered Charity Number
20027032

Companies Registration Number
258148

2020
Our Year in Review

Supporting Parents
Supporting Children

Helpline

1,817 calls & emails to NPC Helpline

01 8874477

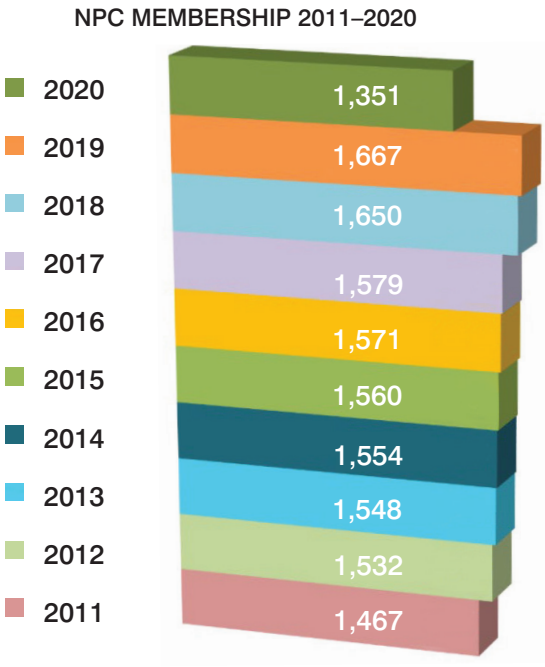
helpline@npc.ie

Training

4,217
PEOPLE ATTENDED NPC TRAINING EVENTS

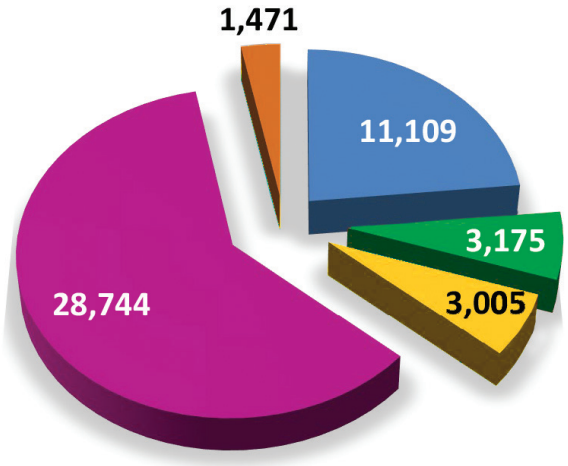
IN **542**
SESSIONS AROUND THE COUNTRY

Membership



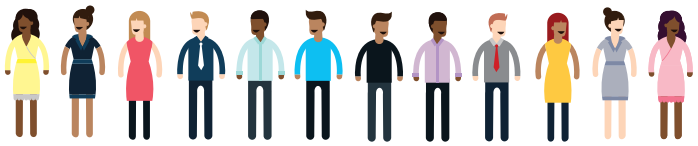
Communications

* Users that have accessed information on
www.npc.ie



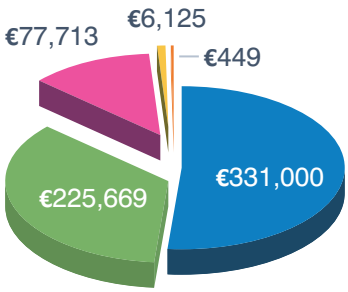
NPC Surveys 2020

- Survey on ensuring that schools are open in a manner which is both safe and sustainable
- Survey on the preparations for the reopening of schools and how reopening is operating in practice
- Survey to explore parents'/guardians' and children's experiences of 'schooling at home' during COVID-19
- Your child returning to school
- Your school in partnership with parents



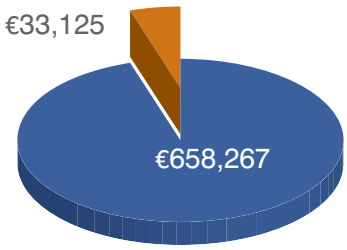
47,504
Responses were received to NPC Surveys

Income



- Department of Education
- Income from sponsoring bodies
- Membership fees
- Course fees
- Other

Expenditure



- Council related activities
- Support costs

Social Media 2020

3,451
FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS
REACH OF **186,448**

823
INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS

Overview of National Parents Council Primary

OUR VISION

NPC want to see an Ireland where ***every*** child has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Supporting Parents
Supporting Children

OUR MISSION

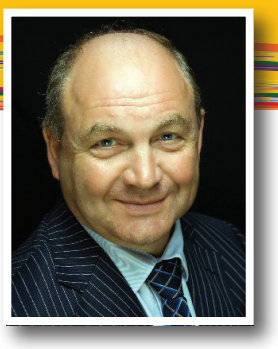
NPC exists to ensure that all parents are supported and empowered to become effective partners in their children's education. NPC will work to increase the capacity and capability of the primary education sector, to achieve true partnership and deliver better outcomes for all children.

VALUES

NPC knows that when parents and schools work together, children do better. Therefore NPC believes that:

- Parents must be actively engaged in the education of their children.
- Parent involvement in children's education must be supported by the attitudes, beliefs and practices of all members of the school and broader education community.
- Parents should be viewed as partners in facilitating children's learning and should be supported in this role by the school and broader education community.
- Parents should be viewed as full partners in the decisions that affect their children and their family.
- Parents should be welcome in the school, and their support and assistance should be sought as a valuable resource to support children's education in the school.
- All communication and dialogue with parents must be regular, open, two-way and meaningful.

Chairperson's Report



It is my pleasure on behalf of the Board of Directors to present the 2020 review of the National Parents Council Primary (NPC).

In preparing the Annual Report and Financial Statements the Board seeks to clearly demonstrate the activities of the organisation, its impacts and benefits and how it organises and funds its operations in line with principles of good corporate governance and transparency.

It is fundamental to our organisation that the highest standards of Corporate Governance are maintained. Our commitment to delivering a quality and efficient service, now and into the future, has continued, in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In this regard, NPC is independently governed by a Board of Directors, comprised of 10 voluntary members who receive no remuneration for their services. The Board is charged with the responsibility of administering NPC on a not-for-profit basis.

The Board has two committees, Finance/Risk/Audit and Governance. During 2020, the Board met six times and the two committees also met on several occasions, with all meetings taking place virtually in line with public health guidelines. Minutes were prepared for all meetings.

2020 was like no other year for our society, educational sector and our organisation. I would like to recognise and acknowledge the challenges faced by many families, many of whom have been in contact with NPC via the various channels. Undoubtedly the services and advocacy provided by our organisation are now needed more than ever and provide a vital link and connection to parents. The board are cognisant of the role to oversee and steer the organisation. The organisation's board committees continued to work with a special focus on the areas of risk assessment, mitigation and finance scenario planning while also ensuring compliance with the charity regulators Code of Governance.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank all the Board members for their invaluable contributions to NPC in 2020. Finally, I would like to extend my gratitude to Áine Lynch, our CEO and the staff of NPC whose commitment and dedication to NPC's Vision on our behalf ensures that NPC continues to improve the experience of children and parents in primary and early years education.

Larry Keaveney
Chairperson

Chief Executive Officer's Report

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, staff of NPC showed their agility and commitment to work in an unprecedented way that would allow us to meet the challenges of the pandemic. As a result of this, NPC's commitment to its 'core objectives' never wavered, and in fact, our services continued to grow and develop. However, the pandemic did necessitate some fundamental alterations to our service offerings, and indeed, an immediate and total reimagination of our service delivery.

While COVID-19 may have dominated the year, it did not negatively impact our strategic goals or long-term vision for NPC. Significant progress continued to be made on the implementation of each of the objectives of our Strategy, "Parents as Partners; Children, Schools and Communities". This strategic plan spans 2018 to 2022 and recognises the unique role we play in representing parents' voices in education and supporting them to support their children through these important years of education. Representing parents' voices was never more vital during 2020 amid school closures, remote learning, and continued restrictions. In 2020, we heard from over forty-seven thousand (47,504) parents through our surveys on a wide variety of issues. This was an increase of 350% on 2019. The survey that gained the most responses from parents was on the issue of "Your Child Returning to School" which received over twenty-eight thousand (28,744) responses.

The service delivery in 2020 was again very busy, albeit with a very different approach to providing supports to parents. In March 2020, with the first school closure it became very clear, very quickly, that parents needed support in providing fun learning activities for their children. In response to this NPC provided a "Daily Edition" of varied unique resources throughout the period of school closures. NPC worked with artists, chefs, musicians and exercise and wellbeing experts to develop video content for parents to use with their children.

During 2020, NPC continued to respond to parents' concerns through the helpline. At times, due to restrictions, the helpline was only able to operate through email but when possible, we reopened the telephone lines as quickly as was possible with the Helpline answering 1,820 calls and emails during the year. Our training supports which are normally delivered in schools was severely impacted by restrictions and school closures. However, we quickly adapted our training provision to deliver supports via video and zoom with 4,217 parents attending in person or via zoom live training events and 44,000 parents engaging with training videos which were developed to support transitions from early years to primary and from primary to post-primary settings. The mental health and well-being session was again the most sought-after training in 2020 with 1,732 parents attending. The level of engagement by parents in our services continues to indicate that NPC supports are valued and relevant to parents of primary school and early years children.

COVID-19 made the NPC Annual Education Conference impossible as an in-person event, however, NPC recognised that it was essential that parents did not receive less support at this time. Instead of the normal in-person event, NPC provided a series of webinars every Wednesday evening during the month of October on different areas of well-being and mental health supports. These seminars were provided in partnership with Dr. Colman Noctor who presented on four different topics, which was followed by a question-and-answer session with participants. The seminars proved incredibly popular with over 7,500 parents attending.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the continued trust of parents in our organisation and the dedication of the Board and staff members of NPC who went above and beyond over the course of a difficult year to ensure that we could continue to provide high-quality supports, services and advocacy for parents.

Áine Lynch
Chief Executive

Early Years

The NPC Early Years' service was established and developed in order to support parents to support their children both at home and in pre-school and to represent their voice in the Early Years' sector.

Training

NPC delivered face-to-face training in February and March 2020 on the topic of supporting your child's transition from pre-school to primary school.

To enable NPC to continue to support parents through COVID-19 restrictions NPC developed an online training session for parents.

NPC designed and delivered our first early years webinar in partnership with the National Council for Special Education entitled "Let's Talk About Your Child's Special Educational Needs When Starting Primary School". This event was designed to support parents to support their child's transition from pre-school to primary school.

NPC also worked in partnership with St. Patrick's Mental Health Services to develop a programme to support parents to support their young children's positive mental health in the early years. NPC successfully ran a pilot programme in December 2020 and will run further workshops in 2021.

Helpline

In 2020, NPC continued to support parents with an early years' helpline service, which is available via telephone, email and webchat.

Early Years Helpline Issues	
Training	52
ECCE Scheme	94
Services policies & procedures	32
AIM – Access and Inclusion model	5
Transition from pre-school to primary school	28
Pre-school deposits	4
Leavers/transfers from pre-school places	3
Other	30
Total	**248**

Information leaflets

NPC provides information leaflets to assist parents in finding a pre-school place and to support parents when their children are transitioning from pre-school to primary school.
The information leaflets provided are:

- Finding a pre-school place
- How do I choose the best pre-school for my child?
- Who's who in your child's primary school?
- Supporting your child's transition from pre-school to primary school
- Supporting playful learning at home.

Website

NPC continues to support parents with the early years section on the NPC website to provide information for parents specifically related to early years' education and care. The EY website received 26,646 page hits in 2020.

Type of Training delivered	Number of sessions delivered	Number of attendees at face-to-face sessions	Number of attendees online	Total number of attendees
Transition from pre-school to primary school – face-to-face sessions	12	166		166
Transition from pre-school to primary school – online sessions	34		362	362
Let's talk about your child's special educational needs when starting primary school – webinar	1		166	166
Supporting parents to support their young children's mental health at home - online	7		146	146
Total	**54**	**166**	**674**	**840**

Representing Parents

NPC represents the voice of early years' parents to many stakeholders including the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and the Department of Education.

Helpline

2020 understandably saw a large number of contacts to the Helpline, via phone calls and email in relation to the impact of school closures due to COVID-19. We heard from many parents about the social, emotional and psychological impact of primary schools being closed.

The Helpline operated from mid-March to mid-June 2020 by email only in view of the strict public health guidelines in place at that time. From June 2020 to December 2020 the Helpline operated by both phone and email.

Of note in 2020 we saw a growing number of queries from Parent Associations regarding the rules governing the effective and efficient functioning of Parent Associations.

The Helpline saw an increase in the number of Early Years' calls and emails in 2020. This reflects the growing awareness of the Early Years' Helpline service of our service.

Helpline statistics 2020

NPC Helpline Issues	Total number of calls & emails for 2020
BULLYING	
Bullying involving a child	32
Bullying involving a teacher	7
Bullying involving a principal	5
Principal/BOM not implementing Anti-bullying policy	3
Cyberbullying	7
Total	**54**
ISSUE	
Supervision	9
Complaints Procedure	24
Homework	4
Code of Behaviour	5
Split Classes	12
Uniforms	5
Class Size	2
Enrolment	43
Curriculum	15
Time in School	24
Whole School Evaluation (WSE)	3
Health and Safety	39
Book Rental Schemes	2
School Closures	257
Voluntary Contribution	5
Child Abuse	4
Total	**453**
EARLY YEARS	
Total	**248**

NPC Helpline Issues	Total number of calls & emails for 2020
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT	
General	7
Complaints	7
Total	**14**
PARENT ASSOCIATIONS	
Set up	43
Disputes	83
Financial Issues	93
NPC Membership	51
Rules/Roles	214
Information	247
Difficulty with Principal/Board of Management	20
Training	57
Insurance	21
GDPR	3
Garda Vetting	3
Total	**835**
SPECIAL NEEDS	
Special Needs Enquiry	53
Assessment	23
Special Needs Assistants (SNAs)	9
Access to School	46
Professional Resources	5
Total	**136**
Other	**77**
Total	**1,817**

Training and Development

The NPC Training and Development Programme continued to deliver training and support to parents throughout 2020.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Training and Development Programme supports parents to work in positive partnership with the school, and it seeks to empower parents in their role as the primary educators of their children and encourages a positive role for parents as part of the whole school community.

TRAINING PROGRAMMES DELIVERED IN 2020

COVID-19 significantly impacted NPC's ability to provide training supports for parents as training sessions typically take place in schools. With the schools being closed or affected by social distancing restrictions for the most part of 2020, NPC had to completely redesign its training service to adapt. All NPC training programmes were redesigned to suit online delivery and all NPC trainers were upskilled accordingly.

NPC provided 264 training sessions to a total of 4,217 parents in schools across Ireland, six different training programmes for parents were offered countrywide.

Anti-Bullying Training

This programme enabled parents to support their children regarding issues of bullying and also informed them about the Anti-Bullying procedures in primary schools. This training was funded by the Department of Education under the Anti-Bullying Action Plan.

Parents' Association/Parental Involvement Training

This programme gave information and guidance to new and established Parents' Associations. The aim of the programme was to inform Parents' Associations on their role as part of the whole school community and to give parents an understanding of the importance of parental involvement in the home and school. It aimed to support and facilitate parents in developing a positive partnership in the school as a community. School closures and restrictions prevented this training happening in the usual way, therefore an online PA clinic was held once a week, this enabled parents to find solutions and share ideas with other parents from all across the country. This training was funded by the Department of Education.

Internet Safety Training

This programme focused on strategies for both improving communication between parents and children and negotiating boundaries to children's internet use. Parents were given the skills to engage with their children's online lives. Through the training, parents were also informed about how young people use the internet, what attracts them to the internet, and gained an insight into children's main worries and concerns when online. This training was co-financed by the European Union, Connecting Europe Facility and Virgin Media.

Parenting – Supporting your Child to Build Healthy Friendships and Relationships

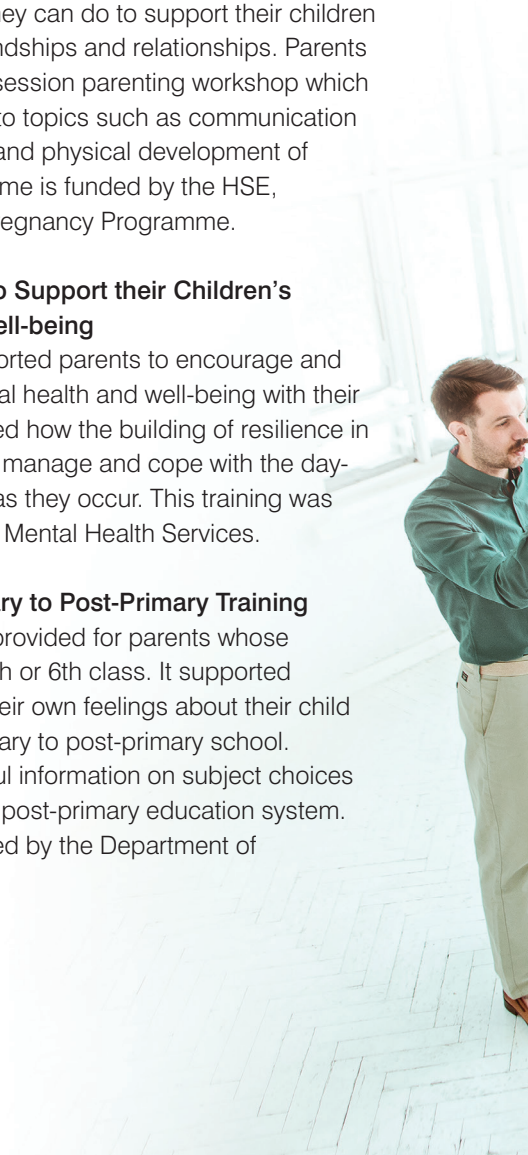
Parents attended information sessions which informed them about the Social Personal Health Education (SPHE) curriculum and what they can do to support their children in building healthy friendships and relationships. Parents also attended a three session parenting workshop which delved more deeply into topics such as communication and social, emotional and physical development of children. This programme is funded by the HSE, Sexual Health Crisis Pregnancy Programme.

Supporting Parents to Support their Children's Mental Health and Well-being

This programme supported parents to encourage and promote positive mental health and well-being with their children. It also explored how the building of resilience in children helps them to manage and cope with the day-to-day stresses of life as they occur. This training was funded by St. Patrick's Mental Health Services.

Transition from Primary to Post-Primary Training

This programme was provided for parents whose children were in 4th, 5th or 6th class. It supported parents to reflect on their own feelings about their child transitioning from primary to post-primary school. It also gave them useful information on subject choices and an insight into the post-primary education system. This training was funded by the Department of Education.



TRAINING PROGRAMME STATISTICS FOR 2020

Type of Training		Number of sessions delivered	Number of attendees at face-to-face sessions	Total number of attendees
Parents' Association Training		81	432	728
Transition from Primary to Post-Primary		14	214	288
Internet Safety		60	403	1,020
Parenting – Supporting your child to build healthy friendships and relationships	Information Sessions	7	114	124
	Training Sessions	2	54	54
Supporting parents to support their children's mental health and well-being		84	778	1,732
Anti Bullying		16	235	271
Total		**264**	**2,230**	**4,217**

Partnership Schools Ireland

The Partnership Schools Ireland (PSI) programme aims to ensure better outcomes for children by promoting partnerships between schools, families, and the wider community. It is a joint initiative by the National Parents Council Primary and the Irish Primary Principals Network and is part-funded by the Department of Education.

The PSI programme is based on Dr Joyce Epstein's model of school, family and community partnerships. For over 40 years, this research has shown that when strong families, excellent schools and healthy communities overlap and work together they provide the best possible opportunities for children to thrive. Children who have the support of their families, schools and communities are more likely to feel more positive about education, have more positive social, emotional and behavioural development, have better school attendance, perform better academically and adjust to school life more easily.

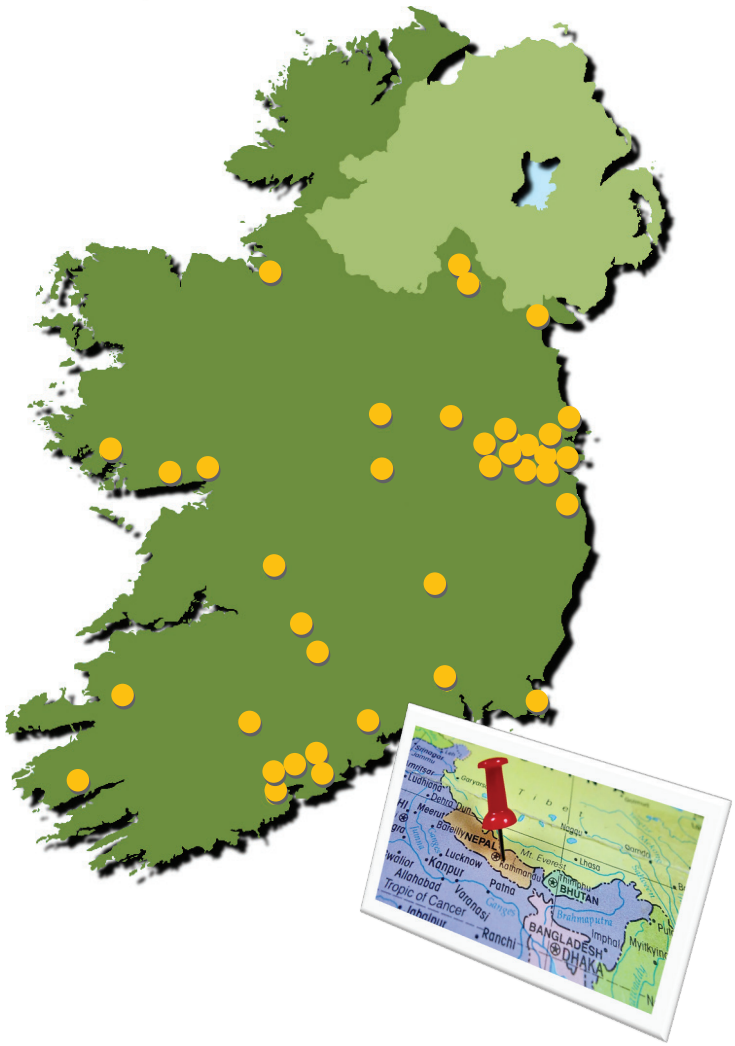
With school closures and public health measures, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted our ability to run training sessions for schools. Therefore, in 2020 three schools completed PSI training, bringing the total number of schools trained to forty one. Two of these schools were trained in Ireland, and an additional school in Nepal. Members of Shwet Barahi School, Kathmandu, Nepal completed their PSI training with NPC CEO Áine Lynch who was in Nepal supporting the Irish Charity, Indreni, to promote partnership with parents in their schools.

Over the past number of years, work has been ongoing to develop an online Team Training Workshop. This course is designed to support schools who have already received their in-person PSI training. The Online Team Training Workshop can be used as a refresher for a whole group who have trained before, or new members of the Action Team Partnership (ATP) who were not present for the initial training course. The training was developed and made available in early 2020 to any school who had already received PSI training.

Partnership Schools Ireland earned a 2020 Partnership Organisation Award from the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) at Johns Hopkins University for this Online Team Training Workshop. This is Partnership Schools Ireland's second NNPS Partnership Award – the training was praised for its clarity, artistic quality and comprehensiveness. The NNPS were impressed with evidence that the programme is scaling up the number of schools, and that the online workshop will enable the small number of NPC staff to conduct remote training with a large number of interested schools.

Finally, the first *Promising Partnership Practices Ireland* booklet was printed and distributed in early 2020. It documents the partnership work of schools across Ireland and provides the wider community with an opportunity to hear about the positive work that is happening in Partnership Schools. Going forward, an annual *Promising Partnership Practices Ireland* booklet will share the goals, actions, and experiences of Partnership Schools.

Partnership SCHOOLS IRELAND



Communicating with Parents & Children

In line with the NPC strategic objective to develop two-way communications and ensure the delivery of quality information, NPC, in 2020, despite COVID-19 restrictions, continued to communicate with parents and children via the website, social media and surveys.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, and the resulting school closures, 2020 proved to be a very different year for NPC and a difficult year for parents and children. From March 2020 onwards we were unable to hold face-to-face training sessions, conferences, regional assemblies etc. and had to be more creative in our communication with parents.

Website

The NPC website www.npc.ie aims to provide parents with information regarding NPC and information on primary and early years education.

In 2020, the NPC website truly became the main communication hub for the organisation. In addition to showing up-to-date newsfeeds on issues of interest to parents of children, to support parents and assist them with their children's home learning during school closures, the website became a repository of resources for parents including daily tips, expert videos and free webinars. There were also videos and fun daily activities for children provided. During 2020 the website had 110,110 users, an increase of 105% from 2019.

The expert videos providing useful information, support, tips etc for parents were presented by the following:

- **Pairic Clerkin**, CEO of the Irish Primary Principals' Network
- **Paul Gilligan**, CEO of St. Patrick's Mental Health Services
- **Shane Smith**, Sports Scientist & Primary School Teacher
- **Pauline Rohdich**, Happiness Trainer
- **Siobhan Mooney**, Fitness Instructor
- **Mark McCabe**, SKIPnROPE
- **Jackie Maguire**, Music & Movement
- **Deirdre Browne**, Deirdre's Stage School
- **David Gillick**, former Olympian, European Champion, Author and Health Advocate
- **Pauline Hyland**, Laois Art Academy
- **Chad Byrne**, Head Chef at the renowned Brehon Hotel, Killarney
- **Miriam O'Donoghue**, certified and experienced LEGO® Serious Play® Facilitator and a Trainer of LEGO® based methods and approaches
- **Niall de Burca**, one of Ireland's finest traditional storytellers with his own unique style provided lively, energetic audio and video clips especially for children.

Webinars

Webinars for parents commenced in October 2020 and proved to be hugely popular, especially the 'Let's talk' series of webinars by Dr. Colman Noctor:

- Let's talk about connecting with your child
- Let's talk about helping anxious children
- Let's talk about your child's online life
- Let's talk about building your child's social savvy

Over 7,500 parents attended the webinar series.

NPC also hosted a webinar entitled 'Let's talk about supporting your child's additional needs when starting Primary School' by Laura Berry, a Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) working with schools to allocate additional supports to children who need them and a webinar entitled 'Gender Equality Matters' with Dr. Bernie Collins, which focused on tackling gender-stereotyping and gender-based bullying.

In 2020, member Parents' Associations found themselves in very different situations, trying to communicate with parents whilst not being able to meet. To assist Parent's Associations, NPC developed online guidelines for Parents' Associations with regard to COVID-19, including information on holding AGMs.

Social Media

In addition to the NPC Facebook account launched in 2019, NPC launched Twitter and Instagram accounts in March 2020 to make it easier to share information with parents during COVID-19 restrictions and to allow parents to easily share information with one another.

Surveys

NPC gives parents and children the opportunity to share their views with the organisation regarding primary and early years education issues by way of surveys promoted on the website, social media and circulated to members and NPC contacts. The results of the surveys formed the basis of submissions to the Department of Education, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and other key stakeholder organisations.

In February 2020, NPC ran a snap 24-hour survey to find out about schools and their partnership with parents. The survey aimed to ascertain if schools had Parents' Associations and their policies regarding parental involvement and parental engagement. There were 1,471 responses to this survey.

NPC, in conjunction with researchers in the School of Education at NUI Galway, ran a survey to explore parents'/guardian's and children's experiences of 'Schooling at home' during COVID-19 from the 22nd of June to the 10th of August 2020. There were 3,005 responses to this survey.

Further to an invitation to meet with the Special Committee on COVID-19 Response looking at the Impact of COVID-19: Education – return to school and school transport, NPC ran a snap 24-hour survey from the 25th to the 26th of June 2020 in order to inform discussions and to ensure parents' views were included, this survey was entitled 'Your child returning to school'. There were 28,744 responses to this survey.

NPC was invited to make a submission to the Oireachtas Special Committee on COVID-19 on the 'Preparations for the reopening of schools and how reopening is operating in practice'. To inform the submission NPC surveyed parents of primary school children to find out about parents' and children's experience of the first days of the schools reopening after summer 2020. There were 3,175 responses to this survey.

Further to an invitation to make a written submission to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education on the topic of 'Ensuring that Schools are open in a manner which is both safe and sustainable' to inform this submission, NPC ran a snap survey from the 19th to the 20th of October 2020 there were 11,109 responses to this survey.

Survey Title	Number of Responses
Your school in partnership with parents	1,471
Survey to explore parents'/guardians' and children's experiences of 'schooling at home' during COVID-19	3,005
Your child returning to school	28,744
Survey on the preparations for the reopening of schools and how reopening is operating in practice	3,175
Survey on ensuring that schools are open in a manner which is both safe and sustainable	11,109
Total	**47,504**

Fred O'Connell NPC Innovation Award 2020

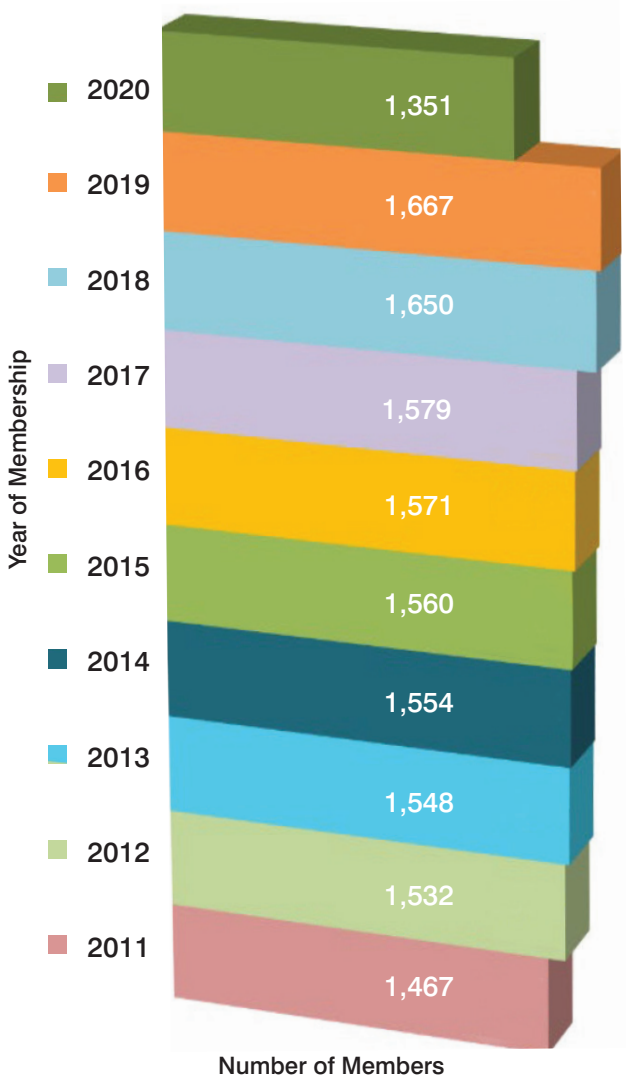
The NPC Innovation Award recognising innovative partnership between parents and schools was deferred to 2021, due to COVID-19, to enable Parents' Associations to submit projects.

Membership

Membership of National Parents Council Primary consists of affiliated Parents' Associations and individual Associate Members.

The graph below indicates the trend in membership over the last 10 years. COVID-19 restrictions and the resulting school closures resulted in the majority of parents' associations not being able to continue their business and this had a knock on effect on NPC membership in 2020, previous to this, membership had increased steadily over preceding years.

NPC MEMBERSHIP 2011–2020



The table below shows the membership for 2020.

NPC MEMBERSHIP 2020

County	Number of Members
Carlow	21
Cavan	32
Clare	31
Cork	182
Donegal	57
Dublin	205
Galway	65
Kerry	57
Kildare	57
Kilkenny	32
Laois	25
Leitrim	14
Limerick	63
Longford	22
Louth	35
Mayo	31
Meath	71
Monaghan	27
Offaly	26
Roscommon	26
Sligo	34
Tipperary	83
Waterford	32
Westmeath	28
Wexford	58
Wicklow	37
Total	**1,351**

NPC during COVID-19

2020 proved to be a very different year for everyone, parents suddenly found themselves in situations where they had to home school their children, while trying, in many cases, to juggle their own work at the same time. Children had to try to get used to learning at home with their parents acting as their teachers, not always an easy situation for either.

NPC had to reimagine our way of working to be able to support parents and children during COVID-19. To do this we created 'Daily Editions' online and social media supports. As face to face conferences couldn't be held we provided webinars for parents and all our training was adapted to be available online and new training sessions were developed.

Daily Editions

NPC tried to assist parents by providing 'Daily Editions' which included a variety of resources: hints and tips for learning at home, fun activities to do with children, expert videos by chefs, fitness instructors, mental health and wellbeing advocates, musicians, storytellers etc.

Some of our experts include:

PAIRIC CLERKIN, CEO of the Irish Primary Principals' Network shared a number of videos for parents, including one entitled Supporting your child's learning at home and Pairic also shared supportive messages with parents as schools reopened.

PAUL GILLIGAN, CEO of St. Patrick's Mental Health Services, shared a series of videos with NPC for parents to support their children's and their own mental health and wellbeing during COVID-19:

- How do we protect our children's mental health at this time?
- How can physical activity protect our children's mental health?
- How does learning enhance our children's mental health?
- How can we help our children to make a contribution at this time?
- How can taking notice enhance our children's mental health?
- Enhancing children's wellbeing by looking after our own mental health.

MARK McCABE, founder and head coach of SKIPnROPE, demonstrated different skipping skills for parents and children. Skipping is a terrific form of exercise that can help improve agility, balance, hand-eye co-ordination in adults and children.

CHAD BYRNE, Head Chef at the renowned Brehon Hotel, Killarney, partnered with NPC to put his unique spin on ordinary family meals and **DAVID GILLICK,** former Olympian, European Champion, Author and Health Advocate also showed how to prepare healthy, easy to make dishes that all the family could enjoy preparing and eating.

MIRIAM O'DONOGHUE, certified and experienced LEGO® Serious Play® Facilitator and a Trainer of LEGO® based methods and approaches showed how to construct fun LEGO projects.

NIALL DE BURCA, one of Ireland's finest traditional storytellers with his own unique style, provided lively, energetic audio and video clips especially for children, including a special Christmas storytelling session.

Other expert videos were provided by the following:
SHANE SMITH Sports Scientist & Primary School Teacher
PAULINE ROHDICH Happiness Trainer
SIOBHAN MOONEY Fitness Instructor
JACKIE MAGUIRE Music & Movement
DEIRDRE BROWNE Deirdre's Stage School
PAULINE HYLAND Laois Art Academy

Webinars

Starting in October 2020, NPC provided a series of webinars for parents every Wednesday evening. The first four webinars were provided in partnership with **DR. COLMAN NOCTOR** who presented on four different topics:

- Let's talk about connecting with your child
- Let's talk about helping anxious children
- Let's talk about your child's online life
- Let's talk about building your child's social savvy

The fifth in our series of webinars was aimed at parents of children with special educational needs and was presented by **LAURA BERRY**, a Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO). This webinar was entitled: 'Let's talk about supporting your child's additional needs when starting Primary School'.

The final webinar in the series was presented by **DR. BERNIE COLLINS**, researcher and educator on Gender Equality Matters (GEM) and was entitled 'Gender Equality Matters' and focused on tackling gender-stereotyping and gender-based bullying.

Online training

New online NPC training sessions were provided for parents of children transitioning from pre-school to primary school and from primary school to post primary school. It was a particularly tough time for children in 6th class who missed out on so much of their last year in their primary schools. Our training aimed to assist parents to support their children as they prepared for this major event in their lives.

All of NPC's existing face-to-face training sessions were adapted so that they could be provided virtually for parents and a new Early Years' training session was developed in conjunction with St. Patrick's Mental Health Services to support parents to support their young children's positive mental health.

Financial Report

NATIONAL PARENTS COUNCIL – PRIMARY

(Company Limited by Guarantee - without Share Capital)

DIRECTORS' REPORT

The directors submit their report together with the audited financial statements of the company (or the "Council") for the year ended 31 December 2020.

The Council's charity registration number is CHY 10547 and the company registration number is 258148.

The registered office of the Council is 12 Marlborough Court, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1.

Administrative details of the Council

The names of those who served as directors during the year are:
Massimiliano Boccalari
Miriam Brandt
Pirooz Daneshmandi *(resigned 26 September 2020)*
Laurence Keaveney *(Chairperson)*
Hilary Lawrence *(resigned 26 September 2020)*
Aisling Lawton
Damian Murray
Derek O'Leary
Dermot O'Riordan *(resigned 26 September 2020)*
Patrick Ryan
Avril Byrne *(appointed 26 September 2020)*
Sonya Ryan *(appointed 26 September 2020)*
Tara Sherlock *(appointed 26 September 2020)*
Day to day running of the Council is managed by the Chief Executive Áine Lynch.

Details of the Council's bankers, solicitors and auditor are given on Page 1.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing document

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, and not having a share capital incorporated in the Republic of Ireland under the Companies Acts 2014 on 10 December 1999. The Council does not have a share capital and consequently the liability of members is limited, subject to an undertaking by each member to contribute to the net assets or liabilities of the company on winding up such amounts as may be required not exceeding €1.27.

The Council was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the entity and is governed under its Articles of Association and managed by a Board of Directors.

The Council has been granted charitable status under Section 207 and 208 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997.

The Council comply with the Governance Code for community, voluntary and charitable organisations in Ireland. The Council confirm that a review of the organisation's compliance with the principles in the Code was conducted on 11 September 2020. This review was based on an assessment of our organisational practice against the recommended actions for each principle. The review sets out actions and completion dates for any issues that the assessment identifies need to be addressed. All actions from the previous review have now been completed. The next review is due to take place during 2023.

Recruitment and appointment of the Board

In accordance with the Articles of Association one third of the elected directors in office must retire each year. If the number of directors is not divisible by three, then the lowest whole number nearest one-third shall retire.

The directors appointed in general meeting may co-opt a further two directors for a term of up to three years on such terms and subject to such conditions as the Board may determine and such co-opted directors shall be eligible for re-appointment at the expiry of their term of office.

The Board nomination process has followed a process in accordance with the NPC revised Constitution which provided for the members of the NPC to nominate people for election to the Board. Following the nomination stage, an electronic voting process was conducted which facilitated all NPC members to elect the Board members to fill the vacancies that arose.

The Board is committed to achieving high standards of governance. Board members do not receive any remuneration in respect of their services to the Council. Expenses are reimbursed where claimed. There have been no contracts or arrangements entered into during the financial year in which a Board member was materially interested.

All new Board members receive induction training and induction papers on commencing their appointment to the Board.

Organisational Structure

The Board of National Parents Council – Primary is permitted to have a maximum number of directors of ten: up to eight of whom may be elected by the Full Members (affiliated Parents' Associations) and up to two of whom may be co-opted by the Board of Directors.

The Board are responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the National Parents Council – Primary. This is in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the National Parents Council – Primary Governing Handbook. At present the Board has ten members, eight appointed in general meeting and two co-opted by the appointed directors.

Audit Committee

As part of the Board's plans to fulfil its objectives in this area it has constituted an audit committee to ensure an effective review and monitoring of financial risks, reliable management and financial reporting, compliance with laws and regulations and the maintenance of an effective and efficient audit.

Chief Executive

The Chief Executive of the Council reports to the Board of directors. The Board provides leadership and strategic management, developing and furthering the aims and objectives of the organisation and delegates certain duties and responsibilities to the CEO. This includes implementation of the strategic plan, leading and managing the Council's staff members, programmes, projects, finances and all other administrative aspects so that the Council's ongoing mission,

vision and objectives are fulfilled within the context of the Council's values, as approved by the Board of Directors and membership.

Key Risks
During 2020 and continuing into 2021, an outbreak of COVID-19 spread throughout the world. In Ireland, the impact of the pandemic has been characterised by the temporary closure of many businesses and organisations in "non-essential" areas to ensure people's movements are restricted in order to slow down the spread of the virus. The National Parents Council Primary has been able to continue operating during the pandemic period but the offices have had periods of closure or partial closure when some or all staff have been working remotely from home. This has changed the way that NPC have offered supports to parents but not prevented service provision. However remote working has had an impact on a number of activities that have not been able to continue during the COVID period:

1. The most significant impact has been on face-to-face training. During the remote working period and school closure no face-to-face training has taken place, however towards the latter part of 2020 from September onwards remote training was developed and implemented successfully and has temporarily replaced the face-to-face training during times of social restrictions.
2. Partnership schools – during school closure no new schools have been trained in the partnership schools programme.

Objectives and Activities
The principal activities of the Council are to act as a nationwide organisation representing parents of children attending early and primary education.

National Parents Council – Primary was established to contribute to the advancement of the early education and primary education of all children, in order to improve and enrich the education of each child and to support the involvement of parents in all stages of education.

Vision
The Council want to see an Ireland where every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Mission
The Council exists to ensure that all parents are supported and empowered to become effective partners in their children's education. The Council will work to increase the capacity and capability of the primary education sector, to achieve true partnership and deliver better outcomes for all children.

Key Activities
The key activities in achieving the vision and mission of the Council are:
1. Representing the parents' voice in primary education
2. Advocacy
3. Building participation
4. Service delivery

Achievements and Performance
The Council publishes an Annual Review outlining the achievements of the organisation under its Strategic Plan's Aims and Objectives.

Financial Review
The Council reported an operating deficit of €50,636 in the year (2019: deficit €4,104). This was due to the impact that the COVID-19 restrictions had on the operation of some of our services, most significantly our parent training programmes. In addition as schools were closed for a substantial period of the 2020- 2021 school year, NPC's members (Parents Associations), were less active which impacted on NPC membership renewals during the 2020 period.

The principal sources of funding received by the Council are from funding grants from the Department of Education and the Health Service Executive. The Council also receives funds from its membership subscriptions and publication sales.

The Board has examined the Council requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation. It has established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets held by the company should amount to between three and six months of average expenditure.

Accounting Records
The directors believe that they have complied with the requirement of Sections 281 to 285 of the Companies Act 2014 with regard to keeping adequate accounting records by employing accounting personnel with appropriate expertise and by providing adequate resources to the financial function. The accounting records of the company are maintained at the company's offices at 12 Marlborough Court, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1.

Going concern
As set out in Note 1 of the financial statements, the Council has assessed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on its operations at the date of approval of the financial statements. This assessment encompassed a detailed recent review of the future outlook of the company which demonstrates that the Company should have adequate resources to continue operating for at least the 12-month period from the date of approval of the financial statements.

Accordingly, the directors consider it appropriate that the Council prepares its financial statements on a going concern basis.

Plans for Future Periods
National Parents Council - Primary's Strategic Plan; "Parents as Partners" will shape the plans and direction for the organisation until 2022.

Relevant Audit Information
The directors believe that they have taken all steps necessary to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and have established that the company's statutory auditor is aware of that information. Insofar as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's statutory auditor is unaware.

Auditor
In accordance with Section 383(2) of the Companies Act 2014, KPMG, Chartered Accountants, will continue in office.

On behalf of the Board

Laurence Keaveney
Director

Tara Sherlock
Director

28 June 2021

STATEMENT OF DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES IN RESPECT OF THE DIRECTORS' REPORT AND THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

(Company Limited by Guarantee - without Share Capital)

The directors are responsible for preparing the directors' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law they have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with FRS 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland*.

Under company law the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the company and of its profit and loss for that year. In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- assess the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern; and
- use the going concern basis of accounting unless they either intend to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the assets, liabilities, financial position and profit or loss of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2014. They are responsible for such internal controls as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and have general responsibility for taking such steps as are reasonably open to them to safeguard the assets of the company and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities. The directors are also responsible for preparing a directors' report that complies with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014.

The directors are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the Company's website. Legislation in the Republic of Ireland governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

On behalf of the Board

Laurence Keaveney
Director

Tara Sherlock
Director

28 June 2021

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF NATIONAL PARENTS COUNCIL – PRIMARY

(Company Limited by Guarantee - without Share Capital)

REPORT ON THE AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of National Parents Council - Primary *(Company Limited by Guarantee – Without Share Capital)* ("the company") for the year ended 31 December 2020 set out on pages 10 to 22, which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the cash flow statement and related notes, including the summary of significant accounting policies set out in Note 1. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is Irish Law and FRS 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* issued in the United Kingdom by the Financial Reporting Council.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the company as at 31 December 2020 and of its net expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with FRS 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland*; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (Ireland) (ISAs (Ireland)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section* of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of financial statements in Ireland, including the Ethical Standard issued by the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority (IAASA), and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate. Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Other information

The directors are responsible for the other information presented in the Annual Report together with the financial statements. The other information comprises the information included in the directors' report. The financial statements and our auditor's report thereon do not comprise part of the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion or, except as explicitly stated below, any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether, based on our financial statements audit work, the information therein is materially misstated or inconsistent with the financial statements or our audit knowledge. Based solely on that work we have not identified material misstatements in the other information.

Based solely on our work on the other information undertaken during the course of the audit, we report that;

- we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report;
- in our opinion, the information given in the directors' report is consistent with the financial statements;
- in our opinion, the directors' report has been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2014.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2014

We have obtained all the information and explanations which we consider necessary for the purposes of our audit.

In our opinion the accounting records of the company were sufficient to permit the financial statements to be readily and properly audited and the financial statements are in agreement with the accounting records.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

The Companies Act 2014 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion, the disclosures of directors' remuneration and transactions required by Sections 305 to 312 of the Act are not made. We have nothing to report in this regard.

RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES AND RESTRICTIONS ON USE

Responsibilities of directors for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the directors' responsibilities statement set out on Page 6, the directors are responsible for: the preparation of the financial statements including being satisfied that they give a true and fair view; such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern; and using the going concern basis of accounting unless they either intend to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (Ireland) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A fuller description of our responsibilities is provided on IAASA's website at

http://www.iaasa.ie/Publications/Auditinq-standardsIInternational-Standards-on-Auditino-for-use-inIre/Description-of-the-auditor-s-responsibilities-for

The purpose of our audit work and to whom we owe our responsibilities

Our report is made solely to the company's members, as a body, in accordance with Section 391 of the Companies Act 2014. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Richard Hobson
for and on behalf of
KPMG
Chartered Accountants, Statutory Audit Firm
1 Stokes Place,
St. Stephen's Green,
Dublin 2

20 July 2021

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
for the year ended 31 December 2020

	*Restricted funds 2020	**Unrestricted funds 2020	Total funds 2020	Total funds 2019
Income from	€	€	€	€
Charitable activities				
- sponsoring bodies	225,669	331,000	556,669	685,043
Other trading activities				
- membership fees	-	77,513	77,513	102,461
- course fees	-	6,125	6,125	20,325
- publication sales	-	60	60	135
Investment income	-	60	60	120
Other income	-	329	329	1,083
Total incoming resources	**225,669**	**415,087**	**640,756**	**809,167**
Expenditure				
Charitable activities	(225,669)	(465,723)	(691,392)	(813,271)
Total resources expended	**(225,669)**	**(465,723)**	**(691,392)**	**(813,271)**
Net (expenditure)/income for the year	-	(50,636)	(50,636)	(4,104)
Total funds brought forward	-	351,965	351,965	356,069
Total funds carried forward	**-**	**301,329**	**301,329**	**351,965**

There are no other comprehensive income and losses for the current or preceding financial year.
All income and expenditure in the year is derived from continuing activities.

Explanation of some terms in the Financial Report

*** Restricted funds** represent monies received which can only be used for particular purposes specified by the provider of such funds. Such purposes are within the overall aims of the Council.

**** Unrestricted funds** are available for general use at the discretion of the Council in furtherance of its general objectives.

BALANCE SHEET
as at 31 December 2020

	2020 €	2019 €
Fixed assets		
Tangible assets	**8,648**	11,885
Current assets		
Cash at bank and in hand	**467,614**	433,027
Debtors and prepayments	**32,985**	40,166
	500,599	473,193
Current liabilities		
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**(207,918)**	(130,849)
Net current assets	**292,681**	342,344
Total assets less current liabilities	**301,329**	354,229
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year	**-**	(2,264)
Net assets	**301,329**	351,965
Funded by:		
Unrestricted funds	**301,329**	351,965
Accumulated surplus	**301,329**	351,965

On behalf of the Board

Laurence Keaveney
Director

Tara Sherlock
Director

DIRECTORS WHO SERVED DURING 2020

Laurence Keaveney
Chairperson
Board meeting attendance 6/6
Expenses €0.00

Massimiliano Boccalari
Board meeting attendance 4/6
Expenses €0.00

Miriam Brandt
Board meeting attendance 5/6
Expenses €154.45

Aisling Lawton
Board meeting attendance 6/6
Expenses €0.00

Damian Murray
Board meeting attendance 5/6
Expenses €0.00

Derek O'Leary
Board meeting attendance 6/6
Expenses €0.00

Patrick Ryan
Board meeting attendance 6/6
Expenses €0.00

Pirooz Daneshmandi resigned 26.09.2020
Board meeting attendance 2/4
Expenses €0.00

Hilary Lawrence resigned 26.09.2020
Vice-Chairperson
Board meeting attendance 3/4
Expenses €113.78

Dermot O'Riordan resigned 26.09.2020
Board meeting attendance 4/4
Expenses €0.00

Avril Byrne appointed 26.09.2020
Board meeting attendance 2/2
Expenses €0.00

Sonya Ryan appointed 26.09.2020
Board meeting attendance 1/2
Expenses €0.00

Tara Sherlock appointed 26.09.2020
Board meeting attendance 2/2
Expenses €0.00

Expenses shown may include payments to Directors incurred through other volunteer roles within NPC.

BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2020

Audit Committee

- Dermot O'Riordan (Chair) 3/3
- Damian Murray 3/3
- Aisling Lawton 2/3
- Pirooz Daneshmandi 2/3

Governance Committee

- Miriam Brandt (Chair) 1/1
- Derek O'Leary 1/1
- Max Boccalari 1/1
- PJ Ryan 0/1

NPC STAFF

Áine Lynch	Chief Executive
Catherine Cross	Services Manager
Clare Downey	Early Years Services Manager
Richard Quinn	Financial Administrator
Carmel O'Shea	Helpline Officer
Michelle Scanlan	Helpline Officer
Danielle Goodman	Partnership Schools Ireland Coordinator
Michelle Davern	Administrative Officer
Sharon Hopkins	Training Administrator
David Perkins	Administrator
Marion O'Brien	Administrator

Supporting Parents
Supporting Children

If you would like to contact us...

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