Dear Parents / Guardians,

I would like to welcome you to Weston Primary Montessori School. This booklet is intended to provide you with an introduction to all aspects of school life at Weston Primary Montessori.

All involved in the school intend to work very closely with our new parent body, over these first exciting years of our school.

Together we hope to develop a warm, friendly and inclusive atmosphere and a vibrant school community with the joint aim of providing the best possible education for all the children in the school.

Weston Primary Montessori School was formed in July 2016 by the teachers and parents of the former Glebe Primary Montessori School which had been around since 1978. We are one of the few Montessori Primary schools in Ireland offering a primary education through the Montessori method.

Our teachers teach the full curriculum through the Montessori method. We also provide classes in computers, oral Irish, Music, French, cookery and Irish dancing.

We are a multi-denominational educational establishment using the philosophy and teaching practices of Dr. Maria Montessori. Our students hail from many different cultural backgrounds.

Our past students have gone on to transition very smoothly into state secondary schools and we believe the skill of self-motivated learning has helped them to be successful in state exams. We teach children from Junior Infants to Sixth Class, with class ratios of 16 pupils to 1 Teacher. We also employ highly qualified and experienced teachers with a specific qualification in Montessori

Teaching.

We aim to build a love for knowledge, as we follow each child’s interests and allowing them to learn at their own pace working to their full potential in a group environment, regardless of age and ability. We aim to promote independent learning, respect of their environment and the people in it, Self-discipline and Self-motivation.

**MANAGEMENT OF THE SCHOOL**

The day to day running of the school is undertaken by the school management team:

Pre-School/ ECCE : Sinead Langton & Selene Clarke

Primary School: Amber Masterson & Gail Hartigan

We have a very dedicated team of parents who give up their time and experience on a voluntary basis by sitting on the Board of Directors.

**NEW CHILDREN**

We ask that parents dropping off children starting school either in the Pre-school (ECCE) or Junior Infants to drop them at the classroom door. It is very unsettling for the children if parents stay in the class in the morning. It is separating from mum or dad that is the most difficult part and we find the children settle much quicker when parents leave promptly in the morning. Please help us in making the start of the year as easy as possible for our new students.

**SCHOOL TIMES**

The school day begins at 9am. Doors open at 8:45am and we ask that all children be in school and ready to begin class by 9am. Monday to Thursday school finishes at 2:30 for Junior Infants through to 6th class and on Friday school finishes at 2:00pm. The Pre-school (ECCE) finish each day at 12.00. Please be punctual in collecting your children. People who collect your children from school MUST be known to the teacher, in advance. No child will be released to anyone unknown to the school.

**SCHOOL UNIFORM**

The full school uniform must be worn every day, except when the school informs you otherwise. The school tracksuits may only be worn on designated PE days. You will be informed of the day by your child’s class teacher at the start of the first term.

**The uniform consists of:**

Navy jumper,

White shirt,

Green tie,

Grey skirt, trousers or pinafore

Navy, grey, white or grey tights or socks only.

Brown, black or navy shoes only please no runners or coloured shoes please.

We would suggest for the preschool and infant classes that Velcro shoes be worn.

Please contact the office for the school crest. Each crest is purchased for €6.00 and can be easily stitched onto the school jumper.

**PE uniform consists of:**

Navy tracksuit

White aertex top

Runners may only be worn on PE days

**Pre-school (ECCE) uniform consists of:**

Navy tracksuit

White aertex

**All primary school children will need indoor shoes that will remain in school**.

**CURRICULUM**

Within our **Pre-School / ECCE** room we focus specifically around Aistear and Siolta. Each framework has a clear and specific purpose. Siolta focuses on all elements of quality in ECCE settings, e.g. parents and families, transitions, environments etc whilst Aistear focuses on the curriculum and providing appropriately challenging, positive and enjoyable learning experiences for children from birth to six years. Both frameworks compliment and support each other.

The Montessori work is taught under the Aistear framework. It provides many skills such as hand eye coordination, concentration and independence to name a few. Additionally, the children are exposed to other compartments of the curriculum such as Physical Education, yoga, arts & crafts, cooking, Irish dancing, music, gardening, sand & water play and much more.



The **Primary School's curriculum** has been carefully devised to allow a gradual progression from the pure Montessori teaching in Infant and Junior classes to the integration of a Montessori ethos and the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Science in the senior classes.

We encourage our children to learn through **peer teaching,** as this is central to the Montessori method of teaching. One peer learning initiative is our **reading buddies** system where an older and younger child read together once a week. Both children benefit greatly from this system developing leadership, responsibility, friendships and reading skills. This will also be reflected in our **school newspaper** and our school **tuck shop.**

**History, Science and Geography are taught** through a project based approach, working in small groups and individually. Each cultural lesson plan projects a similar topic for all ages but the information is broader with sub-lesson plans for the older children. Our cultural group lessons are grouped appropriately in junior, intermediate and senior levels.

Our Montessori equipment and teaching methods encourage the children to discover for themselves and develop their own maps and records in a hard back copy, which builds into their own record of the subject, this method allows the child to really engage with the subject and develop a true understanding.

The children use **iPads/ laptops** for many subjects with appropriate, carefully chosen educational apps to supplement their class work.

In our classes, we employ the Montessori principles allowing each child to progress individually at their own pace.  We follow the Curriculum from the Department of Education through the Montessori method.

**HEALTHY EATING**

The children should bring a snack and a lunch each day. We have a healthy eating policy at Weston Primary Montessori and so would ask that only healthy food be packed for your child’s lunch. Please do not send in crisps, nuts, sweets, cakes, biscuits or fizzy drinks.

On Friday one treat may be brought in, to be eaten after the usual healthy lunch.

As we are an environmentally friendly school so please use re-usable lunch boxes and beakers.

**ABSENTEEISM**

If your child is absent from school a note *must* be sent to the school on your child’s return. We are obliged to keep a record of each child’s attendance and report to the National Education Welfare Board any child who has been absent for 20 days or more. Children should not be taken out of school for holidays.

**POLICIES**

There are a range of policies written and held in the school. If you wish to view any of these please just ask.

**MEETINGS**

There will be 1 parent teacher meetings per year, this meeting will take place in February. There will be a written report for each child at the end of the school year. Should you require a meeting with your child’s teacher in the meantime, please make an appointment to see her. Teachers cannot meet with parents during class times. We are more than happy to meet with you at 8:30am, prior to school starting or after school once an appointment has been made.

If you have a difficulty regarding your child and want to meet with a member of staff, the procedure is to make an appointment with the class teacher. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you should then make an appointment to meet with the Principal. If you are still unhappy, a letter should be written requesting a meeting with the Board of Management.

**FEE PAYMENTS**

Having paid your non-refundable deposit to secure your child’s place in the school, fees must be paid either in full at the start of the school year, on the first day of each term or on the 5th of every month. We offer a sibling discount.

First Child €3950 pa

Second Child €3550 pa

Third Child €3150 pa

Fees may only be paid using a direct payment into the school bank account. Cheques or cash will not be accepted at the school.

North Kildare Primary Montessori School Ltd T/A Weston Primary Montessori account is in AIB, Crumlin. Please quote your 'child's name' in the payment reference area.

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**PARENTS ASSOCIATION**

We are ready and waiting for any volunteers for the parent’s association. The Parents Association are responsible for many of the fundraising activities that take place at the school; cake sales, concerts, sponsored walk, bag packing etc. We are always looking for new suggestions and help from parents. Please feel free to come forward if you would like to help.

**FUNDRAISING**

As we are not funded by the Department of Education & Science we rely solely on fee income and fundraising. Fundraising activities therefore play a large role in Weston Primary Montessori; we ask all families in the school to support the fund raising events. They are also a great way for parents to meet & socialise and an invaluable source of income for our school.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Please clearly label all of your child’s belongings.

If your child is having a birthday party, you may distribute the invitations in class, providing there is an invitation for everyone in the class.

**SUPERVISION**

Children cannot be left unsupervised on school premises before 8.45am. At home time, children in the Pre-school (ECCE) up to 2nd class must be collected at the school gate.

**COMMUNICATION**

As we are a “Green School” and are attempting to reduce the amount of paper we use, letters/notes to parents will be kept to a minimum. We will instead contact you regarding school events, closures, etc. via the Schools ‘Whats App’ grouping.

Our website and facebook will be another source of information, so please check regularly.

The board can be contacted at info@westonpm.com

Kind Regards.

School Management.