

A historic day for Nenagh Community National School as it begins its journey as a co-educational, multi-denominational school.

A new era for one of Nenagh's oldest schools, St. Mary's Junior Boys' School, has dawned following an agreement between the Diocese of Killaloe and Tipperary Education and Training Board that has allowed for the reconfiguration of the 108-year-old all-boys school to the County's first ever Community National School catering for pupils all the way to sixth class. It will also provide a multi-denominational primary option for the first time for parents and students in Nenagh.

The decision is in line with the Programme for Government aim to establish multi-denominational Community National Schools across the State by 2030; the move to increase the plurality of school types is supported by the Irish Episcopal Conference to reflect the more diverse society emerging in Ireland. This is a pilot divestment project, the lessons from which will inform future such projects.

The ethos of the Community National School will be based on the core values of the Education and Training Board, Excellence in Education, Respect, Care, Equality and Community.

Cllr. Roger Kennedy, Chairperson of Tipperary Education and Training Board said, "Tipperary ETB has a strong record of partnership with the three dioceses of the county, including Killaloe. The reconfiguration of St. Mary's Junior Boys' National School into Tipperary's first Community National School very much reflects that and has been achieved in a spirit of cooperation. There's such a proud history at the school, which gave so many boys in Nenagh their first experience of education over the last century and more, so Tipperary Education and Training Board is delighted to come on board and ensure that this success story is continued in the years ahead"

Chief Executive of Tipperary Education and Training Board, Ms Bernadette Cullen said "We see this historic day as the start of a new chapter for the school. We will continue to build on the excellent standard of education in the school, recognise and celebrate its religious background but, at the same time, be proactive in celebrating and recognising other beliefs and, indeed, none at all"

Ms. Clodagh Kelly, Director of Schools, Tipperary Education and Training Board said "We are delighted to welcome Nenagh Community National School to the Tipperary Education and Training Board school family. I want to acknowledge the work of the Board of Management of St Mary's Junior Boys School, Principal, John Gunnell and his wonderful staff as well as the interim manager Joe Carmody. I also want to acknowledge the work of the Tipperary Education and Training Board members as well as our staff in supporting this transition."

School Principal, John Gunnell, said "There's going to be an underpinning of the ethos of the school; celebratory of all, a place where every child that comes here is welcomed. That's an ethos that will be essential in the formative years of these children's lives and will prepare them for the more diverse world that they are stepping out into. We now look forward , as Nenagh Community National School, to working with our with our patron Tipperary Education and Training Board, as we continue to serve the people Nenagh for many years to come."