

**SCOIL EOIN BAISDE
CAILÍNÍ NAOIDH**

**ST JOHN THE BAPTIST
INFANT GIRLS' SCHOOL**



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“Is Deas A Bheith Óg!”

Introduction to St John the Baptist Infant Girls' School

Welcome to St John the Baptist Infant Girls' School (locally known as Belgrove). Our School motto is "Is deas a bheith Óg" – it is nice to be young. It is our school's priority to provide a safe, happy and stimulating place into which your child will love to come each day. In the Infant School we aim to provide a warm, caring and happy environment where every child can achieve her full potential, educationally, physically, socially and emotionally. Kindness, care and understanding of children of such a young age help us to achieve our objectives.

Enrolment, School Staff and Facilities

Here in the Infant School, we accommodate girls from Junior Infants to First Class. The school Enrolment Policy has been drawn up by the Board of Management. We have three Junior Infant classes, three Senior Infant classes and three First classes. Our staff is currently comprised of the school principal, nine class teachers, a full-time education support teacher, two part-time education support teachers, a school secretary, three special needs assistants and a school caretaker. Our accommodation includes nine classrooms - eight with adjoining cloakrooms/art areas, a library which incorporates an interactive whiteboard, education support rooms, a shared school hall and a shared music room. We also have access to the local GAA astroturf facility.

The three Junior Infant classrooms are located on the ground floor. Each classroom has a cloakroom and an art room. The classrooms are bright and airy and very well heated in winter. Each classroom has two computers with broadband access, an interactive digital projector and a visualiser. The children also have access to iPads and school cameras.

The Principal's office, secretary's office and teachers' staff room are located on the administration corridor. The school yard is just off this corridor. The yard has been re-covered with a soft surface. Classes are often held in our school garden when the weather is fine. The children care for the garden and with the help of the parents and teachers they plant and sow vegetables and flowers. Our music room is very well equipped with percussion instruments and a piano. The library incorporates an interactive whiteboard which enhances whole class teaching. The school hall is shared with the Senior Girls' School and we have lots of sports equipment. We also have a wide variety of science equipment. Thanks to the efforts of our Parents' Association we have been able to continuously purchase and update modern resources for our school.

Board of Management

The Board of Management welcomes all new families to St John the Baptist Infant Girls' School. The Board consists of two nominees of the Patron, two parents, the Principal of the school, one teachers' representative and two community representatives. Mr Paul Nolan chairs the Board.

Parents' Association

We have a very active Parents' Association in our school. Our parents are very involved in school activities and organise various events throughout the school year. They are willing to help out at every opportunity and provide invaluable support in very practical ways. The Chairperson of the Parents' Association will contact parents early in the school year to outline the aims and objectives of the Association and to invite new members to join!

School Uniform

Our pupils wear a school uniform in the Infant School, which is available from Pender's shop on Vernon Avenue and Lynch's of Marino. From time to time, parents donate good quality school uniforms to the school, so please contact the school secretary if you would like one - even as a spare! The school tracksuit and sensible trainers should be worn for P.E. The class teacher will inform parents about P.E days. Velcro fastened shoes save lots of time. Every child's belongings must be labelled clearly so jumpers and tracksuits are easily identifiable. She will also need an apron or an old shirt for art.

Lunch

There are two lunch breaks: "little break" at 10.30am and "big lunch" at 11.45am. In Junior Infants "comfort food" may be a good idea for the first few days and after that the "healthy option" is best. Parents will be notified about the E.U Milk Scheme later in September. Glass bottles are not allowed in school. We have a Healthy Lunch Policy which was drawn up in consultation with the parents. There are quite a number of pupils with peanut allergies and therefore we would ask parents not to include nuts or nut extract foods in their children's lunch.

Accidents and Injuries

In the case of a serious accident, the parents or guardians will be contacted immediately. If we cannot contact parents, an ambulance may be called. In cases of cuts or minor injuries, wounds will be washed and cleaned (for legal reasons teachers are not allowed to apply creams or plasters) and parents will be informed at going home time. Should a child require an Anapen or the administration of any medication, written permission must be sought from the Board of Management. It is vital that the school has up to date emergency contact phone numbers.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The Board of Management of St John the Baptist Infant Girls' School recognise that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and will be reflected in all of the school's policies, practices and activities. The Board has adopted the *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011* and the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) in the school is the Principal, Patricia O'Donoghue. It is to her that any concern must be initially reported in relation to abuse of any form. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person is the Deputy Principal, Máire Duffy.

The Board will ensure that all school policies and protocols relevant to child protection are in place. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Management and will be made available to school personnel, the Parents' Association and all parents. In its policies, practices and activities St John the Baptist Infant Girls' School will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare.

The school will:

- Recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations.
- Fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters.
- Adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect.
- Develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children.
- Fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing the child protection matters.

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION

At Primary level RSE aims to help children learn about their own development and about their friendships and relationships with others. The work in school is based on developing a good self-image among the children, promoting respect for themselves and for others and providing them with appropriate information.

The themes covered are: *This is me, We are friends, This is my family, Keeping safe, Showing our feelings, Other people have feelings too, The wonder of new life, How my body works, Decisions and their consequences.*

Parent/Staff Communication

Parents are always welcome in our school. The Board of Management endorses the view that good communication and effective co-operation between parents and teachers is fundamental to the development of a happy and effective learning environment. To this end a variety of communications is used. School Newsletters are sent home on a regular basis and in so far as possible these and other communications are sent out on a Monday only ("Message Monday"). These should be read carefully as they usually contain important details of special events, outings and school closures.

At reception time, 8.35am, a parent/teacher may discuss any minor concerns, however, on matters of deeper concern, an appointment should be made for a mutually suitable time. Formal lessons begin at 8.55am and please do not disturb the teacher or class after this time.

All classes will have annual parent-teacher meetings.

Complaints Procedure

If there are concerns about an individual child which need to be resolved, these guidelines must be followed:

- a) The parent/guardian and teacher concerned should meet in the first instance to try to resolve the problem.
- b) If there are no satisfactory solutions a meeting may be requested with the Principal to discuss the issues.
- c) Only if matters are still unresolved should an appeal be made in writing to the Chairman of the Board of Management, who has the ultimate responsibility for the school.

Policies

Our staff and Board of Management update and review all school curricular and administrative policies on a regular basis. These policies are available on the school website www.belgrove.ie.

Attendance

Good attendance is encouraged and we require a note if your child cannot attend school for any reason. The school is obliged to inform Tusla (The Child and Family Agency) if your child has missed 20 days or more in the school year or where there are concerns expressed by a teacher about a child's attendance. A reminder note will be sent out to you if your child's absence exceeds 15 days.

Punctuality

The school opens at 8.35am and the children enter the school via the side gate. The Board of Management cannot take responsibility for children arriving before this time. The first 20 minutes is timetabled as reception time and this is a valuable time for the children to play and socialise before formal lessons begin. Formal instruction begins at 8.55am and finishes at 1.15pm. For the first few weeks our three Junior Infant classes go home at 12.00 each day until they become accustomed to the routine. New Junior Infants may be brought into their classrooms each morning and collected there at 12.00.

It is best not to linger in the classroom with children in the morning as it only prolongs the problem of parting and can be upsetting for the other girls in the class. After two or three weeks children should come in from the cloakroom by themselves. It is important that children are collected promptly at dismissal times as they become very anxious if they are left waiting. No responsibility is accepted for children left on school premises after the 1.15pm dismissal time. Parked cars either in the morning or afternoon should not block the entrance gate to the school. Dogs are not to be brought into the school at any time.

Health and Hygiene

If a child has to remain at home due to illness, there is no need to telephone the school as a note explaining her absence will suffice on her return. However, in the case of infectious illness, please notify the school immediately. Children should not be sent to school if they are unwell. For any longer absences/holidays or if any child has to be collected from school early for whatever reason, please send a note of explanation to her teacher beforehand. The HSE will notify parents through the school with regard to hearing and eyesight check-ups for your child. Head lice can be a recurring problem, so each child's hair should be checked at least once a week and all family members treated when necessary. Prevention is better than a cure and we would strongly advise you to keep your child's hair tied back. The use of head bandanas is recommended.

As part of our Social, Personal and Health Education programme we encourage regular washing of hands, particularly around eating time and after toilet use. We are not, however, always able to oversee this so please remind your child of its importance. Unfortunately, germs and viruses spread very quickly in a classroom environment so it is vital that the children are encouraged to use a tissue when blowing their nose and to cover their mouth and turn away when coughing. We have adopted the HSE slogan "*Catch it, bin it, kill it*" in order to help prevent the spread of colds and flu infections.

Ethos of our School

It is the aim of our school to provide a broad based education for our children. This involves all aspects of children's development including moral growth and emotional needs as well as intellectual development. Wishing to support this ethos in our Code of Behaviour, we hope that it will encourage our pupils to develop the ability to recognise right from wrong, and the ability to reason.

A minimum of rules is considered preferable to a long list of confusing instructions. By creating a caring and secure environment we aim to reinforce positive behaviour, rather than placing major emphasis on bad conduct.

Parents and teachers are encouraged to see themselves as complementary factors in the education of the whole child. Through mutual co-operation we can best support each child and ensure that the pupils who leave our school will do so with a positive self-image and the confidence born of knowing right from wrong.

The Code of Behaviour is available to read on our website www.belgrove.ie. In our Code the emphasis is placed on the value of positive reinforcement both in the area of achievement and good behaviour with the aim of developing in the pupil an internalised self-discipline.

The Code of Behaviour including the Anti-Bullying Policy will be revised at agreed intervals. The Board of Management reserves the right to add to or amend this code from time to time as it is deemed necessary following consultation with the whole school community.

School Outings

As representatives of St John the Baptist Infant Girls' School, children will be expected to behave with decorum in public places. No interference with others or with public property will be tolerated.

Social Personal and Health Education

In line with our school ethos, Social, Personal and Health Education will provide opportunities for the individual child to develop a framework of values, attitudes, understanding and skills that will inform her decisions and actions now and in the future – enabling her to respect and relate to herself and others and become an active and responsible citizen in society. Relationships and Sexuality Education is part of SPHE. RSE aims to help children learn at home and in school about their own development and about their friendships and relationships with others. This work will be based on developing a good self-image, promoting respect for themselves and others and providing them with appropriate information.

Anti-Bullying Policy

A revised Anti-Bullying Policy was drawn up by the Board of Management in 2014. We draw your attention to excerpts from the policy below. The full policy is available on our website www.belgrove.ie.

Definition of Bullying

“Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.”

The following types of behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

1. Deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying.
2. Cyber bullying.
3. Identity-based bullying, such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person’s membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour including a once-off offensive or hurtful message, do not fall within the definition of bullying and will be dealt with as appropriate under the school’s Code of Behaviour.

The relevant teacher for investigating and dealing with bullying is the class teacher. However, a pupil or parent may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in the school and individual teachers must take appropriate measures regarding reports of bullying behaviour in accordance with the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy.

- Under the SPHE programme children will be taught how to deal with conflict and develop their own self-esteem.
- To prevent conflict, children are encouraged to play with children of their own age group and friendship groups are organised regularly.
- It will be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- All reports of bullying will be noted, investigated and dealt with by teachers. In that way, pupils will gain confidence in “telling”. This confidence factor is of vital importance.

Holidays and Closures

This booklet contains a list of school holidays. You will be notified of other closures e.g. by letter in advance. In accordance with rule 125.3 of the Rules of National Schools, a school shall not be closed for any purpose without the prior permission of the Board of Management. The school may be closed for the following reasons:

- School vacations, public and religious holidays.
- In the interest of public health.
- Exceptional circumstances—at the request of the DES.

Exceptional Closing

Where it is necessary to close the school for exceptional reasons i.e. failure of the heating system, flooding, damage caused by vandals, inclement weather etc. the Board of Management has agreed the following procedure to notify parents of the reasons for and the expected duration of the exceptional closure:

1. A note will be given to the child at school informing parents of the closure.
2. Notice will be given to parents through the parish bulletin or church announcement.
3. A notice will be prominently displayed at the entrance to the school.
4. Information will be posted on our school website www.belgrove.ie in the events section and on the school telephone.
5. In emergency circumstances, parents may be contacted by text/phone also.

Parents can be assured that children will not be left unattended at the school whatever the circumstances.

Heating Arrangements

The following agreement regarding heating has been reached between the Minister for Education and Skills and the Catholic Primary School Managers' Association: "The minimum acceptable standard temperature of 16°c must be maintained throughout the school from assembly to time of dismissal. Where the minimum standard of temperature is not reached or cannot be maintained the school may be closed."

Where there is heating failure in the school the following procedure has been agreed: 1. If on arrival the heating system has failed, pupils will return home with parent. 2. Should the heating system fail anytime after official opening time, classes will continue as normal. If however heat has not been restored by 1.00pm, a note will be sent home advising parents to check before children are left at school the following day. A notice will be prominently displayed at the school entrance and posted on the school website if closed.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Aims and Objectives of Homework in St John the Baptist Infant Girls' School

1. As consolidation of work covered.
2. To cultivate the habit of private study.
3. To keep parents in touch with and involved in their children's school work.

Procedures/Guidelines

- Homework should be an integral part of the subject being taught and given in order to consolidate work done.
- Homework must be consistent; a small amount, and given in such a way as to form a pattern for the children so that they are more likely to remember it.
- Parents are encouraged to supervise children's homework, check and sign and ensure that it is neat and in keeping with the standard of their work in school.
- Teachers will check that homework is being done and will give extra help where difficulties occur.
- Homework for Junior and Senior Infants will consist of reading and recognition of new words. Worksheets or workbooks may be sent home to consolidate work covered in school i.e. letter/number formation.
- Homework for First Class will usually consist of tables, spellings and English reading. There may be writing and sums at the discretion of the class teacher.
- Irish homework may include: Reference to the theme being taught in class and relevant phrases included for practice at home, pictures of items relevant to the theme, Irish language games to be played at home, web addresses for parents to use with their children to enhance the language. The teacher may include translation of phrases/words where necessary. The emphasis in Irish homework is informal at all times, in order not to discourage parents' involvement with the language.
- Homework will not be given at weekends except on occasion when a teacher considers that an individual pupil may need it.
- The education support teachers may also set homework.

The time for completion of homework:

- ◇ Junior Infants not to exceed 10 minutes
- ◇ Senior Infants not to exceed 15 minutes
- ◇ First Class homework not to exceed 25 minutes.

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS 2016-2017

School Re-opens on Wednesday 31 August 2016.

October 2016 Mid-term Break

Closed from Monday 31 October 2016 to Friday 4 November 2016 inclusive.

Christmas 2016

Closing on Thursday 22 December 2016 at 12.00 noon and re-opening on Monday 9 January 2017.

February 2017 Mid-term Break

Closed Thursday 23 February and Friday 24 February 2017.

St Patrick's Public Holiday 2017

Closed Friday 17 March, Monday 20 March and Tuesday 21 March.

Easter 2017

Closing on Friday 7 April 2017 at 12.00 noon which will be the final day of the school term, unless changes are required as part of contingency arrangements to make up for time lost due to unforeseen school closures. Where contingency arrangements are required, a school authority may reduce the length of the Easter break by remaining open up to and including Wednesday 12 April 2017. Re-opening on Monday 24 April 2017.

May Bank Holiday

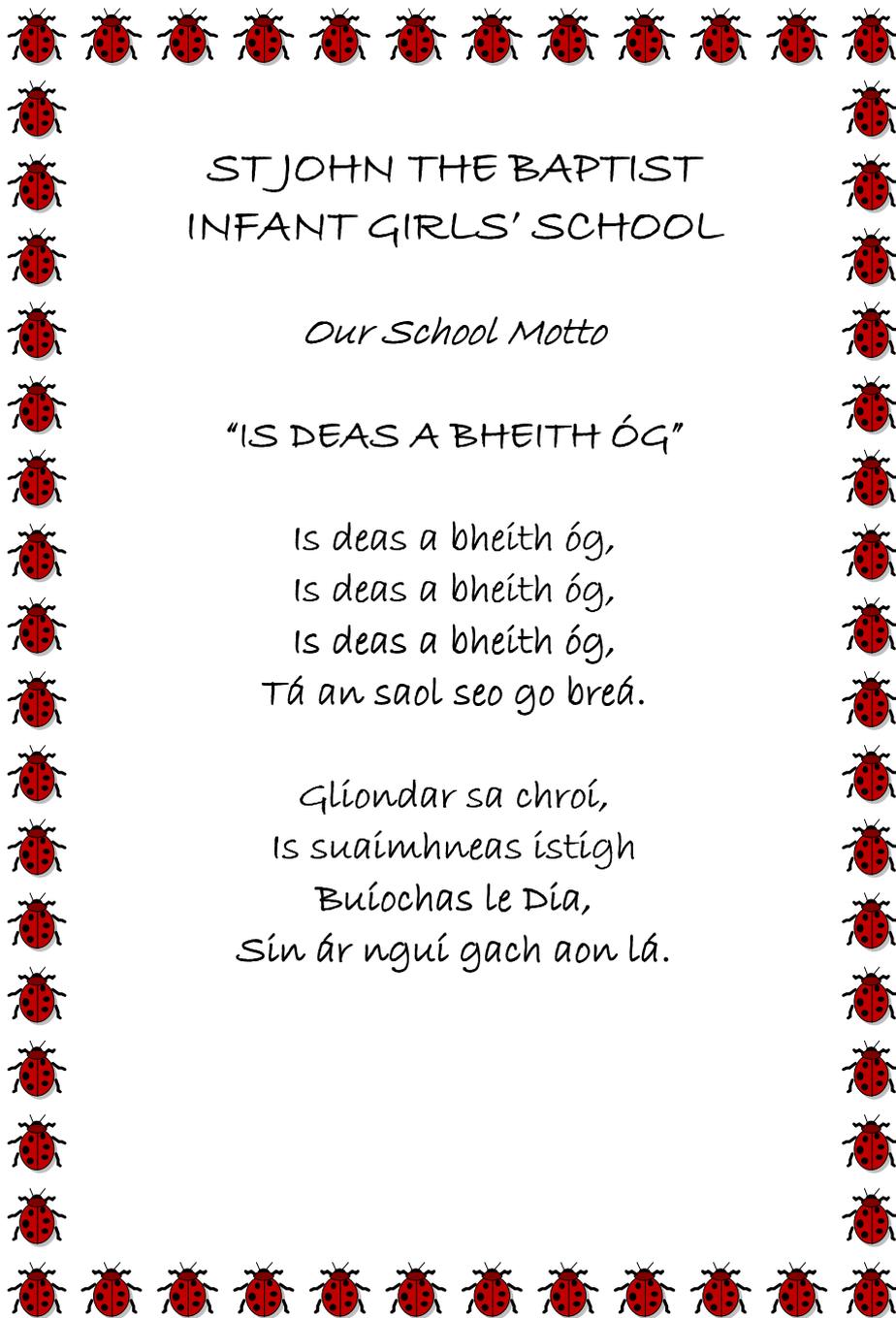
Closed Monday 1 May 2017.

June Bank Holiday

Closed Friday 2 June, Monday 5 June and Tuesday 6 June 2017.

Summer Holidays

Closing on Friday 30 June 2017 at 12.00 noon.



ST JOHN THE BAPTIST
INFANT GIRLS' SCHOOL

Our School Motto

"IS DEAS A BHEITH ÓG"

Is deas a bheith óg,
Is deas a bheith óg,
Is deas a bheith óg,
Tá an saol seo go breá.

Gníondar sa chroí,
Is suáimhneas istígh
Buíochas le Dia,
Sín ár nguí gach aon lá.