

**SCOIL EOIN BAISDE  
CAILÍNÍ NAOIDH**

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



*Seafield Road West  
Clontarf  
Dublin D03 XK27*

*Telephone: 01 8332459  
email: [secretary@belgrove.ie](mailto:secretary@belgrove.ie)  
[www.belgrove.ie](http://www.belgrove.ie)*

***“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. 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. The religious education programme, *Grow in Love*, is taught throughout the 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 parent nominees, the Principal of the school, a teachers' nominee and two community nominees. Paul Nolan chairs the Board.

## **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 is our Code of Behaviour. Parents and teachers are encouraged to see themselves as partners 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](http://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 is reviewed 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.

## **Admissions, School Staff and Facilities**

We accommodate girls from Junior Infants to First Class. The school Admissions Policy has been drawn up by the Board of Management. We will have three Junior Infant classes this year, three Senior Infant classes and four First Classes. Our staff comprises of the school principal, ten class teachers, a fulltime education support teacher, a second education support teacher, a school secretary, special needs assistants and a school caretaker. Our accommodation includes ten classrooms—eight with adjoining cloakrooms/art areas, a library/resource room, 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 will be located on the ground floor. The classrooms are bright and airy and very well heated in winter. Each classroom has Wi-Fi broadband, 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 a soft surface and was recently painted with playground games. 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 school is very well equipped with percussion instruments and a piano. 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 refurbish the old boiler house into a new resource room— Tír na nÓg.

## **Parents' Association**

We have a very active Parents' Association in our school. Our parents are 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 practical ways. The Chairperson of the PA will contact parents early in the school year to outline the aims and objectives of the Association and to invite new members to join. Please see the PA section of our website to see an up to date calendar of events and sponsored activities and resources.

## **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](http://www.belgrove.ie).

## **School Routine**

School starts at 8.35am and the children enter the school via the side gate. Children are expected to walk in an orderly fashion into their classroom. Under no circumstances should children be left unaccompanied on the school premises before 8.35am. The Board of Management does not accept responsibility for children arriving before this time. Children arriving after 8.55am must go through Reception, to their classrooms. Late comers will be recorded. Parents will not be permitted access to the classrooms after 8.55am. Parents of children who are persistently late will be asked to meet with the Principal. In September, Junior Infants may be brought into their classrooms each morning. 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.

## **Dismissal**

Dismissal time is 1.15pm. It is important that children are collected promptly at dismissal time as they may become anxious if they are left waiting. Each teacher accompanies her/his class to their designated dismissal area. Parents should notify the teacher in writing in cases of somebody different collecting their child. Early collections must be made through Reception. Parents should send a note to the teacher and the pupil must be signed out by an adult. If a child is not collected after school, the teacher will bring her to the Principal's office and every effort will be made to contact the child's family through emergency phone numbers. 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 onto the school premises at any time - Guide Dogs excepted.

## **Road Safety**

Congestion at the school gates is an ongoing problem with some parents double-parking, making U-turns or parking on footpaths at drop off and collection times. The result is incredibly dangerous: small children weaving in and out of parked and moving cars at the school gate, many of whom are too small to be seen by drivers pulling in and out. In the interest of child safety, we would urge all parents to think twice before parking dangerously at the gate. Allow yourself plenty of time so there is no reason to 'drop and dash'; park safely and walk to the school with your child. Please note the disabled parking bay is for use by drivers with a disabled parking permit only.

### **School Uniform**

Pupils wear a school uniform in the Infant School, which is available from Lynch's of Marino. The class teacher will inform parents of P.E days. Velcro fastened shoes save lots of time. All belongings, including lunch box and drinks bottles, should be labelled clearly.

### **Lunch**

There are two lunch breaks – “little break” at 10.30am and “big lunch” at 11.45am. Parents will be notified about the E.U Milk Scheme in September. Glass bottles are not allowed in school. Our Healthy Lunch Policy was drawn up in consultation with parents. There are quite a number of pupils with peanut allergies so please do not include nuts or nut extract foods in your child's lunch - this includes spreads such as Nutella.

### **Accidents and Injuries**

In the case of a serious accident, 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 and the child will be given a note to give to their parent/guardian. Should a child require the administration of any medication, prior written permission must be sought from the Board of Management. It is vital that the school has up to date emergency contact phone numbers. Our Administration of Medicine Policy is available at [www.belgrove.ie](http://www.belgrove.ie).

### **Health and Hygiene**

Children should not be sent to school if they are not well enough to take part in normal activities. Please send a note to your child's teacher on her return. However, in the case of infectious illness e.g. chickenpox, please notify the school immediately. The HSE will notify parents through the school with regard to vision and hearing screening and immunizations for your child.

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.

## **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 published on a regular basis on the school website (www.belgrove.ie) and parents will receive a text to notify them. 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. All classes will have annual parent-teacher meetings and children will receive annual progress reports.

## **Absences**

Since the inception of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, schools are obliged to report on school attendance. Schools are required to submit Student Absence Reports to Tusla twice each year on those children with serious attendance issues that have been identified during the current academic year i.e. children that have been absent from school for a cumulative total of 20 days or more falling within the following categories:

- Illness
- Urgent family reason
- Holiday
- Suspended
- Other
- Unexplained.

As all attendance is monitored it is important to let us know **in writing** the exact reason your child has been absent when she returns to school. Please note that a phone call will not suffice. A reminder note will be sent out if your child's absence exceeds 15 days.

## **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.

## **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](http://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.

## **CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT**

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 2017*.

**The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) in the school is the Principal, Dearbhla O'Driscoll. 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, Fionnuala Reddy.**

The Board will ensure that all school policies and protocols relevant to child protection are in place. The school's Safety Statement and Risk Assessment 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.*

## **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 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.

### **Holidays and Closures**

This booklet contains a list of school holidays which is also available on our website. 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-service days.
- In the interest of public health.
- Exceptional circumstances.

### **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. Notice will be given to parents by text/email.
2. A notice will be prominently displayed at the entrance to the school.
3. Information will be posted on our school website [www.belgrove.ie](http://www.belgrove.ie) in the Latest News section.

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

## **SCHOOL HOLIDAYS 2019-2020**

**New school year starts on** Thursday, 29 August 2019.

### **October 2019 Mid-term Break**

Closed from Monday 28 October to Friday 1 November 2019 inc.

### **Christmas 2019**

Closing on Friday 20 December 2019 at 12.00 noon and re-opening on Monday 6 January 2020.

### **February 2020 Mid-term Break**

Closed Monday 17 February to Friday 21 February 2020 inc.

### **St Patrick's Public Holiday**

Closed Monday 16 March and Tuesday 17 March 2020.

### **Easter 2020**

Closing on Friday 3 April 2020 at 12.00 noon.

Re-opening on Monday 20 April 2020.

### **Circular 9/2017**

*Where contingency arrangements are required to make up time lost due to unforeseen school closures, the school authority may reduce the length of the Easter break by remaining open up to and including Wednesday 8 April 2020.*

### **May Bank Holiday**

Closed Monday 4 May 2020.

### **June Bank Holiday**

Closed Monday 1 June 2020.

### **Summer Holidays**

Closing on Friday 26 June 2020 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.*

*Gliondar sa chroí,  
Is suaimhneas istigh  
Buíochas le Dia,  
Sin ár nguí gach aon lá.*