

**SCOIL EOIN BAISDE
CAILÍNÍ NAOIDH**

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



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“Is Deas A Bheith Óg”

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INTRODUCTION

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 girl 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.

School Ethos

St John the Baptist IGS is a Roman Catholic Infant Girls' school under the patronage of Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. A Catholic school aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the child: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual. The school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God. Catholic schools provide religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Catholic Church and promote the formation of pupils in the Roman Catholic faith. The pupils are taught the *Grow in Love* programme.

Supporting this ethos is our Code of Behaviour. Parents, guardians 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.

A positive school ethos is based on the quality of relationships, both the professional relationships between teachers and the ways in which pupils and teachers treat each other. This positive ethos permeates the activities of our school and helps in forming a strong sense of social cohesion within the school. 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 is available to read on our website www.belgrove.ie.

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.

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that their child cooperates with school policies in an age appropriate manner.

Parents/guardians who accept a place in St John the Baptist IGS will be required to sign an undertaking on the school application form to support the implementation of the school's code of behaviour and other policies.

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. The Board's main function is to manage the school on behalf of the patron and for the benefit of the students and to provide an appropriate education for each student at the school. The Board is accountable to the patron and the Minister for Education and Skills. The school principal is responsible for the day-to-day management of the school and is accountable to the Board. Paul Nolan is currently the chairperson of the Board.

ADMISSION

The school operates under the Rules for National Schools and Department of Education and Skills Guidelines. It is funded by annual grants for specific purposes from the D.E.S. It caters for girls from Junior Infants to First Class resident in any of the three Catholic Clontarf parishes of St Anthony, St Gabriel and St John the Baptist.

We accommodate girls from Junior Infants to First Class. The school Admissions Policy has been drawn up by the Board of Management and is available at www.belgrove.ie/policies

SCHOOL STAFF

Our staff comprises of the school principal, class teachers, education support teachers, a school secretary, special needs assistants and a school caretaker. The present staff of the school is listed on our website www.belgrove.ie.

SCHOOL ORGANISATION

School Routine

School starts at 8.35am and the children enter the school via the side gate. 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/ guardians will not be permitted access to the classrooms after 8.55am. Parents/ guardians of children who are persistently late will be asked to meet with the Principal.

School finished at 1.15pm. It is important that children are collected promptly as they may become anxious if they are left waiting. Each teacher accompanies her/his class to their designated dismissal area. In September parents/ guardians are asked to detail the ordinary collection arrangements for their daughter. Parents/ guardians must notify the teacher *in writing* in cases of somebody different collecting their child. Parents/ guardians should send a note to the teacher and the pupil must be signed out by an adult. Early collections must be made through Reception. 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.

Family Contact details

All parents/guardians are requested to provide their family data including phone numbers, e-mail and mailing address to the school secretary. The school will communicate with parents/guardians through email, text message and phone calls and Aladdin depending on the particulars of the communication. If a change in contact details occurs please inform the secretary as soon as possible: secretary@belgrove.ie

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/guardians 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 respect our neighbours by not blocking the entrance to their houses. Please note the disabled parking bay is for use by drivers with a disabled parking permit only.

School/ Home Communication

Parents/guardians are always welcome in our school. The Board of Management endorses the view that good communication and effective co-operation between parents/guardians and teachers is fundamental to the development of a happy and effective learning environment. To this end a variety of communications are used including text messaging, email, Aladdin and letters. School Newsletters are published on a regular basis on the school website (www.belgrove.ie) and parents will receive them by email. These should be read carefully as they 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.

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.

Accommodation, Pedagogical Resources

Our accommodation includes nine 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 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.

The classrooms are bright and airy and very well heated in winter. Each classroom has Wi-Fi broadband, an interactive smart panel and a visualiser. The children also have access to iPads and school cameras. Our school is very well equipped. During the school year 2018/2019 a large amount of resources to support active methodologies were purchased with PA funding. It is also with 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. The school is well resourced with music and science equipment. The school hall is shared with the Senior Girls' School and we have lots of sports equipment.

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 boxes 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.

POLICIES AND STRUCTURES OF THE SCHOOL

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/policies.

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 principles of best practice in child protection and welfare.

Accidents and Injuries

In the case of a serious accident, parents/ 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 red note to give to their parent/guardian. Should your daughter require an ice-pack during the day, a blue note will be sent home advising you of the same. Should a child require the administration of any medication, prior written permission must be sought from the Board of Management. Our Administration of Medicine Policy is available at www.belgrove.ie.

Absences

Children should not be sent to school if they are not well enough to take part in normal activities. 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.

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.

School Outings & Tours

Pupils go on school tour annually. Parents/ guardians are informed in advance and the cost of the tour is borne by the parents/ guardians. As representatives of St John the Baptist Infant Girls' School our pupils are expected to behave with decorum in public places. No interference with others or with public property will be tolerated. From time to time the pupils will also go on other educational outings e.g. Fighting Words/ Raheny Library/ St. Anne's Park/ nature walks.

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, through Aladdin.
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 in the Latest News section.

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

Role of the Parents/ Guardians & 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 contacts parents/guardians 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. Each year we celebrate Arts Week and Science week. Parents/guardians are encouraged to volunteer to do related workshops with the children during those weeks.

Holiday arrangements for the year 2020/2021.

- School Re-opening: Tuesday 1st September 2020.

- October 2020 mid-term break: Closed Monday 26th October to Friday 30th October 2020 inclusive.

- Christmas 2020: Close Tuesday 22nd December 2020 at 12 noon. Re-open on Wednesday 6th January 2021.

- February 2021 mid-term break: Closed Thursday 18th February and Friday 19th February 2021 inclusive.

- St. Patrick's Bank Holiday: Closed Wednesday 17th March.

- Easter: Close on Friday 26th March 2021 at 12 noon*. Re-open on Monday 12th April 2021.

*Where contingency arrangements are required to make up for time lost due to unforeseen closures, the school authority may reduce the length of the Easter break by remaining open up to and including Wednesday 31st March 2021, as per Department of Education circular 0034/2011.

- May Holiday: Closed Monday 3rd May to Friday 7th May 2021.

- June Bank Holiday: Closed Monday 7th June 2021.

- Summer Holidays: Close Wednesday 30th June 2021 at 12 noon.

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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.*