

Scoil Mhuire na nGrást,
Béal Guala,
Co. Chorcaí.

Belgooly Central School,
Belgooly, Co. Cork.
Roll No:19672H
Reg. Charity No. 20114312



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13/09/2022

Dear Parent/Guardian,

SUMMER WORKS 2022

Over the years, through various grants from the Department of Education & Skills, voluntary family contributions and Parents' Association fundraising and the generous efforts of the local community, the school has been able to add to its physical infrastructure to meet growing needs. The school community has a strong historical commitment to maintaining the integrity of the fabric of the physical learning and working environment and it is encouraging that such a commitment is on-going.

In addition to an extensive deep cleaning throughout the school, other school improvement works undertaken during the summer break entailed necessary repair and maintenance works throughout the building and school grounds.

Having secured DES funding to facilitate an extension of three mainstream classrooms, a resource room and the conversion of an existing classroom to Special Education accommodation, it is anticipated that the school will take occupancy of these rooms in November/December. We look forward to this new development and the school would like to acknowledge the successful efforts of the entire school community (Board of Management, Parents' Association, School Families, Staff & Pupils) for their practical support, assistance and co-operation with all the related works.

Unfortunately, due to the current increased and lengthy lead-in-times with securing electrical materials, the feasibility of completing the proposed Summer Works Scheme 2022 (Electrical Works) project, within such a limited time-frame over the summer months, presented a real concern for the school. Following consultation between the school, the Building Services Contractor, the proposed electrical contractor and the DE, it was decided to defer these works until Summer 2023.

ANNUAL VOLUNTARY FAMILY CONTRIBUTION 2022/2023

While the Board of Management continues to exhaust every possible avenue in terms of available funding, the **Annual Voluntary Family Contribution of €50** plays a very significant role in bringing about such improvements, as outlined above. In the interest of safety, ease of payment and to assist with administration, the school is facilitating e-payment in respect of this voluntary collection - families will receive a text tomorrow, Wednesday, with related payment advice details. Please refer to *page 5* of this letter for further details on this payment type. The payment of this voluntary contribution is facilitated in a number of ways: a once off payment of €50; at the start of each term – Term1/Term 2 €20 & Term 3 €10; €10 every other month. Your on-going generosity and support is much appreciated.

STAFF MEETING & EARLY CLOSURE (TUESDAY, 04 OCTOBER)

In order to facilitate a staff meeting, pupils will finish and leave **on Tuesday, 04 October** in the following order:

- Junior & Senior Infants – 1.40 – 1.50pm
- 'Walkers' (all classes) & School Buses – 1.50pm

Should you have a child in Junior or Senior Infants who is to depart school in the company of an older sibling as a 'Walker' or 'Bus', arrangements will be made by the relevant staff for these pupils to join their older siblings at the relevant time in respect of school departure, as outlined above.

Over....

PUPIL PERSONAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE 2022/2023 (Allianz)

The Allianz Pupil Personal Accident 24 hour cover is operational for all pupils again this year and the fee is €8 for 24 hour cover. **Friday, 07 October** is designated date for final collection of money. For ease of payment and to assist with administration, the school is facilitating e-payment in respect of this collection - families will receive a text tomorrow, Wednesday, with related payment advice details. Related details attached which provide further information on this scheme. **(Please note that VHI Swiftcare in Mahon is dedicated only to VHI customers)**

BOOK RENTAL SCHEME (BRS) 2022/2023

Further to previous Home/School correspondence (30/08/2022), the school wishes to congratulate and express their gratitude to the Parents' Association Book Rental Scheme (BRS) working group - together with Ms. Cronin, Ms Hurley & Mrs. Ryan - who kindly volunteered so much of their time to facilitate the preparation and distribution of books to pupils partaking in the scheme. This has been a worthwhile initiative with significant levels of uptake again this school year among school families. As previously outlined, the scheme will be reviewed annually. Going forward, the continuation, scope and expansion of the scheme is subject to available funding and the practical assistance and support of a related working group to assist with the administration of the scheme.

If your child is not availing of the Book Rental Scheme for 2022/2023, please note that a charge will apply for the use of Supplementary English Readers and the interactive aspect of the Irish Scheme and related materials (Junior Infant to Second Classes) and the Hire of Novels, use of Supplementary Irish Readers and the interactive aspect of the Irish Scheme and related materials (Third to Sixth Classes). This charge amounts to €5 per/child for all classes and we request that payment is forwarded to your child's class teacher by no later than **Friday 07 October** (please place €5.00 in an envelope labelled with your child's name and marked 'Non-BRS 2022/2023 Charge')

WEAVING WELL-BEING PROGRAMME (SECOND TO SIXTH CLASSES)

Pupils from **Second to Sixth Class** will be using the **Weaving Well-Being Programme** in school again this year. *Weaving Well-Being* is an Irish-designed *Social Personal & Health Education (SPHE)* programme which teaches children evidence-based skills and strategies to develop positive mental health and well-being. It is based on Positive Psychology, which is the science of well-being. The aim of the programme is to empower children to become active participants in creating, maintaining and boosting positive mental health throughout their lives.

Key Features

- The programme is multi-level, with a specific age-appropriate pupil book for children from **Second to Sixth Class**
- There is a pull-out parent guide at the centre of each pupil book
- Each lesson has a homework activity designed to encourage parental involvement and help to embed the concepts in the children's daily lives
- After the 10 lessons have been completed, parents should encourage their children to use the skills and Strategies, wherever possible
- Each level explores a particular concept from Positive Psychology
- The programme is ideally designed to build skills and strategies incrementally over a five-year period by providing children with the opportunity to revise and deepen their understanding of concepts year-on-year

Additional information on the programme can be found on the publisher's website *Outside the Box Learning Resources* www.otb.ie/WWB

The price of the pupil book is **€5.00 per pupil** and is available to purchase from the school. **Friday, 23 September** is designated date for final collection of money. For ease of payment and to assist with administration, families of pupils from second to sixth class will receive a text tomorrow, Wednesday, with related e-payment advice details.

LIFETIME LAB WORKSHOPS (THIRD CLASSES)

Lifetime Lab, a Cork City Council operated facility offering hands on science workshops and activities and events to primary schools in the Cork area, is currently offering a workshop entitled, *House of Circuits*. This project has been developed with assistance from *Science Foundation Ireland*.

This STEM Outreach initiative is a fun and hands-on exploration of electrical circuits, allowing children to explore and discover, building up their understanding of current electricity and simple circuits. The workshop will be school-based, with individual workshop kits for each child in the class to work on. Pupils in third classes will avail of the workshops on **Friday, 14 October**.

To facilitate these workshops, there is a cost of **€5.00 per pupil**. **Tuesday, 11 October** is designated date for final collection of money. For ease of payment and to assist with administration, families of 3rd class pupils will receive a text tomorrow, Wednesday, with related payment advice details.

LITERACY (SPELLING & CURSIVE HANDWRITING)

Pupils from **Third to Sixth Class** will be using the *Spelling Made Fun Programme* in school this year. *Spelling Made Fun* is a new and innovative fun, multi-sensory spelling programme developed specifically for Irish Primary schools and has been extensively reviewed by practicing teachers nationwide. The book is unavailable to purchase in bookshops and therefore it was not included on this year's booklist.

The price of the pupil book is **€8.00 per pupil** and is now available to purchase from the school. **Friday, 23 September** is designated date for final collection of money. For ease of payment and to assist with administration, families of pupils from third to sixth class will receive a text tomorrow, Wednesday, with related e-payment advice details.

To further support pupils' literacy development, all pupils from **Junior Infants to Sixth Classes** will follow the *Ready, Steady, Write* (Folens) cursive hand-writing programme in the school this year. Fluency is an important goal in teaching handwriting and cursive writing helps to fulfil that goal as it involves a continuous, natural left to right movement. With cursive writing, words are written in an unbroken movement similar to children's continuous prewriting patterns. Spaces are used mainly to separate one word from another. Regarding infants, instead of learning print first and cursive later, pupils can be supported to learn the cursive style from the outset – which supports them to focus on other aspects of literacy development as they progress through primary school. Research shows that children who learn cursive writing benefit the most, especially in the areas of spelling, memory, text construction and thought formation.

PARENT/TEACHER MEETINGS 2022/2023

Parent/Teacher meetings will be held on **Thursday, 17 & Tuesday, 22 November**. Pupils (First to Sixth Classes) will finish and leave school at 2.35pm on *Thursday 17th* and at the usual time of 2.50pm on *Tuesday 22nd*. The usual school bus provision will operate at these times. Usual 1.50pm finishing time for Junior & Senior Infants on both these dates.

Parents/Guardians will have an opportunity to book an appointment time(s) early next month, via Aladdin 'Connect'. Further details to be advised in due course.

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION AGM – THURSDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER 2022 (Teas/coffees at 7.30pm & AGM will commence at 8.00pm)

The school's Parents' Association will hold their AGM this **Thursday evening, 15 September (School Halla)**, and all parents are invited to attend.

The Parents' Association & Friends of the Parents' Association are to be commended for their committed and resourceful efforts that have enhanced school life for all throughout the past year. Their tenacious presence and generous contribution over the past year has brought a sense of familiarity, fun and eager anticipation to school life for pupils, staff and parents at various times throughout the past year.

Halloween decorations, Santa's Grotto & visit 2021, School Calendar 2022, 'Garden Angel' Sensory Garden improvements, subsidies towards 3rd class Robert's Cove beach trip, supporting the 3rd to 5th Class Bingo, the very successful 'Easter Raffle', preparation for Book Rental Scheme 2022/2023, lots of practical support for the school - as part of An Taisce Green Flag - in its efforts to secure the Travel Flag (e.g. Walking on

Wednesday 'WOW',...), Sports for All Day (Ice-Cream van visit) and subsidising hoodies for departing sixth class pupils (2021/2022), as well as a take-away treat for their farewell celebration have all featured as part of their busy schedule of work and activities.

The P.A. is most generous with its time and talents. However, its successful voluntary efforts are dependent on the continued support, co-operation and practical and positive help of all parents/guardians. They therefore welcome as many people as possible to the AGM meeting on Thursday evening, to hear about the many activities that have been undertaken over the past year, the work of the PA and what is entailed. There is always a welcome for new PA committee members to assist and share the tasks involved in organising and planning for the various events for your children for the year ahead. In this regard, a previous PA email (08/09/2022) contains a 'Nomination' link for anyone who may be interested in joining the committee. **In terms of sustaining such invaluable parental contribution, it is essential that there is a parent representative from each class on the Parents' Association committee 2022/2023.**

We have 237 school families and your support in helping the Parents' Association going forward in 2022/2023 in any way would be most welcome and appreciated.

SEESAW (ALL CLASSES)

Class teachers will be providing pupils with their Seesaw *Home Learning Codes* over the coming weeks. To maintain everyone's familiarity with this online learning platform, some elements of homework will be assigned via Seesaw.

BUS PARKING

The school wishes to remind parents of the need for continuing vigilance by everyone at the school entrance area. ***Please park on the Belgooly side of the school entrance in the morning and afternoon, leaving the Riverstick side available for school buses. Please advise child-minders/others of same.***

HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION & ALADDIN 'CONNECT'

During the course of the school year, your child will receive various notice board updates (*via Aladdin 'Connect'*) informing you of different aspects of general school information and events. In addition, our school website (www.belgoolyns.ie) hosts school information and educational links you may find useful e.g. School Calendar 2022/2023, Parents' section, previous Home/School notes, Parental Complaints Procedure, Booklists 2022/2023, Child Safeguarding Statement, RSE Policy....

Aladdin 'Connect', an online school communication/organisation/administration facility, assists parents in relation to advising the school in respect of pupil absences, allows parents to update family contact details, provide various permissions in relation to certain activities, regular school news via notice-board message updates and furnishes families with the annual school report card.

This facility also supports the school by reducing paper usage, reducing printing costs, facilitating enhanced school communication and reducing the unnecessary handling, where possible, of papers/notes/money....

Thank you to families who have **1) registered 2) downloaded the related app and 3) validated mobile phone number (please complete all 3 steps, the attached information sheets 'Parent Sign-up for Connect' & 'Set Up App Parents' will assist).**

Given the significant pupil numbers in the school, digital communication will be key in the facilitation of school organisation and arrangements for 2022/2023. The school now requests that one or both parents from each family to sign-up for *Aladdin 'Connect'* as this will be used increasingly as the school's main communication means.

For parents who wish to sign-up for 'Connect', another unique access code will be forwarded by text on Monday next.

Please remember to refresh your Aladdin 'Connect' app page on a regular basis.

Yours faithfully,

Diarmuid Hennessy

School Principal

ePayment Facility Details

The school uses the Aladdin software service for administrative purposes and the ePayment system will give you access from an internet browser on your computer, phone or tablet to make secure payments to the school using your credit or debit card. The purpose of the ePayment system is to facilitate the easier payment of school money collections for parent/guardians and to reduce the amount of cash and cheques being sent into our school in line with recent Central Bank directives.

Aladdin uses state of the art security to safeguard information entered by you and the school and data is stored and processed in strict compliance with Irish data protection laws. Normal debit and credit card usage costs will apply.

On receiving a text containing your **payment access link**, you will be brought to a parent payment page which will contain payment details requested for your child's/family's money collection. You will require a phone with internet access or, alternatively, you can type the related link in an internet browser on a computer to make an ePayment. Once you have completed your payment, you will be issued with a reference number. Please quote this reference number in any queries you may have regarding this payment with the school.
