

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



*Principal: Diarmuid Hennessy  
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29/08/2024

Dear Parent/Guardian,

### **WELCOME**

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome everyone back after the summer break with a special greeting to all our new pupils and families.

We congratulate Ms Éadaoin O’Leary and Ms Laura O’Callaghan on their respective permanent appointments to the school. We also welcome staff who are joining us for this School Year (2024/2025) – Ms Gina Patterson (SET), Ms Marie Walsh (SET), Ms Lucy Kelleher (Third Class), Ms Nicole O’Leary (Second Class) & Mrs Linda Farley (SNA). Mr Ronan Coomey will provide substitute cover for Ms L Collins (Third Class) until the beginning of October.

### **RETIREMENTS & RESIGNATION**

Having given over 42 years’ teaching service, both in Cork City and in Belgooly, Mr. Risteárd Cotter (who joined the permanent teaching staff at *Scoil Mhuire na nGrást Belgooly* in October 1983) retires this month. As one of the most long-standing members of staff, Mr. Cotter has witnessed many changes both in Education and the evolving journey of *Scoil Mhuire na nGrást* over the past four decades. Chomh maith le sin, mar cainteoir dúchais Gaeilge, spreag Risteárd spéis and grá inár dteanga dúchais ar fud na scoile. Ba mhaith linn buíochas ollmhór a ghabháil le Risteárd agus molaimid go léir go h-ard é.

In addition to Mr. Cotter’s retirement, and having given 25 years’ service, Mrs Maria Crean (who joined *Scoil Mhuire na nGrást* in October 1999), will retire week ending Friday, 11 October 2024. The welcoming, courteous and efficient school office is testament to Mrs. Crean’s competent and professional disposition at all times. The school is most grateful for the significant role Mrs Crean has played in supporting the school’s many developments and the school community over these many years.

To avail of a teaching opportunity closer to home, Mrs. Karen Whelan has decided to resign her teaching position in *Scoil Mhuire na nGrást*. Since joining the teaching staff in 2007, Mrs Whelan has taught various class groups and, in more recent years, the area of Special Educational Teaching. A dedicated and committed teacher, and former member of the Board of Management (2019-2023), Karen will be greatly missed.

We wish Mr Cotter and Mrs Crean a long, happy and healthy retirement that is filled with many opportunities to enjoy their respective interests in the years ahead and we wish Mrs Whelan every success and happiness in her new school, Cloghroe NS.

In recognition of the contribution made to the school by each of these staff members, the school plans to host a celebration later in October.

### **FREE SCHOOLBOOKS SCHEME 2024/2025 & REQUISITES LIST 2024/2025**

Books, workbooks and copybooks will be distributed to pupils over the coming days. Thank you to everyone, all staff and the Parents’ Association, for assisting with this initiative and to Ms. Cronin (Coordinator), supported by Mrs Crean (School Office), Ms Gudauskiene (School Office), Ms Hurley, Ms M Murphy, Mrs Sugrue and our caretaking provision team, Michael & Pat.

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In relation to requisites (i.e. pens, pencils, mathematical sets, tin whistle etc.), which are not covered by the scheme, requirements on what items parents/guardians need to supply for the year ahead are outlined in the attached '**Requisites List 2024/2025**' (v.06June2024).

### ***DAILY SCHOOL TIMETABLE & ASSEMBLY/DISMISSAL***

The Board of Management wishes to remind families of the school's daily school assembly and dismissal arrangements:

- 9.00 - 9.10am - Outside assembly
- 9.10 - 9.20 – Classroom Assembly (all pupils are expected to be in school by no later than 9.20am)
- 1.50pm – Junior & Senior Infant departure (from the main school gate)
- 2.50pm – All other pupils depart (from the main school gate)

The school premises will open to receive pupils at 9.00 am. For their own health and safety, the children are not permitted to enter the school grounds any earlier than 9.00am and parents/carers and pupils are advised not to gather outside the school before 9.00am. Upon arrival at school, from 9.00am onwards, pupils should go straight to their designated class lines for outside assembly. The school will open at 9.10am and pupils will proceed to assemble in their respective classrooms. All pupils are expected to be at school by no later than 9.20am as formal instruction commences at this time.

In the afternoon, all pupils, including infant pupils, may be collected from the main school gate. Classes will end each day for all pupils at 2.50pm (with the exception of Junior & Senior Infants who finish classes and leave school each day at 1.50pm). Parents who wish to have their children escorted home should make their own arrangements to have them met at the school gate. The person to escort them should be at the school by no later than 2.50pm (or 1.50pm in the case of Junior & Senior Infants) as the school is not in a position to accept responsibility for looking after the children after that time.

### ***SCHOOL ACCESS***

The Board of Management wishes to remind all parents and guardians that no adults, other than staff members, should enter the school building or grounds, unless by prior arrangement and/or on the express permission of the Principal or Deputy Principal, or on an established basis/arrangement with the teacher. Please note that this is in keeping with Health and Safety guidelines and also with child protection legislation. It should also be noted that if a parent/guardian wishes to meet an individual teacher, he/she should first contact the School Office to make the appropriate arrangements. Messages for teachers can be sent by (1) writing a note to the class teacher **or** (2) emailing the school at [belgoolyns@gmail.com](mailto:belgoolyns@gmail.com) **or** (3) by phoning the school office (021 4770712). The Board of Management would like to remind all parents and guardians to be aware that it is obliged to take the safety and well-being of all the pupils and staff in the school very seriously.

### ***COLLECTION OF CHILDREN DURING THE SCHOOL DAY***

Should a parent/carer need to collect a child during the school day, he/she is asked to advise the relevant class teacher in advance by (1) Noting the early collection on Aladdin 'Connect' **or** (2) writing a note to the class teacher **or** (3) emailing the school at [belgoolyns@gmail.com](mailto:belgoolyns@gmail.com) **or** (4) by phoning the school office (021 4770712). The child will be brought from his/her class to the main school office area to meet with his/her parent/carer.

### ***CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES FOR PRIMARY & POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS***

The Board of Management recently reviewed the school's Child Safeguarding measures. The related notification and Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment are available to view on the school's website.

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**SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS (2024/2025)**

Parents are requested to inform the Board, through the Principal, of any allergies or any *Specific Requirements* of their child. The Board will then inform all parents of a food allergy within the school. Without identifying any individual pupils, the teachers will make their pupils aware of food allergies. This, the Board hopes will provide a safe environment and invites parents, staff, pupils and school visitors for their co-operation.

Because the consequences of a child having an allergic reaction can be serious, the Board assumes that the whole school community will assist in making the school as safe as is reasonably possible for each child.

**Regarding School Year 2024/2025, please note we have pupils in the following sections who have particular allergies (Second, Fourth & Fifth Classes – hazel nut, peanut and cashew nut allergies) and who have been advised to avoid all foods containing same.** We ask for your co-operation in this respect.

**'BUG BUSTING' NIGHT (THURSDAY, 29 AUGUST)**

While the prevalence of head lice is a community dilemma, the school, for its part, requests that all parents/guardians engage with a 'Bug Busting' night tonight, **Thursday, 29 August**. It is hoped that such a whole school approach – at the start of a new school year - will assist detection and, should the need arise, provide families with the opportunity to engage with head louse treatment measures over the coming weekend. To assist, there will be no homework assigned tonight and please find attached a HSE information sheet on the matter. Your local pharmacist will also be in a position to advise. It is important that all families co-operate and support this initiative and engage with frequent checks throughout the school year in this regard.

**ROAD SAFETY**

The Board of Management would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their co-operation and support in relation to the *Safe Routes to School* infrastructure and for refraining from parking at the school gate and within the School Zone area. It is requested that this information is brought to the attention of child-minders/others who may drop or collect your child to or from school.

The initial few weeks of a new school year can be particularly busy and so commands a greater sense of road safety vigilance by everyone outside the school at all times. Thank you for your continued support and co-operation.

**SCHOOL UNIFORM**

Further to previous communication in June, we wish to remind families of the following requirements regarding the school uniform. The uniform consists of wine jumper/cardigan with school crest, grey trousers/pinafore/skirt, wine tie, blue shirt and regular school shoes. Pupils wear tracksuits for sporting and PE related activities, class teachers will inform you of these days in September. A white polo shirt is to be worn under tracksuit and pupils may wear runners with tracksuit.

During the months of May, June & September, in addition to the main school uniform or the school tracksuit on designated days (as above), pupils may also wear a white polo t-shirt, an up-cycled short version of the existing school tracksuit or wine-coloured shorts (the latter being available from the school's uniform supplier – *Cahill's Clothing Carrigaline*). **To assist with returning lost uniform items, please label all clothing (i.e. track-suit tops, jumpers, cardigans).**

**SHERPA KIDS (Before & After-School Childcare Programme 2024/2025)**

Further to a previous communication in June, families may avail of the above-mentioned service at the school. Should you wish to avail of this service, Sherpa has requested that, in the first instance, contact be made via email.

**Email:** [bns@sherpakids.ie](mailto:bns@sherpakids.ie) & **Telephone:** 083-0103968

The Board of Management wishes to advise families that this activity, facilitated by an independent contractor, is independent of the primary function of the school. Therefore, all queries, related arrangements (including, where necessary, individual pupil needs/requirements) and other contact in respect of this facility is to be made directly and separately with Sherpa and not through the school office.

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**SHERPA KIDS & RECRUITMENT (2024/2025)**

Please see a related notice from *Sherpa Kids* attached.

Related link – [Sherpa Recruitment 2024/2025](#)

**AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES 2024/2025 – Irish dancing, Music, Drama, Art & Board Games Club**

Further to a previous communication in June, relevant details are outlined on the school's website at

<https://www.belgoolyns.ie/after-school-activities>

The Board of Management wishes to advise families that these activities, facilitated by independent contractors, are independent of the primary function of the school. Therefore, all queries, related arrangements (including, where necessary, individual pupil needs/requirements) and other contact in respect of these activities is to be made directly and separately with the respective tutor/group and not through the school office.

**HOT SCHOOL MEALS PROGRAMME SCHEME 2024/2025**

Just a reminder, and further to previous Home/School communication (email 20/06/2024), in terms of (1) family registration and (2) making a food choice for your child(ren), please find related details attached once again for your attention. Ashdale Catering has advised that there is a lead time of two full days (excl. Bank Holidays, Saturdays & Sundays) for any new food orders/food changes. Of course, this is an optional service and pupils may wish, as heretofore, to bring their own packed lunch to school. In any case, it is advisable that pupils also bring a drink and a smaller healthy food and/or fruit snack for the earlier break-time. The Board of Management wishes to advise that as such a service is independent of the primary function of the school, and facilitated by an independent provider, all queries, related arrangements (including, where necessary, individual pupil needs/requirements) and other contact in respect of this service is to be made directly and separately with *Ashdale Catering* and not through the school office.

**CENTRE FOR TALENTED YOUTH IRELAND (DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY)**

The *Centre for Talented Youth Ireland* at *Dublin City University* provides specialised courses for young people with exceptional academic ability in verbal, numerical or abstract reasoning. You may be interested in visiting the website at [www.dcu.ie/ctyi](http://www.dcu.ie/ctyi) for information on whether these courses would be of benefit to your child. Should you have any queries, please make an appointment, through the school office, to speak with a member of the *Special Education Teaching* team.

**HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

During the course of the school year, you will receive various Home/School notes by email/Aladdin noticeboard informing you of different aspects of general school information and events. In addition, our school website hosts school information and educational links you may find useful e.g. School Calendar 2024/2025, Parents' section, previous Home/School notes, Parental Complaints Procedure, Requisites List 2024/2025, Child Safeguarding Statement, RSE Policy....

School families will be notified of any date or time changes of events or other important information via Aladdin 'Connect'.

**SIXTH CLASS 2023/2024 'BRING & BUY'**

Congratulations to sixth class (2023/2024), Mr Hayes-Curtin & Ms O'Neill (coordinators) and all involved for raising €2,450. This year the proceeds were shared between the *RNLI*, *UCC Surgeon Noonan Society* & *Kinsale Youth Support Services*. Many thanks to everyone for your very willing and generous support, assistance and contributions.

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***SCHOOL SPORTS DAY/MOUTH GUARD REMINDER (Fifth & Sixth Classes)***

The school's *Sports for All Day* took place in late June and the pupils and staff enjoyed a great day of activity and fun. Thanks to all staff for facilitating this enjoyable event and to Ms. C Murphy for coordinating same. Over the course of the term, in preparation for Sciath na Scol Football, fifth and sixth class pupils will have an opportunity to avail of Gaelic Football training. In this regard, pupils are required to wear gum shields.

We look forward to another successful school year ahead!

Yours faithfully,  
*Diarmuid Hennessy*  
*School Principal*