

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



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

10/09/2024

Dear Parent/Guardian,

SUMMER WORKS 2024

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, an extensive deep clean, upgrade, maintenance and repair works were also undertaken throughout the school, as well as the school grounds receiving their usual late summer tidy ahead of re-opening.

ANNUAL VOLUNTARY FAMILY CONTRIBUTION 2024/2025

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 – Term 1/Term 2 €20 & Term 3 €10; €10 every other month. Your on-going generosity and support is much appreciated.

STAFF MEETING & EARLY CLOSURE (Tuesday, 01 October at 1.50pm)

In order to facilitate a staff meeting, pupils will finish and leave school on **Tuesday, 01 October at 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. The usual school bus provision will operate at this earlier time.

NEW PRIMARY MATHEMATICS CURRICULUM 'OIDE' STAFF IN-SERVICE & SCHOOL CLOSURE (MONDAY, 07 OCTOBER 2024)

In order to facilitate staff training, organised by *Oide*, please note that the school will remain closed on **Monday, 07 October**. For further information on the New Primary Mathematics Curriculum, please see related details attached. Sherpa, After-School Irish Dance and Music Classes will not operate on the day.

PUPIL PERSONAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE 2024/2025 (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, 04 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)**

Over....

JOSEPH WALSH STUDIO VISIT (6th Class)

Through the generous advocacy of a former school family, our sixth class were most fortunate to avail of an opportunity to visit the nearby *Joseph Walsh Studio* in Fartha last week. The studio was a hive of activity as preparations were well underway for *Making In/2024*, a celebration with an international reach that connects creative makers pursuing various endeavours (e.g. architects, cultural theatre groups, ceramicists, weavers, wheelwrights, the culinary work..). Visiting the workshop and design rooms, and sharing the inspiration and creation of Joseph's unique work, the pupils were given insights in relation to the materials, tools, practices and workmanship behind the pieces. In addition, the pupils enjoyed viewing the creations of others, particularly the impressive roadster of Italian specialty automaker's Pagani! The grounds at Fartha are also home to some monumental and experimental sculptures -*Passage House, Stone Vessel* and *The Hedge Theatre*. The latter provided the setting to conclude our visit, as we enjoyed *The Kabuki Theatre* group in rehearsal.

The school is most grateful for this most unique and inspirational experience and we wish to convey our appreciation to a former *Scoil Mhuire na nGrást* pupil, Joseph Walsh, and all the team at *Joseph Walsh Studio*. Beir bua ar an obair!

LITERACY - CLASS LIBRARIES, 'KINSALE WORDS BY WATER FESTIVAL 2024' & CCC MOBILE LIBRARY

Our school year has gotten off to a wonderful start with pupils from various classes enjoying our libraries which have been funded jointly by the Parents' Association and the Board of Management in recent years. As part of our schools vision to create a community of lifelong readers, it is hoped to hold book events (e.g. Book Fair in October 2024) throughout the year to give children the opportunity to have positive experiences with books and reading and to strengthen our relationship with the local library in Kinsale. In this regard, some dates to note, Kinsale Library will host upcoming events, as part of the *Words by Water Festival*. The festival has activities of interest for everyone - [Words by Water 2024](#)

In addition, both of our Fifth Classes will have an opportunity to visit the mobile library when it visits the school every fortnight, commencing with Mr Hayes-Cutin's fifth class today.

WEAVING WELL-BEING PROGRAMME (SECOND TO SIXTH CLASSES)

Pupils from **Second to Sixth Class** will be availing of 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.

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

'MANNERS MATTER' MONTH

As part of the school's *Social Personal & Health Education (SPHE)* programme, pupils learn to care for and respect others including how people interact, communicate, live, play and work together. The development of a range of communication and interpersonal skills will add to a child's experience of life at home with their families, in school and the wider community as well as serving them well in various settings later in adult life. During the month of September, pupils will explore the role that manners play in relating with others through role-play, drama, stories, poems, quotations and print in our environment (e.g. receipts). The importance of whole body listening, what good manners look like at home/school, social media manners, good sportsmanship, giving and receiving compliments, respecting differences, greetings and common courtesies will form part of the basis of class exploration on this topic.

"Good manners will open doors that the best education cannot" Clarence Thomas

Over....

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

The school's Code of Behaviour (available to view at <https://www.belgoolyns.ie/school-policies>) aims to promote a sense of mutual respect among all members of the school community. In this regard, class teachers will be reminding pupils, over the course of the month, of those simple, everyday efforts which help to support the school with such an endeavour. To assist, parents/guardians are also requested to remind pupils on this important matter. The pupils are to be commended for their excellent behaviour, which is often remarked upon during school excursions (i.e. tour venues, on buses, at matches....). The school is very grateful to school families for their continued support and co-operation in relation to the promotion of positive, respectful behaviour, which, of course, is also essential with facilitating effective teaching and learning.

PARENT/TEACHER MEETINGS 2024/2025

Parent/Teacher meetings will be held on **Thursday, 21 & Tuesday, 26 November**. Pupils (First to Sixth Classes) will finish and leave school at 2.35pm on *Thursday 21st* and at the usual time of 2.50pm on *Tuesday 26th*. 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) next month, via Aladdin 'Connect'. Further details to be advised in due course.

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION 'WELCOME EVENING 2024/2025' - TUESDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2024 (TEAS/COFFEES AT 7.00pm & MEETING AT 7.30pm)

The school's Parents' Association will hold their 'Welcome Evening 2024/2025' on **Tuesday evening, 17 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 pupils, staff and parents at various times throughout the past year. 'Welcome' refreshments for our 'Open Evening' in October 2023 and 'New Entrant Evening - March 2024', Halloween decorations 2023, Santa's Grotto & visit 2023, School Calendar 2024, subsidies towards athletics development coaching, school tours, bus transport, the very successful 'Easter Raffle', preparation for *Free Schoolbook Scheme 2024/2025*, sensory equipment for our new sensory area (new extension lobby area), three buddy benches for the school garden, assisting with planning and preparing a new 'Wildflower' patch (see photos), subsidising hoodies for our departing sixth class pupils, as well as a take-away treat for their farewell celebration and the very welcome ice-cream treat on *Sports for All* day 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 meeting on Tuesday evening, 17 September, 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 terms of sustaining such invaluable parental contribution, it is essential that there are two parent representatives from each class on the Parents' Association committee 2024/2025.** We have 231 school families and your support in helping the Parents' Association going forward in 2024/2025 in any way would be most welcome and appreciated. In this regard, the recent donation of LEGO by a school family is very much appreciated.

BELGOOLY TIDY VILLAGES

Thank you to our friends in the *Belgooly Tidy Villages* for attending to the colourful wall flower containers at the school (see photos). Such autumnal colour is welcomed by the pupils, staff and many school visitors.

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.

HSE 'BACK TO SCHOOL'

The HSE Talking Health and Wellbeing Podcast has returned with a *Back to School* theme, focusing on providing support to parents as children return to school.

Related details available at:

[*Back to School \(Common Illnesses & Building Healthy Routine\)*](#)

[*Healthy Lunch Boxes for Kids*](#)

[*Screen Time & Young People*](#)

A HSE *Back to School* health advise note for parents is also attached.

HOT SCHOOL MEALS PROGRAMME SCHEME 2024/2025

Further to a previous HSN (29/08/2024), just a reminder, Ashdale Catering has advised that there is a lead time of at least two full days (excl. Bank Holidays, Saturdays & Sundays) for any new food orders/food changes. **To assist with pupils with bringing home uneaten lunches, please ensure that your child has a suitable container in their bag to facilitate same.**

Of course, this is an optional service and pupils may wish 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.

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.belgoolyins.ie) 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....

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.

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 Signup 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 2024/2025. 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.
