

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

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



Principal: Diarmuid Hennessy
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18/03/2026

Dear Parents/Guardians,

SCHOOL CALENDAR 2026/2027 (v.18/03/2026)

A copy of the calendar for the 2026/2027 school year is attached. Please note that the school will be re-opening after the summer break on **Wednesday, 26 August 2026**.

STAFF MEETING & EARLY CLOSURE (TUESDAY, 28 APRIL 2026 at 1.50pm)

In order to facilitate a staff meeting, pupils will finish and leave school **on Tuesday, 28 April 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.

SCHOOL CLOSURE (MONDAY, 11 MAY 2026) – DEY'S 'PRIMARY CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK' & WHOLE-STAFF IN-SERVICE

To facilitate engagement of all staff with the Department of Education & Youth's new *Primary Curriculum Framework*, please note that the school will remain closed on **Monday, 11 May 2026**.

Sherpa & After-School Irish Dancing & Music classes will not operate on the day.

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION (NCSE) & SPECIAL EDUCATION PROVISION

As part of recent new measures to support the forward planning for Special Education Provision, parents seeking a special class or special school placement for their child in upcoming academic years (i.e. 2026/2027, 2027/2028, 2028/2029..), should make direct contact with the *National Council for Special Education (NCSE)*. In order to assist with making this contact, the NCSE has set up a dedicated NCSE email address to facilitate initial contact. In this regard, further details are available at <https://ncse.ie/notify-ncse-special-class-special-school> Families may also contact Maria Murphy, Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO), South Cork on (01) 5391342 or at maria.murphy@ncse.ie

A recent linked update from the National Council for Special Education (dated 13th February 2026) may also be of assistance to families.

ANNUAL SCHOOL FAMILY VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION 2025/2026

There have been many improvements to the school's physical, teaching and learning environments over the past number of years from which all children benefit. The voluntary *Annual Family Contribution* of €60 plays a significant role in supporting necessary improvements. The payment of this voluntary contribution is facilitated in a number of ways:

- a once off payment of €60
- at the start of each term e.g. Term 1 (€20), Term 2 (€20) & Term 3 (€20)
- €12 every other month
- €6 per month (Sept – June)

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We thank you for your annual voluntary contributions to date and wish to remind school families that contributions may be given to class teachers or made by e-payment. Larger contributions would be very much welcomed and will be gratefully acknowledged by the Board.

SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPLICATIONS FOR NEW SCHOOL ENTRANTS TO PRIMARY & POST-PRIMARY (SCHOOL YEAR 2026/2027)

Bus Éireann is offering an online application system for School Transport for new entrants to primary school and post-primary school for the 2026/2027 School Year. Online applications can be made on [Bus Éireann School Transport Section](#) later this month. The closing date for applications for 2026/2027 school year is **Friday, 24 April 2026**.

If you have another child starting in Junior Infants or transferring from primary to post primary school in August/September 2026, you will need to make an application for this new school entrant, quoting your Family ID No. which is located on your existing school-going child's bus ticket, School Roll No. (e.g. *Scoil Mhuire na nGrást* - 19672H) and Class Year Definition (e.g. Junior Infants is Yr 1 etc). Should you have any further queries, please contact Cork School Transport Office, Bus Éireann, Capwell, Cork (Tel. 021 – 4557137/4557129 or at st.cork@buseireann.ie)

'APPLICATIONS FOR ADMISSION (ENROLMENT) 2026/2027'

Applications for next year's enrolment is now being finalised. In this regard, we would be grateful if you could advise any neighbours and relatives who live in the parish, and who may intend sending their pre-school children to *Scoil Mhuire na nGrást* in August 2026, to visit the school's website. All related details and application requirements available at www.belgoolyns.ie ('Admissions' tab).

As we are presently reviewing our pupil enrolment numbers for the 2026/2027 school year, please advise the school if there are any pupils currently enrolled who will not be returning in August 2026

SOME RECENT EVENTS/CELEBRATIONS

Catholic Schools Week 2026, First Penance & Confirmation 2026

Catholic Schools Week 2026 was celebrated from Sunday, 18 January to Saturday, 24 January 2026. The theme for Catholic Schools' Week 2026 (CSW2026) was '**Normal Lives, Called to Holiness**'. Over the course of the week, classes explored Called to Holiness through Prayer/Love & Friendship/Family Life/Service & Courage/Joy & Mission.

Second class pupils celebrated the Sacrament of First Penance in The Sacred Heart Church Belgooly on Tuesday, 17 February and are now preparing for the Sacrament of The Eucharist on Saturday, 25 April in St. Joseph's Church, Riverstick. Pupils in sixth class celebrated the Clontarf Parish Confirmation on Tuesday, 24 February in St. John the Baptist Church, Kinsale. Thank you to the many staff members for the time and meaningful attention given to these preparations over the past number of months.

Blackrock Castle Observatory ran an art competition and pupils in Ms Buckley's class created a collaborative piece inspired by the theme 'Cosmic Christmas'. They printed a galaxy background, created planet baubles and stars using oil pastels, added lights with finger painting and designed a rocket ship using fabric and fibre. The results were announced in January and the class were highly commended for their entry. Each child received a prize, including a pencil, ruler, notebook, bookmark and space-themed posters. Well done first class!

VexIQ competition in MTU - Six sixth class pupils travelled to MTU with the robot that they built and coded themselves. They engaged in tests of coding and driving skills, and worked collaboratively with other teams to score as highly as possible in the Vex Mix and Match game. Well done to all involved and to Mr Coomey for coordinating this activity.

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Féile Fichille - Our chess teams had a great time in Ovens, attending the Féile Fichille. Thirty-two pupils from 4th class to 6th class attended the day-long chess tournament, each playing six matches against opponents from several other schools. Students showed both great skill and sportsmanship throughout the day, and represented the school brilliantly. Thank you to Mr Coomey for coordinating this event.

Grandparents' Day - We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all grandparents who joined us for our Grandparents' Day at the end of January. It was a truly special occasion, filled with warmth, smiles and a wonderful sense of community. The 2nd class pupils were at the heart of the celebration. They proudly shared their beautiful projects about their grandparents and enjoyed spending time playing games and chatting together in the classrooms. Their enthusiasm, kindness and pride were evident throughout the morning and made the occasion extra special. A special word of thanks to the staff working with 2nd class, whose planning, care and attention to detail ensured the day ran so smoothly and created such a welcoming atmosphere for everyone. We would also like to commend the 5th class pupils for baking delicious cakes which were enjoyed by all, and the school choir for their wonderful performance, which added greatly to the joyful and relaxed atmosphere. The very positive feedback received afterwards reflects how meaningful the occasion was for everyone involved and highlights the strong partnership between home and school. Thank you for helping to make Grandparents' Day such a memorable and enjoyable experience.

First South Credit Union - The annual First South Credit Union Schools Quiz took place last month. With over forty teams taking part, both the U13 and U11 teams did very well on the day. Thank you to Ms O'Neill for coordinating this activity and well done to all involved!

Safer Internet Day 2026 took place on Tuesday, 10 February 2026. Based on the theme, “AI Aware: Safe, Smart, and in Control”, pupils explored ways, in an age appropriate manner, to engage with the critical thinking and digital literacy skills they need to evaluate content, recognise bias, protect their privacy, and make responsible decisions, and be Safe, Smart and in Control. Thank you to the Parents' Association for highlighting the benefits of the [‘Keeping Childhood Smartphone Free in Scoil Mhuire na nGrást’ \(Voluntary Code\)](#) and to the wider parent body for their engagement with the Internet Safety online sessions, as provided by the *National Parents Council (NPC)*.

Engineering-in-a-Box (Third & Fourth Classes) - Pupils in Third and Fourth Classes have just completed a seven-week *Engineering-in-a-Box* workshop series, as part of the [STEAM](#) initiative. Facilitated by four engineers from Johnson & Johnson Innovative Medicine (Janssen), Ringaskiddy, the programme provided invaluable insight into a range of engineering disciplines, including infrastructure, biomedical, process, energy and electronics. Through hands-on, design-based challenges, pupils worked collaboratively in small groups to develop creative thinking, problem-solving and communication skills. Over the course of the programme, the pupils have constructed bridges, wind turbines, boats and pulleys, bionic hands, explored electrical circuits using Play-Doh and worked on a group project that brings together all the knowledge and skills they have developed during the workshops. The pupils thoroughly enjoy the weekly sessions and eagerly anticipated each lesson, while building skills in collaborative problem-solving, analytical thinking and experimental design. The school is very grateful to the engineers from Johnson & Johnson Innovative Medicine for their time, expertise and ongoing support, and to parents for their proactive and generous advocacy in helping to secure this enriching programme.

Engineers Week - As part of Engineering week, the Vex Robotics team showcased their robot Huey to all classes, STEM in a box (Third and Fourth classes) showed their engineering projects and classes explored a variety of STEM projects (rollercoaster/ paper boat design). Learning about the many types of engineering and the work entailed, imagining what our future cities may look like were explored. The week finished with pupils playing board games with their friends.

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Energy Week - During Energy Week (23rd–27th February), the Green Schools Committee carried out an energy check around the school to raise awareness about saving energy. Pupils visited classrooms to see how well we are doing at turning off lights and closing doors to keep the heat in. They found that lights were turned off 66% of the time, which shows a great effort by many classes to save electricity. Energy presentations also took place throughout last month. We learnt that every small action makes a difference! Thank you to everyone for helping our school become more energy aware and environmentally friendly! Current *Green Schools Committee* work involves: weekly litter picking to help our school grounds clean and tidy; biodiversity work is also underway, with snowdrops planted and weeding in progress in designated areas and supporting plant growth and encouraging care for the natural environment. Third and Fourth Classes are also taking part in the *Patchwork Meadow Project*, supporting biodiversity at home and in the wider community. We thank pupils and families for their continued support of our Green Schools initiatives.

Mrs Clancy's Class enjoyed many activities over the past few weeks which included designing & eating their own charcuterie boards, creating St. Brigid's Crosses, building volcanos and carrying out a chemical reaction which resulted in an eruption! In addition, Veronica Stuart, an international gold medallist in crotchet, and her colleague, Pauline Hayes, shared their expertise by offering a workshop to the pupils.

The Arts - Well done to all the pupils for participating in the recent St. Patrick's Day Kinsale Art Competition. Congratulations to our winners – Millie Blinko, Lola Kelleher, Estelle Ziegert, Liam Daly, Michael Collins & Aisling Coughlan

Seachtain na Gaeilge - Bhí seachtain na Gaeilge againn ar scoil ón 9ú lá go dtí 13ú lá de mhí na Márta. Ghlac páistí na scoile páirt i scata eachtraí chun an Ghaeilge a spreagadh.

Wellbeing (Athletics, Sciath na Scol.) fourth class pupils were delighted to avail of an opportunity to play their hurling and camogie blitzes in Páirc Uí Chaoimh last month. Playing against schools from across the South East division, they also enjoyed a guided tour of PUC. Well done to the girls and boys in 6th Class who represented our school at the recent Sciath na Scol Sports Quiz in the Rochestown Park Hotel. The boys' team finished second overall out of an impressive 85 teams! A fantastic achievement and a credit to the pupils involved. A sincere thank you to a family for kindly sponsoring new singlets for our Athletics teams, who will represent the school at the City Sports in MTU this coming May. It will be wonderful to see our athletes competing in suitable team gear. We would also like to extend our thanks to *Mac Plant & Civils* for their generous donation to the school. This funding will be used to purchase equipment to support the wellbeing of all pupils.

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION 'EASTER RAFFLE 2026'

Thank you to the many local businesses who have kindly sponsored some very generous prizes for the forthcoming Parents' Association Easter Raffle. Vouchers, hampers, gifts, Easter eggs and other prize details are attached.

In addition to the school raffle cards, the PA is also running a separate wider community draw, with its own set of prizes. Tickets will be available at **Centra Riverstick** again this forthcoming weekend (i.e. **21/22 March 2026**) and also on this **link <https://www.idonate.ie/raffle/BelgoolySchoolEasterRaffle>**. The wider community draw will take place on **Thursday, 26 March, at 11.00am** in halla na scoile, along with the school raffle draw. Your generous support is always appreciated!

RELATIONSHIPS & SEXUALITY EDUCATION (RSE) PROGRAMME

All classes continue to engage with the *Relationships & Sexuality Education (RSE)* programme and thank you for your support in this regard.

A related link to this programme – [Oide & RSE Resources](#)

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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 new *Safe Routes to School* infrastructure and for refraining from parking at the school gate and within the School Zone area. Just a reminder, the *rain gardens* adjoining the footpath outside the school are planted with wildflowers seeds.

EASTER HOLIDAYS

Please note that the school will close for the Easter break on **Friday, 27 March at 12 noon**. The usual school bus provision will operate at this time. 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 on the day. **Just to note, there is no hot lunch service on this day, pupils will need to bring their own lunch for the first breaktime.** School will re-open on **Monday, 13 April 2026**.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

Well done to all school families for supporting school attendance and punctuality over the past term.

SOME UPCOMING EVENTS/CELEBRATIONS

- *City Sports 2026 Trials - March 2026*
- *Senior Class Camogie & Hurling Sciath na Scol Training & Fixtures – March & April 2026*
- *KCS TY GAA Coaching Event (Sixth Classes) on Friday, 20 March*
- *New Entrant 2026/2027 Evening on Tuesday, 24 March 2026 at 7.30pm in Halla na Scoile*
- *KCS COP 2026 Event (Sixth Classes) on Wednesday, 25 March*
- *Clontead Transition Team & Scoil Mhuire na nGrast 'Celebration of Place' invitation (attached) - Wednesday, 25 March at Belgooly Church from 7.30-8.30pm*
- *Parents' Association Easter Raffle 2026 Draw will take place on Thursday, 26 March at 11.00am in halla na scoile*
- *The school will close for the Easter break on Friday, 27 March at 12 noon. Just to note, there is no hot lunch service on this day, pupils will need to bring their own lunch for the first breaktime*
- *National Spring Clean 2026 (An Taisce) takes place from 01 to 30 April 2026*
- *School will re-open after the Easter break on Monday, 13 April 2026*
- *School Transport Applications for New School Entrants To Primary & Post-Primary (School Year 2026/2027) – Closing date – Friday, 24 April*
- *Clontead Parish First Holy Communion – Saturday, 25 April 2026 at 11.00am in St. Joseph's Church, Riverstick*
- *Staff Meeting – Early closure on Tuesday, 28 April (see page 1 for details)*
- *School Closure – Monday, 04 May 2026 (Public Holiday)*
- *School Closure (Primary Curriculum Framework Staff In-Service) – Monday, 11 May. Please refer to page 1 for further details*

Yours faithfully,
 Diarmuid Hennessy
 School Principal