



# Starting School in St. Bride's N.S. Ballintubber





## Welcome!

Welcome to St Brides NS Ballintubber, an inclusive school where children are nurtured, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. We take great pride in our positive school atmosphere, high quality teaching and strong sense of community.

Every child is celebrated for who they are and we encourage them to grow in confidence, curiosity and kindness as they progress through their years with us.

We invite you to explore our website to discover what makes St Bride's Ballintubber a special place for your child to learn, and hope that you will revisit it to keep up to date with our school policies, and our many activities and events that take place throughout the school year.

Be sure to follow our Facebook page for regular updates of school life, and should you wish to visit our school or learn more about enrolling your child please do not hesitate to contact us, we would be delighted to welcome you!

Le gach dea-ghuí

Aoife Connolly (Principal)

Padraigh Mc Inerney (Deputy Principal)



## Description of the school

St Bride's NS Ballintubber is situated in the parish of Ballymoe/Ballintubber in the Diocese of Elphin. At present, there are 87 pupils on roll. We have four mainstream class teachers, two learning support/ resource teachers, two special needs assistants and a secretary. We provide both breakfast club and after school facilities on site. Our school building consists of four large classrooms, a spacious GP room, a pre-fab and staffroom. Our extensive school grounds include a large well-maintained playing field, a basketball court, school yard with activity trails and interactive games and a junior play area. We also have access to the newly developed local playground and astroturf pitch located in the award winning village of Ballintubber.



## Staff 2025/2026 School Year

Junior/ Senior Infants - Mrs Breda Donnelly

First/Second Class - Ms Emma Egan

Third /Fourth Class - Ms Aoife Connolly

Fifth/Sixth Class - Mr Padraigh Mc Inerney

Special Education - Ms Joanne Finan and Ms Theresa White

Special Needs Assistants - Majella Garvey and Geraldine Muldoon

Secretary - Karina Burke



## The School Day

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>9:05 am</b>            | <b>Children supervised in classroom</b>  |
| <b>9:20 am</b>            | <b>Teaching and learning</b>   |
| <b>11:00 am -11:15 am</b> | <b>Morning break</b>   |
| <b>11:15 am -12:30 pm</b> | <b>Teaching and learning</b>   |
| <b>12:30 pm -12:55 pm</b> | <b>Lunchtime</b>   |
| <b>12:55 pm- 2:00 pm</b>  | <b>Teaching and learning</b>   |
| <b>2:00 pm-2:05 pm</b>    | <b>Infant dismissal at 2:00 pm with 5 minute movement break for other students</b> |
| <b>2:05 pm -3:00 pm</b>   | <b>Teaching and learning</b>   |
| <b>3:00 pm</b>            | <b>Dismissal of 1<sup>st</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> classes</b>                        |
| <b>*12:30 pm</b>          | <b>Infant finishing time for week 1</b>  |

Please note the Board of Management does not accept responsibility for your child before 9:05 am/after 3 pm.

We have an on-site breakfast club (from 8:00 am) and an after-school service (2:00 pm – 6:00 pm) in the school GP hall. Please contact Mary Cuddy on 086- 2028771 should you wish to avail of this service.

Children are expected to be punctual and attend school every day (Education welfare act 2000). If for any reason your child cannot attend school you must inform the school in writing (note/email). The school is required to notify the Education Welfare Services if your child misses more than 20 days of school.



## School Uniform

### School Uniform

Our school uniform consists of:

Grey trousers /skirt/pinafore and blue shirt

(Please note girls can choose to wear trousers too)

Royal blue jumper/cardigan

Red tie (to be worn for official school photos and at Confirmation)

Please label your child's clothing

We recommend runners as your child will be active during breaktimes/ daily mile.



### PE

As an active school, we take part in many activities throughout the school year. Please take note of your child's PE day(s), which may change as the year progresses. We will keep you informed of these changes on school messaging service/ school website and school Facebook page. Please ensure your child is wearing tracksuit and runners to school on these days.

### Toileting accidents

Accidents can happen in school and having a spare set of clothes in your child's bag (socks/underwear/trousers) is essential as we do not always have spare clothes available

## Health and Safety

- Children who are sick should not be sent to school. You must consider the other children in the class.
- If your child develops any contagious illness such as chicken pox, impetigo, please keep him/her away from school until the period of contagion is over and inform his/her teacher immediately. A note explaining absences is expected or a doctor's certificate.
- **Head Lice:** No matter how careful you are about your child's hair, there is still a chance that it can become infested with head lice if he/she comes in contact with other children. Please check your child's hair regularly. It is very important that you inform your child's teacher immediately if you find headlice, as they are highly contagious. We will notify all parents to check their children's hair.
- **Health Problems:** If your child has a particular health problem such as allergies, asthma, diabetes etc., you should advise the school. The school should be made aware of the name and address of your family doctor.
- If your child needs medication on a regular basis, proper and clearly understood arrangements for administration of medicines must be made. (Refer to school policy).
- All information regarding your child's health will be treated in the strictest confidence.
- Your permission will be required for dental, eye or other health examinations during the school year.

## Healthy Eating Policy

- Our school avails of the School Hot Meals programme. Your child will receive a nutritious hot meal for their lunch every day. You will receive a welcome email from "The Lunch Bag" which will include log in details and a unique password for your child. Once you have registered with The Lunch Bag you can make your child's meal selection and make additional changes when required. Please send in a healthy snack and drink bottle for your child's morning break.



## The Curriculum

There are 12 subjects in the curriculum that are taught at every level in the school.

- |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1. English   | 7. Art       |
| 2. Irish     | 8. Music     |
| 3. Maths     | 9. Drama     |
| 4. Science   | 10. S.P.H.E. |
| 5. Geography | 11. P.E.     |
| 6. History   | 12. Religion |

The curriculum aims to:

- Develop each child's potential to the full;
- Encourage a love of learning; and
- Help children develop skills they will use all their lives.

## Importance of Play

Much of children's early learning and development takes place through play and hands-on experiences. Through these, children explore social, physical and imaginary worlds. These experiences help them manage their feelings, develop as thinkers and language users, develop socially, be creative and imaginative and lay the foundations for becoming effective communicators and learners.

In our Junior Infants and Senior Infants classes much of the children's learning will be through structured play and we will have dedicated Aistear sessions each week. There is a theme each month e.g. The Doctor, The Vet, The Farm, The Restaurant, The Hairdresser, The Clothes Shop etc. During these sessions children will play, dress up, role play using a variety of resources such as water, play-doh, sand, blocks, junk art etc.



## Children with Special Educational Needs

- All schools have a teaching allocation to meet the needs of pupils with special needs.
- The Special Education Teaching (S.E.T.) allocation provides a single unified allocation for special educational support teaching needs to each school, based on that school's educational profile.
- Schools will deploy resources based on each pupil's individual learning needs.
- Early Intervention is vital at this age. If a child requires an assessment of their needs, the school will then work closely with parents and contact the relevant support for their child e.g. NCSE, CDNT, NEPS etc.
- Parents of pupils with identified special education needs should discuss the support available from the school with the Principal and the assigned S.E.T.



## Language Acquisition

- If English is not your child's first language, please note that we encourage children to speak English or Irish at school except when sharing their native language with the class.
- Total immersion in a language is the easiest way for children to become fluent and this will enable them to learn better in our school.
- However, we encourage parents to use their native language at home as this is also really important for the child's development and acquisition of languages.
- If English is not your child's first language, we will provide EAL (English As an Additional Language) support to your child.
- EAL support will be provided in a small group setting by our EAL Teacher.

## Homework

Junior Infants homework will begin mid September.

Junior Infant children will be expected to complete homework every evening with the exception of Friday – no homework at weekends!

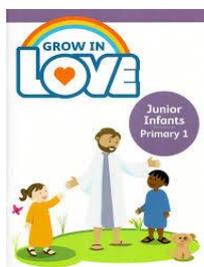
Homework will be given every day and will be taken up by the teacher the next day.

### **The following routine should be established early:**

- Set aside a quiet regular time
- The child should be sitting comfortably
- Homework time should include time for oral as well as written work
- Encourage your child to keep books and copies clean and tidy
- Praise your child's efforts at every opportunity
- If, when working with your child, you feel yourself becoming impatient you should stop
- If your child is persistently having problems with homework, contact the teacher to discuss the difficulties
- If, for any reason, homework cannot be done, let the teacher know
- Please sign the homework sheet every evening when all of the homework is completed.

### **Junior Infant Homework consists of:**

Jolly Phonics Sounds, Jolly Phonics Songs, letter formation, numeracy activities, Grow in Love (religious programme) activities, sight words, skills books and reading from the Rainbow programme by CJ Fallon.



### **Afterschool**

Please always check work completed in Afterschool/Homework clubs. It is your responsibility as a parent to ensure all work has been completed.

## Home-School Communication

- In order for us to do what is best for your child, it is very important to have good home-school communication. Parents are the primary educators of their children and your co-operation and support are essential to the school.
- For general information, we will issue notices or newsletters to you through the children, via email or via text message. (Please ensure you have provided the correct email address and mobile number to the office).
- It is important that you check your child's schoolbag regularly for notes.
- It is important that you attend parent-teacher meetings to keep in touch with your child's progress.
- Check our website regularly for up to date information – [www.stbridesns.ie](http://www.stbridesns.ie), the school also has a Facebook page, Ballintubber National School (St Bride's NS).
- If your child is experiencing a particular problem, it is essential that you communicate this to the teacher.



## Assessment

- Continuous informal assessment will take place during the school year, for example, assessment of Jolly Phonics sounds on a weekly basis, assessment of sight words etc.
- Parent Teacher meetings take place in November.
- Formal assessment in Autumn/Winter of Senior Infants.
- Formal written reports are sent out at the end of the Summer term.

## Birthday Invitations

School Policy is that birthday invitations are to be distributed outside of school hours.  
The teacher cannot distribute them in the classroom.

## The First Day .....

- Don't make a big deal about starting school as this can make children anxious. It helps if you prepare your child coming up to the first day. Some ideas are; let your child choose their schoolbag/pencil case/lunchbox etc.
- When you arrive at the classroom be as casual and calm as you can.
- You will meet the teacher who will encourage your child to sit with a group and play with the other children.
- Assure your child that you will be back to collect them, wish them goodbye and leave without delay.
- In spite of the best efforts of both teacher and parents, a small number of children will still become upset. If your child happens to be one of them, please remain calm. Patience and perseverance always work wonders.
- Trust the teacher. They are experienced at helping the children settle into their new surroundings. We understand that parents may be feeling anxious inside but it is vital that you have a positive and calm exterior.
- Tell your child that the teacher will look after them until home time. When you have reassured your child you should leave promptly. The teacher will comfort your child and help them settle in to the morning.
- You can always check back in with the office in a short while.



## Going home....

- Be sure to collect your child on time. Children can become very upset if they feel they are forgotten.
- If, at any time, the collecting routine has to be changed, please ensure you tell your child and the teacher.
- Please check your child's bag each evening for letters/notes from the school.
- If you have any concerns, please talk to your child's teacher.

## Helping your child in Junior Infants

There are many ways in which you can help your child to settle into and enjoy school life, and particularly their year in Junior Infants.

- Write their name on their coats, bags, books, lunch boxes, flask, clothing etc.
- Teach your child how to take off and put on their coat and how to open and close zips, buttons, buckles and laces.
- Show your child how to use and flush the toilet properly, and how to wash their hands properly.
- Encourage your child to share their toys and to tidy up after playing.
- Choose a lunch box and bottle/flask that are easily opened.
- Talk with your child about how they are getting on in school.
- Read to your child regularly.
- Encourage good behaviour, kindness and respect for others.
- Come to the meetings arranged by the school for parents.
- Set aside a quiet regular time with your child for homework each day.
- It is also a good idea to ensure your child is as independent as possible – physically, emotionally and socially. For example, if they can remain contentedly for a few hours in the home of a relation, friend or neighbour, then separation from parents when they start school should not cause any great anxiety.
- Meeting for play dates with future classmates can also be helpful.

Such experiences will help your child to feel more secure and self-confident and they should be able to settle into school more easily.



Please visit our school website, [www.stbridesns.ie](http://www.stbridesns.ie), where you can learn more about our school before your child starts in September.

POD

## POD Primary Online Database >

The Department of Education and Skills has developed an electronic database of primary school pupils called the Primary Online Database (POD) which involves schools maintaining and returning data on pupils to the Department at individual pupil level on a live system. The database allows the Department to evaluate progress and outcomes of pupils at primary level, to validate school enrolment returns for grant payment and teacher allocation purposes, to follow up on pupils who do not make the transfer from primary to post primary level and for statistical reporting.

The database will hold data on all primary school pupils including their PPSN, First Name, Surname, Name as per Birth Certificate, Mother's Birth Surname, Address (including Eircode), Date of Birth, Gender, Nationality, whether one of the pupil's mother tongues is English or Irish, whether the pupil is in receipt of an Exemption from Irish and if so the reason for same, and whether the pupil is in a Mainstream or Special Class. The database will record the class grouping and standard the pupil is enrolled in. The database will also contain, on an optional basis, information on the pupil's religion and on their ethnic or cultural background.

Both religion and ethnic and cultural background are special category data under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). These questions are optional. While these questions are optional, the information would be very useful to the Department for statistical and research purposes. Aggregated information on Ethnic/Cultural background will be used to track the progress of these groups, and to compare their progress with other groups, thereby identifying gaps in the system and assisting in the development and implementation of appropriate policies and interventions.

Aggregated information on religion will be used for statistical purposes only.

Parents/guardians are asked, if they wish to do so, to identify their children's religion and ethnic background, and to consent for this information to be transferred to the Department of Education and Skills. This consent is recorded via the Enrolment Application Form.

**Principal: Ms Aoife Connolly**

**Deputy Principal: Mr Padraigh Mc Inerney**

**Phone Number: 094-9655276**

**Email: [stbridesns@gmail.com](mailto:stbridesns@gmail.com)**

**Website: [www.stbridesns.ie](http://www.stbridesns.ie)**

