

Our Lady's Girls' National School

Ballinteer

Parent Information Booklet

Ethos of Our Lady's Girls' School:

The 'ethos' of Our Lady's Girls' School encompasses collective attitudes, beliefs, core values, traditions, aspirations and goals. These are reflected in the actual practices which are carried out in the school on a daily, weekly and yearly basis. While it is impossible to outline all aspects of the school 'ethos', the following characteristics are experienced and promoted as essential elements in the establishment of a supportive and positive 'ethos'.

- In Our Lady's Girls' School, where the ethos is that of a Christian Catholic school, religious instruction, in accordance with the doctrine and tradition of the Catholic Church is part of the education given to children who belong to that Church.
- The pupils are prepared for the reception of the sacraments of First Confession, First Holy Communion and Confirmation, in accordance with arrangements in the diocese.
- Prayer is a feature of the school day.
- Our school choir sings at the 11a.m. Children's Mass each Sunday within term-time.
- The school aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the pupil, including her relationship with God, with other people and with the environment.
- The Principal and teaching staff aim at maintaining high professional standards and creating a safe and happy environment.
- A spirit of mutual respect is promoted within the school community. Pupils are drawn by example and teaching to appreciate and respect people of different religious affiliations and of different nationalities.
- Close contact is maintained between school and home. Parents/Guardians and teachers support one another and collaborate with one another in leading the children to the fullness of their potential at the different stages.

Ancillary staff in the school are highly esteemed and respected. It is recognised that their work makes a valued contribution to the process of education.

Health and Hygiene:

Your child is sharing a room daily with a large number of other children. Close contact with other children is unavoidable, so particular attention should be paid to health and hygiene.

Head lice are a common problem in primary school. As your child shares a classroom and playground with a large number of other children, it is very easy for head lice to spread. Parents should check hair regularly for lice, a discreet word to the teacher or Principal and a note will be sent home to all pupils for hair to be checked. This helps to stop reinfection.

During primary school your child will be screened for vision, hearing and dental problems. Consent forms will be sent home.

Immunization against certain illnesses also takes place during primary school. Parents will be informed of dates and parental consent must be given for vaccinations to take place. No child will be vaccinated without parental consent.

If your child suffers from allergies, asthma, epilepsy or any other health problem you should inform the Principal and class teacher. If your child needs medication on a regular basis, please speak with the Principal and school secretary.

Children with Special Needs:

“Special educational needs” means the educational needs of students who present with learning difficulties. It also includes the needs of exceptionally able students. The following categories of pupils will receive supplementary teaching from the Learning Support Teacher and the Resource Teacher under the terms of the *General allocation Model outlined in DES Circular 02/05*:

- Pupils whose achievement on standardised tests in English or Mathematics is a cause for concern.
- Pupils with learning difficulties, pupils with social or emotional difficulties and pupils with co-ordination or attention control difficulties.
- Pupils for whom English is a second language.
- Pupils who have been identified as being in the low incidence category (*Appendix 1 Sp. Ed. Circular 02/05*) will receive an individual allocation of support through the Special Education Needs Organiser. (SENO)
- Pupils who have special educational needs arising from high incidence disabilities (borderline mild general learning disability, mild general learning disability and specific learning disability).

Resource and Learning Support:

Resource and Learning support teaching may take place as withdrawal for one-to-one teaching, withdrawal as a member of a small group, team teaching, in-class support or a mixture of any of the above. This decision will be made through collaboration between some or all of the following parties; the Principal, Class Teacher, Learning Support/Resource Teacher and parents of the child. Allocation of support is based on a combination of test results and teacher/parental observation. Parental approval is sought if a pupil is to be withdrawn from class for support. The Learning Support/Resource teachers work in collaboration with the class teacher to meet the individual needs of the pupil through differentiation of the curriculum. Teachers liaise with each other at an informal and formal level and parents also have opportunities to meet with Learning Support/Resource teachers.

Complaints Procedure:

- A parent must consult with the class teacher with a view to resolving the complaint. An appointment must be made as teachers cannot leave classes unsupervised.
- If after a reasonable time the problem is not resolved the Principal can be consulted. Again an appointment has to be made.
- If the complaint is still unresolved, the parents may bring the problem to the Board of Management.
- If no solution is found then the parents should bring the complaint in writing to the Board of Management.
- The Chairperson should then bring the precise nature of the written complaint to the teacher and seek to resolve the matter between all parties.
- After this procedure has been exhausted the Board of Management have to follow a strict set of rules giving equal consideration to both parties.

Starting School:

Starting school is a milestone in the life of a child. It is often a time of stress and anxiety for parents. Parents however, can do much to reduce such anxiety – both for themselves and their child. The following points will be of help to you, your child and the staff.

- On the first morning, Junior Infants may be brought directly to their classroom. Please check the noticeboard inside the main door to see which class your daughter is in.
- Her school books should be covered, labelled with her name and handed to the class teacher in a bag.
- Please do not take photos of pupils other than your daughter.
- We would ask you to leave as quickly as possible as this helps all pupils to settle.
- All Junior Infants will finish at Noon for the first week. They can be collected from outside their classroom.
- When collecting please access the school via the porch at the Infant block, rather than by the main entrance.
- After the first week when the new Junior Infants have settled, they can be dropped off in the main reception area where they will be supervised until collected by their teachers.

Homework Folders:

A zipped A4 folder is issued to pupils as part of the starter pack. This is used to bring home worksheets, books and any school newsletters or notes. It should be brought to school every day and checked at home every evening. Any notes, messages or monies for school should be put in the folder.

Class Contact List:

The Parents' Association organise a contacts list for each class. Parents are invited to submit their name and contact details for inclusion on the list. All those who do so are issued with a copy.

Birthday Invitations:

While birthdays are to be celebrated, we do not allow birthday parties, cakes etc. in school. We also do not allow birthday party invitations to be given out in school or in the school grounds, to avoid causing upset to those not invited. We would suggest that the class contacts list be used instead.

Change of address or contact details:

Please notify the school of any change of address or contact details. The school should also be notified of any change in family circumstances or any medical conditions diagnosed in a pupil.

Meetings with teachers:

Short parent/teacher meetings are organised every year, usually in November. Should you wish to meet with a teacher at any other time, we would ask you to make an appointment through the secretary to avoid disruption to the class.

Walking to school and parking:

When walking to school, if crossing the road, please do so with the lollipop lady at the designated crossing point; and use the marked pedestrian paths around the car park. If dropping off children by car please park in a designated space and walk your daughter to the school door. We ask parents not to park by the school railings for health and safety reasons as this obstructs children walking and also other drivers.

Punctuality:

We place a great value on punctuality and expect all pupils to be in attendance by 8.50a.m. Any pupil who arrives late for school is required to sign into the Late Book (Pink) in reception. Junior pupils should always be handed over to a responsible adult and never allowed to walk to their classroom alone. The class may not always be there. We also ask that pupils are collected on time after school as we do not have a facility to supervise children after hours.

Absences:

Pupils who are absent from school should bring a note for their teacher on their return. Any pupils absent for 20 or more days must be reported to the National Education Welfare Board. It is school policy to issue a letter to be signed by both parents after 15 days absence.

Attendance:

Regular attendance at school is vital for pupils to make good progress. We would ask parents to avoid taking children out of school during term time for holidays etc. as this is very disruptive to their education.

Leaving early:

Pupils who need to leave early during the school day to attend appointments etc. should bring a note for their teacher and be collected by a parent/guardian. They should be signed out in reception (green book) and signed in again if returning to school.

Recommended Healthy Lunches:

- A drink (preferably water) in an easy to open and close container.
- A filled sandwich, wrap, roll, or pasta, some fresh fruit and/or veg.
- If wished, a treat such as cake, a bun, plain rice cake or healthy non-sugary bar, raisins.

We do not recommend:

Sweets, chocolate, crisps, fizzy drinks, popcorn, sweet bars etc.

We also do not recommend yogurts or jelly in school for junior classes as problems occur with spillages.

Toys:

We would ask that toys and special possessions not be brought to school as any loss or damage can be very upsetting for pupils. As pencils and crayons are supplied in school, these items also do not need to be brought in schoolbags.

Uniform:

The school uniform consists of:

- Grey pinafore or skirt
- White shirt
- Royal blue cardigan or jumper with crest
- Plain grey or white socks or tights
- Black school shoes
- School tie (available from school)
- Navy tracksuit with crest
- White polo shirt
- Runners
- Optional navy school jacket with crest

All of the above are available from:

Pat O'Farrell School & Sport Ltd, Unit 12, Stillorgan Shopping Centre.

Alternatively, items may be purchased in any shop and crests sewn on as needed. These are available through the school.

Tracksuits and runners are worn on P.E. and Music days only (usually Mondays, Tuesdays or Wednesdays). Uniform should be worn on all other days.

Hair should be tied back from face with a bobbin or hairband.

School bags should be large enough to accommodate an A4 folder.
For health and safety reasons, wheelie bags are not allowed in school.

Your daughter will need an old adult-sized t-shirt labelled with her name to wear over her uniform for Art and any other messy activity.

Music Programme:

We are delighted to have a very successful Music Programme running in the school. Lessons are taught by trained Music Education Specialists from Churchtown School of Music and instruments are provided for use in the school. Classes take place during school hours on Tuesdays and are thoroughly enjoyed by all. There are two 10 week terms per school term.

Costs are as follows:

Infants – Mini Music (1 teacher) €40 per year.

1st – 4th classes – Violin (2 teachers) €80 per year.

5th + 6th classes – Guitar (2 teachers) €80 per year.

Music expenses may be spread between two terms.

A concert is held in April to show what the children have learned.