



## Naíscóil agus Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche



## Eolas Scoile School Information



## Background:

Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche was established in 1999 by a group of parents who wanted their children to be educated through the medium of Irish. Our founding parents had a clear vision for the education they wanted for their children, and the whole school community has worked tirelessly to make their vision a reality. Previously based at Castlewellan Community Centre, we moved to our new purpose built accommodation in September 2010.

Our aims are:

- That we educate our children to achieve their full potential through the medium of Irish;
- That we value and seek a high level of parental involvement in their children's education;
- That children are bilingual when they leave Naíscoil agus Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche at the end of Rang 7.





**Extra-curricular activities:**

- Club Bricfeasta – every morning from 8am – 8.45am
- Afterschool Club – every afternoon from 2pm – 4pm Homework, Sports, Art & Crafts, Cookery, Reading and Games are offered in BBB as afterschool activities
- Club Mata – helps Key Stage 2 pupils improve their Maths skills
- Summer Scheme - having fun and speaking Irish in July
- Choir – Christmas Concert and school events, help with singing at sacraments
- School Council and Eco-School Committee comprising of representatives from Rang 4 – 7
- An Gairdín – our very own school garden project
- Outdoor Learning Spaces – dedicated outdoor spaces for different key stages in school





## Spórt:

At Naíscoil agus Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche, pupils experience a wide range of sporting activities.

- Foundation Stage children participate in 'Huff agus Puff' - 10 minutes of daily physical exercise before morning lessons
- Hurling/camogie and Gaelic football training with local coaches.
- Key Stage 2 pupils play Gaelic football, hurling, camogie and soccer for the school in local inter-school and Cumann na mBunscol competitions, as well as cross-country running.
- Promotion of wide range of sports, such as rugby, netball and athletics with guest coaches coming into school
- Key Stage 2 pupils travel to Down Leisure Centre in Downpatrick every spring for swimming lessons.
- Every year KS2 pupils are given the opportunity to participate in the Cycling Proficiency Programme.



In PE, teachers follow a movement and athletics scheme which ensures continuity and progression of core skills and competences.



## The School Day:

The Náiscoil runs from 9 am – 12 noon.

For R1-7, Class begins at 9.00am. Children are supervised in the clós (playground) from 8.45-9.00am. Parents can avail of our daily breakfast club, pupils can be dropped off at the school from 8.00am where they will receive a healthy breakfast, which costs £3 per morning.

- Breaktime is from 10.30-11.00am.
- Lunchtime is from 12.00-1.00pm.
- Rang 1 and Rang 2 go home at 2.00pm.
- Rang 4 – 7 go home at 3.00pm.
- Rang 3 go home at 2.00pm until Christmas.
- From January onwards,
- Rang 3 go home at 3.00pm.

On Fridays, we have staggered finishing times. R1 and R2 pupils finish at 1.50pm. R3, R4 and R5 pupils finish at 1.55pm and R6 and R7 pupils finish at 2pm.



At Náiscoil agus Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche, we pride ourselves on our healthy eating policy. Our school dinners come from St. Malachy's Primary School in Castlewellan and are of a high standard. It is recommended that pupils eat fruit, a yoghurt or a small sandwich at breaktime. Pupils are encouraged to stay hydrated with water throughout the day. We discourage sugary/fizzy drinks, crisps, chocolates and sweets as these can impact on the children's behaviour.



## Curriculum:

There are three stages in Primary School:

- Foundation Stage (Naíscoil, Rang 1 and 2)
- Key Stage 1 (Rang 3 and 4)
- Key Stage 2 (Rang 5, 6 and 7)



We follow the Northern Ireland Curriculum: Literacy, Numeracy, The World Around Us, The Arts (Art & Design, Music and Drama), P.E, Religious Education, ICT.

We have an Irish immersion programme in Naíscoil, Rang 1 and 2, and we begin to teach English formally in Term 2 of Rang 3.

Naíscoil agus Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche assesses pupils in the same ways as pupils are assessed in any other primary school in Northern Ireland – Irish or English medium. In accordance with the NI Curriculum, in Years 1 – 7, teachers must assess your child's learning.

In Years 1 & 2, this predominantly takes the form of ongoing individual classroom observations. However, in Rang 1 & 2, pupils are also assessed on a 6 – weekly basis on their key literacy and numeracy skills/targets, albeit in a very informal style, such as structured games and 1:1 activities.

In Years 3 - 7, pupils undergo standardised tests in the summer term in English, Irish and Maths, which give a more formal indication of progress. These scores are then analysed by the teachers and subject coordinators, and used to plan the future teaching and learning of our pupils. Additional support is provided on a weekly basis to help raise standards in Numeracy and Literacy.



A significant proportion of the curriculum in Rang 1 is delivered through play-based learning, a natural progression from the Naíscóil curriculum. Children learn to problem solve, take turns, share, explain their methods and extend their vocabulary and communication skills through language rich, adult supervised/led play experiences.

We are very well resourced with ICT equipment. Each class has an interactive whiteboard, desktop and laptop computers, iPads and Chrome Books, as well as access to other ICT equipment such as BeeBots, Probots and Spheros. We have subscriptions to online learning tools such as Sumdog, Izak9, Giglets and Accelerated Reader, all of which help to contribute to an enhanced learning experience for our pupils.

### **Religion:**

We are in inter-denominational school, we follow 'Living Learning Together', a pastoral care programme which encourages personal development and mutual understanding of the world and the wider community. We also prepare children for the Catholic sacraments if their parents so wish, following the Veritas 'Beo Go Deo' Catholic Education Series. Parents are consulted during the sacrament years, and are asked if they would like to opt their child out of sacraments. We of course also cater for these children not taking part in the sacraments with alternative lessons / activities.





## Our uniform consists of:

- Navy sweatshirt embroidered with the school logo and motto (available from McKenny's Clothes Shop in Castlewellan);
- Grey trousers, skirt or shorts;
- Green polo shirt embroidered with the school logo and motto;
- Navy school coat (optional);
- Black shoes; (preferably velcro/slip-on for younger pupils)
- Girls may wear navy or green gingham dresses in the summer time;
- There is also an optional O'Neills school quarter-zip which can be ordered from the O'Neills website.



## P.E. uniform consists of:

- Grey/ navy track bottoms, or grey/navy shorts;
- Suitable trainers
- Green polo shirt embroidered with the school logo and motto or O'Neills school jersey (optional)

Children come to school in their PE gear on the days of their PE lessons



## Transition from Naíscoil to Bunscoil:

Naíscoil Bheanna Boirche is our feeder nursery school. Children who have attended Naíscoil Bheanna Boirche are well prepared for the transition to Rang 1 in Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche. They participate in a language-rich immersion programme in Naíscoil Bheanna Boirche, where they experience a play-based learning environment through the medium of Irish, developing their language skills so that they are ready for the Rang 1 curriculum.

At regular intervals throughout the year the Naíscoil pupils attend storytime and play sessions in the Rang 1 classroom to get to know Máire Boden, the Rang 1 class teacher, Martina Lenaghan and Ruth Laverty, the classroom assistants and the current Rang 1 pupils. These sessions really help to make the pupils ready for the transition from Naíscoil to Rang 1.



We usually have a short induction programme at the start of September to settle the pupils quickly and easily into Rang 1.



## Parents:

We have a caring, friendly ethos at Naíscoil & Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche where each child is valued and difference is celebrated. We acknowledge our children's successes in weekly school assemblies and we invite parents to join us for special assemblies to celebrate with us on special occasions.

We strive to involve parents in the life of the school. Parents help with clubs and events, and we have parents employed in the school. Parents are involved in fundraising and school development, and we have a very active and vibrant parents' group 'Cairde' who organise activities and fundraising events to help subsidise school trips and equipment, and new members are always welcome.



We believe that happy children are more effective learners. Parents are always encouraged to discuss any concerns they may have either with the class teacher or with the principal. Whilst having Irish in the home is not a prerequisite to attend Naíscoil agus Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche, parents are strongly encouraged to avail of the many great Irish language classes that are available in the area to be able to support their child's learning.



**At Naíscóil agus Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche, we have well established links with other schools and community organisations in the community.**

- Key Stage 2 pupils take part in Cumann na mBunscol Gaelic football and hurling tournaments with local primary schools
- Strong links with local post-primary schools, St. Malachy's High School, Castlewellan, and Shimna Integrated College, Newcastle.
- Strong links with Bunscoil Mhuire agus Phádraig in Downpatrick, Gaelscoil na mBeann in Kilkeel and Bunscoil an Iúir, Newry.
- Children from R5-7 take part in an All-Ireland Drama competition Féile Scoil drámaíochta
- Rang 6 agus 7 pupils are given the opportunity to visit the Donegal Gaeltacht to experience the spoken language amongst native speakers





**Sonraí úsáideacha:**

**Useful contact details:**

**guthán: 028 437 71356**

**suíomh idirlín: [www.bunscoilbb.com](http://www.bunscoilbb.com)**

**ríomhphost:**

**[info@bunscoilbb.castlewellan.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@bunscoilbb.castlewellan.ni.sch.uk)**

**seoladh: Naíscóil & Bunscoil  
Bheanna Boirche,  
Bunkers Hill,  
Castlewellan,  
Co. Down,  
BT31 9EB.**