

Bennettsbridge N.S.

**Bennettsbridge,
Co. Kilkenny.
R95R280.**

School Prospectus 2023/2024

Bennettsbridge N.S. is a Catholic Co-Educational Primary School.

Bennettsbridge N.S. Mission Statement

Bennettsbridge N.S. is a Catholic School under the patronage of the local Catholic bishop. The Catholic ethos permeates the school day. At Bennettsbridge National School we celebrate the uniqueness of the child as it is expressed in each child's personality, intelligence and potential for development. We will strive to nurture the child in all dimensions of his or her life: spiritual, moral, cognitive, emotional, imaginative, aesthetic, social and physical.

At Bennettsbridge N.S. the School Staff, the Board of Management, the Parents and the Children work together to create a safe and educationally stimulating environment where the Christian values of Respect, Tolerance and Understanding are promoted. Our Vision and Aims are informed by; inclusiveness and equality, the holistic development of the child and our school atmosphere.

Bennettsbridge N.S. is an inclusive school.

Discrimination is prohibited on the following grounds:

Gender; Marital Status; Family Status; Sexual Orientation; Religion;

Age; Disability; Race and Traveller Community.

(Equal Status Act 2000).

School Staff 2023/2024

Mrs Sheila Aylward	Principal
Mrs. Olivia Selmon	Deputy Principal /5 th Class
Mrs. Caitriona O'Keeffe	2 nd Class
Mrs. Emily McCormick	Special Education
Mrs. Aoife Pembroke	3 rd Class
Ms. Nano Nagle	Senior infants
Mr. John McDonald.	6 th Class
Ms. Órla Morrissey	1 st Class
Ms. Kerrie Dunne	Junior Infants
Ms. Katie Mullan	4 th Class
Ms. Lynne Power	Special Education
Ms. Richelle Guilfoyle	Senior Infants
Ms. Deirdre Dowling	Shared Special Education Teacher
Ms. Anna Hughes	EAL teacher (Part- time)
Mrs.Tracey Walsh Brennan	Secretary
Ms. Linda O' Brien	SNA
Ms. Kellie O' Farrell	SNA
Mr. Patsy Whearty	Cleaner /Caretaker

Board of Management 2019-2023

Patron's Nominee	Fr. Pat Dalton PP (Chairman)
Patron's Nominee	Mr. Seán Booth (Treasurer)
Teachers' Nominee	Mrs. Olivia Selmon
Board Nominee	Ms. Elvera King
Board Nominee	Mrs. Katie Hayes
Parents' Nominee	Ms. Joanne French
Parents' Nominee	Matt Wallace
Ex-officio	Mrs Sheila Aylward (Principal/ Secretary)

Parents' Association Committee Members

Eimear Cody (Chairperson)
Helen Dooley (Secretary)
Deirdre Driver
Serena Maher
Trish McNally
Jane Millea
Neasa Neary (Treasurer)

In School

The Pupils are expected:

1. To be well-mannered and courteous at all times with teachers, staff-members, visitors, helpers and each other.
2. To attend school regularly and punctually.
3. To wear the school uniform on all school days except when otherwise instructed.
4. To respect the school environment, the property of others and their own property.
5. To be attentive in class and to complete all assignments on time and to the best of their ability.
6. To behave in an orderly, safe fashion when lining-up, exiting and entering the school and classrooms or engaging in any school related activities.
7. To abide by the policies and procedures in place, to ensure the smooth and safe running of the school.

The school promotes good behaviour by:

- a) A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- b) A comment in a pupil's copy or homework journal
- c) A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation
- d) A word of praise in front of a group or class
- e) Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- f) A mention to parent: written or verbal
- g) Special mention in class or at assembly

How the school responds to unacceptable behaviour:

- a) Reasoning with the pupil
- b) Reprimand (including advice on how to behave)
- c) Temporary separation from peers, friends or others
- d) Carrying out a useful task in the school
- e) Loss of privileges
- f) Detention during a break
- g) Prescribing additional work
- h) Referral to Principal Teacher
- i) Communication with parents
- j) Suspension
- k) Formal report to the Board of Management

Bennettsbridge N.S. General Information

1. School Calendar 2023/2024

Holiday	Closed	Re-opens
School reopens for all pupils		Wed 30/8
Halloween	Mon 30/10	Mon 6/11
Christmas	Mon 25/12/23	Mon 8/1/24
February Bank Holiday	Mon 5/2	Tues 6/2
February Mid-term	Thurs 15/2	Mon 19/2
St. Patrick's Weekend	Mon 18/3	Tues 19/3
Easter	Mon 25/3	Mon 8/4
May Bank Holiday	Mon 6/5	Wed 8/5
June bank Holiday	Mon 3/6	Wed 5/6
Summer Holidays	Wed 26/6	To be decided

- **Emergency Closures:** Adverse weather may necessitate changes to the February and Easter breaks as per Department directives. Details will be communicated via the Aladdin Connect App and /or the local radio station (KCLR96FM) when possible.
- **Infants:** For safety reasons infants are dismissed at 11:50am on half- day closures.
- **Early Closures:** Parents will be notified on Aladdin or via school bulletins of early closures to facilitate DES staff webinars, PDST school support or termly staff meetings.
- **Staff Meetings / DES Staff In-Service:** School may close early for termly staff meetings. There may be additional school closures for DES approved staff in-service. Details will be posted on Aladdin in a timely manner.
- **Croke Park Agreement:** The provisions of the Public Service Agreement 2011 provides for an additional 36 staff hours which are provided for non- class contact activities.

2. Admissions

- The Annual Admission Notice detailing application and decision dates for admission to Junior Infants 24/25 will be available on the school website in January 2024.

3. School Hours

Morning Supervision	8:40am
School commences	8:50am
Little Break	10:30am – 10:45am
Lunch	12:00pm – 12:25pm
Junior & Senior Infants Dismissal * Junior Infant Dismissal for the first two weeks of school is at 12:00pm.	1:30pm
1 st – 6 th Class Dismissal	2:30pm

4. Attendance and Punctuality

- We are obliged to inform the Child and Family Agency (Túsła) when a child is absent for twenty or more days during any school year. Please enter an absence explanation via the Aladdin app. Absences explained under the correct category (Illness, Urgent, Holiday, Suspended, Other, Unexplained) ensures accurate information is recorded and returned as such to TUSLA if required.
- **Late Arrivals:** Children arriving late for class miss out on important class-work and disrupt the other pupils and the Class Teacher. Your co-operation in relation to punctuality is important and much appreciated. An Aladdin message explaining the reason for the late arrival is appreciated.
- **Roll Call:** As outlined in DES Circular 0033/2015, *'The roll should be called at the same time each day, normally within the first hour after the commencement of the school's 5 hour 40 minute day.'*

Please note the following; In BBNS the roll is taken by 10:00am each morning. Children arriving after this time will be marked absent.

- **Dismissal:** Classes (1st -6th) are dismissed at 2:30pm. Parents who wish to have their children escorted home should make clear arrangements to have their child/ children met at a designated gate (either at the school or the field gate). The person escorting the child/children should be at the designated gate no later than 2:30pm as the school cannot accept responsibility for looking after the children after that time.

5. **Child Protection**

- The Principal and Deputy Principal are the school's DLP (Designated Liaison Person) and deputy DLP, respectively. The DLP's function is to liaise with the HSE in the event of child welfare concerns. The Board of Management has adopted as school policy the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools . We are obliged to report matters of concern in relation to abuse of children to the local Health Service Executive. They will assess the case and provide the necessary support for the child concerned.

6. **School Uniform**

- Navy v-neck sweatshirt, light blue polo top, navy tracksuit bottoms .
- Summer uniform: navy mid-thigh / knee-length shorts. Navy v-neck sweatshirt., light blue polo top,
- Please label all sweatshirts.

7. **Infants**

- **Dressing:** You can help your child enormously by teaching him/her to dress himself/herself – doing up buttons and zips; tying laces etc.

- **Schoolbags:** Wheelie bags are not suitable for Infants because they can cause accidents. Shoulder bags are the best option. Please ensure that the longer books fit in the bag and that your child can open and close the bag.
- **Books/Pencils:** Please ensure that your child is equipped with a pencil, a sharpener and an eraser – every morning! Markers are unsuitable for Infants.

8. Lunch

- Something small and convenient is recommended for lunch breaks e.g. a piece of fruit, small sandwich .No glass bottles or tin cans are allowed in the school. An easy-open screw top plastic bottle for lunch drink is best. No hard toffee, lollipops, crisps or chewing gum please. Both lunches are taken in the classrooms before breaks. The school also uses an optional healthy lunch delivery service. Please see www.thelunchbag.ie for details.
- **Lunch Form:** Children who go home for ‘Big Lunch’ must have parental permission granted on Aladdin. Please ask if this applies to you. Going to the shop to buy lunch is not permitted as it gives rise to problems with supervision, insurance etc.
- **Food Allergies:** Please discourage your child from sharing or exchanging lunch items with other children. If your child has an allergy please record the details on the Registration Form. Please inform the Class Teacher at the beginning of each year.
- **Wipe Out Waste Policy:** Please pack children’s lunches in reusable boxes or bags. Children, all wrappers, all waste and all uneaten food should be put back into your lunch box or lunch bag and brought home for recycling or disposal.

9. **Parent /School Communication:** Please adhere to the following to ensure smooth communication and response with school personnel;

Aladdin

- Parents can use Aladdin to notify school of absences, early pickups and late arrivals. . Do not remove your child from the school without informing the Class Teacher, Principal or Secretary.
- School staff use Aladdin to send individual, class and whole school messages, bulletins and emails .

Google Classroom

- Teachers use Google Classroom to outline homework, share educational links and occasional classwork. .Each child will be assigned their own login details.

Other Communications

- **Report Cards:** Annual Report Cards will be sent to parents via Aladdin Connect before the school closes for the summer break.
- **Concerns:** If a parent/guardian has a particular concern about any aspect of the school’s work then the matter should be referred, in the first instance, to the Class Teacher and subsequently to the Principal - if necessary. An informal approach to such matters is always the best course of action.
- **Sensitive Issues:** Sometimes parents have important or sensitive information about their child which the class teacher might need to know. If this information is to be reported orally, then please repeat the information to the new class teacher at the start of each school year.
- **The School/Home Liaison Form** is occasionally used to communicate with parents regarding Homework, Attendance, Conduct, Punctuality, Progress etc.
- **School Policies** are available to view on request from the office. Relevant policies are available on

the school website also. Parents will be notified via school bulletin when relevant draft policies are being devised.

- **Additional Communication:** is via The School Prospectus, Annual Parent Teacher Meetings, (usually in November), Individual Parent Teacher Meetings, Annual Infant Induction Meeting, Annual Report Cards, The School's Website, The Suggestion Box at the front door.
- **Suggestion Box:** This affords parents an opportunity to communicate directly with the school. Signed suggestions will be given consideration by the Staff and the Board. You are reminded that "In a spirit of collaboration and trust, parents will recognise that there are areas of school activity that belong to the professional work of the teachers and also a recognition that certain areas of responsibility (e.g. finance) belong to the Board of Management", (CPSMA 2012).
- **Change of Address, email address, mobile number etc.** Please inform the school immediately if there any changes to your contact details. You need to inform the HSE at the same time, to be included in Dental / Inoculation / Vaccination programmes.
- **Circulars:** Dept. Circulars about school matters are available at: www.education.ie.
- For all other communications please contact the school by phone or email.
- **Staff Privacy:** You are respectfully asked to please show due consideration for staff privacy outside of school hours and during holiday periods. Thank you.

10. Financial

- **Aladdin Epayments:** Parents are encouraged to use Aladdin Epayments for all money transactions. If this is not feasible please put money in a sealed

envelope and write your child's name, purpose of the money and amount enclosed on the envelope.

- **Insurance:** The names of all children attending the school are submitted to Allianz Insurance for 24 hour/365 day social, domestic, leisure and school activities cover. The cost is paid at the beginning of Term 1 as part of school fees.
- **Photocopying:** A levy of €20.00 per child, per annum contributes towards the cost of photocopying and maintenance.

11. Health and Safety

- **Medicines:** Please see the Administration of Medicine Policy on the school website and complete the attached form if applicable. In keeping with CPSMA advice the administration of medicines by staff will only happen in emergency situations.
- **Collecting Children:** If your child is to be collected by someone other than yourself please inform the Class Teacher.
- **Car Park:** Children's safety is a priority. Please use the lined spaces in the car park, follow the arrow directions for entry and exit and do not park near the school gates. Common sense and courtesy ensure prompt pick-ups and drop-offs.
- **Authorisation Notes/ Permissions:** Unless the school is in receipt of an authorisation note /or permission granted through Aladdin Connect children will not be permitted to leave during school time for sports events, Mass-serving etc.
- **Prohibited Items:** Mobile phones, smart watches, glass bottles, correction fluid, chewing gum, laser pens and any items or substances which may be harmful. For reasons of Child Protection and Privacy children are not permitted to bring mobile phones, smart watches, cameras or electronic games to school or on school outings.

12. School Activities

- **Class Allocation:** Assigning children to classes is the Teachers' prerogative and responsibility. Teacher knowledge, information, experience and observation inform the decisions about placement, having due regard for the best interests of the child. Parents' requests regarding class or teacher selection cannot be accommodated. School authorities are requested by the Department to ensure that class sizes are kept as low as possible. This may result in 'multi-grade' classrooms .
- **Annual Assessment Tests:** Drumcondra literacy & Numeracy tests are administered in May and June to 1st – 6th classes. Results are communicated via the annual Pupil Report Card. Aggregate results from 2nd, 4th & 6th classes are reported to the Dept of Education and to the Board of Management annually. A Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST) is administered to Senior Infants in the spring/ summer term.
- **The Sacraments:** Communion for 2nd Class children is held during May of each year. Confirmation takes place every second year for 5th and 6th classes.
- **Book Fair:** This annual event is run to replenish/replace books in each class library.
- **Credit Union:** (Deferred until further notice) The Credit Union accepts deposits from 1st to 6th Class children at the school on Tuesday mornings before school starts.
- **School Tours:** Usually in late May or June.
- **External Teachers:**
 - ❖ **Recorder:** Margaret Ó Faoláin De Bhróithe visits 1st to 6th classes weekly for recorder lessons.

- ❖ **Gymnastics:** Caoimhe Shiel visits all classes during the winter term for gymnastics. Details are posted and payable on Aladdin.
- ❖ Other external coaches /teachers visit the school periodically as determined by the needs of the children and when timetabling permits.

Miscellaneous

- **'Little accidents':** Sometimes a change of underwear is warranted. In the event of this happening, new underwear will be provided by the school which you are asked to replace with new underwear. Please see the Intimate Care and Toileting Policy.
- **Extra-Curricular Games:** Teams and games are organized and run by the local GAA club. Announcements about fixtures etc. are sometimes relayed through the school.
- **Birthday Parties:** Invitations should not be distributed within the school. Children get very upset if they've been excluded. Legislation forbids schools to distribute class lists.

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