



# St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School Newsletter

December 2019

A thuismitheoirí agus a chaomhnóirí,

As we approach the Christmas season, there is much to report and reflect on. Boys new to 'big school' in junior infants and other classes have settled well into routines as evidenced by how well everyone performed at the various Christmas shows and events.

**Welcome back:** I am delighted to welcome back Ms. Elaine Keenan who has returned to teach the boys in Room 2.

**Homework meetings:** These have been held for all year groups, I want to thank the teachers for organizing these meetings as well as Parents for attending.

**Meeting with teacher:** Teachers are more than willing to have a quick chat with parents- these informal meetings are best held at collection time after school.

**Parent-teacher meetings for junior infants and first classes:** These will be held on Tuesday & Thursday January 28<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> January. Teachers will be in contact early in the new year to make arrangements.

**Language Curriculum in-service:** All 4 schools on the campus held their language in-service day on November 5<sup>th</sup>. This was a very successful day for us and led to sharing of best practice by our staff on effective strategies for language teaching (Gaeilge & English). We have allotted time at each staff meeting to build on initiatives we took on that day.

**Frásaí na seachtaine:** Each week, class teachers teach a topical frása gaelach to the boys. Boys from classes take it in turns to read the phrase over the PA to the entire school community. This is among the initiatives we have implemented on foot of our language in-service. \_

**Christmas plays:** Since Hallowe'en when scripts were circulated among the teachers concerned, the teachers and boys have been using any spare moments to practise the songs for their Christmas shows. As we approached the beginning of December, the effort ratcheted up and rehearsals on stage with light and sound became the norm. The proof of the pudding really did come through in the eating as over the past week, the boys in junior infants and 1<sup>st</sup> classes have performed for us here, our neighbours in the other three Belgrove schools and on Thursday last finally for you the Parents and grandparents.

**"Santa's List":** This was produced by the teachers of our junior infant classes it was simply magical- seeing boys who have only been in school for about 14 weeks knowing their lines, their cues, when to speak and move and most importantly how to sing out in unison was amazing. Santa recalled all the things he needed on his list to make Christmas special- he was helped by his reindeer, and robins as well as a host of other character from the Christmas story

**"Tinsel and Tea Towels":** it is audition time for the Christmas play and parents receive a letter from school asking them to supply their child with a costume- in the middle of all the commotion, school life is disturbed by the visit of two inspectors Mr. Precise and Mr. Particular who ask the boys to continue on as if they were not there..... A case of art imitating life! Real-life characters

from THIS school figure prominently. Worrying for staff to see impersonations so true to life..... which brought great laughs from the parent audience!!

**DVD of concert:** This year, CPD sessions recorded and produced the DVD of the Christmas concerts. I want to thank David McLean, director of the company for making this possible. DVDs are still available from school office cost €10. Many thanks to Joanne Giles and members of the PA for co-ordinating sales!

**Carol Service:** On Friday December 13th, our focus shifted from our school plays to the religious aspect of Christmas when our senior infant and 2<sup>nd</sup> classes held a carol service in St. Gabriel's Church. We had wonderful singing from Senior Infants and 2<sup>nd</sup> classes, readings on the nativity story by boys across a number of classes and beautiful carolling! Again, it was great for us to see so many parents and grandparents present to support the boys. Well done to all involved!

**Thursday & Friday 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> December:** We had a Christmas theme and all boys wore a Christmas jumper or a Christmas hat.

**Santa in Belgrove:** On Thursday, despite his hectic pace of life and very busy schedule, Santa visited all the classrooms with a gift for everyone. If your child was absent, the gift will be kept for him until he returns to school.

**Maths Week:** Maths week took place from October 12th to 20th. The first and second class boys participated in Mathletics (maths through P.E.) with thanks to Ms O'Dywer. We also had maths activities for all classes and a specialised question of the day for each class level. Each teacher had lots of cross curricular maths activities and a great week was had by all

**Active School:** We continue to promote the importance of physical activity and incorporate it into our school routine on a daily basis. Active Archie is always eager to go on 'active adventures' with boys who are planning to take part in (or spectate at) any active events. Thanks to Gavin who puts us thro' our paces every Friday morning at Bootcamp and also to Niall McAndrew who had Bootcamp as Gaeilge recently.

**Green Schools Committee:** The Green School Committee's theme this year is Energy. Thanks to all the children and parents who contributed projects during Climate Energy Week. Please can you remind your children to use the compost and green bins in school. Have a Happy Christmas and New Year. The Green Schools Committee.

### **Sam Maguire and Brendan Martin Cups:**

On 4<sup>th</sup> November, we welcomed local hero Jack McCaffrey with the Sam Maguire Cup. This was a great occasion for our school and for the boys. Boys asked Jack a number of very searching questions!!

On the 7<sup>th</sup>, hot on Jack's heels, we had a visit from Niamh Hetheron, Caoimhe O'Connor and Sarah Fagan.

Each of the ladies went through their training and fitness regimes and were very open about their toughest opponents- Cork!

**Belgrove Junior Girls' Concert:** All the school visited the Junior Girls' School for their show and we all had a great time. Well done to all.

**Christmas cards:** This year, we produced Christmas cards, the proceeds of which raised considerable funds for the school. I want to thank Joanne Giles for co-ordinating the production and printing of these.

Don't forget to check out the photos of all events on [www.belgrovejbs.ie](http://www.belgrovejbs.ie) !

**Christmas Shoebox Appeal:** We would like to extend a sincere thank you to all those Parents who took the time to assemble shoe boxes for our nominated charity "Inner City Helping Homeless". We had a great response and I want to thank Deirdre Moreau in particular for co-ordinating the project with us.



Peter Kelly, who has friends here in the school has asked that we support a charity called 'Boots for Africa' by helping collect old and, as he says, 'pre-loved' boots.

We will place a collection box in the school for a few days before Christmas in order to collect some of these pre-loved boots.

We hope to collect soccer, GAA, and rugby boots and then ship them off to townships and underprivileged sports teams in South Africa to provide a basic need for these kids to play and participate in Sport.

After the World Cup it became much publicised that a few members of the team, including the Captain of the charity Siya Kolisi (remember him??) had grown up playing barefoot on rock hard surfaces trying to enjoy a sport that he loved so much, and at the same time trying to avoid falling into gangs and being lead down the wrong path.

<https://www.bootsforafrica.com.au/>

<https://www.instagram.com/bootsforafrica/>

Many thanks for your support.... Might even help the pre-Christmas 'feng shui' clear out!

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**Nut allergies:** I want, on behalf of the staff, to thank parents for their support and co-operation in ensuring guidelines are followed in cases where there is a boy or boys with allergies in particular classes.

**Holidays:** we re-open on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

**Enrolment:** Applications for enrolment in Junior Infants for September 2020 should be made now. The closing date is 31<sup>st</sup> January next. Application forms are available from the Secretary's office or may be downloaded from the school website [www.belgrovejbs.ie](http://www.belgrovejbs.ie)

**Date for Diary:** Table Quiz—Our annual fundraiser and fun night out will take place in Clontarf Castle Friday 31<sup>st</sup> January.

**Yoga:** First and Second Classes will start yoga on 10<sup>th</sup> January with Karen Hazzard from the Yoga Factory.

**Junior Infants:** The MMR and 4/1 booster vaccinations will take place on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020. Please return Consent Forms.

**M & M Theatrical Productions** will visit the school with the Production of "Beauty and the Beast" on 21<sup>st</sup> January.

**Drumming:** David Day will start his four drumming sessions on 22<sup>nd</sup> January.

**Science Week:** 10<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> February 2020

**Mid-term break:** 17<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> February 2020.

Finally, can I wish everyone in the School Community - Staff, Parents, members of the Board of Management and boys - and beyond a very happy and peaceful Christmas and may the feast of the birth of Christ enrich us all.



**Príomhoide: John O'Sullivan**

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