





Ráiteas Misin

Mission Statement

We at Naíscoil agus Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche are dedicated to creating a caring and secure school community in which every member values the importance of speaking Irish, and in which children, parents and staff feel valued, supported and happy.

We strive to provide an ethos in which openness, honesty and bilingualism permeate through all aspects of our school and the wider community.

Foireann na Scoile School Staff



Múinteoir Rang 1
/ P1 Teacher -
Máire Boden



Príomóide na Scoile
- School Principal
Ciarán Mac an
tSionnaigh



Cúntóir Ranga/Classroom
Assistant - Martina
Lenaghan

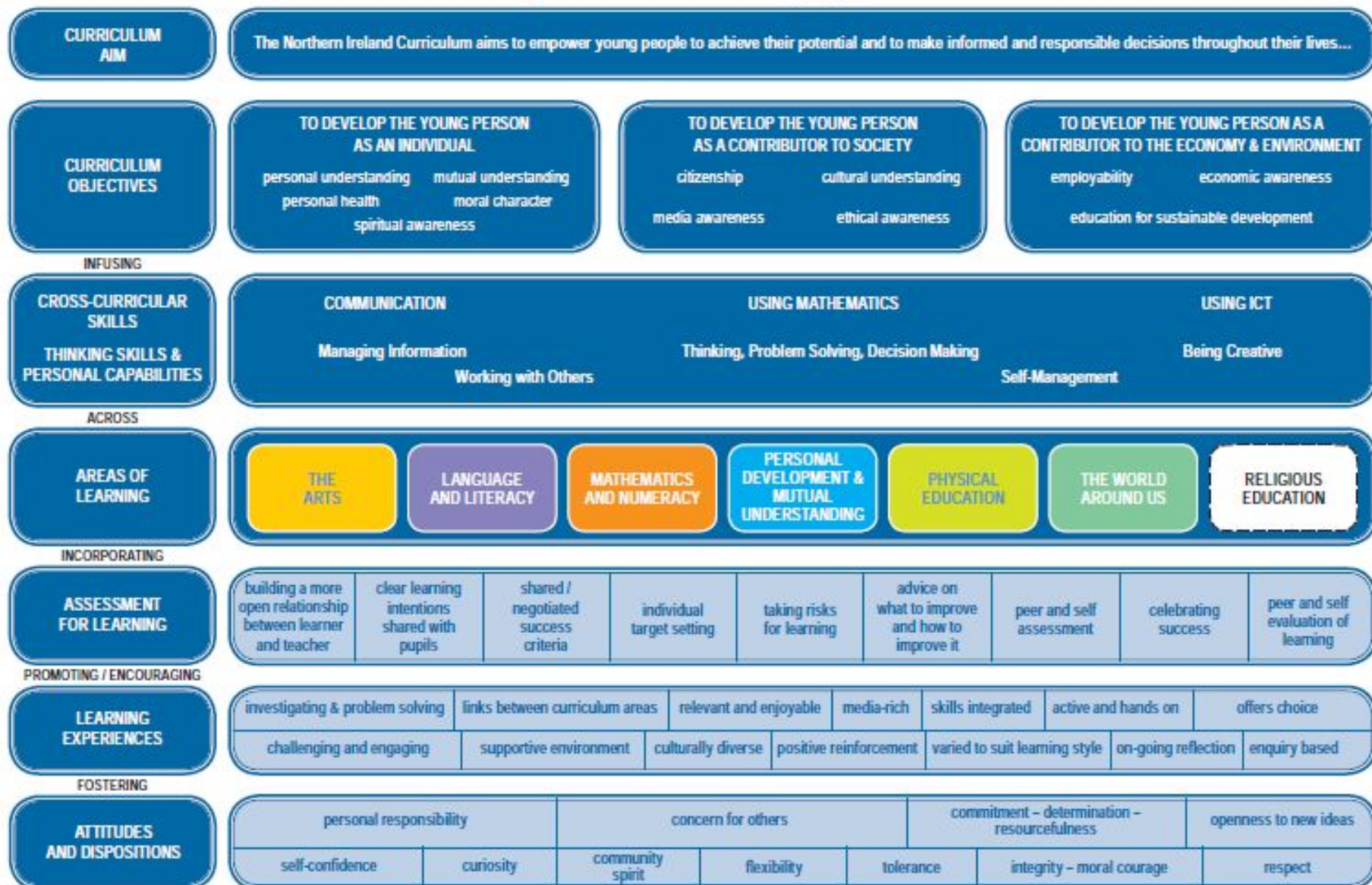


There are three key stages in Primary School:

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

We follow the same Northern Ireland Curriculum as any other primary school in NI: Literacy, Numeracy, The World Around Us, The Arts (Art & Design, Music and Drama), P.E., Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU), Religious Education and ICT.

The "Big Picture" of the Curriculum at Key Stages 1 & 2





Curaclam (ar lean...) Curriculum (continued...)

A significant proportion of the curriculum in Rang 1 is delivered through play-based learning. 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 cover real-life topics such as 'The Post Office', 'At The Vet' and 'The Beach Café', as well as covering seasons, festivals and celebrations throughout the world.

We are **very well resourced with ICT equipment**, with PCs, laptops, Surface Pro devices, Chromebooks, an interactive board and a set of iPads in each classroom, but we also take pride in putting oral communication and interaction first, so children aren't allocated digital devices on 1:1 basis. We were awarded 'Digital-School' status in June 2017, and we came first place in the Primary School section of the Northern Ireland C2K ICT Excellence Awards in June 2019.

We are in inter-denominational school, and 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.





Litearthacht Literacy

The biggest question parents have about our curriculum is the teaching of **Language and Literacy**.

- In Rang 1 we teach the same language concepts and literacy skills as taught in any other Primary 1 classroom in Northern Ireland, ie **Talking & Listening and Phonological Awareness Skills** such as Beginning Sounds, Rhyme, Syllables and Blending, we just happen to use Irish words as samples, rather than English, such as 'madadh' or 'muc' instead of 'mouse' or 'monkey' or 'lón' rhymes with 'rón', rather than 'door' rhymes with 'floor' etc...
- We still teach **phonics**, looking at a new beginning sound a week, and we send home weekly high frequency keywords to help pupils with emergent reading
- We also teach **reading skills**, just like our English-medium counterparts, such reading from left to right, and using beginning sounds, context and pictorial clues to help tell the story
- We teach **writing skills**, starting off with individual letters/sounds, building up to words and their own names, and progressing to sentence level towards the end of the year
- Pupils are **taught English** lessons from Rang 3 onwards, but have the foundation literacy skills from Rang 1 and 2 already, and so aren't starting 'from scratch' at all.



Measúnú Assessment

Another key question parents often ask is 'how will my child be assessed?'

- Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche assesses pupils in the same way pupils are assessed in any other primary school in Northern Ireland - Irish or English medium.
- In accordance to the NI Curriculum, in Years 1 - 7, teachers must assess your child's learning.
- In Rang 1 & 2, this predominantly takes the form of ongoing individual classroom observations. Rather than sitting end of year tests, pupils are 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 Rang 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 used to plan the future teaching and learning of our pupils.
- Every year, 1:1 parent-teacher meetings are held to help to update you on your child's progress and to suggest areas to help support your child in the home environment.
- At the end of each school year, you will receive a written report from your child's teacher. This will describe your child's progress in every aspect of the curriculum.



Spóirt Sports

At Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche, we endeavour to ensure pupils experience a wide range of sporting activities.

- Structured weekly PE lessons are taught, in which teachers follow a movement and athletics scheme which ensures continuity and progression of core skills and competences.
- Sports and games included in after-school club activities, such as FunFit Sports and tennis lessons
- Key Stage 2 pupils play Gaelic football, hurling and soccer for the school in local inter-school competitions.
- Key Stage 2 pupils travel to Down Leisure Centre in Downpatrick every spring term for swimming lessons.
- Key Stage 2 pupils participate in the Cycling Proficiency Programme.





Imeachtaí Seach-churaclaim

Extra-curricular activities

- Club Bricfeasta - Breakfast Club open from 8 - 8.45 am which Rang 1 can attend once the phasing in process is complete at the end of September.
- Club Iarscoile - Afterschool Homework Club 2-4pm (2 - 3pm Rang 1 - 3, 3 - 4pm Rang 4 - 7) daily - as above, Rang 1 welcome to avail of the Club Iarscoile once settled in and staying until 2pm.
- School Council
- Eco-School committee
- Summer Scheme - having fun and speaking Irish in July
- Regular school trips, walks and outings
- Forest school activities in Bunkers Hill
- Inter-school sports and quiz competitions
- Scoildrámaíocht competitions
- Poetry and conversation Féiseanna



- Class begins at 9 am. Children are supervised in the clós (playground) from 8.45am
- Breaktime is from 10.30 - 11.00am. Lunchtime is from 12 - 1.00pm.
- At Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche, we pride ourselves in our healthy eating policy. It is recommended that pupils eat fruit, a yogurt or a small sandwich at breaktime. Water is always available.
- Our school dinners cost £2.60 per day, payable via ParentPay or with cash. ParentPay log-in details will be provided in September. The menu is put on our school website every term. We don't allow sugary/fizzy drinks, crisps, chocolates and sweets. We do not have any children with a nut allergy at present but we discourage bringing nuts to school.
- As a result of various dietary requirements and needs, we ask that parents don't send in buns or treats on occasions such as birthdays etc. We also ask you to reiterate with your child about not sharing their food, as kind as they may think they're being!
- Rang 1 and Rang 2 go home at 2.00pm Mon - Thurs and 1.50 on Fridays to help ease traffic congestion
- Please fill in usual people who will collect your child on our data collection form, and inform us of any changes in circumstances or if someone different will be collecting your child.



Poncúlacht agus Tinreámh

Punctuality and Attendance

- School begins at 9am, but pupils are welcome to be dropped off and supervised in the school yard from 8.45am.
- On wet mornings, pupils come straight to the classroom from 8.45am.
- Please try to be in school on time, as they may miss registration, ordering their dinner (which is done first thing) and the beginning of morning lessons.
- Children who are late will be marked late on the register.
- If your child is absent, you should send a note in explaining the absence the next day or phone the office. If this does not happen, the absence goes down as "unexplained absence".
- If you are collecting your child early, you must contact the office before coming to the classroom, unless prearranged with Máire.



Our uniform consists of:

- Navy sweatshirt embroidered with the school logo and motto (available from John McKenny's Clothes Shop in Castlewellan, Co. Down);
- Grey trousers, skirt or shorts;
- Green polo shirt embroidered with the school logo and motto;
- Navy school coat (optional);
- Black shoes (slip on/velcro ideally);
- Navy or green gingham dresses in warmer weather;
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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
- We have a school jersey and quarter zip top which is **OPTIONAL**, which can be ordered from the O'Neills website. The quarter zip can be worn any day of the week too, not just PE days if you so wish.
- Rang 1 pupils are strongly recommended to wear **velcro trainers** for PE to enable them to change as independently as possible



Please ensure that your child comes to school in a suitable waterproof coat, to allow us to be outdoors as much as possible. In Rang 1, coats with zips are preferable, as we need pupils to be able to put on and take off their coats as independently as possible.

We also ask that you pack a change of underwear, socks and trousers/tracksuit bottoms in your child's school bag daily (or it can be kept on their coat hanger in the cloakroom) in the case of a toileting accident or a fall in a puddle etc...

PLEASE ENSURE ALL JUMPERS AND COATS ARE CLEARLY LABELLED! Jumpers especially are frequently taken off, and are easily taken home by another pupil. If it is clearly labelled, it can be returned promptly, whereas without a name, it may become lost indefinitely.



Cúrsaí Airgid

Transport, Free School Meals and Uniform Allowance

For those wishing to apply for home to school transport assistance, the Education Authority has introduced a new, online process for parents applying for home to school transport support.

Further information on eligibility for transport assistance and how to apply can be found on the Education Authority website following the link www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/home-to-school-transport/how-to-apply-for-transport-assistance-for-my-child

If you think you could be eligible for free school meals or school uniform allowance, further information and downloadable forms can be found at: <https://www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals-uniform-grants>



Tuismitheoirí Parents

Our caring, family ethos at Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche means that we strongly value the importance of parental input in their child's education, and we enjoy a wonderful level of parental participation and involvement in our school community here at Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche.

We strive to involve parents in the life of the school. Parents help with our after-school activities and assist on school trips and events. Parents and grandparents are employed in throughout the school in a variety of roles. Parents are also involved in school fundraising, and we have a very active and vibrant Parents' Support Group called 'Cairde' who regularly organise fundraising events and activities to help subsidise school trips and resources. Please consider joining Cairde in the new school term, if you think you could lend a hand.

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. Our door is always open, and we pride ourselves here at Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche in our open and friendly relationships between teachers and parents.

If parents wish to speak to their child's teacher privately, please ring the school office to arrange a telephone appointment.



Aip Scoile School App

As we are an award winning Eco School, we aim to use as little paper as possible. Therefore, we send out important messages and information via our Schools NI app.

Parents are asked to download it asap, if you haven't done so already. Please select Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche as your favourite school, ensuring that notifications are enabled, and check the app regularly. We also ask parents to visit our website to keep up to date with what is happening in our school, for the school dinner menu etc...

Our app is available on both Android and Apple devices. Simply visit our school website where you will be prompted to download the app for free.

www.bunscoilbb.com



Ag Tacú sa Bhaile Home Support

We use a range of methods to communicate with our parents at BBB, Such as our Schools NI app, our school website www.bunscoilbb.com and Google Classroom.



Whole-school, general messages are sent via the school app, whereas individual class level messages are sent primarily via each class 'Google Classroom'. Class teachers set homework, post messages and communicate at a class level using this app, as well as providing individual, personal feedback to pupil on their work/activities.

Log-in details and passwords are sent home mid-September.

In addition, we highly recommend parents follow Cairde Naíscoil agus Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche on Facebook for regular posts and suggestions regarding home-learning and Irish-language events and activities going on locally.



Ag cuidiú le do pháiste Supporting your child

Whilst having Irish in the home is not a prerequisite to attend Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche, parents are strongly encouraged to avail of the many great Irish Language classes and intensive courses that are available in the area in order to be able to support their child's learning.

In addition, homework's are always supplemented with support materials for parents to use to help with pronunciation and meaning. Remember, homework is a REVISION of work/topics covered in class, so pupils will be able to tell YOU what they are meant to do, and will take great joy in doing so! Hopefully the overview sheets and verbal instructions on Google Classroom will also be of help to you.

There are also some fantastic websites to assist parents with Irish and support their child, such as:

www.abair.ie www.tearma.ie www.foclóir.ie
www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/irish/blas www.irishforparents.ie
www.cúla4.com www.foghlaim.tg4.ie

We also recommend using the following apps if you have a tablet device at home:

Cód na Gaeilge, **Sumdog**, **Cúla 4**, **Fuaim Ú**

and we welcome any recommendations for good apps you may come across at home! Please send them in!



Obair bhaile Homework

In Rang 1, we don't send formal homework home until after the Halloween break, although from September we send home challenges and tasks such as finding and posting pictures of items of a certain colour, listening to a story/song or watching a short video and having a chat with you about it etc. This is a great way for them to start using their Irish a bit more at home, but also to ensure everyone is comfortable and confident using Google Classroom.

Once homework begins, we will send a blue BBB book folder home every Monday, which will contain any reading text books and worksheets needed for the week, along with a weekly overview of what to do, and how to help pronounce words etc. We will also send home a homework jotter, but this stays at home. As homeworks are completed, glue the worksheet into the jotter, take a photo of the piece of work, and at the end of the week attach the worksheet photos to the assignment on Google Classroom. We do not mind if, eg, Mondays homework isn't complete on Monday night, as long as all tasks are completed and photos are posted to Google Classroom by Thursday evening, to allow us to assess the work and provide meaningful and timely feedback.

Please return the homework folders to school on Fridays, to allow us to prepare the folders again for the following Monday.



Please inform staff of any health and medical needs your child has including any food allergies, asthma etc...that we're not already aware of.



If your child becomes ill while in school, we will contact the number you have provided on your data collection form. Please make sure this is always up to date and inform us of any changes throughout the year.

In the case of wetting accidents, we encourage pupils to change independently using the change of clothes in their bags/in the cloakroom. In the rare case of a soiling incident, as per our 'Intimate Care' policy, pupils will be encouraged to clean themselves independently, made comfortable, and parents will be called.

Please be aware that staff cannot administer medicine. If your child needs medication, feel free to come to the school to give it when needed.

Please inform Máire or Ciarán of anything that may affect your child's behaviour such as bereavement, sudden shock, separation, etc. All information will be treated as strictly confidential.

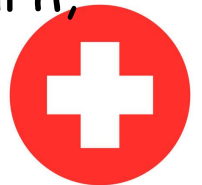


If your child is ill, please keep them at home until they have fully recovered to help prevent the spread of infection. NHS guidance on incubation periods for common illnesses is available online via the following link:

[https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Guidance on infection control in%20schools poster.pdf](https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Guidance%20on%20infection%20control%20in%20schools%20poster.pdf)

If you are in any doubt, please also just contact the school office for clarification.

An absence slip should be taken to school upon their return, These will be provided at the start of the year.





- Putting on own shoes, jumper, coat
- Velcro shoes
- All clothes labelled
- How to open and close own schoolbags, lunchboxes, tupperware etc...
- Colouring in & scissor skills
- Reading with your child
- RECOGNISE own name in writing/print
- **Don't practice letter/name-writing yet!** This often leads to wrong letter formation habits which can be extremely difficult to undo. Leave that to us!



- Singing nursery rhymes together
- Read bedtime stories together and encourage an interest in books and reading
- Playing 'I Spy', changing to something beginning with the sound 'mmmmm' or 'aaaaaa' etc...
- Turn-taking and waiting for their turn with games such as Snakes and Ladders
- Talking about their day with you, and the 3 best things about their day, all to help develop basic conversation skills



- Included in your information pack is a summary document of our Child Protection Policy along with our Intimate Care Policy for your reference.
- All of our other school policies are available to view on the school website www.bunscoilbb.com or from the school office by appointment with the principal



Please return your completed data collection and permission forms by Friday 14th June at the latest. Please also provide the school with a photocopy (or send/take in the original copy for us to photocopy for you) of your child's birth certificate, as we need a hard copy for our school records, by this date too.

This presentation is also available under the Parents Section on our school website www.bunscoilbb.com.



Mar fhocal scór...

We are really looking forward to meeting you all as your children start their journey in Rang 1. We understand that this is an exciting time for you and your child. However, we also understand that after this evening, you may think of something you would like clarification on.

If you have any further questions please don't hesitate to email the school office on info@bunscoilbb.com or you can directly email Máire on mboden273@c2kni.net or by calling the school on 028 437 71356.

Go raibh maith agaibh.



Mol An Óige

**NAÍScoil & BUNSCOIL
BHEANNA
BOIRCHE**