

## Background

Scoil Íosagáin opened as a six teacher school in 1982. It replaced the red brick building on the Arklow Road, which had been in existence since 1938. The original National School was situated on the Ballyfad road, opposite the Green, and was built in the 1800's.

Scoil Íosagáin is a Catholic school under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin, in Arklow Parish and in the half Parish of Johnstown. It is governed by a Board of Management of eight people, two nominees each from the Patron, the Parents, the Teachers and the wider community. The Chairperson is one the Patrons nominees. Since 1997 we have had a lay chairperson.

## Mission Statement

Scoil Íosagáin, though proudly and primarily a Catholic School will, endeavour to cherish equally all the children in its care, irrespective of background, creed, colour, race or ability.

We will provide a safe, happy environment where the children will be constantly encouraged to achieve their goals and remind of the endless possibilities and opportunities which education provides.

They will be encouraged to have respect for themselves and others, their home, their environment, their country. In achieving these ends the school will need the support and input of the whole school community.

## The school motto is:

***Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí***  
***(Praise the young and they will flourish)***

## Board of Management

The function of the BOM is to manage the school on behalf of the Patron, for the benefit of the students and to provide an appropriate education for each student at the school.

Chairperson:	Seán Lenehan
Principal/Secretary	Matthew Meleady
Treasurer:	Tom Flemming

Ciarán Furlong (parent), Maria Carroll (parent), Nora Finn (community), Amanda Kavanagh (Teacher) Martin Cannon Cosgrove P.P.

The board meets at least five times a year. The agenda always includes a Principals report and a Financial report.

## Teaching Staff

Principal:	Matthew Meleady
Deputy Principal:	Eileen Porter

Eithne Byrne, Amanda Kavanagh, Linda Byrne (Career Break), Laura Doyle ( for Eithne Byrne), Emma Fogarty ( Part Time resource) Claire McDonald, (Part Time Resource)

## School Secretary

Elizabeth Foxton

## Ancillary Staff

Geraldine O'Rafferty  
Oliver Doyle

## **Parents Committee:**

Paul Kennedy (Chair) Ciara Byrne (secretary), Thomas Clare (p.r.o.), Maria Carroll, Andy Kinsella, Chris Tallon, Dorothy McCarthy, Fiadhnaí Ni Lionain, Sinead Buttle, Una Byrne, Wendy Cronin, Barbara Suter Murray, Yvonne Menton, Linda Byrne (Teachers Rep)

The function of the parents association is to work with and support the principal, teachers and board of management and to promote and maintain a good relationship partnership between school and home. The committee meets regularly, roughly every six weeks. The Principal and/or Deputy Principal always attends these meetings.

### **Absences -**

All absences must be accounted for by parents by note to the principal or class teacher. No exceptions can be made to this rule.

### **Accidents / Illness-**

Should a child become sick or injured at school, parents or their representatives are contacted immediately to collect the child. In the event of serious illness or injury the school reserves the right to take appropriate action and is indemnified to do so by parents' consent on enrolment form (confidential enrolment form).

### **Assessment-**

The school keeps regular checks on pupils' progress.

1. weekly spellings, tables etc.
2. Christmas and summer tests are administered by the class teacher in all subjects.
3. Standardised Tests: All Standardised are conducted in accordance with Department Of Education and Skills Guidelines. Drumcondra Micra T and Sigma T are administered annually. NRIT will be administered in accordance with best practice.

The Principal visits other classes regularly to keep check on pupil's progress and offer encouragement. Where a child is experiencing difficulties in weekly spellings, tables etc the parents are sent for to sort out the problem. With regard to Christmas assessments and the Standardised Tests, parents are informed of results at the January Parent/Teacher meetings. The results of Summer assessment are posted in June.

### **Behaviour -**

In every school there are sanctions to register disapproval of unacceptable behaviour. The

sanctions which are operational in the school are reasonable and graded. The following strategies may be used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour.

1. Reasoning with the pupil.
2. Reprimand - including advice on how to improve and if appropriate, communicate with parents.
3. Teacher informs parents.
4. Temporary separation from peers.
5. Loss of privileges
6. Detention during a break
7. Prescribing additional homework or written work
8. Further communication with parents
9. Further referral to principal
10. Communication with parents re suspension
11. Suspension.

#### Operation of the Discipline Code

1. Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested, in writing, to attend the school to meet the Chairperson and Principal.
2. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil will be suspended for a temporary period. Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of Rule 130 (5) of the Rules for National Schools ([www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)).
3. In the case of gross misbehaviour the Board will authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.
4. Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case in accordance with rule 130 (6). The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences. All efforts will be made to match the curriculum to the abilities, aptitudes and interests of each pupil, bearing in mind the good of all children.

*(Full details are available by contacting the office)*

#### **Books -**

Books are ordered for each class by the school. If you feel you are eligible for the small book grant, please contact the school secretary.

### **Choir -**

The children of Scoil Íosagáin and Bearnacleagh come together to form a choir for the Sacraments. The Children are expected to attend for the ceremony as they would have benefited from previous years supporting their celebrations.

### **Class Allocation -**

The Principal is responsible for the allocation of classes. Where a staff member expresses a desire for change which is feasible the case will be dealt with on its merits.

### **Class Division -**

Sometimes, owing to unmanageable numbers, it is necessary to divide classes. In the Junior classes it is done according to age and in Senior according to abilities.

### **Complaints Procedure -**

A parent who has a problem concerning a teacher should, first of all, approach the class teacher with a view to resolving the situation.

Where the parent is unable to resolve the problem, he/she should approach the Principal with a view to resolving it.

If the complaint is still unresolved, the parent should raise the matter with the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

### **Child Protection Policy - ([www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)) ( Full policy available for view by contacting the office.)**

The Department of Education and Science has issued Guidelines and Procedures to all schools in relation to Child Protection and Welfare. These guidelines promote the welfare of all children and are to be welcomed. The BOM of Scoil Íosagáin has adopted these guidelines as school policy. Legislation demands that if there is a matter of concern in relation to abuse of a child/children, whether the abuse is physical, sexual, emotional or neglect, the school is obliged to report this to the local Health Board. The Health Board will assess the situation and provide the necessary support for the child/children.

Neglect is defined by the guidelines as follows:

- Late for school regularly
- No suitable lunch / undernourished
- Dirty or unwashed
- Constantly tired in school / sleeping in class
- No books, pens, pencils etc.
- Parents non attendance at Parent / Teacher meetings
- Unwashed clothes
- Failure to complete/do homework on a regular basis.

The school's designated Liaison person, appointed by the Board of Management is the school Principal.

***Irregular and Poor Attendance:***

The Education Welfare Act 2000 compels schools to implement certain regulations in relation to pupil attendance and absence. A central theme of one section of the Act is to promote and encourage school attendance and the educational welfare of children. However, the Act places certain obligations on the school. The school is legally obliged to inform the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) when a pupil is absent for a long continuous period or when a pattern of irregular attendance is apparent. A report about each child between the ages of 6 and 16 years has to be sent when a pupil has been absent for a period of 20 days in any school year. No matter how genuine an absence may be, a report has to be sent to the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB). Sanctions can then be imposed on the parents due to irregular or poor attendance when the reason (s) for the absence is/are considered unwarranted. Genuine and unavoidable reasons will be acceptable, though an EWO may take contact with the family. The School Rules oblige a parent to send a written explanation to the class teacher on each pupil absence. When appropriate (ie long illness etc) parents must submit to the school a copy of medical evidence regarding a child's absence as well as retaining a copy as evidence for inspection by the relevant authority.

**Closures -**

Parents are notified at the beginning of each year of all foreseen closures. Emergency closures are dealt with as they arise, but with the guarantee that all pupils will be looked after. Parents are informed of In-service, Planning and Staff Meetings well in advance (as soon as the school knows)

## **Dance/Drama/Music -**

The school employs outside help in the above areas. Drama is taught to all classes by Michael Way, Red Moon Theatre, each week. 'Hip Hop' dancing is taught to all classes by Laura Kitt. Bridget Kenny teaches keyboard from 2nd class up to 6th class. The Gorey School Completion Programme covers 50% of the cost.

## **Drugs -**

As part of their preparation for life after primary school, the children are given a good grounding in the pitfalls of drugs - hard, soft and legal. Where possible, we get the Gardai to come in to talk to the children. The good work of Margaret Sheriff and Majella Aspel in this area is immeasurable.

## **Enrolment Policy** ( *Full policy available for view by contacting the office.*)

Scoil Íosagáin is a Catholic school, under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin. As a Catholic School, we aim to promote the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the pupil: intellectual, physical, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and other people. The school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. The school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and tradition of the Catholic Church and promotes the formation of its pupils in the Catholic faith. The school prepares children for reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation, the Eucharist and Confirmation.

The school shall endeavour to cater for all who present seeking legitimate enrolment, provided numbers and space permit and that the necessary facilities, supports and backups are in place.

Enrolment shall normally take place on the first day of the new school year.

Application forms will be issued from **January**. Parents/Guardians will be issued with Code of Discipline and will be expected to confirm in writing their acceptance of same as a condition of their child/ren's enrolment.

Where numbers for enrolment in Junior Infants exceed viability, an age cut-off point will be introduced.

The school will enrol children subject to the following priorities:

1. Siblings of children in the school
2. Catholic children from the catchment area.
3. Traveller children residing in the area
4. Catholic children with no catholic school in their area.
5. Children of other / no faith in the area.

### **Educational Outings -**

Each year we receive numerous advertisements in relation to Educational outings. It is at the teachers own discretion which of these outings is selected in accordance with their own Yearly Plan.

### **Equality -**

This school cherishes all its children equally, irrespective of creed, colour, gender or ability.

### **Entertainment (in-school) -**

Visiting storytellers are invited, subject to availability and funding resources.

### **Family Contribution -**

Families are asked to contribute to the good running of the school. The current monthly contribution amount is €15 per child or €30 for a family.

### **Family Mass -**

The family Mass is held in Johnstown each month. Children preparing for the Sacraments should attend. Notification is sent from the school.

### **G.A.A. -**

Coaching in hurling and football is provided periodically by the Wexford County Board for all pupils in the school. We are very grateful to the G.A.A. for the service.



## **Homework Policy -**

The reason for homework:

- As a link between home and school.
- Strengthening the partnership between parent/guardian, teachers and children.
- Parents/Guardians can become actively involved in the child's formal education, observe the child's progress and identify any problems that the child may have.
- To evaluate and build on work undertaken in the classroom.
- To give children the opportunity to memorise and further study areas already taught in school, e.g. history, geography, poetry, spelling, reading, tables etc.
- To make use of material and sources of information which may not be accessible in the classroom.
- As an exercise in self-discipline, to develop independent study habit which can prove invaluable later.

### ***Types of homework:***

There is generally a mixture of oral work (study/memorisation) and written work. This balance may vary depending on class work.

Memorisation, as outlined earlier, forms a very important part of homework and should always be checked as it is often neglected by children.

In relation to spelling a **Look, Say, Spell, Cover, Write and Check** method is recommended.

### ***Infants:***

In infant classes, homework is sometimes given but is not recorded by pupils, parents/guardians as at infant level they tend to have more contact with the teacher and are generally aware of what the child has to do.

Homework usually consists of word recognition, reading or perhaps a worksheet. It may also involve informal work such as collecting items for the nature or 'colour' table.

### ***1st Class to 6th Class***

Homework is generally assigned to all classes from 1st to 6th class, Monday to Thursday and is written into the pupil's homework journal.

Homework tends to cover all subjects with the core subjects Irish, English, Maths, being allocated more time.

### **Homework at weekends -**

Paired reading is recommended as an encouragement to children and the reading of library books is encouraged at all times, including weekends. At senior level this may involve newspaper or other reading.

Homework is generally not given at weekends, however, homework may be given in certain circumstances e.g.

- Where homework/schoolwork during the week was done incorrectly through carelessness or inattention on the part of the pupil.
- Work may be prescribed as a sanction for misbehaviour.  
(see code of Discipline and School Rules)

### **Time Spent on Homework -**

It is difficult to specify how long children at various levels should spend on homework as the time spent depends on:

- the age of the pupil
- the child's ability to listen in class and learn
- the child's level of concentration
- the suitability or otherwise of the learning environment - distractions, interruptions etc.
- the time of evening when homework is undertaken

The following may be used as a guide by parents:

Infants 5 - 15 minutes

1st & 2nd      20 - 30 minutes

3rd & 4th      30 - 45 minutes

5th & 6th      45 - 75 minutes

Periodically, teacher may ask parent / guardian to monitor and note the time taken by pupils to complete assigned homework.

### **Some difficulties that may arise -**

If the child is doing his/her homework under the proper conditions and is spending an inappropriate amount of time at homework the parent/guardian would write a note explaining the difficulty in the child's journal or arrange to meet the class teacher, LS teacher or school Principal, as appropriate, with a view to resolving the issue.

## Healthy Lunch Policy -

As part of the school's S.P.H.E. (Social, Personal and Health Education) policy and in consultation with the staff, parents council and board of management a school lunch policy has been agreed upon. The main focus of this policy is on healthy lunches.

The following are the main points of our policy:

- As part of the Department's initiative on Health Promotion, we have been included in the **Schools Lunch Scheme for the year 2013 2014**. The scheme provides a full lunch. (Children are permitted to bring extra lunch for small break should they so wish). Inclusion in the scheme for future years will depend on our engagement with the procedures and guidelines of the scheme. Confirmation of inclusion will be on **a year by year basis and cannot be assumed**.
- We have engaged '**Fresh Today**', a Wexford based company, to supply our lunches under the scheme. Lunch selection may be changed by logging on to the 'Fresh Today' Website.
- We are promoting the HSE's healthy eating guidelines. All classes will discuss regularly the nutrition quality of school lunches. Senior classes will discuss the food pyramid
- Parents will be sent a letter at the beginning of the school year, outlining our policy and asking for their co-operation. Lists of recommended lunches and foods not recommended will be included.

### *Recommended for lunches – (Small break)*

*Sandwiches, rolls, crackers, fruit, vegetables, popcorn, plain biscuits, scones, homemade cakes, buns, bracks, yogurt, petit filous, fromage frais, soup, tea, pure orange juice*

### *Not recommended for lunches -*

*Fizzy drinks, sweets, crisps, chips, bars, chocolate etc.*

3. We would like our school be an environmentally friendly place so children

are encouraged to bring lunches in lunch boxes, drinks in beakers or suitable containers.

5. Lunches will be eaten in the classrooms from 12.25 - 12.35 daily.
6. This programme will be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis.

### **Home / School Liaison -**

The school endeavours to keep parents fully aware of school policy and to inform them of whatever changes may occur from time to time. This is normally done in the form of notices sent via children. Something really important is posted.

Parents are kept informed of their children's progress by Parent/Teacher Meetings held annually, normally in January/February and by individual reports posted at the end of each school year. It is school policy to nip problems in the bud rather than let them fester and grow out of proportion or indeed control. To this end, parents are encouraged to contact the school whenever a problem arises and arrange an appointment with the Principal and/or the class teacher. Likewise if a problem arises in school the parents are contacted. The school is happy to record the existence of an active Parents Association which has been in existence for a number of years. Constant liaison is maintained between the Principal and this committee. The Board of Management welcomes input from this group.

### **Insurance -**

All pupils of Scoil Íosagáin will be covered for Personal Accident (24 hour cover). The cost of the premium will be met from the Family Contribution.

### **Learning Support -**

It is school policy to cater for children with special needs from an early stage and we therefore begin remediation in Senior Infants.

### **Litter -**

Children are encouraged to respect their environment, whether home, school or the area at large. The school experiences no litter problems and the children must be complemented in this regard. Bringing home their personal lunch litter has cut our refuse charges by more than half.

### **Meetings -**

Parent / Teacher Meetings are held each year in January or early February. Times will be issued but should the times not suit please contact the office and a change may be arranged.

Staff Meetings are held each term. These are crucial to the good running of the school, and are run in accordance with Department of Education guidelines.

### **Mobile Phones -**

Mobile phones are banned. Should any child need to contact home, they may do so on the school phone. No child is ever denied this.

### **Opening Times -**

9.20 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. (2.00 p.m. for infants) We offer supervision from 9.10. On fine days the children will be supervised outside by staff. When the weather is bad the children will be allowed to go inside. The school doors cannot be opened before 9.10 for students.

The school accepts no responsibility for pupils outside these hours.  
It is most important that children be on time for school.

### **Photographer -**

Presently the school invites a photographer to the school every second year and on these occasions parents have the option to have their child photographed, family group photographs are also an option that can be arranged at this time. There is no obligation and the photographer determines the cost of the photos in advance.

### **Promotion of Materials -**

It is school policy not to distribute literature, educational or otherwise, from outside commercial interests as this may be interpreted as giving an imprimatur where one does not exist.

### **Promotion of Pupils -**

It is school policy that children progress from class to class annually with their peers. However, in extreme or exceptional circumstances and following lengthy consultation with parents, a child may need to repeat a given year. This would ideally take place before 2nd class.

### **Property -**

The school accepts no responsibility or liability for items lost or damaged. All uniforms, books or anything else likely to be mislaid should be labelled.

### **Rights and Responsibilities -**

#### ***Pupils Rights:***

Pupils have the right to expect to :

- be treated fairly, consistently and with respect
- learn and to be educated in a relatively disruption -free environment
- be safe from bullying and abuse
- have their individual differences recognised and catered for
- be listened to, and to question, at appropriate times
- make mistakes and to learn from them
- have positive behaviour affirmed
- have misbehaviour dealt with appropriately

#### ***Pupils Responsibilities:***

Pupils are expected to:

- attend school regularly and punctually
- work quietly, safely and to the best of their abilities at all times
- listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice
- show respect for all members of the school community
- respect the right of other pupils to learn
- care for their own property
- respect all school property and the property of other pupils
- avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others
- remain seated at all times, if their teacher is not in the room
- avoid all nasty remarks, swearing or name calling
- include other pupils in games and activities
- move quietly around the school

- keep the school clean and tidy
- bring the correct materials and books to the school
- stay on school premises and within designated areas during school times
- follow school and class rules.

## **Responsibility for Pupils-**

The school accepts responsibility for pupils within school hours. Therefore no child may leave the school premises during these hours unless

- collected by a parent/guardian
- written permission is requested of principal
- where parent contacts principal by phone

In the current climate, the school makes no apology for this rule and will enforce it to the letter. If children are ever likely to need to leave the school for lunch, the appropriate form should be signed at the beginning of the year.

## **Going home (Change of collection arrangements.)**

We understand that from time to time it may be necessary for parents/guardians to change the collection arrangements for their children at short notice. The School/Class Teacher/Principal must be advised in advance if children's travel home arrangements have been altered.

Each year parents will be asked to inform the School of any change to contact details and any change regarding who is authorised to collect their children.

## **Sacraments -**

First penance for 2nd class is held during Lent each year.

First Holy Communion is normally in May.

Confirmation is held every 2nd year for 5th and 6th classes. The timing of this is at the discretion of the Bishop, though normally in May.

Communion and Confirmation are held at 11 a.m. Mass on Sunday in Johnstown. Penance is held midweek at night, again in Johnstown.

Meetings for preparation for Sacraments-

These meetings are arranged by the school Chaplains, in consultation with the Principal.

Fr. Michael Murtagh - Penance and Communion

Fr. Martin Cannon Cosgove P.P. - Confirmation

### **School Completion Programme -**

Scoil íosagáin is part of the Gorey C.S. Completion Programme. This is a major benefit to our school both educationally and financially. Margaret Sherriff and Majella Aspel provide advise on SPHE, RSE and a range of Social Skills Programmes, for which we thank them.

We rely upon the financial interventions provided by the GSCP also to part fund the Music, Dance and Drama, which are an integral part of our Attendance strategy.

### **School Masses / Liturgies-**

Mass for the academic year is normally celebrated by the Parish Priest in September each year. An Advent Service is held in the school. Ashes are distributed on Ash Wednesday.

A Ceremony of Light and Commitment Ceremony are also held.

### **Self Esteem -**

The pupils of 6th class are taken in small groups to help them overcome any worries or apprehensions they might have for the future.

### **Stay Safe & RSE-**

The Stay Safe Programme is taught throughout the school. A programme in Relationships and Sexual Education is also taught. Senior pupils are given talk on Puberty and Development by qualified personnel from outside , normally Margaret Sheriff, Gorey SCP

### **Transition to Secondary School -**

Senior pupils are given a great insight into life in secondary school, again through the School Completion Programme.

### **Uniform -**



It is school policy, that the school have a uniform. This uniform is supplemented by a school tracksuit and not by any other combination.

#### School uniform

Boys - Blue jumper, navy pants, white shirt, navy tie.

Girls - Blue jumper, blue tartan kilt, white shirt, navy tie.  
(Black Shoes preferably for both boys and girls)

Navy tracksuit, white polo t-shirt.

Uniforms are supplied by Funges of Gorey.

#### **Wet Days -**

Children remain supervised in their classrooms.

#### **Yard Supervision -**

Like any prudent parent, the school shall endeavour to safeguard each child in its care. To this end a teacher shall be constantly on supervision during morning and lunch - time breaks. A rota for these duties is worked out by the Principal.