
RATHGAR JUNIOR SCHOOL

& Kindergarten





Principal's Welcome

On behalf of the staff and children of RJS I would like to welcome and thank you for considering Rathgar Junior School for your child's primary education. We are proud to introduce our school to you and hope that this prospectus will give you an insight into the special qualities of our school and the extensive, all-round education we offer.

Rathgar Junior School & Kindergarten has provided an outstanding education to children for over 100 years. Our ethos, traditions, curricular, extra-curricular and after school programs, enrich their primary school experience. We promote a grounded education and an appreciation of our environment, nature, respectful social interactions, the importance of community, of friendship and of charity. We encourage children to be reflective and to develop positive growth mind-sets, so that they can be open to the infinite possibilities of the future.

We see the potential and light in every child and give them every opportunity to experience success. We value the importance of parents in their children's education and we work together for the benefit of each child. Our school community is something we treasure. Working in partnership together, we see the benefit for the children.

If you require any further information or have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school directly. We will be delighted to answer any questions you may have.

Brigid-Rose Kalisa
Principal



Our founder: Isabel Douglas



Founding of Rathgar Junior School

Rathgar Junior School was founded by Isabel Douglas and the Society of Friends (Quakers) in September 1919. Isabel was ahead of her time in delivering an education free from corporal punishment, where she wanted the children to love coming to school, to love learning, and for all children to be able to access Irish, arts & crafts and nature studies. For over 100 years, RJS has kept the core values and traditions alive, whilst adapting and adding to our school, our curriculum and activities. Rathgar Junior School's patron is the Society of Friends.

We welcome children and families of all faiths and religions and are proud of the diversity we have within the school.



Aims

At Rathgar Junior School we seek to instil all children with a sense of wellbeing, independence and confidence whilst developing a lifelong love of learning. Our aim is to help every child be the best that they can be, whilst nurturing their strengths, talents and interests and supporting them in all areas of school life, academically, socially, spiritually, physically and emotionally.

Mission Statement

At Rathgar Junior School, our highly skilled teaching and support staff ensure that all children have the opportunity to personally develop their:

- **Confidence**

In their academic ability and social environment. We develop a child's lifelong learning without the pressure of formal exams or standardised testing.

- **Independence**

In being a self-guided learner and developing lifelong skills. We also encourage all to have a sense of responsibility for themselves, for each other and for their environment.

- **Environment**

Everything we do in school is directed towards ensuring that all children have a safe and happy experience. We believe that by nurturing the enjoyment of coming in to school for children, they will have that principle for life. We provide a secure and stimulating environment where everyone feels valued, respected and understood.



- **Creativity**

We value all art forms, as well as the more traditional subjects, in the school and place a strong emphasis on children being able to enjoy Art, Music, Drama and other extracurricular activities.

- **Innovation**

Hands on learning is at the heart of what we do. Giving children the ability to explore and investigate is essential for growth and development. We provide an environment which encourages and provides opportunities for active learning, curiosity, investigation, creativity, innovation, imagination and challenges.

- **Equality**

We promote equality of opportunity for all pupils and staff. We embrace diversity and welcome children with all faiths and none. We value and celebrate the richness and diversity of cultures and beliefs in our community and the wider world.

- **Community**

We greatly value our wonderful community of parents, staff and children at RJS and believe that these lifelong connections help children feel a sense of belonging and strengthens relationships. Our Parents' Committee are very involved in organising and helping with a variety of activities throughout the year.



School Ethos & Patronage

Rathgar Junior School is a primary school which was founded on the ethos and values of the Religious Society of Friends, known as Quakers in 1919. We welcome children of all religions and backgrounds and all children of no religion. Rathgar Junior School is a member of the Association of Independent Junior School, Ireland (AIJS).



The following useful information gives an outline of the beliefs of Quakers:

- religion starts from personal experience
- all individuals have 'that of God' within them
- everyone has a potential for good and is worthy of dignity and respect

We provide an environment that promotes:

- high standards
- a quest for truth
- tolerance
- openness
- equal rights
- a love of learning for its own sake

We foster an ethos that means:

- those of us involved in education approach every learner, believing that each individual's educational needs should be recognised, and equal value given to them.
- we believe in "immense potentialities" and that the purpose of education is to help individuals to believe in these in themselves.
- we believe that learning is a lifelong experience and is a part of living rather than a preparation for it.
- we respect each individual and value the contribution that each has to make to the learning process.
- we treat individuals as equals, whatever their gender, race, religion, culture, class, ability, sexual orientation, or circumstances. It means that we actively reject, and work to eliminate, discrimination of any sort.
- we believe that learning happens most creatively when relationships are based on mutual respect.
- we wish to adopt methods of discipline based on trust and mutual support, seeking to promote the positive.
- we encourage individual responsibility to the group and the group's responsibility for everyone.

- we seek to avoid hierarchies of power and to encourage a participating community.
- we empower learners to challenge injustice and develop the imagination to find alternatives, to build compassionately a community which is inclusive of those who may be disadvantaged or rejected.
- we encourage questioning and exploration, honesty and openness.
- we seek to nurture and value spiritual growth and to open windows into new worlds of creativity and imagination.
- we seek creative ways to go forward, particularly in situations that involve or might lead to conflict.
- we stress achievements and successes, bearing in mind that excessive use of competition can be destructive.
- "teachers" recognise that they are learners too and need to strive to be good listeners.
- we try to live out our vocation "adventurously".
- we value simplicity, pursuing the things which bring true fulfilment and seeking to find and communicate a right relationship with the material world.
- we denounce violence of any kind and promote finding peaceful solutions to conflict.
- we try to keep before ourselves and others the ideal of unqualified and unlimited love.



Why choose Rathgar Junior School?

Within the Classroom.

Here at RJS, we pride ourselves on our highly trained and experienced teaching and support staff. We have built a wealth of knowledge and through our teachers, working collaboratively, have managed to develop a truly unique education. We follow the Irish Primary School Curriculum whilst giving pupils ownership over their learning, allowing freedom for them to explore topics that they are interested in. We go beyond the textbooks and schemes of work, enjoying active learning, pair/group/individual project or topic work, using our local environment as a teaching resource with multiple, local trips. We invite guest speakers and people in our community to speak with the children, regularly and we create links with a variety of charities both locally and around the world.

Our Subjects

Gaeilge, English, Mathematics, Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE), History, Geography and Science, Arts Education, Visual Arts, Music and Drama, Physical Education, Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE), Religious Education (Bible Stories & Comparative Religions). We also teach and encourage Public Speaking, Debating and Current Affairs Education.

Our Team

We have a wide range of nationalities within our staff to reflect the student body and this has allowed us to embrace methods of best practice from around Europe. Within our teaching staff we have specialist subject teachers for Irish, French and Music to ensure all students can benefit from the wealth of experience with which they bring and achieve their very best.

Our Extracurricular Activities

We promote individuality, diversity, and inclusion, always. Cohesion in all our lessons helps teach children to challenge stereotypes and enjoy working together towards a common goal. We pride ourselves on being able to help children understand how to work together, with multiple people and being able to independently answer their own curiosities. We offer opportunities for children to enjoy extracurricular individual or group instrumental music tuition from professional musicians as well as classes in Drama from the Dublin Academy of Dramatic Arts (DADA), Playball, Hockey, Tennis, Athletics, Lego (Bricks4Kidz), Chess and Choir, to name a few. We are also supported by parents in running a weekend programming club called Coder Dojo.

Our Atmosphere

Children at RJS benefit from the community, family atmosphere within the school. They find it easy to form friendships and maintain positive relationships. We take great care in children's mental and physical wellbeing and actively teach lifelong strategies to help children cope in the modern world. You will find that our children enjoy an enormous sense of security and happiness within school and look forward to what each new day brings.

Our small class sizes and individual learning culture helps foster the personal relationship that is built between the staff and children really helps us to understand how the children learn individually and enables us to monitor their progress carefully. Small class sizes ensure our teachers have the capacity to tailor their teaching to the children's needs within the class and they work closely with our Special Educational Needs teacher if needed. This careful monitoring and individual attention allows us to track the children's progress without the need and pressure of standardised testing. Each child to learns at their own pace.





Beyond the Classroom

Our extra-curricular program of learning is second to none and we take full advantage of being able to focus on the arts.

Our Music

Each class enjoys 2 music lessons per week with a specialist music teacher where they can explore different instruments, cultures surrounding music and music theory. In addition to this, private music tuition is available through a range of instruments such as guitar, violin, and piano, all of which are led by professional music teachers. Music Day takes place in Term 3, where children have the opportunity to perform as a class and children learning an instrument can share a piece with the audience. This is always a highlight and a wonderful opportunity for the children to share their skills and talents.

Our Drama

All of our teachers are adept at teaching drama and using this art form as a way of learning and self-expression. Each class works towards a Christmas Play where they showcase their talents in front of the whole school and their families. This is a truly magical time of the year as we turn our school hall into a winter wonderland ensuring that children feel the excitement in the lead up to Christmas. The performances are always very well received, and it also allows time for parents to meet in the hall after to further strengthen our community atmosphere.

Our Gaeilge

The opportunity to perform in front of a large audience continues throughout the year with our thoroughly enjoyable Maidin na Gaeilge, a highlight for all of the children. All classes sing, dance and perform in Irish all morning. It is a wonderful way to celebrate the Irish language and culture together and great fun.

Our Art


Art is an essential part of school life and is incorporated into most lessons. Each class has at least 2 long art lessons per week, and this culminates in a whole school exhibition in the summer term. On this day we open the school for all to come and explore the classrooms which have been turned into galleries for the day and marvel at the skill of the children's artistic prowess and handwork skills.

Our I.T.

As part of our commitment to ensuring all children are prepared for the modern world, we offer a coding club run by our fantastic parent volunteers. CoderDojo has been running in school for many years and delivers key skills to children who are interested in computer programming and development.

Our Clubs

We also offer a range of other clubs, after school, for all ages where we are sure children will discover a new talent or want to try a new skill. Some of our clubs on offer are:

- CoderDojo
 - Drama (Dublin Academy of Dramatic Arts)
 - Recorder
 - Lego (Bricks4Kidz)
 - Chess
 - Playball
 - Hockey
 - Summer games
- 

School Trips

Throughout the year, all classes have the chance to go on numerous school trips. Whether it is a simple nature walk or a guided tour through a Dublin Museum, or further afield, all classes will experience the excitement and fantastic learning opportunities a school trip provides, adding to a more rounded sense of independence for all the children. At the end of the year, each class also goes on their school tour. The eagerly awaited Form 6, overnight stay at Carlingford Adventure Centre is the main source of excitement and this allows the children to practice everything that they have learnt with us at RJS.



Sport

Sport is a key element of life at RJS should your child wish to take part. We believe that it teaches valuable life skills such as teamwork, resilience and commitment as well as developing fine and gross motor skills. During Term 1 and 2, we train twice a week at Three Rock Rovers Hockey club using the most modern facilities. Hockey training is open to all students from Forms 2 to 6. Children in Forms 5 and 6 participate in the Leinster School Girl's Hockey League and the Leinster Under 12 School Boys' Hockey League. We use the most qualified coaches and are fortunate to have coaching staff from the Women's Hockey Irish Olympic Team. Children in KGA to Form 1 have the option of attending Playball once a week.

During the Summer term we use CYM sports facility where, with the support of qualified professionals, we teach athletics, soccer, rounders, and tennis. Forms 1 and 2 may participate in tennis coaching at Ashbrook Tennis Club. At the end of Term 3, all children participate in Sports Day where families are invited to watch and cheer on. It is a wonderful family fun day for all of the school community.





Charity

We believe that it is an essential part of education to teach children to help others less fortunate than ourselves. As a school we are involved in many organised charity events throughout the year for various charities. We collect money through our 'Copper Collection' for The Peter McVerry Trust and we support Team Hope's Christmas Shoebox Appeal. We hold a number of bake sales throughout the year and our Sale of Work and Treasure World always manages to raise valuable money for local charities. The children in school are always keen to help when needed and will often go out of their way to help raise funds for vital work. It is embedded in our ethos that we will always strive to help where we can. Throughout the year we hold regular fundraising events for charities in need and teach the children about caring for the wider community.



After School

Kids Club is our afterschool service which is available to all children until 5:45pm daily (term time only). It is a great opportunity for children to mix with other year groups and play or to complete their written homework. Kids Club offers a very cosy and enjoyable space in which children are very comfortable. Bookings are taken weekly and invoices are issued monthly.

The RJS Community

We have an 'open door' policy when it comes to parents within the school. We value parent input as we believe that by working together, we can do what is best for all children. We encourage regular catch ups with your child's teacher and are always contactable via email or at the door at the end of the day should you wish to discuss anything. Parent-teacher meetings are held twice yearly, and school reports are issued at Christmas and the end of the school year.

We have a very active Parents' Committee who are always helping the school and looking for new recruits, should you wish to join.

There are many social events for parents throughout the year such as table quizzes, coffee mornings, family fun days, picnics in the park, play dates and larger events such as the 'Gala Dinner' which we hope to make a more regular event. You will be welcomed with open arms into our community and will always receive help and guidance should you need it.

Beyond RJS

We are officially named as a feeder school for The High School. Many of our children choose to go to the following very well-respected schools locally.

These schools include but are not limited to:

- Sandford Park School
- Wesley College
- Gonzaga
- Alexandra College
- St Columba's College
- St Marys College
- Our Lady's School

Whatever Secondary School you choose to send your child to, we make a commitment that we will be there to support them, even after they have left. We welcome back past pupils who need support for school, college or work experience and we take great pride in the fact that pupils want to return when they are older.



Parent Testimonies

'My children thoroughly love being at RJS. The small class sizes mean the teachers are able to spend more time with each child and really get to know them and how they learn. RJS encourages children's individuality and the many extra-curricular activities and in school hidden curriculum activities, offers the children so many opportunities to develop their imagination, creativity, artistic, linguistic and musical skills. There is an active Parents' Committee who support the school. Morning Assembly gives the children a wonderful opportunity to share their news, to present class assemblies and even to bring in their pets! My children are very happy in RJS and we are very grateful to be part of the RJS family.'

'We are delighted with the online learning platform at RJS. It is exactly the right length and very well supported by the form teacher who is available for extra help if required. The zoom sessions create a structure and routine for the day which is critical for this age group. The form teacher offers a timetable for the week which has been very useful in our house as we are not able to attend all of the Zoom sessions.'

'RJS is a unique and special school which gives children much more than education. It builds confidence in the children and creates a family feel where the children are encouraged to be the best version of themselves. The benefits are subtle at first but having been a parent in the school for 13 years I can vouch that this school goes the extra mile all the time. The multiple school trips, the drama classes, the hockey, the swimming, the chess, the presentation skills training are just some of the highlights for my children in the school. The friends that both we as parents have made with other parents and that our children have made is the icing on the cake!'

'RJS is a special place where children feel safe, guided and well prepared for life ahead - they're always happy to go through those red doors into RJS.'

Useful Information

We are situated withing walking distance of Rathmines, Ranelagh and Rathgar and are easily accessible of the **14, 14c, 15, 15a, 15b, 15d, 65, 65b, 83** bus routes. We have scooter/bike parking for children at the front of the school and there is space on the public road for any drop offs/pick ups by car.

Next Steps

If you would like to know more about the school or book in for a private school tour, then please call or email the office so one can be arranged.

Enrollment

If you would like to apply for a place for your child, then please visit our website and download an application form. Forms can be emailed to the office or posted. If you have any difficulty at all then please do email or call us. Our Principal, Brigid-Rose Kalisa, is always happy to show families around the school and to answer any questions you may have.

Places are offered at the end of September for the following academic year. Should places become available, places may be offered to children during the school year.

Fees

Rathgar Junior School is a registered not-for-profit charity and the running of our school is funded by school fees. We receive no financial support from the Department of Education or any other body. For more information on fees, please contact the school office.

You can also find more information on our website at
www.rathgarjuniorschool.ie

Or
by following our twitter page:



@RathgarS

or Instagram:



rathgarjuniorschool

Rathgar Junior School & Kindergarten,
62 – 63 Grosvenor Road,
Rathmines,
Dublin 6,
D06 WC04
T: 014972411
Email: admin@rathgarjuniorschool.com