



Safeguarding Team

Principal: Mr Woolsey

Designated Teacher: Mrs McGuire

Deputy Designated Teacher: Miss McKernan

Nursery Deputy Designated Teacher: Mrs Mulholland

Designated Governor: Mrs Sergeant

Chairperson: Mrs Loney

News Sheet – November 2025

Half Term

A reminder that school will be closed for Half Term and Staff Training from **Monday 27th October to Monday 3rd November**. School reopens on **Tuesday 4th November**.

Halloween Safety

Pupils are reminded to be safe over the Half Term break particularly in relation to Halloween. The following advice has been given to pupils and parents in the past from the PSNI. The PSNI came into assembly this morning to remind pupils about being safe over Halloween.

Sparklers

- Never give sparklers to children under the age of five.
- Always wear gloves when holding sparklers, preferably leather gloves.
- Hold a sparkler at arms length and never wave sparklers at someone else as you could burn them.
- When the sparkler has finished put it into a bucket of cold water immediately.

Fireworks

- Parents need a licence to buy fireworks in Northern Ireland.
- Only adults should light fireworks and safely dispose of them.
- Children need to be supervised around fireworks.
- Never go near a firework that has been lit. Even if it hasn't gone off, it could still explode.

Tips for Parents and Carers

- Remind children to be extra careful when crossing any roads.
- Choose a costume and mask that doesn't restrict a child's visibility.
- Provide children with a torch or glow stick as part of their costume.
- Keep pets indoors.

Staffing

We welcome three new members of staff to Ballyoran, Miss Lucy and Miss Holmes as assistants in Nursery and Miss Connolly who is assisting with administration.

Diary Dates – November

1 st – 3 rd	School Closed for Half Term and Staff Training
4 th	School reopens after Half Term
10 th – 14 th	Anti-Bullying Week
10 th	Yrs 5 – 7 Anti Bullying Workshops
12 th	Yr 3 Trip to Armagh Couty Museum
14 th	Non Uniform Day – (Wear Something Spotty) & Bun Sale for Children in Need
17 th	School Photographs – Individual and Family Groups
21 st	End of Homework for Term 1
26 th	Yr 7 trip to Armagh County Museum

Sickness

You will be aware that there is a lot of sickness around at the moment particularly coughs and colds. Parents are reminded to go over the importance of good hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene (Catch It, Bin It, Kill It) with their children.

Please see the latest PHA Guidance for infection control in school settings which gives recommended times for pupils to be kept off school for various illnesses:

<https://tinyurl.com/44nrzcty>

Parent/Teacher Meetings

Communication is an important part of our partnership with parents and I would like to thank those parents who availed of the Parent/Teacher Meetings this week.

After School Clubs – November and December

Clubs after half term are now open for booking on Parent Pay and with Healthy Kidz, please see details at:

<https://tinyurl.com/3jbrbr8v>

First Aiders

Congratulations to Miss Dudek who has successfully completed the First Aid at Work Course recently.

Eat Smart Week with the Lunch Bunch

Our canteen had a very successful healthy eating week from 29th September to 3rd October. There was different topic of food each day based around the Eatwell Guide and the four main groups associated with it: Fruit & Veg, Carbohydrates, Protein and Dairy. We are very fortunate to have our own kitchen in school which provides us with healthy meals each day and a big thankyou to Mrs Campbell our Catering Manager and her team. A reminder that lots of information on healthy eating is available on our school website at the following links:

Healthy Breaks <https://tinyurl.com/yc4z5r29>

Healthy Lunches <https://tinyurl.com/2p9pbb8z>

Healthy Choices <https://tinyurl.com/mrepcxs6>

Year 5 Shared Education

We are delighted to share what a fantastic start Year 5 have had to their Shared Education journey with Bocombra Primary School. Over the past few weeks, the children have taken part in a series of fun, active, and creative experiences that have helped build friendships and develop important teamwork skills. Our first meet-up took place on Thursday 2nd October at Bocombra Primary School. Although the weather kept us indoors, the children enjoyed a range of engaging activities including giant co-ordinates, forest-themed art, and other creative tasks. It was a lovely way to begin the programme and reconnect with our friends from Bocombra. The following week, on Wednesday 8th October, we headed to Gosford Forest Park for a day full of adventure and exploration. The children took part in a scavenger hunt, forest walks, an A–Z eyespy challenge, and had great fun in the play park. To round off this term's Shared Education events, Ballyoran hosted a fun-filled day of active games led by Healthy Kidz. The children took part in monkey catchers, dodgeball, Gaelic games, basketball skills, and mini-Olympic challenges. It was a fantastic way to strengthen the friendships that have been growing and to celebrate the teamwork and enthusiasm shown by all. We have truly enjoyed reconnecting with Bocombra and launching this year's Shared Education programme in such a positive and energetic way. You can see all the wonderful moments captured in photos on our website, and there's a lovely video reel on our Facebook page too – we'd love for you to take a look!

Eco Committee

Our Eco Committee held its first meeting of the year with great enthusiasm and a strong sense of purpose. The session began with warm greetings as members met one another, setting a positive tone for the year ahead. We took updated photographs of the committee to refresh our Eco board and celebrate our new team. A key part of the meeting was the election of our new leadership team. We are delighted to announce **Haley Corkin** as our newly elected Chairperson and **Santiago Vidal** as our Minute Keeper. Congratulations to both on their new roles! The committee then discussed our involvement in **Walk to School Month**, exploring how we can support this initiative and effectively record participation data. Ideas included daily tallies, class charts, and visual displays to encourage engagement and track progress. Finally, we turned our attention to our major focus for the year: **Global Citizenship**. This theme will guide our projects and discussions, helping us explore how we can make a positive impact both locally and globally. We are excited for the year ahead and look forward to sharing our journey with the wider school community.

Nursery Welly Boot Walk

Our children had a wonderful time taking part in our Sponsored Welly Boot Walk! The event was organised to raise money for new musical instruments for our outdoor area, and we are thrilled to share that we raised an amazing £1160 thanks to your incredible generosity. We will be ordering our new instruments very soon so that all the children can enjoy making music together. Thank you so much for your support!

Book Fair

Thank you to all our parents and carers for supporting the Book Fair from 2nd – 9th October. The children loved exploring the books and choosing new stories to enjoy. Your support helped make the event a great success — we really appreciate it. All money raised will be used to buy new books for our school.

Walk to School Month

Special Assembly

On Monday 6th October, Dave Wiggins from the Walk, Wheel, Cycle Trust held a whole school assembly to discuss the importance of walking, cycling, or scooting to school. Dave explained to the pupils how it was important that we do this as not only does it help us with a healthy mind and body, but it is also extremely important for the environment. The pupils were able to explain how they were able to walk to school if they lived close and it helps our minds to do exercise. The pupils listened well to Dave explain how the fuel emissions hurt the environment and that it would be great to practise walking, cycling, or scooting to school even if it was just once a week. At the end Dave was able to show the pupils his bike Buzz Fivegear which folds up, so he can bring it on public transport to show the pupils how easy it is to exercise and trade cars for bikes.

Big Walking Bus

On Wednesday 22nd October the pupils were invited to take part in the Walking Bus to school. This initiative was started by the ABC council along with the Walk, Wheel, Cycle Trust. The pupils met staff at The Home Bakery and then walked with their parents and teachers to school. The pupils were excited to change their daily routine for the day and helped promote sustainable travel and encourage a healthy lifestyle. The morning was full of smiles from pupils and staff in Year 1 right through to Year 7, it was also great to see encouragement from parents and other family members who joined us.

World Mental Health Day

To mark World Mental Health Day on Friday 10th October, we had a non-uniform 'Wear Yellow' day and pupils donated money to Reach Mentoring. To start the day, pupils took part in a special assembly which helped them to reflect on the importance of looking after their mental health and the importance of supporting others. Throughout the day, pupils took part in a range of wellbeing activities - from mindfulness activities to creative tasks and movement breaks – to remind them about some of the ways that they can look after their mental health. A total of £240 was raised for Reach Mentoring. Thank you for your continued support and generosity.

Action Mental Health Workshops

Pupils in Year 3, Year 4 and Year 6 recently took part in Action Mental Health's 'Little Healthy Me' and 'Healthy Me' workshops. These workshops are designed to support children's understanding of mental health and emotional wellbeing. 'Little Healthy Me', aimed at younger pupils in Years 3 and 4, focused on recognising feelings, building friendships and learning simple strategies to stay mentally healthy through play and storytelling. Meanwhile, Year 6 pupils engaged in the 'Healthy Me' programme, which explored more mature themes such as managing stress, developing resilience and

understanding the link between physical and mental health. These workshops were a valuable opportunity for pupils to learn how to care for their wellbeing in age-appropriate and engaging ways.

Yr 1 Stay & Play Sessions

At the start of October, family members of the Year 1 classes were invited into school for a Stay and Play session. Due to dry weather they were able to experience Play Based Learning both indoors and in the Foundation Stage outdoor play area. It was a lovely morning with the children proudly showing their parents the classroom, cloakroom and their work up on the walls before engaging in construction, small world, physical and fine motor skills play. Thank you to all the family members that were able to come in and enjoy the morning with their children.

Schools of Sanctuary Award Ceremony

Ballyoran Primary School proudly received its Schools of Sanctuary Award on Wednesday 15th October at a special ceremony held at the Hill of the O'Neill Visitor Centre in Dungannon. Mrs. Mackle and Mr. Woolsey accompanied by two of our amazing Year 7 pupils. were honoured to attend the prestigious event and were one of only 20 schools to receive the award on that day.

Joint Shared Education Pupil Council Meeting

We proudly celebrated Shared Education Day on Thursday 16th October 2025 with a special joint meeting of Pupil Council members from our school and our partnership school Bocombra Primary School. Pupils had the opportunity to connect with their peers, take part in fun icebreaker activities and begin building new friendships. A highlight of the day was the launch of a new name for our collaborative group, the Shared Education Council, reflecting on our commitment to working together and strengthening relationships across our school communities.

Gaelic Blitz at Clintyclay PS

Ballyoran Gaelic team had a great day on Friday 17th October, taking part in a blitz with other local primary schools at Clonmore GFC. Our boys and girls did the school proud, showing great skills and excellent behaviour.

Digital Leaders Update from Meeting

On Tuesday 7th October, our Digital Leaders met for the first time this academic year to plan their goals and responsibilities. During this productive session, they discussed a range of important topics, including how they can positively impact ICT learning across the school. To kick off their year, the team set themselves an exciting challenge, to visit other classes and assist their peers during ICT sessions. This initiative will help strengthen digital skills across year groups. We look forward to seeing the Digital Leaders in action and celebrating their contributions throughout the year!

Dreamspace Ambassadors

Ten lucky pupils have been selected to become Dream Space Ambassadors, working in partnership with W5 Life, Belfast. The Dream Space Ambassador Programme trains students to become STEM leaders in their schools and communities. These lucky pupils will gain skills in coding, robotics, and

problem-solving and then support and mentor their peers, families and teachers through demos and training sessions. The newly appointed Dream Space Ambassadors will take part in their first live online training session on Tuesday 21st October, focusing on coding. This session will be delivered by the expert team at W5 Life and promises to be an inspiring start to their journey. We wish them all the best as they begin this fantastic opportunity!

Year 7 visit Wizard of Oz at St John The Baptist's College

On Wednesday 22nd October Year 7 went to St John the Baptist's College to see their talented pupils perform The Wizard of Oz. This was a fantastic pantomime and we all really enjoyed the show, with pupils returning to school full of chat about which was their favourite character. It was lovely to see so many talented past pupils perform. As always, the children did us proud with their excellent behaviour. Many thanks to St John the Baptist's College for inviting us.

Foundation Stage Autumn Sponsored Walk

On Thursday 23rd October our Foundation Stage pupils took part in a Sponsored Autumn Walk at The People's Park. Children completed one lap of the park, followed by a picnic with some delicious treats to celebrate their efforts. All funds raised will go directly towards enhancing our Foundation Stage outdoor play area with much-needed resources. We truly appreciate your generosity and continued support in helping us create enriching experiences for our pupils.

Attendance

Well done to the following classes who had the highest attendance for the month of October:

- Foundation/Key Stage 1: Year 2 with 96.8%
- Key Stage 2: Yr 6: 95.5%

Parent Pay

A reminder that school meal bookings need to be made and paid for on Parent Pay on a weekly basis. This includes Free School Meals which must be booked on Parent Pay also. A reminder also that 9am is the daily cut off time and bookings must be made before then.

Breakfast Club

All pupils are welcome to attend in the Dinner Hall from 8.15 – 8.45am. The cost is £1 per day. Parents must book and pay for Breakfast Club on Parent Pay.

Nuts

As you are aware, we endeavour to ensure that no nuts or nut based products are brought into school to protect a number of pupils who have severe nut allergies. Please respect our 'No Nuts' Policy.

Dogs

A reminder that dogs are not permitted on the school grounds for Health and Safety reasons.

School Website

Keep up-to-date with school news, information and events by logging on to www.ballyoranps.com. Class Pages will be updated regularly giving parents a useful insight into what their children are doing in class.

School App

It is important that all parents authenticate the school app as all communication for individual classes will be sent and received through the App. If you are unable to access the school app please contact the office. Guidance on our school app can be found at:

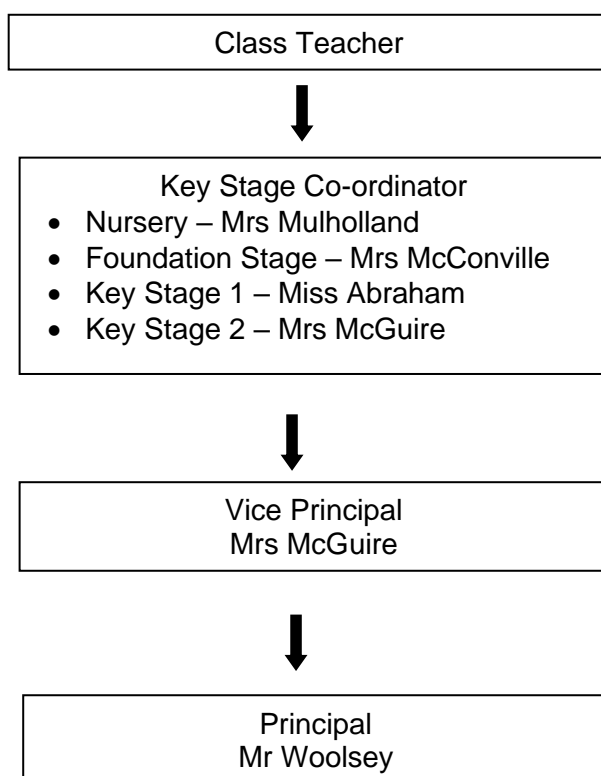
<https://tinyurl.com/2p98mfm2>

General Queries / Concerns

At Ballyoran Primary School we believe in a strong partnership with parents and communication between home and school is a vital part of this.

If you need to speak to your child's teacher, you should contact the office in the first instance and a suitable time will be arranged. Unfortunately, it will not be possible for parents to speak to teachers in the morning as they are busy preparing for the day and supervising pupils. If you do need to pass an urgent message to the teacher in the morning, please either send an email, note or speak to the secretary who will pass the message on.

Meetings can be arranged with staff at a mutually convenient time through the office and we would encourage you to follow the flow chart below when raising general queries / concerns:



Picking Pupils Up

It is vital that parents are punctual when collecting their children otherwise they get anxious. If you are running late we would ask that you phone the office and inform us of this. If a child is not collected and we are unable to make contact with parents/carers we have no option but to phone Social Services and/or the Police.

Emergency Contact Details

It is vitally important that we hold up to date emergency contact details for our pupils. I cannot stress the importance of this enough, please keep us up to date. Again as with late pick up, if we are unable to contact a parent/carer in the event of an emergency we will have no option but to refer this to Social Services.

Dinner Menu

<https://tinyurl.com/33menfh6>

School Development Plan

Ballyoran Primary has a new Three Year School Development Plan. A draft of the full plan and an overview of this year's priorities can be found at

[Ballyoran Primary School - Key Documents](#)

If you have any comments or queries about this plan please contact the school by **Friday 7th November 2025.**

I would like to thank all our parents for their continued support and co-operation during this very busy first half term and thank my staff for their amazing dedication and hard work and wish the entire school community a pleasant, relaxing and safe Half Term break.

Richard Woolsey
Principal