



### **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 – February 2026**

### **Diary Dates for February 2026**

2 <sup>nd</sup>	Safer Internet Day
5 <sup>th</sup>	PSNI Internet Safety Talks in Key Stage 2
9 <sup>th</sup> – 13 <sup>th</sup>	School Closed for Half Term
17 <sup>th</sup>	Pupil Council visit to Civic Centre
19 <sup>th</sup>	Post Primary Admissions Process closes at 12noon
23 <sup>rd</sup>	Energy Saving Week begins School finishes at lunchtime for all pupils
24 <sup>th</sup>	Autism Training for Parents Session 1: 11am – 1pm
26 <sup>th</sup>	Year 5 Egypt Trip to Navan Centre

### **School Closures – February 2026**

- A reminder that school will be closed for Half Term from Monday 9<sup>th</sup> to Monday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026 inclusive. School reopens on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February.
- School will also close at lunchtime (after the pupils have had their lunch) on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026, to facilitate staff training.

### **Staffing**

We welcome Miss Pareigyte to Ballyoran as a SEN Classroom Assistant in Year 1.

We also congratulate Miss Fitzpatrick, one of our Classroom Assistants, who got married recently, she is now Mrs O'Connor.

### **Sickness**

You will be aware of the increased levels of sickness this winter. It is our hope that things will start to improve as we move towards Spring. A reminder that if pupils have a vomiting or diarrhoea bug they should not be sent to school and should not return to school until 48 hours after their last vomiting or diarrhoea episode. This is to protect the school community as these bugs can very quickly travel around the school. Parents are also reminded to go over the importance of good hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene (Catch It, Bin It, Kill It) with their children. Finally, 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>

### **Office Hours Reminder**

Please note the office hours are as follows:

- Monday – Thursday: 8.15am – 4pm
- Friday: 8.15am – 3.45pm

Closed: 10.10am – 10.25am for break and 1.15pm – 1.45pm for lunch

### **Free Autism Training**

Join us this February and March for a series of insightful sessions led by Middletown Centre for Autism, tailored for both parents and staff. Topics include: Autism, Learning Styles & Visual Teaching Communication Sensory Processing Understanding Anxiety Reframing Behaviour

Starting 24 February 2026

Separate sessions for parents and staff

Booking link:

<https://www.middletownautism.com/package/parents/autism-and-the-primary-school-programme-parent-ballyoran-ps-dublin-portadown>

### **Year 6 Dream Space Trip**

Our Year 6 pupils enjoyed an exciting Shared Education trip with Bocombra PS today to Dream Space - W5, Belfast earlier this month. Working collaboratively, pupils explored the world of coding and digital creativity. They engaged in a range of hands-on activities, including learning how to program.

### **Year 5 Schools Singing Programme**

Our Year 5 class has been shining in the Schools Singing Programme this term, enjoying weekly sessions with Orla and Sara-Jane. We are working towards our joined schools performance on the 29th of April in St Anthony's Church in Craigavon!

### **Catholic Schools Week Service**

Our Year 7 pupils attended a special service at St John The Baptist's Church on 13th January to launch Catholic Schools Week on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> January.

### **NSPCC Workshops**

On Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January, pupils in Years 3, 6 and 7 took part in workshops as part of the NSPCC Speak Out Stay Safe Programme.

### **Eco Committee**

Our amazing Eco Committee have been working incredibly hard this term! They have created eye-catching posters to encourage school donations for our local food bank, helping to support families in our community. Thank you to all those who have supported our Food Bank Collection already and a reminder that it continues until **Friday 6<sup>th</sup> February.**

### **Ditch The Dark Day**

Our school was impossible to miss on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January! To celebrate Ditch the Dark Day, our students traded their usual uniforms for the brightest neons and most reflective gear they could find. It was a fantastic way to highlight the importance of staying visible and safe during these darker winter months. A massive congratulations to our "Best Dressed" winners from each class, who went above and beyond with their glowing ensembles! We also want to give a huge thank you to all the parents and guardians for helping the children brighten up our hallways today.

## After School Clubs

Our After School Clubs have proven to be very popular so far this year. The Club Menu for after half term will be going out soon. When the menu is published please book early to avoid disappointment on Parent Pay and Pebble for the Gaelic.

## Breakfast Club

A reminder that our Breakfast Club operates in the dinner hall daily from 8.15 - 8.45am. The cost is £1 per day (£5 per week) and this needs to be booked and paid for on ParentPay in advance.

## Healthy Eating

As you know, Ballyoran Primary School is a Health Promoting School and there are a number of ways that we ensure this:

## Healthy Breaks

Nursery to Year 2 get a healthy snack provided by the school, Year 3 – 7 must bring in their own healthy snack. To help parents we have created a table of suitable and non-suitable healthy break snacks:

Suitable healthy break snacks	Not allowed at break
Pieces of fresh fruit	Any type of confectionery, eg chocolate products and sweets
Fruit pots of sliced or chopped fresh fruit	Crisps and crisp-like products such as tortilla chips, potato sticks, corn chips, prawn crackers, puff crackers;
Canned fruit in natural juice	Cakes, buns or pastries
Salad pots	Cereal or fruit bars
Raw vegetables such as tomatoes, carrots, celery, peppers and cucumber	All biscuits
Bread, pancakes or scones with a thin spread of margarine	Fizzy drinks
Breadsticks or crackers with cheese	Dried fruit that has been sugared or coated in yogurt or chocolate;
Sandwiches, bagels, baguettes, pitta bread, tortilla wraps or rolls	Pretzels
Yogurts	Nuts

## Lunch Boxes

We encourage parents who prepare a packed lunch to ensure it is balanced and healthy and includes sandwiches and fruit. No fizzy drinks are allowed in packed lunches. A leaflet giving guidance on packing a Healthy Lunch is available at <https://tinyurl.com/2s4z9cyv>

## Water

We encourage pupils to drink plenty of water during the day as hydration is very important for children's concentration and learning. To do this pupils must have their own water bottle in school and we ask that you send in one with a non-spill lid.

More information on Healthy Eating can be found on the School Website at <https://www.ballyoranps.com/page/?title=School+Meals&pid=74>

## **Applications for Nursery and Year 1 for September 2026**

The closing date for these was 12noon on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026. Parents will receive notification of placements on **Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026.**

## **Year 7 Transfer to Post Primary School**

Year 7 pupils and their parents are currently considering their options for post primary school. I would encourage all Year 7 parents and pupils to take their time and look closely at all the options before deciding which school best fits. We wish our Year 7 pupils well as they make this very important decision.

A reminder about the post primary admissions process. The Admissions portal opened at **12noon on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026** and closes at **12noon on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2026.** Parents should log on to the EA website at <https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/admissions>  
Year 7 pupils will receive the outcome of their application on **Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2026.**

## **Safer Internet Day**

This year we will celebrate Safer Internet Day on **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026.** Children will be involved in a special assembly and complete various activities throughout the day to help inform them of some of the dangers of being online. Watch out for more information on Safer Internet Day which will be sent out to parents next week.

## **Traffic Management System**

Thank you to the vast majority of parents who use our one way traffic management system appropriately on a daily basis. Unfortunately a small number of parents still choose to drive up Ballyoran Park on a regular basis, rather than use the car park and drop off zones. This causes congestion and is a risk, so I would be grateful if all parents could use the one way system. Thank you for your co-operation on this matter.

## **Pupil Attendance**

As expected with all the winter illnesses, attendance was low during the month of December, with the overall whole school average attendance being 88.9%. Well done to the classes with the highest attendance for December which were:

- Foundation Stage/Key Stage 1: Year 2: 93.1%
- Key Stage 2: Year 5: 90.5%

## **Pupils Leaving School Early**

We discourage pupils being removed from school early as this means they will miss out on valuable learning. If a child, however, needs to leave school early for any reason, a reminder that they **must** be collected from Reception by an **adult**. We are unable to allow pupils to walk home on their own and this policy will be strictly enforced.

## **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 and have exhausted all listed contacts, we have no option but to phone Social Services.

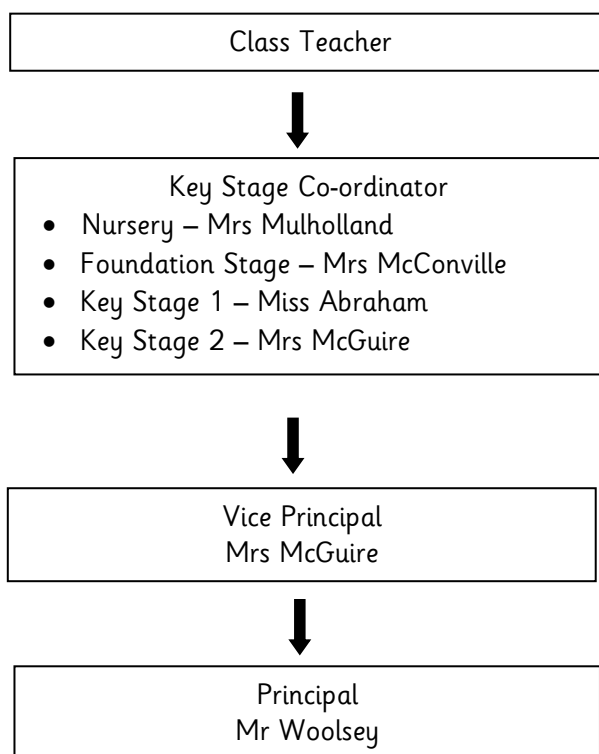
## **Emergency Contact Details**

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 and have exhausted all listed contacts, in the event of an emergency we will have no option but to refer this to Social Services.

### 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:



### Menus

Up until 13<sup>th</sup> February

<https://www.ballyoranps.com/attachments/download.asp?file=187&type=pdf>

A new menu will take effect from 16<sup>th</sup> February:

<https://www.ballyoranps.com/attachments/download.asp?file=346&type=pdf>

Thank you for your continued support and co-operation. Enjoy the Half Term break.

Richard Woolsey  
Principal