



News Sheet – March 2026

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

Diary Dates for March 2026

2 nd	Young Enterprise: Years 4, 5 & 6 Year 7 Service of Light at St Johns: 1.45pm
3 rd	Year 7 Young Enterprise Autism Training Session 2: 11am
4 th	Year 4 First Confession: St Johns at 1.30pm
5 th	World Book Day
6 th	Year 7 at Bee Safe event
9 th – 13 th	Parent/Teacher Consultation Week - school finishes early for all pupils as follows • Nursery: 12.30pm • Yrs 1 – 4 & Caterpillar Room: 12.45pm • Yrs 5 – 7 & Butterfly Room: 1pm
13 th	Wear Green Non-Uniform Day & Special St Patrick's Day Assembly
10 th	Autism Training Session 3: 11am
16 th	Big Walk & Wheel Week Challenge begins
16 th & 17 th	School Closed St Patrick's Day Holiday
18 th	Autism Training Session 4: 11am
19 th	Jo Jingles in Nursery & Year 1
23 rd	Joint Internet Safety Workshop for Years 4 – 7 with St John The Baptist PS Nursery & Year 1 receive notification of outcome of admissions process
24 th	Year 7 Young Enterprise Autism Training Session 5: 11am
26 th	Year 7 Confirmation Practice at St Johns
27 th	Last day of term, no uniform, no dinners, school finishes early for all pupils, early dismissal times

School Closures – March 2026

Ballyoran Primary School will be closed as follows during March:

- Monday 16th & Tuesday 17th March: St. Patrick's Day
- Monday 30th March: start of Easter holidays

Staffing

Congratulations to Mrs Mackle who has been appointed to a permanent Teaching Post in school.

Pupils Playing at Half Time Gaelic Match

On Saturday 31st January, twelve of our pupils had a tremendous experience, representing the school at half time in the Armagh v Galway National League game. All of the pupils did the school proud, showing great skill and determination.

Safer Internet Day

We celebrated Safer Internet Day 2026 on 2nd February with two special Key Stages assemblies centred on this year's theme "Smart tech, safe choices - exploring the safe and responsible use of AI." Pupils took part in an interactive quiz where they had to decide whether an image or video had been created by AI or not, sparking great discussion and lots of curiosity. Back in their classrooms, pupils continued the learning with Safer Internet Day themed lessons thinking about how they can make smart, safe and responsible choices when using technology including AI. We hope that the activities help our pupils feel confident, informed and empowered to use the digital world safely

Dreamspace Ambassador Training

On 3rd February our 10 Dream Space Ambassadors took part in an online training session with Dream Space. The focus of the session was Safer Internet Day 2026, exploring this year's theme of "Smart tech, safe choices - Exploring the safe and responsible use of AI." Throughout the week the Dream Space Ambassadors visited every class in the school to support their peers as they use their digital devices, helping to promote safe, responsible and confident use of technology across our school community.

Craigavon Foodbank Appeal

A huge thank you to all our pupils and parents who generously donated items for the Craigavon Food Bank. Your kindness and support will make a real difference to individuals and families in our local community. We are so proud of our school community for showing such compassion and generosity. Well done everyone. A special thank you to Curtis McGeown in Yr 6 who has shown great kindness this week by donating £25 of his birthday money towards our Foodbank Appeal. His mum and dad then matched this meaning an amazing £50 worth of food has been added to our appeal.

Chair & Vice Chair Visit

The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of our Board of Governors spent a very enjoyable morning in school on 4th February, visiting classes, meeting pupils and talking to staff. They were very impressed with everything that they saw and heard.

PSNI Internet Safety Workshops

As part of Safer Internet Day work, the PSNI came into school on 5th February to do Online Safety Workshops with pupils in Years 5, 6 & 7.

Wear Red Day – NI Chest, Heart & Stroke

We had such a fun Wear Red Day in support of NI Chest, Heart & Stroke on Friday 6th February. Thank you to our parents and guardians for your kindness and generosity. The amount raised was £197.55.

Children's Mental Health Week

Our Wellbeing Ambassadors proudly launched Children's Mental Health Week by leading a special whole-school assembly. With confidence and care, they shared practical strategies for looking after our minds - such as talking about our feelings, staying active, practising kindness and taking time to relax. Throughout the week, our Wellbeing Ambassadors continued to champion wellbeing by leading a range of activities across the school. Their leadership has set a positive tone for the week, inspiring our whole school community to prioritise mental health and wellbeing. Their

kindness, enthusiasm and maturity have shone through in everything they've done - from leading activities and checking in with younger pupils, to promoting positivity and encouraging everyone to look after their emotional wellbeing. They have been fantastic role models

Pupil Council Visit to Civic Centre

Our wonderful Pupil Council enjoyed a fantastic visit to Craigavon Civic Centre on 17th February. They were warmly welcomed by Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Jessica Johnston, who gave them a fascinating tour of the Council Chamber and took the time to answer their many thoughtful questions about the work of the Council. The visit ended on a delicious note with some very welcome refreshments — including pancakes, in celebration of Pancake Tuesday!

Pancake Tuesday

Pupils marked Pancake Tuesday across the school today with delicious pancakes with lots of tasty toppings. Our Nursery pupils even had their own Pancake Run.

Walking Bus

Despite the dull skies, we had a good turnout of pupils and parents for our Walking Bus on 18th February. A little bit of drizzle couldn't dampen the spirits of our resilient walkers!

As part of Children's Mental Health Week, we're focusing on how small habits—like a morning walk with friends—can make a massive difference in how our kids feel. Starting the day with fresh air and a chat is the perfect way to "clear the clouds" before the first bell rings. A huge thank you to everyone who braved the elements. You've shown that looking after our wellbeing is worth every splash!

Energy Saving Week

The week beginning 23rd February was Energy Saving Week in school. Pupils took part in fun, practical activities in school to help us:

- Turn off lights and equipment when not in use
- Keep doors closed to save heat
- Be mindful of water usage
- Think about reducing waste

The learning doesn't stop at the school gates however! We would love for families to join in at home too. By working together — at school and at home — we can help our children build lifelong habits that protect our environment and reduce energy use.

Yr 7 Confirmation Service of Enrolment

Our Year 7 pupils making their Confirmation attended a Service of Enrolment at St John's Church on Monday 23rd February.

Autism Training

Our First Training Workshop for parents took place on Tuesday 24th February and was very worthwhile. There are still places left on the following courses and these can be booked at:

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

- Tuesday 3rd March 2026: 11am – 1pm: Communication
- Tuesday 10th March 2026: 11am – 1pm: Sensory Processing

- Wednesday 18th March 2026: 11am – 1pm: Understanding Anxiety
- Tuesday 24th March 2026: 11am – 1pm: Reframing Behaviour

Yr 5 Egyptian Trip to Navan Centre

Year 5 had an amazing time travelling back to Ancient Egypt on Thursday 26th February. We spent the day looking at the timeline of Ancient Egypt, the mummification process and making our own crowns. We even got the opportunity to speak to an Egyptian farmer and his slave!

Nursery News

People Who Help Us Topic

We were delighted to welcome some of our wonderful parents and grandparents into our nursery to talk about their jobs and how they help people in the community. The children enjoyed hearing their stories, asking questions and exploring the tools they use at work. A big thank you to all the parents and grandparents who gave their time. Experiences like this help our children learn about the world and understand how different people work together to keep our community safe, healthy and happy.

New Sensory Corridor & Quiet Room

The Nursery now have their new Quiet Room and Sensory Corridor up and running. These have been put in place using funds raised through our Christmas performances and Raffle so a big thank you to everyone who supported this.

Class & Group Photos

The deadline for ordering photos online has now passed, if you still wish to order photographs, you should contact Dandelion Studio directly.

Parent/Teacher Telephone Consultations

A reminder that Parent/Teacher Consultations will take place during the week Monday 9th March – Friday 13th March 2026. You will have received your date and time and we would encourage you to attend as this is a vital part of partnership with parents. To facilitate these, school will finish early all week as follows:

- Nursery: 12.30pm
- Yrs 1 – 4 & Caterpillar Room: 12.45pm
- Yrs 5 – 7 & Butterfly Room: 1pm

There will be no after school clubs that week either.

World Book Day

World Book Day is on Thursday 5th March. It will be filled with lots of exciting, celebratory ways to promote reading for pleasure on World Book Day and all-year round. Children will be encouraged to come to school dressed as their favourite book character. Your child has already received their World Book Day Token and these can be spent in the following retailers: Asda, Sainsburys, Tesco, The Works, Waterstones or WHSmith.

Attendance

A reminder that pupils should be in school every day, unless they are sick or have a medical appointment. Educational attainment is closely linked to attendance and your child will only reach their full potential if they are in school every day.

The attendance for January was a very pleasing 93.4%, well up on the month of December. Well done to the following classes who had the highest attendance for the month of January:

- Foundation/Key Stage 1: Year 4 with 95.3%
- Key Stage 2: Yr 6 with 95.4%

A reminder that when a pupil is absent you must let the school know and provide us with a reason for absence, this can be done in a number of ways:

1. Phone call to the school and leave a message at Option 1 – remember you do not need to speak to the secretary
2. Email the secretary at wburrows556@c2ken.net
3. Send in an absence note

This is vitally important because if we do not get a reason for absence then it is recorded as 'No Reason' and will mean that you will receive phone calls and letters about attendance and you may even be referred to the EA Education Welfare Service.

Parent Pay Bookings

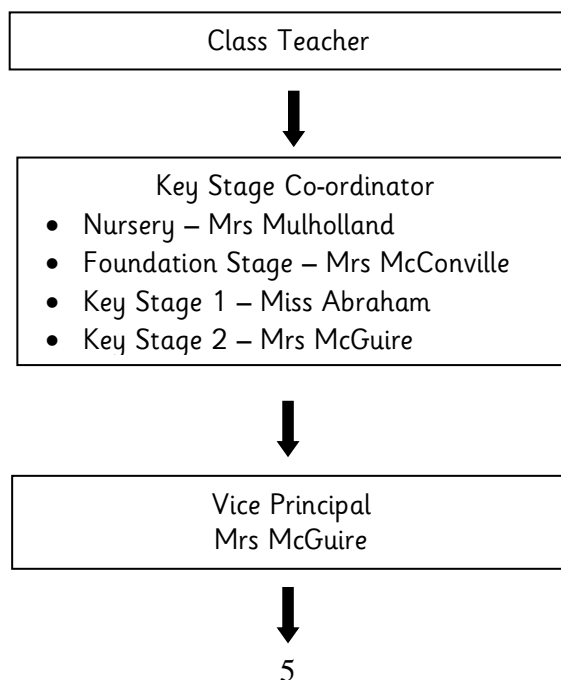
Please remember to book School Dinners - Free and Paid each week on Parent Pay.

Names on Clothing

Pupils frequently lose items of clothing in school and it is very difficult for staff to reunite lost items with pupils if there are no names on the item. With this in mind, I would ask that parents ensure that all items of school uniform and PE uniform have your child's name on them.

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:



Principal
Mr Woolsey

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.

Term Dates & Holidays 2025/2026

We are still waiting for the EA to confirm holiday dates for next year, this will hopefully happen within the next few weeks

Menu

<https://tinyurl.com/bp66jctr>

Thank you for your continued co-operation and support.

Richard Woolsey
Principal