



#### Safeguarding Team

**Principal:** Mr Woolsey  
**Designated Teacher:** Mrs McGuire  
**Deputy Designated Teacher:** Mrs Somerville  
**Nursery Deputy Designated Teacher:** Mrs Mulholland  
**Designated Governor:** Mrs Sergeant  
**Chairperson:** Mrs Loney

## News Sheet – April 2026

### Message from Mrs Loney (Chairperson of the Board of Governors)

It is with very mixed emotions that I inform the school community that our Principal, Mr Woolsey has been recommended for appointment as the new Principal of Millington Primary School from 1<sup>st</sup> September. The Board of Governors want to assure you that they will work hard to ensure a smooth transition. Wishing you all a very Happy Easter.

### Diary Dates for April 2025

15 <sup>th</sup>	Term 3 begins
16 <sup>th</sup>	Year 7 Confirmation Practice at St John's Strings Group at Portadown Festival
17 <sup>th</sup>	Multi Cultural Music & Dance Programme in Yr 7 Year 7 start swimming
18 <sup>th</sup>	2pm: Confirmation at St John's Church
24 <sup>th</sup>	Maths is Fun Day
28 <sup>th</sup>	Grandparents Morning
29 <sup>th</sup>	11am: Yr 5 singing at Liturgy at St Anthony's Church as part of School's Singing Programme

### Easter Holidays

Please note that school will be closed from **Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March to Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2026** for the Easter Holidays and two Staff Training Days. School reopens for the Summer Term on **Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2026**.

### Staffing

We say goodbye to Mrs Williamson who leaves us at Easter, she has been covering Year 3 for the last year. We welcome Mrs Somerville back from Maternity Leave after Easter.

Mrs Holmes, the Nursery Assistant in N2 leaves us at the end of this term and Mrs Bell will return from her Career in early May.

Miss Chapran will join our team of SEN Classroom Assistants after Easter.

### Designated Teacher

Mrs Somerville will be taking over the role of Deputy Designated Teacher again after Easter. We want to thank Miss McKernan who has been covering this role during Mrs Somerville's Maternity Leave.

### Coats Rule

The Coats Rule was extended this year because of the poor weather, it will be relaxed from the

start of term 3.

### **Summer Uniform**

After Easter, pupils may come to school wearing the summer uniform as follows:

- Boys may wear grey shorts
- Girls may wear a blue checked dress and white socks

A reminder that the only jewellery that pupils are permitted to wear in school is a pair of stud ear rings and a watch. A reminder that all footwear must be black.

We continue to be very proud of how smart our pupils look in their uniform.

### **Information on Chickenpox & Meningitis**

We have a number of pupils off with chickenpox at the moment, a reminder to vigilant for symptoms of these and follow PHA guidance which is that a pupil **must stay off school until all spots have crusted over.**

The Public Health Agency has asked all schools to share the following information with parents:

<https://tinyurl.com/yaeuwk5e>

<https://tinyurl.com/26pyjzav>

### **Smoking Policy**

A reminder that smoking cigarettes, e-cigarettes or vaping is not permitted on the school grounds and I would ask that everyone adheres to this policy.

### **Middletown Centre for Autism Training**

Our 5 Autism training sessions for parents and staff have now finished and have been excellent. Those parents and staff who attended have found them very beneficial. A big thank you to all the parents who supported these.

### **Young Enterprise**

Our Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 pupils had a fantastic this month day taking part in Young Enterprise NI workshops. Pupils learned how people and businesses operate in the community, explored global trade and finance and developed early enterprise and decision-making skills through fun, hands-on activities. A big thank you to Young Enterprise NI for inspiring our pupils.

### **Year 7 Service of Light**

Our Year 7 pupils making their Confirmation took part in the Ceremony of Light earlier this month.

### **Dreamspace Ambassador Training**

Our Year 6 pupils have been continuing Dreamspace Ambassador Training.

### **Yr 4 First Confession**

Well done to the 26 Year 4 pupils who made their First Confession. They have worked so hard in preparing for this special service and they did themselves and our whole school community incredibly proud. A wonderful milestone for them all.

### **World Book Day**

Thank you to our pupils and families for helping make World Book Day such a special celebration of reading and imagination.

### **Bee Safe Event**

Year 7 enjoyed attending the “Bee Safe” in March event which highlighted safety aspects on:

- Keeping themselves safe online
- A resilience workshop
- Fire safety in the home
- Road safety
- How to act responsibly on public transport and get on and off buses.

They had a great morning and enjoyed their goody bags to take home.

### **Wear Green Day**

What a fantastic St. Patrick’s Day celebration we had on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March.

### **Big Walk & Wheel Challenge**

Dave Wiggins from the Walk Wheel and Cycle Trust joined us in assembly on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March to talk to the pupils about the Big Walk and Wheel Challenge.

### **Jo Jingles in Nursery & Year 1**

Jo Jingles visited the Nursery again this month for a very enjoyable session of music and movement.

### **Just A Chat Sessions**

We were delighted to welcome local charity ‘Just a Chat’ into school to deliver their Emotional Health and Wellbeing workshops to our KS2 classes on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March. The sessions were engaging, nurturing and age-appropriate, giving our pupils practical strategies to understand and manage their feelings. A huge thank you to Conor and Jack for creating such a positive, open space for our pupils to talk.

### **Online Safety Workshops**

We were delighted to have a joint initiative with St John the Baptist Primary School, St John the Baptist’s College and Tir nan Óg GAA to host a special Parent Information Evening on helping children to stay safe and thrive in today’s digital world.

Wayne Denner, a highly respected technology and online-safety specialist with over 25 years’ international experience. Wayne’s talk gave parents clear up to-date guidance and simple, practical steps for keeping your child safer online and at home and school.

### **Easter Bunny Visit**

A very special visitor hopped into school on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March. Happy Easter from all of us at Ballyoran.

### **Eco Committee Update**

The school’s Eco Committee has submitted its application to renew the Green Flag award, highlighting their strong commitment to sustainability. This process involved reviewing the

school's environmental impact, gathering evidence of ongoing initiatives, and working together to complete a detailed application that reflects the progress made over the year. Alongside regular litter-picking efforts, the committee has been focusing on developing the outdoor classroom, particularly the herb garden. This space is becoming a valuable area for hands-on learning and connecting with nature. The committee's continued hard work is helping to create a greener and more environmentally aware school.'

### **Parent/Teacher Consultations**

Thank you to everyone who took the time to speak to staff about your child's education at the recent Parent/Teacher Consultations. The uptake rate for the whole school was a very pleasing 95.3%.

### **Attendance**

Well done to the classes with the highest attendance for February:

- Foundation/Key Stage 1: Year 1B – 95.4%
- Key Stage 2: Butterfly Room – 97%

These classes received the Attendance Cup and a Certificate and every pupil got a voucher entitling them to one night off homework.

The whole school attendance percentage for February was a very pleasing 94.3% and in line with the Northern Ireland Average for all Primary Schools.

Twenty pupils also got awards for 100% attendance.

February also saw the least number of pupils with an attendance % of below 85% which was extremely pleasing.

Thank you for the hard work that you as parents do ensuring that your children are in school every day.

We believe that these figures are a very strong indicator of the positive ethos that we have created in Ballyoran PS, which is down to the hard work of all of the staff in ensuring that pupils want to come to school every day because of the very positive experiences that they have.

### **Special Diets**

Special diets can be required for a wide variety of medical conditions including food allergies, food intolerance, diabetes and coeliac disease. Other children follow special diets for religious or cultural reasons or because they are vegetarian or vegan. If your child requires a special diet, please contact the office as you will need to complete a Special Diet Application Form and Special Diet Medical Form. These forms are also available on the website at <https://www.ballyoranps.com/school-meals/>

### **Diabetes**

An increasing number of children and young people are being diagnosed with diabetes. Parents are reminded about the possible signs of diabetes to watch out for in their children – The 4 Ts:

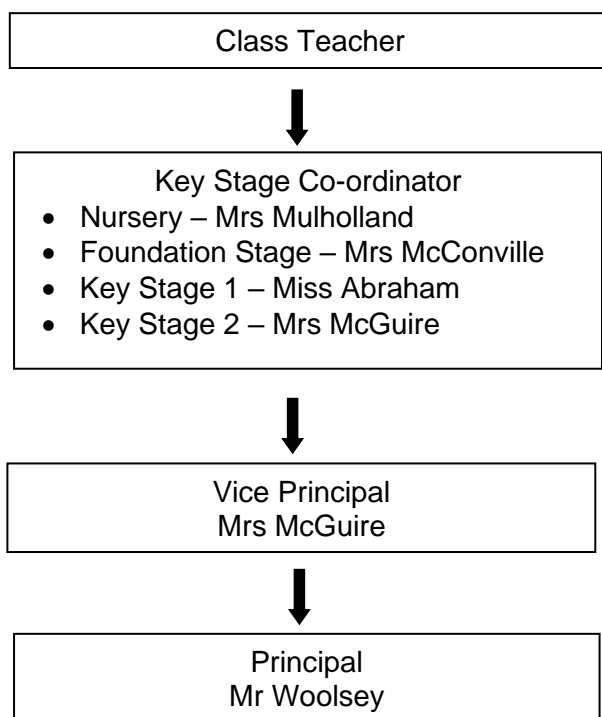
- Toilet
- Tired
- Thirsty

- Thinner

If your child is experiencing any of the 4Ts, visit your doctor immediately. Don't delay as Type 1 diabetes can be fatal.

### 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:



### 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 2026/2027**

<https://tinyurl.com/842nvuvx>

### **Menu**

<https://tinyurl.com/yknvuksm>

### **School Website**

Remember to keep up-to-date with everything that is going on in school by logging on to our website [www.ballyoranps.com](http://www.ballyoranps.com)

Finally, I would like to thank all members of the school community for their support during another very busy term and wish everyone a happy and relaxing Easter Break

Richard Woolsey  
Principal