

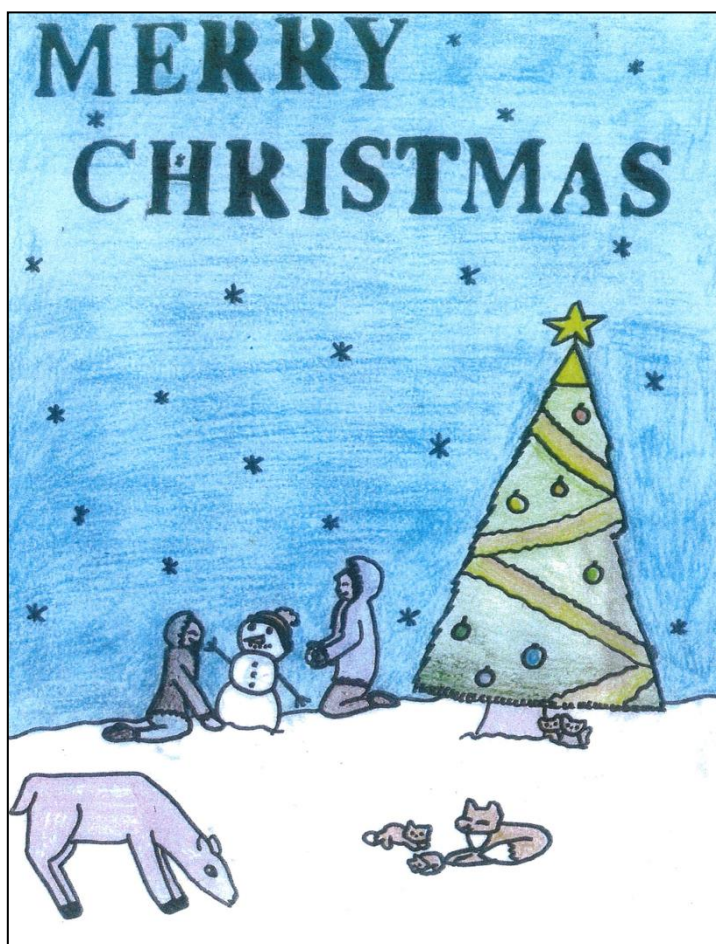


Safeguarding Team

Principal: Mr Woolsey
Designated Teacher: Mrs McGuire
Deputy Designated Teacher: Miss Baird
Nursery Deputy Designated Teacher: Mrs Mulholland
Designated Governor: Mrs Loney
Chairperson: Mr Fleming

News Sheet – Christmas 2024

Merry Christmas



Winning Design for School Christmas Card Competition
by Vashita Mahesh Babu
(Year 6)

End of Term Arrangements

School will finish on Friday 20th December 2024 which will have an early finish time. Pupils do not need to wear uniform on this day and there will be no dinners served.

Staggered Early Dismissal Arrangements are as follows:

- 11.45am: Yrs 5 – 7 & SLSC
- 11.50am: Yrs 3 & 4
- 11.55am: Yrs 1 & 2 & JLSC
- Nursery: 12noon

Start of New Term

Ballyoran Primary School will re-open for pupils on **Wednesday 8th January 2025**

Diary Dates for January 2024

- 8th Term 2 Begins
 - Breakfast Club reopens
 - Sensory Motor Group restarts
- 10th Nursery and P1 Online Applications opens at 12 noon
 - Gaelic After Schools Club starts
- 13th Soccer After School Club begins
- 14th Craft After School Club begins
- 17th Year 5 swimming block begins at South Lakes Leisure Centre
- 24th Nursery & P1 Online Applications closes at 12 noon
- 25th Year 7 Transfer Test (SEAG) Results
- 28th Year 7 Online Transfer Application Process opens

Staffing

We welcome Miss Smyth to Ballyoran Primary School, she will be starting after Christmas as a SEN Classroom Assistant.

General Sickness

Unfortunately, there is still a lot of sickness around. 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>

School Christmas Card Competition

Thank you to all of our pupils for taking part in our Annual Christmas Card Competition, as ever the standard was very high. The winners and runner ups are as follows:

Class	Winner	Runner Up
Junior LSC	Harry Guterres	Elainy Costa
Year 1	Diana Pires Lopes	Milo McConville
Year 2McC	Ludwik Gorgol	Amaya Ahtty
Year 2Mu	Cassie McGeown	Leah Wilson
Year 3	Hayley Corkin	Mila McKernan
Year 4	Elena Peneva	Natan Michalik
Year 5	Nicole Poliakova	Emilie Lawless
Year 6	Gracella Soares Vaz	Varshita Mahesh Babu
Year 7	William Ximenes	Miriam Nhambele
Senior LSC	Lorcain Lennon	Alessandra Da Veiga

Overall Winner

Well done to Vashita Mahesh Babu (Yr 6) who was the overall winner for the entire school. Her design has been made into our official school Christmas Card for this year and features on the front page of this News Sheet.

Christmas Dinner

Our pupils enjoyed a really tasty Christmas dinner in school on Friday 6th December. A big thank you to Mrs Donna Campbell and her team in the kitchen for providing this.

Daily Mile Santa Run

Pupils took part in this on Friday 6th December.

Christmas Shows

A big well done to all our pupils for how well they performed during our Christmas Shows, they were absolutely fabulous, and we are very proud of them all. We had our Nursery Nativity 'Whoops A Daisy Angel' on 11th December and the Foundation Stage (Yrs 1 & 2) presented 'Christmas With The Aliens' on 12th and 13th December. A big thank you to all of the staff also who worked so hard as a team to prepare for our Christmas Shows. Finally a big thank you to everyone who supported our Christmas shows by buying tickets to attend, all of the money raised will go towards our Sensory Room/Corridor Project.

Parents & Friends Christmas Raffles

Our Christmas Raffles were well supported, a big thank you to everyone who bought tickets for these and a special thank you to Mrs Corkin and Mrs McCool and our Parents and Friends for organising these. Thank you also to all the local businesses who supported the school by donating prizes so generously:

- Ashgrove Cycles
- Graham Davison Office Supplies
- McCracken's Spar
- Charlie Mallon Butchers
- Vivo
- Litters
- Miss Halls
- Head of the Road
- Playaway
- The Treehouse Soft Play
- Nathan Goodman Online Coaching
- McKeevers Sports
- Elegance Hair and Beauty

Patrick McDonnell in Year 2 won the Bike from Ashgrove Cycles.

Again, all of the money raised from the raffles will go towards our Sensory Room/Corridor. We are now halfway towards our target total of £12,000, with approximately £6,000 raised. Thank you for all your kindness and generosity.

'Rapunzel' Pantomime at The Market Place Theatre

Pupils from KS1, KS2 and S LSC really enjoyed a recent trip to The Market Place Theatre in Armagh to watch 'Rapunzel'. The dazzling costumes, stunning set, catchy music and hilarious characters made this a magical and breath-taking experience.

Post Box Visit

Year 2 have been learning all about the journey of a letter in Literacy. The pupils enjoyed a walk to the post box to post home their handmade Christmas cards to their families. Children then visited The Home Bakery to buy a bun for their morning snack. The children really enjoyed opening their envelopes when the postman delivered them to their houses.

Journey to Santa

The winners were announced in assembly this week.

Class Parties, Discos and Gifts

All our classes will have their Christmas parties and discos on Thursday 19th December, our Christmas Jumper Day. Santa also visited Years 1 – 2. Every pupil received a selection box from the school on this day also.

Christmas Gifts

This year we are again asking that instead of buying presents for staff that you consider donating to the St Vincent De Paul Christmas Appeal.

Punctuality

A reminder that all primary pupils must be in school every morning for 8.55am and Nursery pupils must be in school by 9am. If pupils are late, this causes disruption and negatively impacts the learning of the pupil who is late and the rest of the class.

Dropping off Pupils Nursery – Year 3

A reminder that all pupils from Nursery to Year 3 must be accompanied to school and collected from school every day by an adult. An adult **MUST** walk Nursery pupils right to the classroom door in the mornings.

Admissions for Nursery and Year 1 – September 2025

The admissions process for Nursery and Year 1 for September 2025 will open at 12noon on **Friday 10th January 2025** and close at 12 noon on **Friday 24th January 2025**. Parents can apply by clicking on <https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/admissions>

Year 7 Transfer to Post Primary School

The post primary admissions process portal opens at **12noon on Tuesday 28th January 2025** and closes at **4pm on Thursday 20th February 2025**. Parents should apply on the EA website at <https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/admissions>

Board of Governors Parent Representatives

The EA are in the process of appointing new Boards of Governors for all schools in Northern for a new four-year term which will run until 2028. Our Board of Governors has two Parent Representatives and I wish to place on record my thanks to Mrs Sinead Hughes and Ms Ceira Hall who have been the Parent Representatives on the current Board of Governors for the last 4 year term, for all their hard work and support.

We are now seeking nominations for our Parent Representative positions for the new Board of Governors. If you are interested in being a Parent Governor please contact the office for a nomination form. This form should be signed by the 'proposer' and 'seconder' (both of whom should also be a parent at Ballyoran PS and should also include the nominee's signature, having given their consent for the nomination. These nomination forms are to be returned to the school either by post or delivered directly to the office by **3.00pm on Friday 17th January 2025**.

Coats

Thank you to all parents for ensuring that your children are in school every day with a coat. Please ensure this continues throughout the winter. It is also important that your child's name is on all clothing.

Contingency Planning - Winter

As we are now in Winter, the school has been reviewing its contingency plans, should the school need to close due to bad weather. Once again, we will be using our Text Alert system, school app and the school website to inform parents should a closure be necessary.

PSNI Online Safety Warning for Children receiving electronic Christmas Gifts

Many children and young people will receive new devices and computer games for Christmas, but we're asking parents, do you know what your child is doing online or most importantly, who they are talking to?

For some children, it will be the first time they've owned a device that connects them to the online world. Even for older children, a new device means new corners of the digital landscape to explore – and unfortunately, new risks to be aware of.

Along with our partners at the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland, we have put together some key tips on how to make sure children enjoy the internet safely.

These tips include; checking the privacy, location and parental controls on devices that the child uses, checking the direct messages and chat functions on apps, using parental controls and having open conversations with their child about what they are doing online.

Parents and carers can access the Safeguarding Board NI App for online safety information and advice.

Practical tips and advice have been published on the Police Service's website here:

<https://tinyurl.com/3ean6kbk>

Office 365

We know that many pupils may get new computers/laptops over Christmas. Please do not buy Microsoft Office for these. Office 365 which includes Word, Powerpoint and Excel is available free of charge to all pupils. It can be downloaded following the guidance at the following link:

<https://tinyurl.com/ycyd9f4b>

Picking Pupils Up

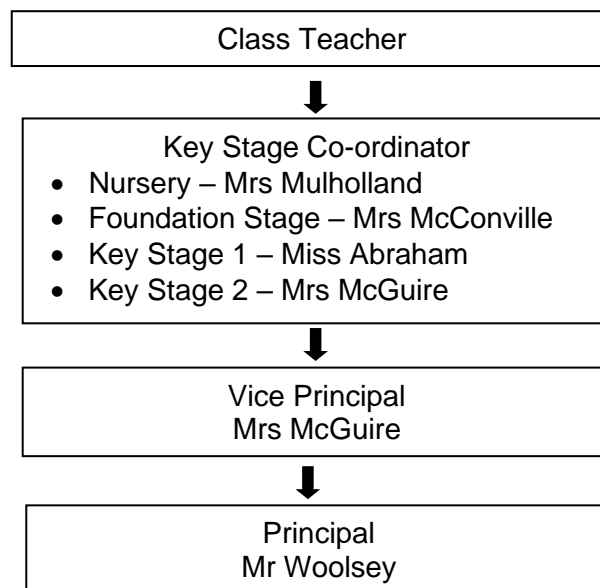
It is vital that parents are punctual when collecting their children otherwise they get anxious. If you are running late we would ask that you phone the office and inform us of this. If a child is not collected and we are unable to make contact with parents/carers and have exhausted all listed contacts, 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:



School Dinner Menu

As you know a rolling monthly menu is in place for term 1 and is available at <https://tinyurl.com/3cuehy9k>

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 download and authenticate the school app as all communication is now sent through the App. If you do not have the school app, you will miss vital communications from school.

Thanks and Happy Christmas

A big thank you to all my Staff for all their hard work this term, thank you also to parents for your continued support and finally, thank you to all of our amazing pupils, who we are so proud of, for making Ballyoran Primary School such a special place.

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

Richard Woolsey
Principal

