



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

## News Sheet – April 2025

### Diary Dates for April 2025

9 <sup>th</sup>	Parents receive acceptance letters for Nursery & Year 1 for September 2025 Gaelic Tournament at Ballyhegan
14 <sup>th</sup>	Caterpillar Room & Butterfly Room Sponsored Welly Boot Walk
16 <sup>th</sup>	Last day of term
17 <sup>th</sup>	Easter Holidays begin
28 <sup>th</sup>	Term 3 begins

### End of Term Arrangements

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> April is the last day of term. There will be no uniform, no dinners and school will finish early. Pupils may bring an unhealthy break. The following Staggered Dismissals will apply:

- 11.45am: Yrs 5 – 7 & Butterfly Room
- 11.50am: Yrs 3 & 4
- 11.55am: Yrs 1 – 2 & Caterpillar Room
- 12noon: Nursery

### Easter Holidays

Please note that school will be closed from **Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> April to Friday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2025** for the Easter Holidays. School reopens for the Summer Term on **Monday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025**.

### 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.

### Staffing

Mrs Walker retired at the end of February after nearly 38 years' service at Ballyoran Primary School. Her love of teaching and hard work, commitment and dedication have always been very evident. Mrs Walker taught across a number of classes over the years, including Years 3, 4, 5 and 7, with the majority of her teaching being in Year 6. Her love of reading and novels was always very evident in her teaching, and this has been passed on to many pupils over the years. Her passion for Science in particular rocks has been instilled into countless pupils over the years and her work as Science and later World Around Us Co-ordinator helped to take this area of learning forward throughout the school. We wish her a long, happy, fulfilling and peaceful retirement.

We welcome Miss Irwin to the staff of Ballyoran, she will be covering Mrs McCullough's Maternity Leave in the Caterpillar Room.

## **Smoking Policy**

Please note that our Smoking Policy has recently been reviewed and adopted by the Board of Governors and now includes vaping. This means that no smoking cigarettes, e-cigarettes or vaping is now permitted on the school grounds and I would ask that everyone adheres to this policy.

## **School Development Plan Audit**

We are currently completing an audit to help us draft a new Three-Year School Development Plan for the period 2025 – 2028. An important part of this audit is getting the views and opinions of pupils, staff and parents who are being asked to complete online questionnaires. Pupils are currently completing their questionnaires in school. Parents will have received a text yesterday with a link to this and we would ask you to please complete it by **Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April**. If you did not receive the link please contact the office.

## **Online Safety**

On Monday 10<sup>th</sup> March, Constable Emma and Constable Elaine from PSNI talked to Key Stage 2 pupils about Staying Safe Online. They shared tips about how we can protect ourselves when using the internet. Tips included:

- Have safe, unpredictable passwords to provide more security.
- Speak out if you are unsure of anything.
- Do not accept requests from people you do not know.
- Do not share private pictures online.
- If someone passes on an inappropriate picture, block it, report it and tell a trusted adult.
- Be kind to others on group chats.
- Share devices with your parents.
- The social media platforms Tik Tok, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram and Twitter are for 13-year-olds and upwards.

For more information and tips on how we can support our pupils to safely use the internet, please explore: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/talking-child-online-safety/>

## **Nursery News**

### Football Coaching

On Friday 21<sup>st</sup> March the children enjoyed their visit from Coach Jake. We were practising new football skills and enjoyed playing games. We look forward to his next visit.

### PSNI Visit

On Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March we had a special visit from the PSNI at the Nursery. The officers spoke to the children about their important job in keeping people safe and helping those in need. The officers also spoke to the children about how we can keep safe at home, out and about, or when we are crossing the road. The children also got to see a police car.

### **Liam McCorry Coaching**

Armagh County Board coach Liam Mc Corry is working with a selected group of pupils from Years 5, 6 and 7 over a period of 6 weeks. The pupils are receiving the benefit of expert coaching with one session per week lasting 45 minutes. The aim is to strengthen the pupils' development and to foster links with the local gaelic clubs.

## **World Book Day**

Pupils and staff at Ballyoran PS enjoyed participating in World Book Day 2025. The day was filled with lots of exciting, celebratory ways to promote reading. We raised an amazing £370.32 from our £1 book sale. It was a fantastic day enjoyed by all and we thank parents/guardians for supporting this day and making it such a huge success.

## **Reading Week Competition**

Well done to all pupils who participated in our Reading Week Competition. A big well done to Year 3 and Year 7 who won the competition. They will get to enjoy a hot chocolate party, a trip to the park or a popcorn movie afternoon as their prize. A superb effort from all pupils at Ballyoran PS!

## **Brownlow 5 A Side Competition**

Seven pupils from Year 5 and Year 6 represented the school in a tournament at Brownlow Integrated College on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March. The squad consisted of 5 boys and 2 girls. The players performed with great distinction, achieving a great set of results. There were 3 victories and just one narrow defeat. Highlights included a superb penalty save by Isaac Sargeant and 2 goals each for Jay Kelly and Ksawery Kazmierski.

## **Yr 7 Knights of St Columbanus Lesson**

On the Thursday before the Confirmation ceremony, we were pleased to receive a visit from Jim Lee and Michael Dennison from the Knights of St Columbanus. Jim and Michael provided a workshop, including a slide show, to help the children prepare for the sacrament of Confirmation.

## **First Confession**

Twenty-six of our Year 4 pupils made their First Confession at St. John the Baptist Church on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March. We are incredibly proud of how well the pupils conducted themselves throughout the ceremony and wish them well as they begin preparations for making their First Holy Communion.

## **Confirmation**

The sacrament of Confirmation took place on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> March at St John the Baptist Church, officiated by Bishop Router. We are very proud of our pupils who took part in the ceremony in a prayerful and respectful manner. Although 3 local schools were involved, the music was led by Ballyoran PS. Special thanks go to Mrs Muldrew and the choir who added so much to the occasion with the wonderful music, this was commented on by several people, including Bishop Router.

## **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 91%.

## **Attendance**

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

- Foundation/Key Stage 1: Year 3 – 97%
- Key Stage 2: Butterfly Room – 96.8%

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 93%.

Twenty-six pupils also got awards for 100% attendance.

### 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 –

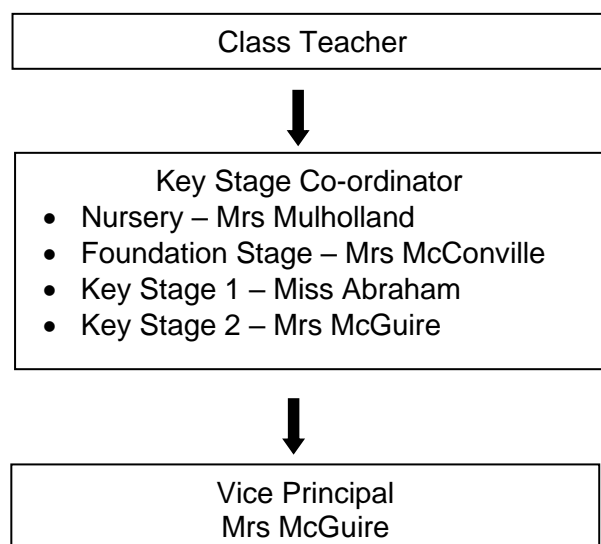
The 4 Ts:

- 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:





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**

These will be published next week on the school app.

### **Coats**

As we have moved into Spring and the weather is a bit milder, a reminder that we are no longer enforcing the coats rule at break and lunch. We would, however encourage you to ensure your child/children come to school with a coat on a wet or cold day.

### **Menu**

<https://tinyurl.com/2vdeub3u>

### **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