

Safeguarding Team

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

News Sheet – October 2024

Settling In

We are now nearly one month into our new school year and it has been a very smooth start to the new term. All of our pupils have settled back into school and we are very proud of them. I want to take this opportunity to thank parents for their continued co-operation and support.

Morning Punctuality

It is vitally important that your child is in school on time every morning. All pupils should be in school for by 8.55am. Doors and gates will be locked promptly at 9am. Thank you to most parents who are adhering to this and getting their child/ren to school on time every morning. Unfortunately, however a small number of parents are arriving late in the mornings when gates and doors have been locked. This is causing disruption to the learning of other pupils.

Year 1 Drop Off

Year 1 parents are reminded that from the start of October, in the mornings, all Year 1 pupils should now walk into class on their own.

Staffing

We welcome Mrs Calvert to the staff as a Classroom Assistant in Nursery. In the afternoons, Mrs Calvert will support children with their reading through the Boosting Reading programme.

We also welcome Miss Hendron to the staff as a Classroom Assistant in Year 4.

Diary Dates – October 2023

1 st	School closed for staff training
3 rd	Book Fair Begins
10 th	Wear Orange Day – Sam Maguire Trophy in school
14 th & 15 th	School Photographs – Individuals & Family Groups in school
21 st	Flu Vaccinations
21 st – 25 th	Parent/Teacher Meetings – School finishes for pupils at 1pm every day
25 th	School Closed for Half Term

Advance Dates

We aim to work in partnership with parents and, with this in mind; we have arranged as many dates as possible for the school year to give parents as much notice as possible.

These can be found on the School App or the Calendar on our website www.ballyoranps.com.

Charity

We will be holding the following events for Charity in Term 1 and ask you to please support these:

Charity Supported	Date	Event	Donation
BBC Children in Need	Friday 15 th November 2024	Wear something spotty and cake sale	Money from cake sale
Samaritan's Purse Shoe Box Appeal	December 2024	Shoe Box Appeal	
Sensory Room Fund	Thursday 19 th December 2024	Christmas Jumper Day	£1 per child

Staff supported the Northern Ireland Hospice Coffee Morning this week during the training days.

Traffic Management Scheme

Our new traffic management scheme is working extremely well and I want to thank the vast majority of parents who are following the guidance and using it properly. A few points however which I would appreciate everyone's co-operation with:

1. A significant number of parents and children are walking over the flower beds and grass outside the Red Nursery Gate, particularly at the 2pm pick up. While we appreciate that there are many parents picking up pupils at this time, we ask that you do not do this please as it is damaging the flower beds and the grass and will cause a particular mess in the wet weather. Parents and pupils are asked to always stay on the tarmac.
2. Please always keep your children under control, some children have been climbing on or walking along the new walls on the walkways. This is very dangerous as a child could easily fall off the wall and become seriously injured.
3. Pedestrians should not be walking into Car Park 2 or exiting via the vehicle gates onto to Ballyoran Park. This is very dangerous.
4. A reminder that there should be no traffic arriving at school via or parking on Ballyoran Park at any time.

European Day of Languages

On Thursday 26th September we celebrated European Day of Languages.

School Attendance – Every School Day Counts

Every single day a child is absent from school equates to a day of lost learning. Sometimes attendance percentages can be misleading – as a whole school in 2022/23 we had a very low average attendance of 87.9%. The impact of Covid 19 obviously continued to have a big impact on this. From the Department of Education guidance detailed below you can see that this falls into the 'Very Poor' to 'Poor' category. As a whole school we would like your cooperation in improving our rate of attendance and in turn reducing the days of lost learning. Please note that rates of attendance are reviewed monthly with the Educational Welfare Office (EWO) and those children falling below 85% are automatically referred to the EWO for intervention. Thank you for your help in this matter. The

Department of Education booklet 'School Attendance Matters - A Parent's Guide' is available on the school website at <https://tinyurl.com/36zxrv5e> .

100% Attendance	0 Days Missed	Excellent
95% Attendance	9 Days of Absence 1 Week and 4 Days of Learning Missed	Satisfactory
90% Attendance	19 Days of Absence 3 Weeks and 4 Days of Learning Missed	Poor
85% Attendance	28 Days Absence 5 Weeks and 3 Days of Learning Missed	Very Poor
80% Attendance	38 Days of Absence 7 Weeks and 3 days of Learning Missed	Unacceptable
75% Attendance	46 Days of Absence 9 Weeks and 1 Day of Learning Missed	Unacceptable

- Due to Department of Education Guidelines, a present mark can only be given if a pupil is in school.
- Just as Attendance is important, Punctuality is also very important as mentioned earlier. **All pupils arriving after the 9am bell will be marked as late.**

Book Fair

The Book Fair will be open to parents on Monday 7th, Tuesday 8th and Wednesday 9th October from 3pm – 3.30pm.

Office

Miss Duraes is currently our temporary secretary. A reminder that the office hours are as follows:

- Monday - Thursday: 8.15 – 3.45pm
- Friday: 8.15 – 3.30pm

The office is closed each day as follows:

- 10.15 – 10.30am: Break
- 1.15 – 1.45pm: Lunch

If you telephone or call at the school during these hours there will be nobody available to speak to you or answer the door.

The office phone is extremely busy and we would encourage you to leave a message on Option 1 if you are reporting an absence. Also please be patient, if the phone rings continuously this does not mean that there is no-one in the office, it means that the secretary is most likely on another call.

Parent/Teacher Meetings

These will take place week beginning 21st October. School will finish at 1pm every day during that week. Reply slips must be returned with the eldest in each family by Friday 4th October 2024.

Emergency Contact Details

It is vital that we hold up-to-date information on every child in school. If any information changes during the year, e.g. telephone numbers, address, medical details, it is **your responsibility** to inform the school immediately. In the past unfortunately, there have been occasions when we have been unable to contact parents, in emergency situations, because we did not have updated contact numbers. In some instances, we have had no choice but to contact Social Services.

Medication

If your child requires any medication to be taken in school for any reason, a Consent Form must first be completed. These are available at the office or can be downloaded from the school website at <https://www.ballyoranps.com/useful-forms/>

Free School Meals/Uniform Allowances

A reminder that eligible parents must apply online for the new school year, even parents who were already in receipt of this last year. If you do not make an application your child will have to pay for dinners until the application is approved. Parents of pupils entitled to Free School Meals but have not received notification that this has been approved by EA, will have to pay for the dinners until the point of approval.

Food Allergies/Special Diets

Legislation means that the school kitchen must be aware of any pupils with food allergies. Whilst most special dietary requirements and food allergies should have been made known to the school already through the Medical Register forms, it is of vital importance to inform us if you have not done so already or if your child becomes allergic to something during the school year. Our school kitchen will in turn make appropriate adjustments to their menus.

If your child requires a special diet please complete the forms at <https://www.ballyoranps.com/school-meals/> and send these into school.

No Nuts Policy

A reminder that Ballyoran Primary School has a **No Nuts Policy** to protect pupils with nut allergies. We ask all parents to respect this when sending food into school.

Fizzy Drinks

A reminder that as part of our Healthy Schools Policy, we do not permit pupils to bring fizzy drinks into school.

Smoking

As you are aware, it is School Policy that smoking is not permitted within school grounds. Please note that this Policy also includes e-cigarettes.

First Aid

Currently the school has eight First Aiders:

- Mr Hendron (Co-ordinator)
- Mrs Muldrew

- Mrs Somerville
- Mrs Bell
- Miss Goodman
- Miss Bloomer
- Miss Wilson
- Mrs Stewart

Breakfast Club

All pupils are welcome to attend in the Dinner Hall from 8.15 – 8.45am. The cost is £1 per day. Parents must book for Breakfast Club by midday every Friday for the following week, by emailing mduraes127@c2kni.net.

Mental Health and Well Being

The mental health and well-being of our pupils and staff is of paramount importance. We have several interventions available in school for pupils who are struggling with social, emotional, behavioural or well-being issues whereby they go out of class and speak to someone on a weekly basis. If you feel that your child would benefit from this, please contact their teacher.

After School Clubs

After School Clubs are running on Mondays and Tuesdays. Click on the link <https://www.ballyoranps.com/after-school-clubs/> to register and pay.

Breaktime Snack: Nursery – Year 2

Nursery and Foundation Stage (Yrs 1 – 2) parents are asked to contribute £10 a month per child towards the daily snack and toy fund. **Please note that this money should be paid at the start of each month on Parent Pay.**

Healthy Breaks: Years 3 - 7

Year 3 – 7 must bring in their own healthy snack of fruit, vegetables, yogurts or breads. No fizzy drinks, chocolate, sweets or crisps are allowed as part of our Healthy Breaks Policy. Unfortunately, several pupils are coming into school with unhealthy snacks for break. To help parents we have created a table of suitable and non-suitable healthy breaks:

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

More information is available at:

Healthy Breaks <https://tinyurl.com/yc4z5r29>

Healthy Lunches <https://tinyurl.com/2p9pbb8z>

Healthy Choices <https://tinyurl.com/mrepcxs6>

Dogs

A reminder that dogs are not permitted on the school grounds for Health and Safety reasons.

Swimming

Year 5 – 7 pupils will be swimming this year on Fridays as usual, in the South Lakes Leisure Centre. Each class will have a block on a rota and Year 7 are currently swimming.

House System

The school continues to operate the House Competition. All pupils have been placed into one of three houses:

- Bann
- Lagan
- Foyle

Points are awarded to pupils for a range of things, (e.g. good manners) and the points are displayed in the Assembly Hall each week with a monthly House Cup and prize presented to the House with the most points.

Congratulations to the following Yr 6 and 7 pupils who have been elected as Captains and Vice Captains this year.

House	Captain	Vice-Captain
Bann	Sophia Murphy	Caitlin Corrigan
Foyle	Emilia Abromaviciute	Fionn Larkin
Lagan	Dercie Guterres	Isaac Sergeant

Pupil Council

Congratulations to our new Pupil Council for this year:

Yr 4	Dylan Mulholland	Katie McCann
Yr 5	Aedan Creaney	Sadie Hall

Yr 6	Isaac Sergeant	Caitlin Corrigan
Yr 7	Sara Das Neves	Denis Kozlowski
LSC	Jakub Czwojdrak	Cian Creaney

Digital Leaders

Well done to our Digital Leaders for this year:

	Leader 1	Leader 2
Year 4	Harley McCann	Carlos Da Veiga
Year 5	Nicole Poliakova	Caolan Creaney
Year 6	Gracella Soares Vaz	Franek Kurowski-Buska
Year 7	Katie Hamilton	Connie-Maye McCoy
LSC	Jason Hall	Alessandra Da Veiga

Eco Committee

The following pupils have been elected as Eco Committee Members representing their class this year:

Year 4	Zach Hall	Livia Varela
Year 5	Emilie Lawless	Kodie Toman
Year 6	Fionn Larkin	Varshita Mahesh Babu
Year 7	Sophia Murphy	Liam Mulholland
LSC	Lorcain Lennon	Salvina Ciuraru

Playground Friends

Year 7 pupils have been again given the opportunity to become Playground Friends and all of them applied and are now carrying out this role.

School App

It is important that all parents authenticate the school app as all communication for individual classes will be sent and received through the App. If you are unable to access the school app, please contact the office. Guidance on our school app can be found at:

<https://tinyurl.com/2p98mfm2>

Parent Information Booklet

Every family received a copy of this on the app at the start of term and we ask that you read this carefully as it contains very important information for this year:

School Website

Keep up to date with school news, information and events by logging on to www.ballyoranps.com. Class Pages are updated regularly giving parents a useful insight into what their children are doing in class.

Facebook

We are currently in the process of setting up a Facebook page for Ballyoran PS. If you do NOT wish for a photograph of your child to appear on the Ballyoran PS Facebook page, please contact the school office on 02838352009.

Sustrans

Thank you to everyone who joined us on the Walking Bus on Wednesdays in September. Have a look below to see if you can spot yourself on our journey to school.

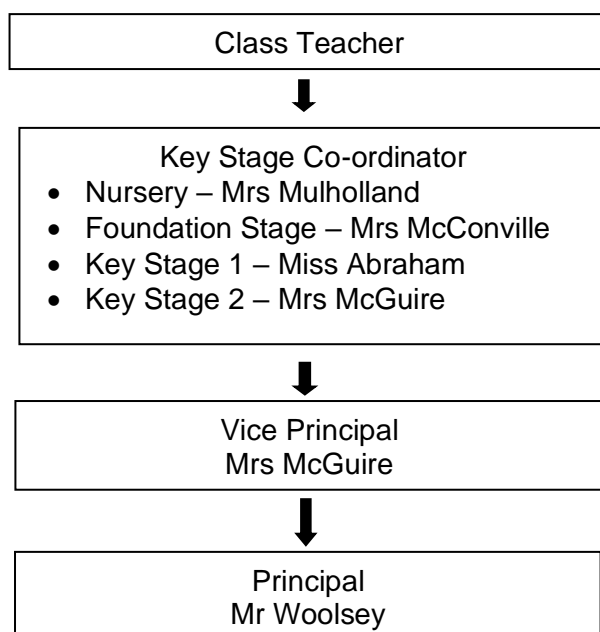
<https://ballyoran-primary-school.secure-primariesite.net/sustrans/>

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:



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 we have no option but to phone Social Services and/or the Police.

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 in the event of an emergency we will have no option but to refer this to Social Services.

School Menu

A reminder that a rolling menu is now in place which covers the whole of term 1 and is available at:

<https://tinyurl.com/yx4krfjb>

Mrs McGuire
Vice Principal

