



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 2023

Merry Christmas



Winning Design for School Christmas Card Competition
by
Caoimhin Hughes (Year 6)

General Sickness

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>

End of Term Arrangements

School will finish on Tuesday 19th December 2023 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
- 11.50am: Yrs 3 & 4
- 11.55am: Yrs 1 & 2
- Nursery: 12noon

Start of New Term

Ballyoran Primary School will re-open for pupils on **Thursday 4th January 2024.**

Diary Dates for January 2024

- 4th Term 2 Begins
Breakfast Club reopens
Parent Pay Goes Live
- 8th Sensory Motor Group restarts
- 9th Nursery and P1 Online Applications opens at 12 noon
- 10th PSNI Internet Safety Talk to Key Stage 2
- 12th Year 5 begin swimming block at South Lake Leisure Centre
- 19th Year 4 trip to Palace Stables, Armagh
- 26th Nursery & P1 Online Applications closes at 12 noon
- 27th Year 7 Transfer Test Results
- 30th Year 7 Online Transfer Application Process opens

Parent Pay

A reminder that our new Cashless Payment System Parent Pay goes live on **Thursday 4th January.** Please ensure that you have registered before the end of term and if you need any help, please contact the office. A reminder that no cash will be accepted in school from the start of term 2.

Staffing

We say farewell and thank you to Miss Montgomery who leaves us at Christmas. She has been working as a Classroom Assistant in N2 and we wish her well for the future.

Our new Junior LSC teacher, Mrs McCullough, starts work with us in January, we welcome her to the staff and hope that she settles into the Ballyoran family very quickly.

Mr Jack Gilpin

Mr Jack Gilpin, the first Principal of Ballyoran Primary School sadly died this week at the age of 92. Mr Gilpin was Principal between 1974 and 1996 and is fondly remembered by all who knew him. We send our sympathy as a school to his wife and daughter and the entire family circle.

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 and Mrs Heaney who retired at the end of last year judged our competition. The winners and runner ups are as follows:

	Winner	Runner-up
Y1	Amaya Ahtty	Elisha Buduan
Y1/2	Leah Nosal	Advany Montinho
Y2/3	Mila McKernan	Haley Corkin
Y3	Beatriz Lopez	Natan Michalik
Y4	Anabella Pereira	Oscar Da Silva
Y5	Jay Kelly	Varshita Mahesh
Y6	Caoimhin Hughes	Sophia Murphy
Y7	Mia Liggett	Erin Fitzpatrick
LSC	Balthasar Carlson Li	Jakub Czwojdrak

Overall Winner

Well done to Caoimhin Hughes (Yr 6) who was the overall winner for the entire school. His 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 8th 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 1st December.

Christmas Shows

A big well done to all our pupils for how well they performed during our Christmas Shows, every pupil in the school got the opportunity to be on stage and they were absolutely fabulous, and we are very proud of them all. We had our Nursery Nativity 'Whoops A Daisy Angel' on 12th December and the Primary School presented 'It's Chri-i-stmas' on 13th and

14th December. A big thank you to all of the staff also who worked so hard as a team to prepare for our Christmas Shows.

'Aladdin' Pantomime at The Market Place Theatre

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

Year 1 Christmas Trip to Navan Centre

Foundation Stage pupils visited The Navan Centre for their Christmas trip. Children watched a short stage show called 'The Snowman Who Refused to Melt'. Pupils made a Christmas wreath, enjoyed a Christmas singalong with an elf and visited Santa's house where he had gifts for all the boys and girls. The pupils really enjoyed their Christmas trip.

Post Box Visit

Year 2/3 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. The children designed Christmas cards using the Just2Easy app. 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 will be announced after Christmas.

Class Parties, Discos and Gifts

All our classes will have their Christmas parties and discos on Monday 18th December, our Christmas Jumper Day. This is a non Uniform Day and pupils should bring £1 for Save The Children. Santa will also visit Years 1 – 4. Pupils should bring in food for the class parties but a reminder that no nuts or nut based products should be sent in. Every pupil will receive 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 at:

<https://www.svp.ie/fundraiser/north-region-gift-of-choice-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.

Ask For Angela

The PSNI have asked us to distribute the following information about a new scheme called Ask For Angela:

<http://tinyurl.com/2s4jw8ns>

Admissions for Nursery and Year 1 – September 2024

The admissions process for Nursery and Year 1 will again be online and administered by the EA as usual. The application process for September 2024 will open at 12noon on **Tuesday 9th January 2024** and close at 12 noon on **Friday 26th January 2024**. 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 will be online for the second year. The Admissions portal opens at **12noon on Tuesday 30th January 2024** and closes at **4pm on Thursday 22nd February 2024**. Parents should apply on the EA website at

<https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/admissions>

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

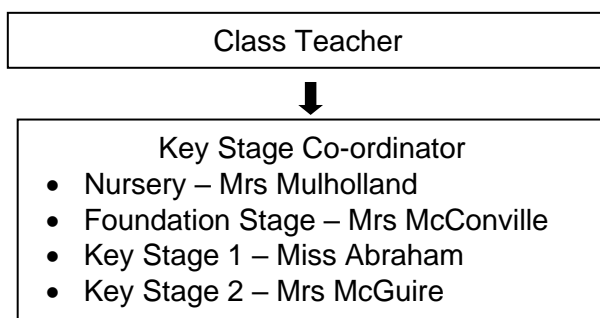
It is vital that parents are punctual when collecting their children otherwise they get anxious. If you are running late we would ask that you phone the office and inform us of this. If a child is not collected and we are unable to make contact with parents/carers and have exhausted all listed contacts, we have no option but to phone Social Services.

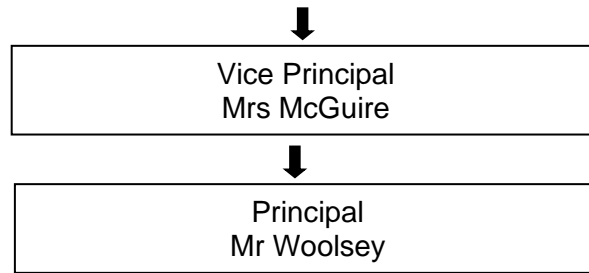
Emergency Contact Details

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

<http://tinyurl.com/t2pentkb>

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 Happy and Safe Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

Richard Woolsey
Principal

