



### **Safeguarding Team**

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

## **News Sheet – October 2023**

### **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, ensuring a very smooth start to the new year.

### **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. Thankyou to the vast majority of 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 McDonnell to the staff as a Classroom Assistant.

### **Diary Dates – October 2023**

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 5 <sup>th</sup>                     | Book Fair Begins   |
| 6 <sup>th</sup>                     | Flu Vaccinations   |
|                                     | Non Uniform Day – Wear Yellow for World Mental Health Day - £1 for Charity |
| 10 <sup>th</sup>                    | School Photographs – Individuals & Family Groups in school                 |
|                                     | World Mental Health Day  |
| 23 <sup>rd</sup> – 27 <sup>th</sup> | Parent/Teacher Meetings – School finishes for pupils at 1pm every day      |
| 30 <sup>th</sup>                    | 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](http://www.ballyoranps.com).

## Charity

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

|                                     |   |                |
|-------------------------------------|---|----------------|
| Friday 6 <sup>th</sup><br>October   | Wear Yellow Non Uniform Day for REACH Mental Health   | £1 per child   |
| Friday 17 <sup>th</sup><br>November | Wear Something Spotty (Be Spotacular) Non Uniform Day and Bun Sale for BBC Children In Need | Money for Buns |
| Monday 18 <sup>th</sup><br>December | Christmas Jumper Day for Save The Children  | £1 per child   |

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

## New 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 a large number of 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 stay on the tarmac at all times.
2. Please keep your children under control at all times, 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, and we do not want anyone to be knocked down.
4. A reminder that there should be no traffic arriving at school via or parking on Ballyoran park at any time.

## New Deputy Designated Teacher

Miss Baird has taken over the role of Deputy Designated Teacher for Safeguarding and Child Protection from Mrs Heaney who retired at the end of last year. We wish her well in her new role.

## Beyond Bricks Programme for Year 5 and Year 7

On Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September, Year 5 and Year 7 classes commenced the Building Bricks programme with their first workshop facilitated by Colleen from Beyond Bricks. The programme is a fun and interactive series of five workshops that uses a 'recovery to discovery' approach, to enhance children's overall mental health and wellbeing, now and into the future.

The objectives of the programme are to:

1. Provide a fun and safe learning environment for young people to explore their emotional wellbeing.

2. Increase young people's emotional literacy through reflections, discussions and play using LEGO® Based Therapy.
3. Support each young person to create a personalised emotional wellbeing toolkit.
4. Support school staff with training, £1000 resources for each class and a support package to deliver an emotional wellbeing programme.

### European Day of Languages

On Wednesday 27th September we celebrated European Day of Languages. Children were reminded of the diverse and inclusive nature of our school which now has pupils from 13 different countries. This was highlighted at our whole school assembly and pupils completed activities in class relating to this.

### Mr Hendron on Countdown

Our very own Mr Hendron took part in the TV game show Countdown on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September on Channel 4. This is the second time Mr Hendron has taken part in the show and he did very well. Well done Mr Hendron!

### 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> .

| <b>100% Attendance</b> | <b>0 Days Missed</b>  | <b>Excellent</b> |
|------------------------|---|------------------|
| 95% Attendance         | 9 Days of Absence<br>1 Week and 4 Days of Learning Missed   | Satisfactory     |
| 90% Attendance         | 19 Days of Absence<br>3 Weeks and 4 Days of Learning Missed | Poor             |
| 85% Attendance         | 28 Days Absence<br>5 Weeks and 3 Days of Learning Missed    | Very Poor        |
| 80% Attendance         | 38 Days of Absence<br>7 Weeks and 3 days of Learning Missed | Unacceptable     |
| 75% Attendance         | 46 Days of Absence<br>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**

This will take place from 5<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023 in our library and more information will follow in due course.

### **Office**

A reminder that the office hours are as follows:

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

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 at the moment 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 23<sup>rd</sup> October and will be face to face in school.

School will finish at 1pm every day during that week. Reply slips must be returned with the eldest in each family by **Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023.**

### **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/>

### **A reminder of our policy on collecting money**

All money coming into school must be in an envelope with the following information clearly written on it: Child's Name, amount and what it is for eg. School Dinners. Also if the money is for dinners, it must clearly state the number of days and which days it is for. This

policy ensures that teachers have more time to teach your child/ren as you will appreciate that counting and administering money is very time consuming.

**We hope to move to a Cashless Payment System like the majority of other schools in term 2. More information will be sent to you on this, in due course.**

### **School Meals/Dinner Money**

Please note the price for school dinners is:

Nursery - £2.50 per day; £12.50 per week

Primary - £2.60 per day; £13.00 per week

Dinner Money must be paid for the whole week **on a Monday**. Please put the money in a sealed envelope with the Child's Name, amount and what it is for written on it. **A reminder that Dinner Money must be paid for in advance and cannot be paid in arrears.**

### **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 four First Aiders:

- Mr Hendron (Co-ordinator)
- Mrs Muldrew
- Miss Baird
- Mrs Bell

This number will increase in the coming weeks as more staff are being trained.

## 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 [ustevenson175@c2kni.net](mailto:ustevenson175@c2kni.net)

## Mental Health and Well Being

The mental health and well-being of our pupils and staff is of paramount importance. We have a number of 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

These remain paused due to Industrial Action.

## 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 and not weekly.**

## 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, a number of 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:

| <b>Suitable healthy break snacks</b>                                   | <b>Not allowed at break</b>   |
|--|---|
| 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                                  | Fizzy drinks  |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| spread of margarine   |  |
| 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  | Beth Creaney | Sophia Murphy   |
| Foyle | Tia Hughes   | Denis Kozlowski |
| Lagan | Mia McKee    | Ruby Hall       |

### Pupil Council

Congratulations to our new Pupil Council for this year:

|      |                      |                |
|------|----------------------|----------------|
| Yr 4 | Aedan Creaney        | Emilie Lawless |
| Yr 5 | Varshita Mahesh Babu | Fionn Larkin   |

|      |                      |                 |
|------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Yr 6 | Sophia Murphy        | Mason McDonnell |
| Yr 7 | Ethan Millar         | Beth Creaney    |
| LSC  | Balthasar Carlson Li | Jakub Czwojdrak |

### Digital Leaders

Well done to our Digital Leaders for this year:

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| Year 2/3 | Daragh Knox and Harvey Hempkin               |
| Year 3   | Natan Michalik and Jilianne Dela Cruz        |
| Year 4   | Sadie Hall and Nicole Poliakova              |
| Year 5   | Isaac Sergeant and Reyna Kaplan              |
| Year 6   | Liam Mulholland and Katie Hamilton           |
| Year 7   | Ola Zaliwska and Denas Ciujevas              |
| LSC      | Alessandra da Veiga and Balthasar Carlson Li |

### Eco Committee

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

|        |                       |                 |
|--------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Year 4 | Maria Fialho          | Rafael Sa       |
| Year 5 | Caitlin Corrigan      | Isaac Sergeant  |
| Year 6 | Emilija Abromaviciute | Mason McDonnell |
| Year 7 | Mia McKee             | Jose Mendes     |
| LSC    | Jason Hall            | Jakub Czwojdrak |

### 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:

<https://tinyurl.com/yxnab4uj>

## School Website

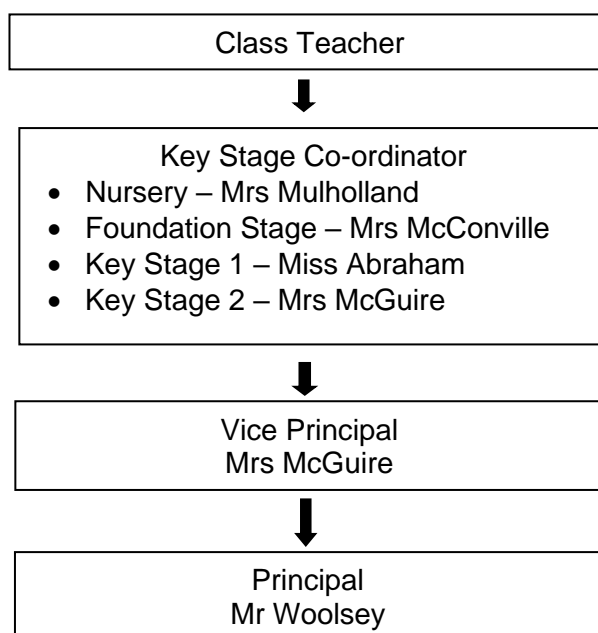
Keep up-to-date with school news, information and events by logging on to [www.ballyoranps.com](http://www.ballyoranps.com). Class Pages will be updated regularly giving parents a useful insight into what their children are doing in class

## 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/4jvw3brn>

Richard Woolsey  
Principal

