



Safeguarding Team

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

News Sheet – March 2023

Diary Dates for March 2023

2 nd	World Book Day
4 th	Confirmation: 3pm at St John's Church
6 th – 10 th	Parent/Teacher Consultation Week - school finishes at 1pm daily for all pupils
6 – 10 th	Annual Reviews
9 th	Yr 6 & 7 Your Life Workshop
	Mackey Eye Care visiting Nursery
10 th	Blackberry Farm visit to Nursery
14 th	Yr 3 – 7 Dance Workshop
17 th	School Closed St Patrick's Day Holiday
20 th	Sustrans Big Walk & Wheel Challenge begins
31 st	Nursery Coaching Session
	Swimming block ends for Years 5 & 6

School Closures – March 2023

Ballyoran Primary School will be closed as follows during March:
Friday 17th March – St. Patrick's Day

Children's Mental Health Week

We marked Children's Mental Health Week from 6th to 10th February in school.

Safer Internet Day

On Tuesday 7th February we celebrated Safer Internet Day. This year the theme was 'Want to talk about it, making space for conversations about life online.' We celebrate this day every year throughout the school to highlight the importance of staying safe online and ensuring children are aware of not only the benefits of being online but also the dangers. We hope that through the various activities each class took part in in school and the activities sent home, it has encouraged children to have important conversations about what they are doing online.

As part of Safer Internet Day, we held two competitions in school. Children in Year 1 and 2 took part in a colouring competition and children in Year 3-7 designed their own internet safety poster.

The winners from each class were:

Year 1 – Leah Nosal
Year 1/2 – Viendei Viend
Year 2 – Livia Varela
Year 3 – Nicole Poliakova
Year 4 – Varshita Mahesh Babu

Year 5 – Brody Winter
Year 6 – Jose Silva
Year 7B/M – Ollie Byrne
Year 7W/H - Emilia Sukalenkova-McCann
LSC – Brian Golicki

Internet Safety Presentation

On Friday 10th February, Sergeant Paul and Constable Emma from PSNI and Caroline from Community Justice gave a presentation about safer internet use to Key Stage 2 pupils. They discussed issues and gave tips about how we can protect ourselves when using the internet. Some 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.
- Not sharing private pictures online as they are forever more on the internet.
- If someone passes on an inappropriate picture, block it, report it and tell a trusted adult.
- Be kind to others on group chats.
- Share your devices with your parents.
- The top social media platforms Tik Tok, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram and Twitter are for 13-year-olds and upwards.
- The age of criminal responsibility in Northern Ireland is 10 years old. This means that children as young as 10 can be prosecuted for criminal offences and be brought before a court.

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/>

Wear Red Day

On Friday 10th February, staff and children had a non-uniform 'Wear Red' day to raise money for The Northern Ireland Chest, Heart and Stroke Association. A total of £204 was raised. Thank you all for your support. It is greatly appreciated.

Nursery Football Coaching

Nursery enjoyed our football session with Coach Louie on 24th February. We practised kicking, dribbling, and stopping the ball. We then played some team games. We all had great fun.

Visitors to Nursery

As part of our People who help us topic, we have had a lot of visitors to Nursery, the PSNI, Dentist, Librarian, and the Optician. The children got to participate in a variety of activities. Look out for photos on the school website.

Year 5 Egyptian Trip to Navan Centre

On Wednesday 22nd February Year 5 travelled to the Navan Centre for an Egyptian themed trip. The day began with interactive activities based upon the origins and timeline of the ancient Egyptians. Then followed location activities and Year 5 were able to utilise

their knowledge of the world to locate Egypt on a world map. The children enjoyed learning about the location of the River Nile and its importance. Following this the children participated in a workshop about the various Egyptian gods. The highlight of the trip was the exploration of the mummification process using a specially designed “mummy organs” costume, appropriate tools and Canopic jars. Our very own Denis was turned into an Egyptian Mummy! The children enjoyed further interaction with an Egyptian farmer and two of his slaves. They gained knowledge of an Egyptian house and the farming seasons. The children were very interested in the certain items of furniture within the house – including an oddly shaped pillow and stool! They learned about how papyrus paper was made, the importance of cats. Another highlight was making their own Egyptian crowns.

Your Life Sessions

Our Year 6 and Year 7 pupils have taken part in the 6-week 'Your Life' programme, which was delivered by Jeanie Graham. The programme aims to raise awareness amongst young people about the dangers of smoking, alcohol and drugs. Jeanie also gave the children advice on how to deal with negative peer pressure. All children were fully engaged and found it very informative.

Parent/Teacher Telephone Consultations

A reminder that Parent / Teacher Consultations will take place during the week Monday 6th March – Friday 10th March 2023. You will shortly receive your date and time and we would encourage you to attend as this is a vital part of partnership with parents. To facilitate these, school will finish at 1pm during this week for all pupils.

World Book Day

World Book Day is on Thursday 2nd March. It will be filled with lots of exciting, celebratory ways to promote reading for pleasure on World Book Day and all-year round. Children are encouraged to come to school dressed as their favourite book character.

Confirmation

Year 7 pupils will make their Confirmation at 3pm on Saturday 4th March at St John’s Church. We wish our pupils all the very best for this very important milestone in their lives.

Sustrans Big Walk & Wheel Challenge

We are encouraging children to stay active on the journey to school this Spring with our **Big Walk and Wheel Challenge!** The challenge will begin on **Monday 20th March** and finishes on **Friday 31st March**.

The challenge is to walk, scoot, wheel or cycle to school each morning for 10 days. Each day the active travel totals of each class will be collected. Our school will be competing against each other as well as other schools to be in with the chance of winning some fantastic prizes!

Cycling, scooting or walking to school is an excellent form of exercise, helps children do better in the classroom, and is great fun!

Thanking you in advance for your support with this initiative.



Traffic Management Scheme

You will have noticed a lot of heavy work going on the all weather pitch, this is our new traffic management scheme which will include a new traffic and pedestrian entrance to the school off Ashgrove Road, a Parents Car park and drop off area and one way system. All traffic will enter the school grounds from Ashgrove Road and exit via a new one way system through the current staff car park gates on to Ballyoran Park. Work is due to be completed by the end of May. You will hopefully agree that a solution to the traffic situation is something that has been needed for a long time. This will be much safer for pupils, parents and local residents and will greatly improve your experience when dropping off and picking pupils up on a daily basis. Further information on how our new system will work and when you will be able to use it will be issued in due course.

Attendance

A reminder that pupils should be in school every day, unless they are sick or have a medical appointment. Educational attainment is closely linked to attendance and your child will only reach their full potential if they are in school every day.

Well done to the following classes who had the highest attendance for the month of January:

- Foundation/Key Stage 1: Year 2 with 92.2%
- Key Stage 2: Years 5 & 6 with 93.7%

A reminder that when a pupil is absent you must let the school know and provide us with a reason for absence, this can be done in a number of ways:

1. Phone call to the school and leave a message at Option 1 – remember you do not need to speak to the secretary
2. Email the secretary jsloan341@c2kni.net
3. Send in an absence note

This is vitally important because if we do not get a reason for absence then it is recorded as 'No Reason' and will mean that you will receive phone calls and letters about attendance and you may even be referred to the EA Education Welfare Service.

Coats Rule

From Monday 6th March the coats rule will be relaxed as we move into Spring. We would however encourage you to ensure that your child has a coat with them on cold or wet days.

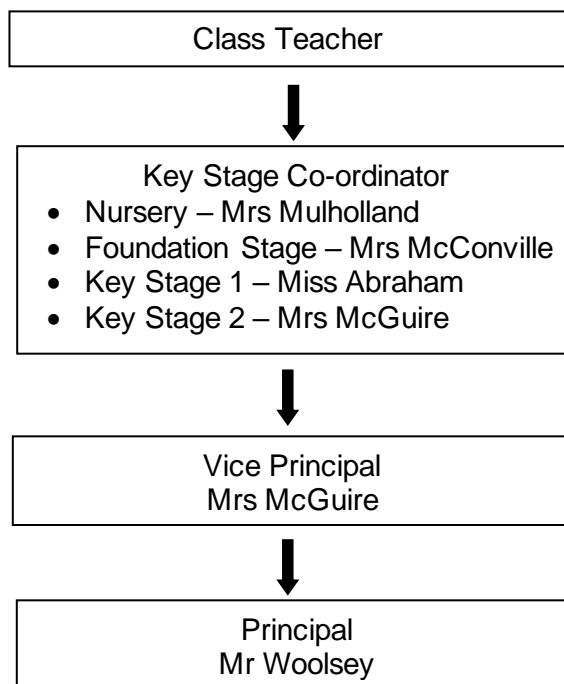
Names on Clothing

Pupils frequently lose items of clothing in school and it is very difficult for staff to reunite lost items with pupils if there are no names on the item. With this in mind, I would ask that parents ensure that all items of school uniform and PE uniform have your child's name on them.

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:



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 2023/2024

See page 7

Menu

A new menu is now in place for the rest of this school year:

<https://tinyurl.com/2p96knvd>

Richard Woolsey
Principal

Term Dates & Holidays 2023/2024 Year

All dates are inclusive

Term 1

Term Dates

Wednesday 30th August – Tuesday 19th December 2023

Holidays

- Monday 25th September 2023: Staff Training
- Monday 30th October – Friday 3rd November 2023: Half Term

Christmas Holiday: Wednesday 20th December 2023 – Wednesday 3rd January 2024

Term 2

Term Dates

Thursday 4th January – Wednesday 27th March 2024

Holidays

- Monday 12th – Friday 16th February 2024: Half Term
- Monday 18th March 2024: St. Patrick's Day Holiday

Easter Holiday: Thursday 28th March – Friday 5th April 2024

Term 3

Term Dates

Monday 8th April – Friday 28th June 2024

Holidays

- Monday 6th May 2024: May Bank Holiday
- Monday 27th May – Tuesday 28th May 2024: May Bank Holiday & Staff Training

School will finish at midday on the last day of each term.

Note: Removing pupils during term time is not recommended; please try not to book holidays or other trips during the school term. Staff cannot prepare work in advance for children who are on holidays and very often these children miss vital work during their absence. The school is also required to inform the EA when a child is removed from school for a holiday. This information is recorded and may be used by the EA in appropriate situations, i.e. Special Educational Needs Assessments or Child Protection issues.