



### **Safeguarding Team**

**Designated Teacher:** Mrs McGuire

**Deputy Designated Teacher:** Mrs Heaney

**Nursery Deputy Designated**

**Teacher:** Mrs Mulholland

**Principal:** Mr Woolsey

**Designated Governor:** Mrs Loney

**Chairperson:** Mr Fleming

## **News Sheet – October 2022**

### **Settling In**

We are now nearly one month into our new school year and we are delighted that the school is now generally back to how it was before the pandemic. 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.

Thank you 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 in the mornings all Year 1s pupil should now be dropped off at the front gate and walk into class on their own.

### **Staffing**

- We said farewell to Miss Warnock recently who left us after nearly a year as a Classroom Assistant. We thank her for her service to the school and wish her well in her new job
- We welcome Miss Goodman who has replaced Miss Warnock and hope that she settles into the school very quickly.

### **Diary Dates – October 2022**

6 <sup>th</sup>	Book Fair Begins
7 <sup>th</sup>	Flu Vaccinations
	Non Uniform Day – Wear Yellow for World Mental Health Day - £1 for Charity
10 <sup>th</sup>	World Mental Health Day
18 <sup>th</sup>	Year 6 & 7 attend 'Annie' show at St John The Baptist College
21 <sup>st</sup>	Nursery Football Coaching session
24 <sup>th</sup> – 28 <sup>th</sup>	Parent/Teacher Meetings – School finishes for pupils at 1pm every day
28 <sup>th</sup>	Yr 5 & 6 Swimming starts
31 <sup>st</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).

### **Covid 19**

Keep up to date with the latest PHA guidance at:

<https://tinyurl.com/36fsy9xt>

### **European Day of Languages**

On Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> 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.

### **First Gaelic Tournament in Nearly Three Years**

Ballyoran Primary School played their first gaelic tournament since the start of the pandemic as they took part in the St John the Baptist's College Cup. The team played a series of games against local primary schools and there was great effort and a tremendous attitude shown by everyone. Player of the tournament for Ballyoran was Yuran Mendes.

### **Forest Schools**

On Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> September Year 5 had their first Forest School session led by Caoimhe, who is part of the Forest School Association. We started off by walking down to the People's Park, Year 5 were all very well behaved and walked along the footpath sensibly and safely. When we arrived at the People's Park, Caoimhe discussed the three Main rules of Forest School, the third rule is very important - it is to have fun! We then split into 5 groups and worked as a team to create our own dens. This required a lot of thinking, experimenting and communicating as a team. All of the children had lots of fun and really enjoyed the experience. Year 5 are looking forward to their next Forest School session!

### **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 2021/22 we had a very low average attendance of 87.2%. Covid 19 obviously had 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/36zxr5e> .

<b>100% Attendance</b>	<b>0 Days Missed</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
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	Unacceptable

	Missed	
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**

This will take place from 6<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> October 2022 in our library and more information will follow in due course.

### **Office**

A reminder that the office hours are as follows:

Monday – Thursday: 8.15 – 4pm

Friday – 8.15 – 3.15pm

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 24<sup>th</sup> October and will be face to face in school for the first time in three years although parents will have the opportunity to have a telephone call with the teacher instead if they wish. School will finish at 1pm and there will be no after school clubs every day during that week. Reply slips must be returned with the eldest in each family by **Friday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2022.**

### **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.

### **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. Paper applications are no longer available. 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 endeavours to be Nut Free 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 three First Aiders:

- Mr Hendron (Co-ordinator)
- Mrs Baxter
- Mrs Bell

This number will increase to five as Mrs Muldrew and Miss Baird will be doing First Aid Training in October.

### **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 [jsloan341@c2kni.net](mailto:jsloan341@c2kni.net).

### **Sensory Motor Group**

Our Sensory Motor Group takes place Monday - Thursday before school (8.45 - 9.05am) and is led by Miss Wilson, Classroom Assistant. The initial set up was planned and shared by an Occupational Therapist from the Southern Trust.

Participation in a short sensory motor circuit is a great way both to energise and settle children into the school day. The aim is to focus concentration in readiness for the day's learning. The circuit also encourages the development of a child's sensory processing skills.

The activities tend to help children who display behaviours such as:

- Constant fidgeting in class
- Slow to start work and constantly missing cues
- Difficulty organising self
- Lethargic and dreamy
- Poor coordination and balance
- Known sensory processing difficulties
- Difficulty paying attention
- Lacking confidence to join in

If you feel your child would benefit, please speak to your child's teacher and a permission letter will be sent home.

### **Mental Health and Well Being Strategy**

Every school in Northern Ireland has been asked to draft a Mental Health and Well Being strategy and we are currently working on this. 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 have now restarted on a phased pilot basis which is another step in the return to normality after Covid. We are trialling the delivery of these clubs by outside agencies. There are currently no places left in any of these clubs. Parents are reminded of the importance of picking children up on time after clubs.

### **Music – Choir & School Song**

One of the many things that we were unable to do during the pandemic was singing which meant pupils couldn't sing in assembly and we were unable to have a choir. I am delighted to be able to say that singing is now permitted again and Mrs Muldrew, our new Music Co-ordinator is in the process of establishing a new Senior Choir.

We have been learning a new school song in our whole school assembly this term. We really enjoy singing it and hope you enjoy listening to it too. Please, click the link below to listen to the lyrics and help your child become familiar with the song.

<https://ballyoran-primary-school.primarysite.media/media/were-aiming-high-2>

### Car Parks

A reminder that pupils and parents must use the Pedestrian Entrance only in the mornings and afternoons. Car Parks are for staff and visitors only. Please respect this policy by not entering the car parks in vehicles or on foot.

### 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. To help parents we have created a table of suitable and non-suitable healthy break snacks:

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.

## Charity

We aim to support the following charities this term and ask that you give generously, pupils are asked to bring in at least £1 for each event:

- Friday 7<sup>th</sup> October – Wear Yellow Uniform Day for World Mental Health Day for Action Mental Health: £1
- Monday 14<sup>th</sup> November – Odd Socks Day for NSPCC (Full Uniform as normal): £1
- Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November – Wear Spots Non Uniform Day and Bun Sale for BBC Children In Need: £1
- Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Jumper Day for Save the Children: £1

## Samaritans Purse Appeal

We will be supporting Samaritan's Purse Shoebox Appeal this Christmas. We would be extremely grateful if each family could fill a Samaritan Shoebox with a variety of small items to give a child a gift this Christmas. Shampoo, a pair of socks, a toothbrush, a small toy – things we take for granted will seem like luxuries to people living in poverty. Volunteers from Samaritan's Purse have talked to the children in Assembly about this. We will send home a leaflet and a ready-made Shoebox with the children this week (one per family). We would ask that the filled Shoeboxes be returned by **Friday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2022**. This is to allow time for transport. We would like to thank you in advance for your support in this very worthwhile cause. Further details can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/3d9u5vew>

## 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	Aishlinn Hughes	Ola Zaliwski
Foyle	Maisie Millar	Connor McGeown
Lagan	Kacper Skwara	Sophia Metcalfe

## Pupil Council

Congratulations to our new Pupil Council for this year:

Year 4	Isaac Sergeant	Logan Neill
Year 5	Brody Winter	Liam Mulholland
Year 6	Beth Creaney	Jamie McNeice
Year 7 B/M	Jacob Kerr	Lexi Carroll
Year 7 W/H	Nuria Encada	Yuran Mendes
LSC	Brian Golicki	Jakub Czwojdrak

### Digital Leaders

Well done to our Digital Leaders for this year:

Year 3	David Fortes Emilie Lawless
Year 4	Caitlin Corrigan Peter Hanratty
Year 5	Ruby Hall William Ximenes
Year 6	Ismaela Gomes Denas Ciujevas
Year 7 HW	Kacper Skwara Daniela Norusaite
Year 7 BM	Maisie Millar Calum Woods
LSC	Brian Golicki Thomas Connolly

### Eco Committee

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

Year 4	Rachel Hall	Fionn Larkin
Year 5	Katie Hamilton	Mason McDonnell
Year 6	Summer McCann	Ethan Millar
Year 7 B/M	Rebecca Silva	Kayden Queiroz
Year 7 H/W	Sienna Wright	Yuran Mendes
LSC	Emma McGeown	

### Playground Equipment & Playground Friends

We are delighted to have been able to purchase a substantial amount of new Playground equipment and markings which has greatly improved the lunchtime playground experience for all of our pupils.

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

## **Christmas**

We are delighted to announce that pupils will once again be doing a Christmas Performance as a whole school for the first time in three years. The dates for these will be as follows:

- Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December at 10am
- Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December at 10am

The Nursery will hold a separate performance on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December at 10am.

More information about buying tickets will be sent out later in the term.

## **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 starting from now on.

## **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/2p8krthm>

## **School Website**

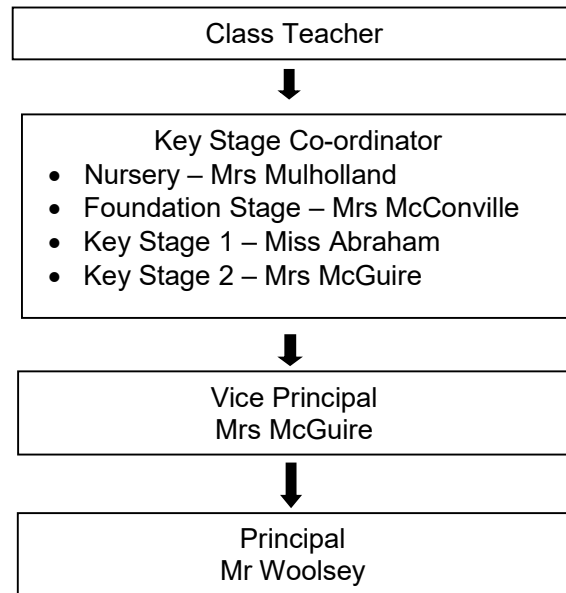
Keep up-to-date with school news, information and events by logging on to [www.ballyoranps.com](http://www.ballyoranps.com). Class Pages will be updated regularly giving parents a useful insight into what their children are doing in class

## **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/2p98m4vh>

Richard Woolsey  
Principal