



## Start of Year News Sheet – September 2022

### Welcome Back

Welcome back to school for the 2022/2023 year. We trust that everyone had a pleasant and relaxing summer. A special welcome to all our new pupils – we hope that you settle into the school very quickly. This is the first normal start to the school year in three years and we are very happy that generally in school everything is back to how it was before Covid-19.

### Parent Information Booklet 2022-23

This has been made available to parents already through the school app and school website and should be read carefully. It can be accessed at <https://tinyurl.com/2hurtfw9>

### Data Capture and Consent Forms

It is vital that we hold up-to-date information on every child in school. A small number of parents did not return these in June and we would ask that these are now returned as soon as possible. If you have mislaid the original form please contact Mrs Sloan in the office for a new one.

### 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 an average attendance of 87.2%. From the Department of Education guidance detailed below you can see that this falls into ‘Very Poor’ to ‘Poor’ category. While we appreciate that Covid was a major factor in this, 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/36zrxv5e>.

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	Unacceptable

	Missed	
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- 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.

### Breakfast Club

The Breakfast Club has already started and is open to all pupils in Nursery – Year 7 daily in the Dinner Hall from 8.15 – 8.45am. The cost has increased to **£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). Children who have not been pre-booked should not attend.

### 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 Start Time: 8.55am

It is vitally important that your child is in school on time every morning. All pupils should be in school for 8.55am ready to start work at the 9am bell. A reminder that the gates open at **8.45am** and no pupil should be on the school grounds before this as there is no supervision. If a child arrives after 9.00am they will be marked as late. Teachers will monitor punctuality and parents will be contacted if their child is persistently late. Teachers will also refer persistent late-comers to the Principal.

### Breaktime Snack

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.**

Year 3 – 7 pupils must bring 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.

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

### School Meals

Please note that we have not been informed of any rise in school meal prices by EA.

School dinner prices remain as follows:

Nursery - £2.50 per day; £12.50 per week

Primary - £2.60 per day; £13.00 per week

We would encourage Dinner Money to 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.

### 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 from day 1.

Applications must be made at <https://tinyurl.com/mrxms8bc>

### Menu for Term 1

A reminder that school dinners start on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> September

<https://tinyurl.com/2p98m4vh>

### 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.

### Year 1 Induction

Year 1 pupils will finish at **1.00pm** daily for their Induction Day only but after that it is 1.55pm. All Year 1 pupils will be in school together from **Monday 5<sup>th</sup> September**. Year 1 parents are welcome to walk their child into school in the early days but we ask that you encourage your child to walk into school on their own as soon as possible. A date will be set when we ask that Year 1 parents do not walk them in and you will receive a note about this in due course.

### Dismissal Times

Nursery: 1.30pm every day

Year 1: 1.55pm every day

Year 1 / 2: 1.55pm every day

Year 2: 2pm every day

Year 3: 2.40pm Mon – Wed: 2.05pm: Thurs & Fri

Year 4: 2.45pm Mon – Thurs, 2.10pm Fri

Year 5: 2.50pm every day

Year 6: 2.55pm every day

Year 7: 3pm every day

### Cycling to and from School

Only pupils in Years 4 – 7, **wearing a cycling helmet** and who have returned a consent form are permitted to cycle to school and park their bikes at the front of the school.

### **Nuts**

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.

### **Clubs**

All After School Clubs/Activities remain paused.

### **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.

### **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.

### **Dogs**

A reminder that dogs (other than Guide Dogs) are not permitted on the school grounds for Health and Safety reasons.

### **Swimming**

Year 5 – 7 pupils will go to South Lakes Leisure Centre again this year on a rota basis. Swimming is a vital part of the Northern Ireland Curriculum for PE and therefore is not optional. We do not charge for swimming as many schools do. Please complete the consent form which will be sent home and return to school immediately.

### **Speaking to Teachers**

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 a note in or speak to the secretary who will pass the message on. Parents must not enter the playgrounds in the mornings.

### **Term 1 Diary Dates – Advance Notice**

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| • 7 <sup>th</sup> October                             | Flu Vaccination  |
| • 24 <sup>th</sup> – 27 <sup>th</sup> October         | Parent/Teacher Meetings – school closes at 1pm                         |
| • 31 <sup>st</sup> October – 4 <sup>th</sup> November | Half Term  |
| • 2 <sup>nd</sup> December                            | Canteen Christmas Dinner – pupils                                      |
| • 16 <sup>th</sup> December                           | Last Day of Term 1 – School finishes at 12noon, no uniform, no dinners |

### **School App**

It is important that all parents are using the school app as this is our main method of communication. If you are not receiving messages on the app please contact the office.

**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.

