



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 – December 2021

Covid-19 & Other Sickness/Illness

We would like everyone in our school community to get to enjoy Christmas in good health, to ensure this happens, we would ask that you follow the PHA guidance and keep children at home if they are displaying any of the 3 main symptoms and book a PCR Test.

We continue to take a cautious approach in relation to Covid-19. With this in mind, I would again ask that if anyone in your household tests positive for Covid-19, then pupils are not sent to school. This is to protect our school community as much as possible as we have seen in many cases that when one person gets Covid-19 in a household the other children eventually get it as well.

The number of parents wearing face coverings in the school grounds is unfortunately decreasing, we would again ask you to please wear these and keep a social distance from other parents, when dropping off and picking pupils up.

As is the case in most schools across the country, we have many children who are off sick with the normal winter bugs. We would again take this opportunity to remind you to please keep children at home if they are unwell so that the bugs are not spread to other pupils and staff. A reminder that with vomiting and diarrhoea bugs, pupils should be kept at home for 48 hours after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhoea.

Further guidance from the PHA outlining how long pupils should be kept at home for various illnesses is available on page 5 and at:

<https://tinyurl.com/yrypvhj>

Finally, we ask that you please inform us of the reasons for all absences so the correct absence codes can be recorded on the register.

Diary Dates – December 2021

- 1st Coats Rule enforced from today
Year 1 visit to Navan Centre
- 2nd Ditch The Dark Day – Non Uniform Day
- 3rd Daily Mile Christmas Santa Run – Pupils to bring Santa Hats to school
Christmas Dinner – pupils
- 10th Class Christmas Performances available on website
School finishes at lunchtime for all pupils
- 16th Christmas Jumper Day for Charity
Class Christmas Parties
- 17th Last day of term, school finishes early, staggered dismissals as follows:
11.30am: Yr 7
11.35am: Yr 6 & LSC

11.40am: Yr 5
11.45am: Yr 4
11.50am: Yr 3
11.55am: Yr 2
12noon: Yr 1 & Nursery

Ditch the Dark Day

Pupils are reminded that we will be having our celebratory 'Ditch the Dark Day' on Thursday 2nd December. On 'Ditch the Dark Day' pupils can wear brightly coloured clothing to remind everyone of the importance of road safety and being clearly visible on darker evenings. There will be a special assembly held where we will hear about the importance of Road Safety and special prizes given out for the best and brightest clothing.

Christmas Holidays

School will be closed from Monday 20th December 2021 to Wednesday 5th January 2022. Term 2 begins on Thursday 6th January 2022.

Christmas Performances

Unfortunately, due to the current restrictions, we are for a second year, unable to have our usual Christmas performances. We know that you will be as disappointed as both the staff and pupils are about this. As last year, each class will be preparing a short minute Christmas Performance which will be recorded and uploaded onto the school website. These will be available for parents to watch on Friday 10th December 2021 and we hope that you enjoy them. We appreciate that these will not be the same as our normal offering but we hope that they will bring some Christmas cheer to the school community.

Canteen Christmas Dinner

Our kitchen staff will be serving Christmas Dinner on **Friday 3rd December 2022**. This will be available to all pupils, even those who do not normally take dinner and is priced at the normal school dinner cost.

Christmas Squares Draw

We will again be having our Christmas Draw. Christmas Squares will be sold in each class at 50p each and the draw will take place before the holidays. Please support this worthy cause which will hopefully raise some much needed money for school funds.

Christmas Post

Unfortunately, there will be no Christmas post again this year.

Christmas Cards designed by pupils

These will be sent home, please return with order form and money by **Friday 3rd December 2021** if you wish to order these.

Christmas Panto

As last year we are having a virtual panto – ‘Jack and the Beanstalk’ from West Midland Theatre, who normally come into school every Christmas. This will be shown online to every class during the month of December to bring some much needed Christmas cheer to our pupils. This is completely free of charge.

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/Salvation Army Christmas Family Appeal. This year they are again asking you to donate money online at

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/education-authority1>

Coats Rule

As the weather has been turning colder in recent weeks, we have been advising pupils to bring a warm coat to school. From **Wednesday 1st December 2021**, any pupils who do not bring a coat to school will have to remain inside at break and lunch time.

Pupil Attendance

While we accept that attendance is lower than normal at the moment because of Covid-19 and other sicknesses, we would ask that parents inform us of all sick absence. The average Pupil Attendance for October was 87%. Well done to the classes with the highest attendance for October which were:

Foundation/Key Stage 1: Year 2 – 92.6%

Key Stage 2: Year 6M - 89.2%

School Photographs

The photograph orders have now been collected from school by the company but if you still wish to order, you can do this online following the instructions on the proof that you received.

Anti-Bullying Week

The focus of Anti-Bullying Week 2021 was on the theme ‘One Kind Word’. In every class, teachers delivered the message that by making small, simple changes we can create a safe environment for everyone. All pupils enjoyed participating in activities taken from the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying website. Anti-Bullying Week is aimed at sending a clear and positive message that bullying is unacceptable.

Children In Need Non-Uniform Day

On Friday 19th November, we held a Non Uniform ‘Wear Spots’ Day for Children In Need. It was a huge success and raised £237.61! Thank you to everyone who supported this.

Sustrans Journey To Santa

We are encouraging children to stay active on the journey to school this winter with our **Journey to Santa Challenge!** Children taking part in the challenge have received a special Journey to Santa stamp card to keep track of their active journeys to school.

Can you help get your school to the North Pole?

The distance between Northern Ireland and the North Pole is approximately 2500 miles.

Walk, cycle or scoot to or from school = 1 mile.

At least 15 minutes of exercise outside school = 1 mile.

At least 15 minutes of exercise within school (this includes PE and Daily Mile) = 1 mile.

- The challenge began on **Monday 15th November** and finishes on **Friday 10th December**.
- Each class have been marking off their journey card each day they cycle, scoot or walk to school or participate in 15 minutes of activity outside or within school.
- To make the challenge more competitive and fun each class records their weekly total on a display board for all to see. Each teacher represents their class as Santa on a bike.
- **Year 5 Mrs McGuire/Mrs McMurray's** class are in the lead with the highest miles travelled however Year 2 Mrs Muldrew's class are very close behind them!
- We have to send Sustrans our total miles and they will send us a £10 Halfords Voucher to be given to a lucky pupil.
- 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.

Switch Off Fortnight

From Monday 8th - Friday 19th November our school took part in the nationwide campaign 'Switch Off Fortnight'. During these two weeks we worked together as a whole school to try and save more energy by switching off lights and electrical appliances when they weren't in use. The goal of the campaign was to help schools save energy and monitor the impact of changing pupil and staff behaviour on the school's energy use. Switch Off Fortnight was also a great opportunity to discuss the important benefits of reducing our energy use and to help pupils understand how making small changes can collectively help to tackle the climate emergency. The campaign was a success, and we aim to continue putting our energy saving actions in to practice throughout the school year.

Admissions for Nursery and Year 1 – September 2022

The admissions process for Nursery and Year 1 will again be online and administered by the EA. The application process for September 2022 will open at 12 noon on Monday 10th January 2022 and close at 12 noon on Friday 28th January 2022. Parents can apply by clicking on <https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/admissions>

Picking Pupils Up

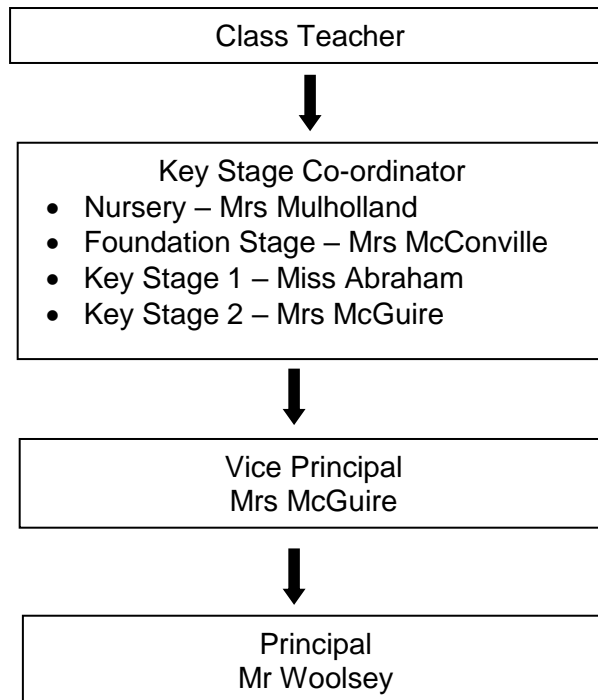
It is vital that parents are punctual when collecting their children otherwise they get anxious. If you are running late we would ask that you phone the office and inform us of this. If a child is not collected and we are unable to make contact with parents/carers we have no option but to phone Social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

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:



Contingency Planning - Winter

As the winter is fast approaching, 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.

Menu

As you know a rolling monthly menu is in place for term 1 and is available at <https://tinyurl.com/3rch5dd6>

Thank you for your continued support and co-operation

Richard Woolsey
Principal

Do I need to keep my child off school?

Chicken Pox

Until all spots have crusted over

Conjunctivitis

No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed

Diarrhoea & Vomiting

48 hours from last episode

Glandular Fever

No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed

Hand, foot & mouth

No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed

Impetigo

Until lesions are crusted & healed or 48 Hours after commencing antibiotics

Measles or German Measles

4 days from onset of rash

Mumps

5 days from onset of swelling

Scabies

Until after first treatment

Scarlet Fever

24 hours after commencing antibiotics

Slapped Cheek

No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed

Whooping Cough

48 Hours after commencing antibiotics

Flu

Until recovered

Head Lice

No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed

Threadworms

No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed

Tonsillitis

No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed