



### **Safeguarding Team**

**Designated Teacher:** Mrs McGuire

**Deputy Designated Teacher:** Mrs Heaney

**Nursery Deputy Designated Teacher:** Mrs Mulholland

**Designated Governor:** Mrs Loney

**Principal:** Mr Woolsey

**Chairperson:** Mr Fleming

## **News Sheet – October 2021**

### **Settling In**

We are now nearly one month into our new school year. All of our pupils have settled back into school and have adapted really well to the routines and procedures and we are very proud of all of them. I want to take this opportunity to thank parents for their continued patience, co-operation and support, ensuring a very smooth start to the new year.

### **Covid-19**

Thank you to all of our parents for the part that you are playing in keeping our school safe. Please continue to adhere to the mitigations in terms of social distancing and face coverings in the school grounds and also continue to go over the importance of the school mitigations with your child regularly.

As you are aware, the PHA guidance around Contact Tracing and the definition of a close contact in schools has recently changed. PHA have now taken responsibility for Contact Tracing and we are no longer involved in this process. If your child is deemed to be a close contact you will be contacted by PHA, if you do not hear from them, you do not need to take any action. We would ask however that you continue to inform us of confirmed positive cases from PCR tests in any of our pupils in the usual way. We would continue to urge caution and ask that if anyone in your household tests positive that you consider keeping pupils at home to protect other pupils and staff.

### **Morning Punctuality – School starts at 9am for all pupils**

It is vitally important that your child is in school on time every morning. All pupils should be in school for by 9am. Doors and gates will be locked promptly at this time.

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. School starts at **9am** for all pupils and it is important that every child is in school by this time.

### **Staffing**

- Mrs Sloan will be going off on Maternity Leave next week and we wish her well for this. Miss Harbinson will be covering her in the office.
- Mrs McConville and Mrs Totten will be going on Maternity Leave in the next couple of weeks and we wish them well for this. Mrs Muldrew is covering Mrs McConville in Year 2 and Miss Wright is covering Mrs Totten in Year 3.
- We welcome five new Classroom Assistants to the primary school this year:
  - ✓ Mrs Kearns – Years 1 & 6
  - ✓ Miss Ford – Year 1
  - ✓ Miss Nellins - Years 1 & 5
  - ✓ Miss Wilson – Years 6 & 7
  - ✓ Miss Cinikaite – Yrs 1 & 4

- We say farewell to Miss Gordon who will be leaving us next week after two and a half years as a Classroom Assistant. We thank her for her service to the school and wish her well in her new post.

### Diary Dates – October 2021

1 <sup>st</sup>	School Closed – Staff Training
7 <sup>th</sup>	Book Fair Begins
	Non Uniform Day – Wear Yellow for World Mental Health Day - £1 for Charity
8 <sup>th</sup>	World Mental Health Day
18 <sup>th</sup> – 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Parent/Teacher Meetings by telephone – School finishes for pupils at 1pm every day
25 <sup>th</sup> – 29 <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).

### European Day of Languages

On Friday 24<sup>th</sup> September we celebrated European Day of Languages. Children were reminded of the diverse and inclusive nature of our school and completed activities relating to this.

### 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 2020/21 we had an average attendance of 91.6%. From the Department of Education guidance detailed below you can see that this falls into the ‘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 and from the Office.

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 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.

### **Book Fair**

This will take place from 7<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> October 2021 but will be managed slightly differently this year due to Covid restrictions. More information will follow in due course.

### **Parent/Teacher Consultations**

These will take place week beginning 18<sup>th</sup> October. In line with our cautious approach to the current Covid-19 situation, these will be telephone consultations. It is our hope that by the Spring we will be able to return to face to face meetings. More information on these will be sent to you in due course.

### **Data Capture Forms**

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.

### **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.

### **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 e.g. 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**

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

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 until the application is approved. Unfortunately, quite a lot of Dinner Money is outstanding currently and we would ask that this is paid as soon as possible. We are not in a position to offer credit and 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**

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

### **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**

Our 4 First Aiders are:

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

### **Breakfast Club**

Pupils of working parents in Nursery – Year 7 pupils are welcome to attend in the Dinner Hall from 8.15 – 8.45am. The cost is 50p 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.

### **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:

<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 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

### **Dogs**

A reminder that dogs are not permitted on the school grounds for Health and Safety reasons.

### **Swimming**

Year 5 – 7 pupils will be returning to swimming this year on Fridays, in a new venue, the South Lakes Leisure Centre. This follows consultation with parents where 97% who completed the online survey stated that they were happy for their child to return to 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:

- Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October – Wear Yellow Uniform Day for World Mental Health Day for Reach
- Friday 12<sup>th</sup> November – Wear Spots and Crazy Hair Day for BBC Children In Need
- Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Jumper Day for Save the Children

### **House System**

The school continues to operate the House Competition. All pupils have been placed into one of three houses:

Bann, Lagan and 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 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	Miguela Guterres	Nuia Encada Pires
Foyle	Mike Martins	Maisie Millar
Lagan	Jude Hall	Estefani Correia

### 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.

### 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.

### School Website

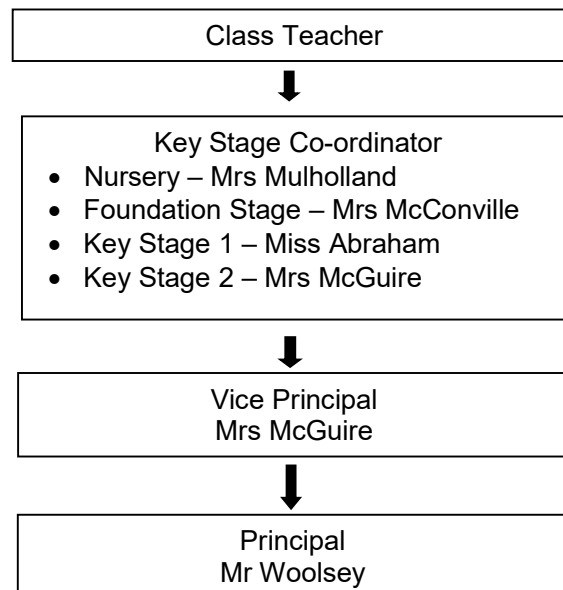
Keep up-to-date with school news, information and events by logging on to [www.ballyoranps.com](http://www.ballyoranps.com). Class Pages will be updated regularly giving parents a useful insight into what their children are doing in class

### 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/3rch5dd6>

Richard Woolsey  
Principal

