

BALLYORAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Principal | Mr R Woolsey, BEd (Hons), PQH



26th August 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

Reopening of School – August 2021

I hope that you and your families are well and that you enjoyed a relaxing summer break. Staff have been working hard preparing for the new school year and look forward to seeing all our pupils again.

We have now received updated Covid-19 guidance from the Department of Education, which we have taken time to consider, and I am now in a position to share with you, our reopening plans for the year ahead. I would ask you to read this detailed Reopening Guidance in full at <https://tinyurl.com/pr3kkvh7>

Unfortunately, Covid-19 statistics in Northern Ireland remain very high and we have been told that we have yet to reach the peak of the current wave of the pandemic, this has meant that sadly there will be very little operational change to the running of the school and things will broadly remain the same as last year apart from a few small changes.

As you will be aware, in recent weeks the media made much of the Executive's decision that schools no longer needed to use Bubbles. This however was not the case when the guidance was released, the message from DE stated 'the need for educational settings to continue to support effective contact tracing means that they are asked to maintain a cautious and measured approach that still seeks to maximize the time where pupils are within a consistent group of pupils.' Ultimately this means that we have to continue to use Class Bubbles.

School reopens on **Tuesday 31st August 2021**, all Year 2 – 7 pupils should return on this day and those Nursery and Year 1 pupils whose Induction begins on this date. **Unfortunately, there will be no school dinners on this date, therefore all pupils must bring a packed lunch.**

Breakfast Club will begin on the first day and continues to be for children of working parents only. Parents must continue to book this in advance each week by 1pm on the previous Friday by emailing jsloan341@c2kni.net. The cost remains the same as last year.

Sickness/Illness

A reminder that if your child displays any of the 3 main Covid-19 symptoms, they should not be sent to school:

- **High Temperature**
- **New continuous cough** (this means coughing a lot for more than an hour or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hrs)
- **Loss of or change in sense of smell or taste**

However as last year we would advise that if your child is unwell in any way that you do not send them to school.

I would draw to your attention changes to the PHA Guidance for Close Contacts which can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/39ttkyrz>

Mitigations

Please remind your child/ren about the importance of hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene and social distancing.

I would draw to your attention a few important changes this year:

1. Morning Staggered Arrival Window

This has been reduced from 30 minutes to 15 minutes, and will now be from **8.50am – 9.05am**. There will still be three staggered arrival times but these have been reduced from 10 minutes to 5 minutes each and I would ask all parents to adhere to these to aid social distancing at the gate.

- 8.50am – 8.55am: A – G
- 8.55am – 9.00am: H – M
- 9.00am – 9.05am: Mc - Z

Pupils will go straight to class on arrival as last year.

Please note that pupils must not be on the school site before 8.50am.

2. Entrances/Exits

The Car Park 2 gate will not be used this year. All pupils will enter and exit through the main school pedestrian entrance. Nursery – Year 2 will go in through the red Nursery gate as last year and Years 3 – 7 will go in through the front door.

As last year only Nursery and Year 1 parents should enter the school grounds in the morning (Year 1 parents will then be asked to drop off at the main gate after the first month to encourage independence)

Nursery – Year 3 parents may enter the school grounds to collect pupils at home time.

All parents coming on to the school site must continue to wear a face covering and adhere to a strict 2 metre social distance from other parents and staff. Parents are asked not to congregate and to leave the school grounds as swiftly as possible.

3. Finish Times

Class	Finish Time	Exit Point
Nursery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1:00-1:10pm- A-F• 1:10-1:20pm- G-M• 1:20-1:30pm- N-Z	Nursery Outdoor Play Area
Year 1	1.55pm	Red Nursery Gate
Year 2	2.00pm	Red Nursery Gate
Year 3	2.40pm Monday – Wednesday 2.05pm – Thursday & Friday	Red Nursery Gate
Year 4	2.45pm Monday – Thursday 2.10pm - Friday	Main Pedestrian Gate at Road
Year 5	2.50pm	Main Pedestrian Gate at Road
Year 6 & LSC	2.55pm	Main Pedestrian Gate at Road
Year 7	3.00pm	Main Pedestrian Gate at Road

4. Fridays

School will no longer finish earlier on Fridays.

5. After School Clubs

These remain paused.

The Parent Information Booklet for this year will be published later this week.

I look forward to welcoming all of our pupils back to school and hope that they will remain in school for the full year without any further closures.

I would appeal to all parents to engage with and support the school in your child's education at all times.

I would reassure you that my number one priority remains, the health, safety and well-being of pupils and staff and I wish to thank you for your continued patience, co-operation and support in these challenging times.

Yours faithfully

Richard Woolsey
Principal