



#### **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 – April 2021**

### **Welcome Back**

I am delighted that we have now been able to welcome back all of our pupils to school, for the first time in three months. It has been a very challenging start to 2021 but we believe that the reopening of school is a very important step on the long road back to normality. I would like to say a big thank you to all of my staff for their outstanding efforts in relation to Online Learning on See Saw and Google Classroom since the start of January. Staff have adapted so willingly and worked tirelessly and as a result of this, all of our pupils have received a very good deal.

I also want to say a massive thank you to all our parents for your support with Online Learning during the school closure, we know that this has not been an easy time for parents. We do however need your continued support in the days ahead which will continue to be challenging for pupils and staff. Finally, we remain very proud of all our pupils for all their work on Online Learning and their resilience over the months.

### **Diary Dates for April 2021**

12<sup>th</sup> Term 3 begins

27<sup>th</sup> Nursery and Year 1 Admission Acceptance letters posted to parents

29<sup>th</sup> Year 7 Confirmation, 5pm, at St John's Church

### **End of Term Arrangements**

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March is the last day of term. It will be a normal school day with full uniform, school dinners and Friday Dismissal Times.

### **Easter Holidays**

Please note that school will be closed from **Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March to Friday 9<sup>th</sup> April** for the Easter Holidays. School reopens for the Summer Term on **Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021**.

### **Reporting a Positive Case of Covid-19 in one of our pupils after school closes for Easter**

For contact tracing purposes, the school must be notified by email at

[info@ballyoran.portadown.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@ballyoran.portadown.ni.sch.uk) of any positive Covid-19 test results **for any of our pupils**, only if they were in school 48 hours before the symptoms started (or if they had no symptoms, 48 hours before the test). This means that we do not need to be informed of any positive cases after **Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March**.

### **Staffing**

#### **Year 1**

We welcome Mrs Biggerstaff back to Year 1 this week and we say thank you to Mrs Muldrew who has been covering the class, for all her hard work and commitment to the school over this past year and wish her well of the future.

#### **Year 7**

Mrs Walker will be returning to work after Easter and we say farewell and thank you to Mrs Mackle who has been covering the class, for all her hard work with Year 7 in recent months and we wish her well for the future.

## **Mrs McCreesh-West**

We welcome Mrs McCreesh-West back to school. Mrs McCreesh – West will be doing small group Literacy and Numeracy support with pupils after Easter as part of the Department of Education's Engage Programme.

## **Parent/Teacher Meetings**

Due to the School Closure, March Parent/Teacher meetings did not take place. Face to face meetings are currently not permitted but we do hope to have telephone meetings in due course.

## **Summer Uniform**

After the Easter Holidays, pupils may come to school wearing the summer uniform as follows:

- Boys may wear grey shorts
- Girls may wear a blue checked dress with white socks

We continue to be very proud of how smart our pupils look in their uniform.

## **Coats**

As we have moved into Spring and the weather is a bit milder, we are no longer enforcing the coats rule at break and lunch. We would, however encourage you to ensure your child/children come to school with a coat on a wet or cold day.

## **Barrardos Counselling**

I am pleased to be able to let you know that Ballyoran Primary School now has its own School Counsellor, through Barnardos. Counselling is available to any pupil from Years 1 to 7. Counselling really adds to the pastoral supports we already offer in the school, and especially this year as our pupils return to school after the recent Lockdown and the other disruptions to family life caused by Covid-19.

The counselling service is called **Time 4 Me**. Barnardo's works directly with individual pupils but also supports the team of adults around them. Time 4 Me helps with the tough situations children and families face, including the impact of the Corona virus. The most common reasons children come for counselling are:

- Changes in the family (e.g. Corona virus disruptions, separation, illness, conflict)
- Bereavement
- Worry and stress
- Friendship issues
- Worries about school work and learning (including returning to school after Lockdown)

A Time 4 Me Counsellor will visit the school each week and we will contact you if we feel that your child might benefit from this.

As a primary school we are very fortunate to have this service as counselling is normally only available in post primary schools.

## **World Book Day 2021**

This year we enjoyed a virtual World Book Day on Google Classroom. We participated in a range of activities including a reading competition, video calls, lives stories and much more. Although World Book Day looked slightly different this year, we still had lots of fun and enjoyed spending time reading. Well done to Year 5 (Mrs McGuire and Mrs McMurray) for winning our reading competition!

## **Mindfulness**

Miss Abraham is currently undertaking a School Improvement Project on children's Mental Health and well-being. We hope to embed strategies and activities into our classroom to help improve our children's mental health and well-being in what has been a very challenging year for all of our pupils. A strategy which we are focusing on at the minute is Mindfulness. Mindfulness is achieved by focusing on one's awareness on the present moment through activities such as breathing/meditation, yoga, mindfulness colouring and nature walks. All classes will be incorporating Mindfulness activities into their daily routine to help support our children's mental health and well-being.

### **Healthy Breaks Reminder**

A reminder that as a Health Promoting School, we operate a Healthy Breaks Policy in school, therefore, pupils should not have crisps, chocolate or sweets for their breaktime snack. Many thanks for your support with this.

### **Special Diets**

The EA have issued schools with guidance for the provision of special diets. Special diets can be required for a wide variety of medical conditions including food allergies, food intolerance, diabetes and coeliac disease. Other children follow special diets for religious or cultural reasons or because they are vegetarian or vegan. If your child requires a special diet, please contact the office as you will need to complete a Special Diet Application Form and Special Diet Medical Form. These forms are also available on the website in 'Parents' and 'School Meals'.

### **Diabetes**

An increasing number of children and young people are being diagnosed with diabetes. Parents are reminded about the possible signs of diabetes to watch out for in their children –

The 4 Ts:

- Toilet
- Tired
- Thirsty
- Thinner

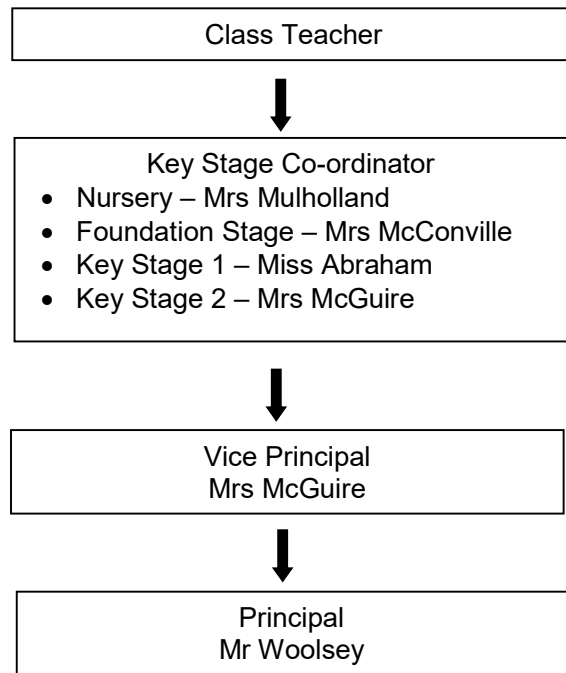
If your child is experiencing any of the 4Ts, visit your doctor immediately. Don't delay as Type 1 diabetes can be fatal.

### **Emergency Contact Details**

It is vitally important that we hold up to date emergency contact details for our pupils. Many parents are not informing us when they change their mobile phone numbers. This is unacceptable and leaves us in a very difficult position if for example we needed to contact you if your child was seriously ill. 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. DE guidance currently does not permit face to face meetings but staff will be very happy to talk to you on the phone. Please contact the office to arrange a suitable time. We would encourage you to follow the flow chart below when raising general queries / concerns:



### **Homework**

Homework will restart on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April for all pupils.

### **School Website**

Remember to keep up-to-date with everything that is going on in school by logging on to our website [www.ballyoranps.com](http://www.ballyoranps.com)

### **Dinner Menu**

The Menu for April can be seen via the following link:

<https://tinyurl.com/af3zmv95>

### **Term Dates & Holidays 2021/2022**

Please see page 5

Finally, I would like to thank all members of the school community for their support during this very challenging term and wish everyone a happy, safe and relaxing Easter Break.

R Woolsey  
Principal



## **Term Dates & Holidays 2021/2022 Year**

All dates are inclusive

### **Term 1**

#### **Term Dates**

- Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> August – Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2021

#### **Holidays**

- Monday 25<sup>th</sup> October – Friday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2021 – Half Term

**Christmas Holiday: Monday 20<sup>th</sup> December 2021 – Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2022**

### **Term 2**

#### **Term Dates**

- Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> January – Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2022

#### **Holidays**

- Monday 14<sup>th</sup> – Friday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2022 – Half Term
- Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2022 - St. Patrick's Day Holiday

**Easter Holiday: Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> – Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2022**

### **Term 3**

#### **Term Dates**

- Monday 25<sup>th</sup> April – Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022

#### **Holidays**

- Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2022 – May Bank Holiday
- Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> – Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2022 – May Bank Holiday & Platinum Jubilee Bank Holiday

School will finish at midday on the last day of each term.

**2 Staff Training Days, when school will be closed for pupils, have still to be set.**

Note: Removing pupils during term time is not recommended; please try not to book holidays or other trips during the school term. Staff cannot prepare work in advance for children who are on holidays and very often these children miss vital work during their absence. The school is also required to inform the EA when a child is removed from school for a holiday. This information is recorded and may be used by the EA in appropriate situations, i.e. Special Educational Needs Assessments or Child Protection issues.