



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 2020

Diary Dates – December 2020

- 4th Canteen Christmas Dinner for pupils
Homework ends for Term 1
- 8th Class Christmas Performances available on website
- 10th Christmas Jumper Day for Charity
- 18th Last day of term, no uniform, no dinners, unhealthy break - school finishes at midday for all pupils. Dismissal times: Years 1 – 3: 11.50am
Years 4 – 7: 12 noon

Staffing

Mrs Hewitt has been appointed as our new school secretary, we welcome her to Ballyoran and wish her well in her new post. She has already started work in the afternoons and will start full time on Monday 14th December 2020. Unfortunately, for these past few weeks the office hours have been shorter than normal but our normal office hours will resume on 14th December: 8.15am – 4pm: Monday – Thursday and 8.15am – 3.45pm on Fridays. Thank you to Mrs Smyth who has very ably covered the office since Mrs Mayers left us at Half Term.

We also welcome Miss White to Ballyoran as a Classroom Assistant in LSC and Year 6.

We welcome Mrs Mackle back on a temporary basis to take small group Literacy and Numeracy Support as part of our Engage Programme.

Covid-19

A big thank you for your continued support during these challenging times as we endeavour to keep our entire school community safe.

A reminder that pupils must not be sent to school if they or anyone in their household has any of the three following symptoms and school should be informed of this:

- 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

The Department of Education's excellent Information for Parents & Carers Leaflet is available at <https://primarysite-prod-sorted.s3.amazonaws.com/ballyoran-primary-school/UploadedDocument/820048953cb443da905186d25c32c3ce/de-information-for-parents-and-carers.pdf>

Procedures for reporting positive cases of Covid-19 in our pupils is available at <https://primarysite-prod-sorted.s3.amazonaws.com/ballyoran-primary-school/UploadedDocument/651f808c83544cc881980a2065196995/informing-school-of-confirmed-case-of-covid-19-in-one-of-our-pupils.pdf>

Christmas 2020

Unfortunately, due to Covid-19, Christmas in school is going to be very different this year. We are however endeavouring to bring as much Christmas Cheer as possible into the school community, for example Christmas trees and decorations have gone up earlier than usual.

Christmas Holidays

School will be closed from Monday 21st December 2020 to Monday 4th January 2021. Term 2 begins on Tuesday 5th January 2021.

Christmas Performances

Unfortunately, due to the current restrictions, we are unable to have our usual Christmas performance this year. We know that you will be as disappointed as both the staff and pupils are about this. Each class will however be preparing a very short five minute Christmas Performance which will be recorded and uploaded onto the school website. These will be available for parents to watch on **Tuesday 8th December 2020** 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.

Christmas Squares Draw

Thank you to Mrs Lennon and Mrs Clarke for making and donating a Christmas Goodie Bag for each class. These are currently being raffled through our Christmas Squares Draw which will take place on Thursday 10th December and these can be bought in classes at 50p each. Please support this worthy cause which will hopefully raise some much needed money for school funds.

Canteen Christmas Dinner

Our kitchen staff will be serving Christmas Dinner on Friday 4th December 2020. 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 Post

Unfortunately to protect the integrity of our Class Bubbles it will not be possible to have School Christmas Post this year.

Christmas Panto

Unfortunately, there is no Christmas panto this year in the Market Place Theatre. We are however having a virtual panto 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 Cards designed by pupils

Order forms have gone out for these and must be returned with the artwork and money by **Tuesday 1st December 2020.**

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 doing things differently due to Covid and instead of asking you to donate items/gifts they are asking you to donate money online at

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/EducationAuthority1>

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 Tuesday 1st December 2020**, any pupils who do not bring a coat to school will have to remain inside at break and lunch time.

Parent/Teacher Meetings

A big thank you to everyone who supported their child's education by taking part in our Parent/Teacher meetings by telephone on 2nd November.

Engage Programme

The Department of Education has given funding to all schools to support pupils, who they recognise have missed out on so much in school learning and teaching during the lockdown school closure. We are targeting Literacy and Numeracy and pupils have already been identified for support which has already begun with Mrs Mackle. The focus this term is Literacy and will shift to Numeracy after Christmas.

Whole School Assemblies

We continue to have our weekly whole school assembly on Zoom every Friday. This is certainly a highlight of the week for both staff and pupils and allows us to come together as a school community virtually, at a time when it is not possible to come together in person.

Pupil Attendance

The average Pupil Attendance for October was well down at 85.8%. Well done to the classes with the highest attendance for October which were:

- Foundation/Key Stage 1: Year 4 – 93.2%
- Key Stage 2: Year 6 – 94.6%

School Photographs

If you wish to order photographs this year we would encourage you to follow the instructions provided to you and do this online. If you click on 'Collection' in the delivery options, these will be delivered free of charge to school. If you wish them to be posted to your home, there will be a charge for this.

Anti-Bullying Week

The focus of Anti-Bullying Week this year was on the theme 'United Against Bullying'. In every class, teachers delivered important anti bullying messages. All pupils enjoyed participating in activities taken from the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying website. There were a number of assemblies during the week focusing on the Anti Bullying message. Year 3 led an excellent Anti Bullying themed whole school assembly. Anti-Bullying Week is aimed at sending a clear and positive message that bullying is unacceptable.

Children In Need

On Friday 13th November, we held a Non Uniform 'Wear Spots' Day for Children In Need. It was a huge success and raised £250.31! Thank you to everyone who supported this.

Ditch the Dark Day

We held our annual 'Ditch the Dark Day' in school on Thursday 26th November. This was a day in which all pupils and teachers accessorised their clothing in a bright and creative way and were encouraged to walk to school. One of the important safety messages of the day was being seen if you are out walking or cycling, in the dark winter mornings and evenings and we would encourage all parents to ensure that children wear bright or reflective clothes. It was a great day and we had lots of fun!

Admissions for Nursery and Year 1 – September 2021

The admissions process for Nursery and Year 1 will again be online and administered by the EA. The application process for September 2021 will open at 12 noon on **Thursday 7th January 2021** and close at 12 noon on **Friday 29th January 2021**. Parents can apply by clicking on <https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/admissions>

General Sickness/Illness

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. Guidance from the PHA is available on page 6 and at <https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/2019-11/Do%20I%20need%20to%20keep%20my%20child%20off%20school.pdf>

Picking Pupils Up

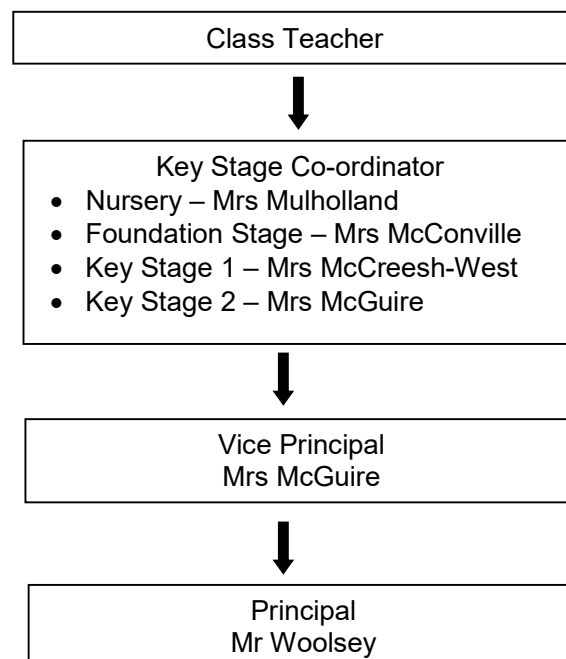
It is vital that parents are punctual when collecting their children otherwise they get anxious. If you are running late we would ask that you phone the office and inform us of this. If a child is not collected and we are unable to make contact with parents/carers we have no option but to phone Social 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. Meetings can be arranged with staff at any time and we would encourage you to follow the flow chart below when raising general queries / concerns:



Obviously parents are free to make an appointment to speak to the Principal at any time.

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 Alerts, App Messages and the school website to inform parents should a closure be necessary.

Menu for December

Click on <https://primarysite-prod-sorted.s3.amazonaws.com/ballyoran-primary-school/UploadedDocument/1bed1962ca7846f5afdd868e2e644964/december-menu.pdf>

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	