

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 – January 2021

Merry Christmas



Winning Design for School Christmas Card Competition
by
Brooke McGeown (Year 7)

Covid-19

A big thank you for your continued support as we have endeavoured to keep our entire school community safe during this challenging term. I hope that you will agree that working together, we have been very successful in doing this. It would be a shame, however if complacency set in now as we are so close to the end of term. Please help us to ensure that no-one in the Ballyoran Primary School family has to self-isolate over the Christmas holiday by continuing to act responsibly and follow Government and school guidelines and encouraging your children to do the same.

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 Information for Parents & Carers Leaflet is available at <https://primarysite-prod-sorted.s3.amazonaws.com/ballyoran-primary-school/UploadedDocument/820048953cb443da905186d25c32c3ee/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>

Reporting Positive Cases after school closes for Christmas

The school must be notified by email at info@ballyoran.portadown.ni.sch.uk of any positive Covid-19 test results for any of our pupils in the first two days of the Christmas holidays, only if your child was in school during the last two days of term (Thursday 17th or Friday 18th December) and if symptoms occur within 48 hours of school closing (up until midday on Sunday 20th December), so that contact tracing can take place. Please do not inform of us of positive cases after midday on Sunday 20th December.

End of Term Arrangements

Despite much speculation, school will finish as planned on Friday 18th December 2020 which will have an early finish time. Pupils do not need to wear uniform on this day and there will be no dinners served.

Staggered Early Dismissal Arrangements to aid social distancing:

- Nursery
 - ✓ A – F: 11.30 – 11.40am
 - ✓ G – M: 11.40-11.50am
 - ✓ N – Z: 11.50 – 12noon
- Year 1: 11.45am
- Year 2: 11.50am
- Year 3: 11.55am
- Year 4: 11.45am
- Year 5: 11.50am
- Year 6: 11.55am

- Year 7 & LSC: 12noon

Start of New Term

Ballyoran Primary School will re-open for pupils on Tuesday 5th January 2021.

Diary Dates for January 2020

- 5th Term 2 Begins
- 7th Nursery and P1 Online Applications opens at 12 noon
- 29th Nursery & P1 Online Applications closes at 12 noon
- 30th GL Common Entrance Assessment

Staffing

I informed you in the last News Sheet that Mrs Hewitt had been appointed as our new secretary, unfortunately she was unable to take up the post. Mrs Sloan has now started as Secretary and we welcome her to Ballyoran Primary School.

Mrs McConville returns to work as Year 2 teacher after Christmas, we say thank you and farewell to Miss Marley who has been covering for her this term and wish her well for the future.

Mathletics November Numeracy Challenge

We participated in the Mathletics November Numeracy Challenge from 16th – 22nd November. The aim was for all pupils to gain as many points towards the whole school total. A leaderboard is published to show the top 200 schools in the world and we were hoping to make this leaderboard. We came 29th in the world, so were absolutely thrilled by the effort of our pupils. It was fantastic to see our school name on the leaderboard with schools from Japan, America, Germany etc. Over the course of the week, 429 hours were spent on Mathletics in our school.

There was fierce competition between certain pupils and some classes. An amazing well done to the following pupils who were the Top 10 for our school. Their individual scores were superb!

1	Ethan - Yr 4	30,432
2	Denas - Yr 4	30,033
3	Maisie - Yr 5	21,581
4	Róisín - Yr 7	20,820
5	Aoibhinn - Yr 4	19,436
6	Rory - Yr 6	14,877
7	Caoimhe - Yr 6	14,440
8	Caelan - Yr 4	14,370
9	Alberto - Yr 7	12,650
10	Laressi – Yr 5	12,312

We also had a class competition and there was great excitement on Friday morning to see which class had won, as it was constantly changing throughout the week. Well done to the following classes for their competitive nature:

	Class	Total points	Average per pupil
1	Year 6	135,970	6,475 points
2	Year 4	189,000	6,300 points
3	Year 7B/M	105,930	5,297 points

Well done everyone for your efforts. Keep up the super work on Mathletics!

Office 365

We know that many pupils may get new computers/laptops over Christmas. Please do not buy Microsoft Office for these. Office 365 which includes Word, Powerpoint and Excel is available free of charge to all pupils. It can be downloaded following the guidance at the following link: <https://primarysite-prod-sorted.s3.amazonaws.com/ballyoran-primary-school/UploadedDocument/d5bbddf2cd414c87817fc7bb68ca8e5e/downloading-microsoft-office-for-pupils.pdf>

Christmas Card Competition

Congratulations to the following pupils who were successful in our Annual Christmas Card Competition:

Class	Winner	Runner Up
Year 1	Maria Fialho	Maisie Hackett
Year 2	Gracella Soares Vaz	Fionn Larkin
Year 3	Connie-Maye McCoy	Katie Hamilton
Year 4	Jose Mendes Da Silva	Ola Zaliwska
Year 5Mc	Goda Valiute	Daniela Norusaite
Year 5B	Isabella Pereira	Aishlinn Hughes
Year 6	Michael Martins	Hanna Kurowska-Buksa
Year 7H/M	Rachel Mallon	Jamie Cartmill
Year 7B/M	Brooke McGeown	Lukas Zincenko
LSC	Tomas Connolly	Baldrick Carlson Li

Well done to Brooke McGeown (Yr 7) who was the overall winner for the entire school. Her design has been made into our official school Christmas Card for this year.

Class Christmas Performances

These went live on our website on Tuesday and a big well done to all our pupils for their efforts in bringing us some much needed Christmas Cheer – we are so proud of all of you. Thanks also to all the staff for putting these together, another example of how staff have adapted so enthusiastically to the new situation that we find ourselves in. If you have not had a chance to watch these yet, please do so, you are in for a real treat.

Christmas Jumper Day

Thank you to everyone for supporting Christmas Jumper Day for Save the Children.

Parents and Friends Christmas Squares

Thank you all for supporting our Parents and Friends Christmas Draw. The winners were:

Nursery 1	James Hunniford
Nursery 2	Carlos Da Veiga
Year 1	Oscar Da Silva
Year 2	Isaac Sergeant
Year 3	Mason Wisniewski
Year 4	Summer McCann
Year 5B	Aishlinn Hughes
Year 5M	Reuben McCaughley
Year 6	Cormac Reynolds
Year 7B/M	Rachel Mallon
Year 7H/M	Miley Eadie
LSC	Balthasar Carlson Li

Christmas Dinner

Our pupils enjoyed a really tasty Christmas dinner in school on Friday 4th December. A big thank you to Mrs Donna Campbell and her team in the kitchen for providing this.

Class Parties and Gifts

All our classes had their Christmas parties on Thursday 19th December. Every pupil received a selection box from the school.

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>

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>

Libraries NI Winter Reading Challenge

Libraries NI are taking part in the Reading Agency's Winter Mini Challenge which started on Tuesday 1st December and will finish on Friday 15th January. The challenge is to encourage children to keep up their reading habits over the winter months, with free-to-access. The themed Mini Challenge is called 'Everyone Is A Hero.' The web page is WWW.Wintermini.org.uk. There are activities, recommendations for great winter reads and competition which can be found along with rewards including a certificate and a virtual badge. Libraries are open again and have lots of Christmas books available to borrow.

Year 7 Transfer to Post Primary School

The new year is normally very important for our Year 7 pupils as they and their parents make decisions on which Post-Primary School to transfer to in September 2021. As part of this process, schools normally host Open Days/Nights in January/February. Given the current pandemic things will be very different this year and most schools are doing their Open days online. This year also for the first time the Post Primary Admissions Process will be done online, similar to Nursery and Primary. Further information will be sent to you on this in due course.

Coats

Thank you to all parents for ensuring that your children are in school every day with a coat. Please ensure this continues throughout the winter. It is also important that your child's name is on all clothing.

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>

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.

Picking Pupils Up

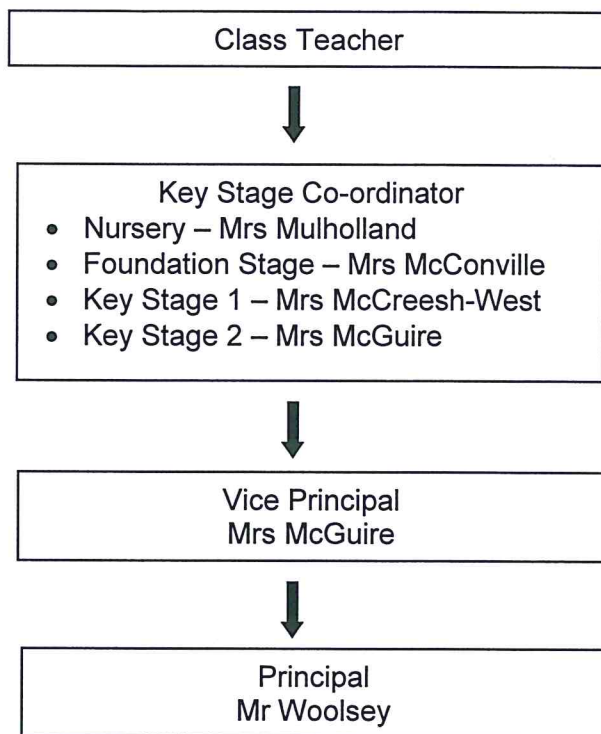
It is vital that parents are punctual when collecting their children otherwise they get anxious. If you are running late we would ask that you phone the office and inform us of this. If a child is not collected and we are unable to make contact with parents/carers and have exhausted all listed contacts,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

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 and have exhausted all listed contacts, 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. Unfortunately following DE guidance, face to face meetings are not possible at this time. However, telephone conversations can be arranged with staff 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.

Menu for January 2021

See <https://primarysite-prod-sorted.s3.amazonaws.com/ballyoran-primary-school/UploadedDocument/96c6fe5fe9194806af1b294a460f4736/january-menu.pdf>

Thanks and Happy Christmas

A big thank you to all my Staff for all their hard work in keeping our pupils safe and adapting so willingly, to ensure high quality learning and teaching has continued during this very challenging term.

Thank you also to parents for your continued support, co-operation and patience in these difficult days.

Finally, thank you to all of our amazing pupils, who we are so proud of, for making Ballyoran Primary School such a special place.

Wishing you all a Happy and Safe Christmas and a Peaceful and hopefully more positive New Year.

Richard Woolsey
Principal