

Safeguarding Team

Principal: Mrs McGuire
Designated Teacher: Mrs McConville
Deputy Designated Teacher: Miss McKernan
Nursery Deputy Designated Teacher: Miss French
Designated Governor: Mrs Sergeant
Chairperson: Mrs Loney

News Sheet – November 2026

Appointment of Vice Principal

We are delighted to share that the Board of Governors has appointed **Mrs Hannah McConville** as the new Vice Principal of Ballyoran Primary School.
Mrs McConville has been a valued member of the Ballyoran staff for the past 13 years and has made an outstanding contribution to the life of our school. Throughout this time, she has demonstrated a strong commitment to our pupils, families and wider school community.
We congratulate Mrs McConville on her appointment and look forward to working with her in this new role as we continue to build on the strengths of Ballyoran Primary School.

Half Term

A reminder that school will be closed for Half Term from **Monday 26th October to Friday 30th October 2026**. School reopens on **Monday 2nd November 2026**.

Halloween Safety

Pupils are reminded to be safe over the Half Term break particularly in relation to Halloween.

Sparklers

- Never give sparklers to children under the age of five.
- Always wear gloves when holding sparklers, preferably leather gloves.
- Hold a sparkler at arm's length and never wave sparklers at someone else as you could burn them.
- When the sparkler has finished put it into a bucket of cold water immediately.

Fireworks

- Parents need a licence to buy fireworks in Northern Ireland.
- Only adults should light fireworks and safely dispose of them.
- Children need to be supervised around fireworks.
- Never go near a firework that has been lit. Even if it hasn't gone off, it could still explode.

Tips for Parents and Carers

- Remind children to be extra careful when crossing any roads.
- Choose a costume and mask that doesn't restrict a child's visibility.
- Provide children with a torch or glow stick as part of their costume.
- Keep pets indoors.

Diary Dates – November

2nd	School reopens after Half Term
3rd	Mummers Project (Year 6)
6th	Swimming lessons start for Year 6
12th	Love for Life Yr 7 Pupils joined by pupils from Bocombra Primary School
13th	Non-Uniform Day – (Wear Something Spotty) & Bun Sale for Children in Need
14th	SEAG Paper 1
16th – 20th	Anti-Bullying Week Theme: Break the Silence
17th	Yr 4 Holding History Day
26th	End of Homework for Term 1
27th	Gaelic Blitz at South Lakes

Sickness

You will be aware that there is a lot of sickness around particularly coughs and colds. Parents are reminded to go over the importance of good hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene (Catch It, Bin It, Kill It) with their children.

Please see the latest PHA Guidance for infection control in school settings which gives recommended times for pupils to be kept off school for various illnesses:
https://tinyurl.com/44nrzcty

Parent/Teacher Meetings

Communication is an important part of our partnership with parents and I would like to thank those parents who availed of the Parent/Teacher Meetings this week.

After School Clubs – November and December

Clubs after half term are now open for booking on Parent Pay and with Healthy Kidz, please see details at: https://ballyoranprimary.ovw4.juniperwebsites.co.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=876&type=pdf

First Aiders

Congratulations to Mrs Nellins and Mrs Stewart who have successfully completed the First Aid at Work Course recently.

Amazon Jungle Show Visit to Year 5 and The Butterfly Room

Year 5 and The Butterfly Room were very excited to welcome some special visitors from the Amazon Rainforest! On Tuesday 13th October, the Amazon Jungle Show visited Ballyoran and gave us the opportunity to meet a variety of fascinating animals. We met snakes, frogs, lizards, tarantulas and even a chameleon. It was a wonderful experience to meet the animals up close and learn more about them and their rainforest habitats. This visit linked perfectly with out rainforest topic and really helped to bring our learning to life. We had a fantastic day and thoroughly enjoyed this hands-on learning experience. If you would like to see more, please visit our class page on the school website.to view photos from the day!

Nursery Welly Boot Walk
Our Nursery children had a fantastic time taking part in their Sponsored Welly Boot Walk. Thanks to the incredible generosity of our families and supporters, we raised an amazing £1,242 towards new construction toys and resources for our home area. We are extremely grateful for your support and kindness.

World Mental Health Day
To mark World Mental Health Day on Friday 9th October, we had a non-uniform 'Wear Yellow' day and pupils donated money to Reach Mentoring. To start the day, pupils took part in a special assembly which helped them to reflect on the importance of looking after their mental health and the importance of supporting others. Throughout the day, pupils took part in a range of wellbeing activities from mindfulness activities to creative tasks and movement breaks to remind them about some of the ways that they can look after their mental health. A total of £223 was raised for Reach Mentoring. Thank you for your continued support and generosity.

Yr 1 Stay & Play Sessions
At the start of October, family members of the Year 1 classes were invited into school for a Stay and Play session. Due to dry weather they were able to experience Play Based Learning both indoors and in the Foundation Stage outdoor play area. It was a lovely morning with the children proudly showing their parents the classroom, cloakroom and their work up on the walls before engaging in construction, small world, physical and fine motor skills play. Thank you to all the family members that were able to come in and enjoy the morning with their children.

Gaelic Blitz at Clintyclay PS
Ballyoran Gaelic team had a great day on Friday 2nd October, taking part in a blitz with other local primary schools at Clonmore GFC. Our boys and girls did the school proud, showing great skills and excellent behaviour.

Digital Leaders Update from Meeting
On Tuesday 7th October, our Digital Leaders met for the first time this academic year to plan their goals and responsibilities. During this productive session, they discussed a range of important topics, including how they can positively impact ICT learning across the school. To kick off their year, the team set themselves an exciting challenge, to visit other classes and assist their peers during ICT sessions. This initiative will help strengthen digital skills across year groups. We look forward to seeing the Digital Leaders in action and celebrating their contributions throughout the year!

Dreamspace Ambassadors
Ten lucky pupils have been selected to become Dream Space Ambassadors, working in partnership with W5 Life, Belfast. The Dream Space Ambassador Programme trains students to become STEM leaders in their schools and communities. These lucky pupils will gain skills in coding, robotics, and problem-solving and then support and mentor their peers, families and teachers through demos and training sessions. The newly appointed Dream Space Ambassadors will take part in their first live online training session on Tuesday 21st October, focusing on coding. This session will be delivered by the expert team at W5 Life and promises to be an inspiring start to their journey. We wish them all the best as they begin this fantastic opportunity!

Book Fair
Thank you to all our parents and carers for supporting the Book Fair. The children loved exploring the books and choosing new stories to enjoy. Your support helped make the event a great success — we really appreciate it. All money raised will be used to buy new books for our school.

Foundation Stage Autumn Sponsored Walk
On Wednesday 14th October, our Foundation Stage pupils took part in a Sponsored Autumn Walk at The People's Park. Children completed one lap of the park, followed by a picnic with some delicious treats to celebrate their efforts.
We are delighted to share that the event raised over £1,000. All funds raised will go directly towards enhancing our Foundation Stage outdoor play area with much-needed resources.
We truly appreciate your generosity and continued support in helping us create enriching experiences for our pupils.

Best wishes, Mrs Somerville
This week we said goodbye to Mrs Somerville as she begins her maternity leave! We thank her for the care, kindness and dedication she has shown to our children and families. We will miss her and wish her and her family every happiness as they prepare to welcome their new arrival!

Ditch the Dark Day!
We are excited to be taking part in Ditch the Dark Day on Friday 27th November. Children are encouraged to wear bright or fluorescent clothing to help promote safe and active travel during the darker mornings and evenings. There will be fun activities and prizes for pupils who get involved.

Walking Bus - To celebrate Ditch the Dark Day, we will be holding a Walking Bus to school that morning. We would love to see as many children and families as possible join us. Further details will be shared closer to the event.

Bike and Scooter Skills Sessions - In the lead-up to Ditch the Dark Day, our Walk Wheel Cycle Trust representative, Dave Wiggins, will be visiting the school to deliver exciting bike and scooter skills sessions. These sessions will help children to develop confidence and learn more about travelling safely and actively.

Parent Pay
A reminder that school meal bookings need to be made and paid for on Parent Pay on a weekly basis. This includes Free School Meals which must be booked on Parent Pay also. A reminder also that 9am is the daily cut off time and bookings must be made before then.

Breakfast Club
All pupils are welcome to attend in the Dinner Hall from 8.15 – 8.45am. The cost is £1 per day. Parents must book and pay for Breakfast Club on Parent Pay.

Nuts
As you are aware, we endeavour to ensure that no nuts or nut based products are brought into school to protect a few pupils who have severe nut allergies. Please respect our 'No Nuts' Policy.

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

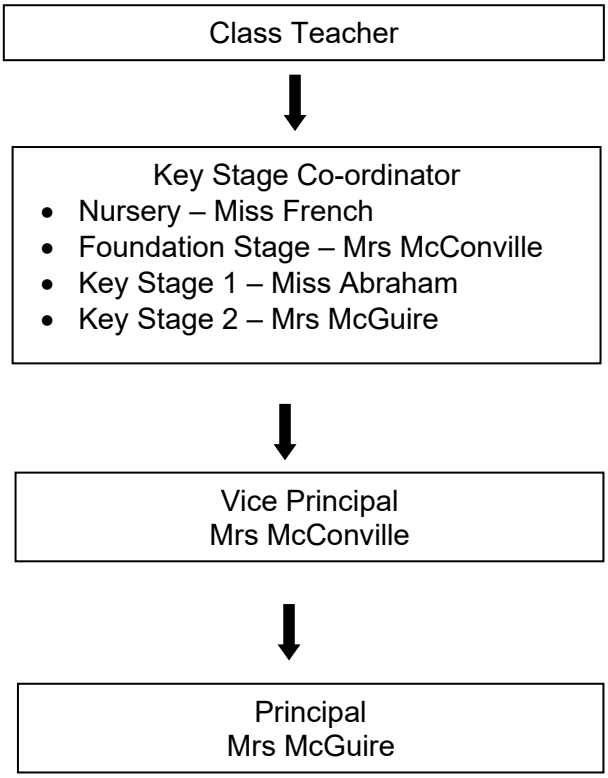
School App
It is important that all parents authenticate the school app as all communication for individual classes will be sent and received through the App. If you are unable to access the school app please contact the office.

Dinner Menu
The school dinner menu is available at:
https://ballyoranprimary.ovw4.juniperwebsites.co.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=836&type=pdf

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.

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

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.

As we reach the end of a very busy and successful first half term, I would like to thank our wonderful pupils for their hard work, enthusiasm and positive attitude each day. They continue to make us proud through their achievements, resilience and kindness.

I would also like to sincerely thank all our parents and families for their continued support, encouragement and co-operation. Your partnership with the school plays a vital role in helping our children thrive.

Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to our dedicated staff for their commitment, professionalism and hard work in providing the very best opportunities for our pupils.
On behalf of everyone at Ballyoran Primary School, I wish our pupils, families, governors and staff a happy, relaxing and safe Half-Term break. We look forward to welcoming everyone back refreshed and ready for another exciting term.

Mrs Roisin McGuire
Principal