

Ballylifford PS Newsletter – Term 1A 2017

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WELCOME

We would like to welcome everyone back to a new school year and we hope that 2017/18 is a happy and enjoyable year in Ballylifford PS. I wish you and your children every blessing for the new school year and look forward to lots of happiness, laughter and learning in the months ahead.

A special welcome to our new P1 pupils and we hope they all have a happy and fulfilling time at Ballylifford Primary School.

MORNING PRAYER

As part of the Catholic ethos in Ballylifford PS, we begin each school day at 9:00am with morning prayer. Mr McElroy will lead it on a Monday and Friday and Mrs Sweeney, Ms Hurl and Mrs Muldoon leading it the rest of the week. The following prayers will be said each morning: The Morning Prayer, Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.

YEAR GROUP ARRANGEMENTS

We would like to inform all parents of year group arrangements for this forth coming academic year. Mrs Sweeney will continue to teach P1 & P2, Ms Hurl will continue to teach P3 & P4 and Mr McElroy / Mrs Muldoon will continue to teach P5, P6 & P7 Class.

NEWSLETTERS

Previously our School Newsletter was issued monthly but we have decided to do it termly from this year. As individual reminders for all dates and events cannot always be sent home, please ensure that you retain the Newsletter for your reference.

It is important that parents check schoolbags for general notes, reminders, newsletters, that are sent home.

The Newsletter will always be made available on the school website www.ballyliffordps.com or you can follow us on twitter-@BallyliffordPS

We ask all parents and family members to download the **SCHOOL NI APP**

It allows everyone to view school updates and receive messages and emails via smartphones or tablets. The app is available on both Apple and Android devices, and will give you access to our school news, calendar events and letters.



P7 Transfer Club

P7 Transfer Club will start again for P7 pupils tomorrow, Tuesday 5th September with Ms Hurl and Mrs Muldoon. This club will run on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 3:00 - 4:00pm.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

The children look super in their new school uniforms. Thank you, parents, for supporting our uniform guidelines. In the interests of safety, girls should not wear hooped or dangling earrings as they can catch all too easily during play-time. It is absolutely vital **your child's name should be clearly marked on ALL clothing and personal belongings.**

Any lost items are stored in our lost property box and you can contact the school office if your child/children have lost any items.

Children should ensure they bring the appropriate clothing for P.E., swimming, etc. on their allocated days

SCHOOL ACCESS

We remind you that access to school during teaching time must be via the main entrance. All other entrances to the school are locked during the school day and opened only for playground access at break/ lunch time, P.E. times and the dismissal of the children at the end of the school day. Parents / childminders who call during the school day must report to the secretary's office in order to comply with Child Protection and Health and Safety regulations.

THE SCHOOL DAY

School begins at 9:00am and we ask for all children to arrive punctually. Arrival on time is important to reduce disruption to lessons and allow children to settle quickly to their learning.

Supervision is provided from 8:30am and all pupils can wait in the school hall until 9:00am. We also ask that parents do not detain teachers in the morning so as to allow a prompt start to the school day. Should you need to communicate with the teacher in the morning, please send a note or leave a message with the school secretary and a meeting can be arranged. School day ends at 2:00 pm for children in Years 1 and 2 and at 3:00pm for children in Years 3-7.

END OF SCHOOL PUPIL COLLECTION

All classes will be lined up in the playground for dismissal at the end of the school day. To assist in the management of this, the children will only be allowed to leave class line if a parent/guardian/family member is there to collect them.

When we have poor weather conditions, parents can collect their children from the back door of the school hall.

Please ensure that children in P1 and P2 are collected promptly as it allows the teachers to continue with their curriculum duties.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an important part of school life and a vital link between home and school. Good homework habits are encouraged in all classes to help children develop self-discipline, independence and good organisational skills; all of which are important when children make the transition to post-primary school.

Children in all year groups will be given homework on a daily basis. We would encourage parents to support their child each night. Please remember that learning homework is as important as written work and reading is essential each night.

We would encourage all parents to sign homework diaries weekly on the line provided at the bottom of each page.

If a parent has any concerns or comments regards their child/children, **please use the parents comment box provided in the P3-P7 homework diary/speak to class teacher directly or an appointment should be made through the school secretary.**

FRIENDS OF BALLYLIFFORD PTA

The Friends of Ballylifford will be holding their AGM very soon and they hope to select dates for their annual events. Please keep an eye out for future events as all friends of the school are very welcome to get involved. Any parents interested in becoming involved in our PTA should contact the School Office.

HEALTHY BREAK & LUNCH POLICY

As part of our Healthy Break Policy we would encourage you to select items from the following list for your child to eat / drink at break time:-

- Milk
- Water
- Fruit
- Vegetables

Any bread based products e.g. sandwiches, pancakes or scones. (Butter or spread can be used, avoid sugary spreads such as jam, marmalade and chocolate spread)

We also encourage children to bring a healthy lunch to school every day. Children are encouraged to bring water to school each day and to avoid fizzy drinks. Drinking water is an essential part of a healthy lifestyle and has been shown to make the brain more receptive to learning. Children may bring their water in a small, plastic bottle and they will be given opportunities to drink water throughout the day.

The canteen has asked us to remind parents that the meals provided follow the Nutritional Guidelines introduced by the Department of Education. Children are provided with a set meal which includes a choice of main course and dessert. The cost of dinner is £2.60 and a menu has been sent home with all pupils.

BIRTHDAY PARTY INVITATIONS

Can we ask all parents/guardians to ensure birthday party invitations to be given to children outside of school hours as it can cause distress to those who have not been invited.

GUITAR

P5- P7 pupils are currently learning the guitar on a Tuesday morning with Mr. Ryan McGarrity.

The cost per session is £2.50. It is very **important** that all pupils practice for at least 15-20 minutes daily as Ryan would like to involve the children in various events throughout the year.

NUT ALLERGY

There are a number of children in the school who have a nut allergy. We would like to remind parents/guardians of the seriousness of this condition and we would encourage that no foods containing nuts or that may contain traces of nuts / nut products, such as peanut butter or nutella sandwiches, etc be brought into school. We would also like to advise parents/guardians to refrain from sending birthday cakes / buns into school. Your co-operation supports the school in monitoring the situation and protects the well-being of all our pupils.

MEDICATION

Parents should keep their children at home if they are feeling unwell or infectious. If your child requires prescribed or non-prescribed medication during the school day, parents must provide written and signed instructions by completing the AM2 form which is available from the school office.

HEAD LICE

As children return to school we would encourage you to check heads regularly as outbreaks of head lice are very common at this stage of the year. It is vitally important that it is treated promptly and with a lotion (not shampoo). Should you require any advice, please contact your local pharmacist.

TIN WHISTLE

P3 to P7 pupils are currently learning the tin whistle with Mrs Sweeney.

It is important that the children bring their tin whistle to school on the set days.

Please ensure that the children have their name on their tin whistles and kept in their homework sacks along with their music sheets. Pupils can purchase a tin whistle for £5.00 from the school office.

- **P3-P4 Tin whistle lesson -Tuesday 2-3pm**
- **P5-P7 Tin whistle lesson -Thursday 2-3pm**

PARENT / TEACHER MEETINGS

The Parent / Teacher meetings for Term One will be held on Tuesday 14th November to Thursday 16th November. **All pupils will go home early at 1:00pm on these dates.** The meetings are an important opportunity for you to pass on information about your child and for the teachers to inform you of your child's progress.

Individual times and dates will be issued by class teachers in due course and if these times and dates are unsuitable, please contact school office or class teacher to make alternative arrangements.

CHILD PROTECTION / PASTORAL CARE

During the first weeks of term class teachers will revise pastoral care arrangements with children and remind them of whom they can talk to if they have any concerns or worries. In school we talk to all the children, particularly about our school safeguarding team and school safety net. These are on display in school and will be reinforced in the classroom and assemblies throughout the school year. Please contact Mrs. Sweeney (designated teacher for child protection) or Mr McElroy (deputy designated teacher for child protection) should you wish to raise a child protection issue. A copy of all Child Protection information leaflets will be sent home to each family. The school will be issuing the 'Parent's Awareness Leaflet' to all parents on week beginning 25th September.

Once received please sign the relevant permission slips and return to school.

Child Protection, Pastoral Care, Intimate Care, E-Safety and Anti-Bullying Policies are available on request from school office.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS & UNIFORM GRANTS

School dinners cost £2.60 per day (£13 per week) this year and the price has been put in place by the Education Authority. You can earn up to £16,190 per year and still be entitled to Free School Meals. To find out if you qualify for Free School Meals, please check the Education Authority website.

PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

We pride ourselves in Ballylifford PS as having a high level of Pastoral Care and we always want our children to learn in an environment which is supportive, encouraging and structured.

In order for learning to be effective, good discipline and positive behaviour is essential. In school we have a number of mottos, Golden Rules and we have an established system of rewards which promotes positive behaviour and we would like the pupils to maintain their excellent attitude and application to their learning. However, in order to maintain our excellent standard, it is also necessary to have effective sanctions in place; a sheet outlining the discipline plan for each year group is attached. Major breaches of discipline may result in loss of playtime at break or lunch time.

As a Catholic school, we wish to help children understand that we all make mistakes and do the wrong thing sometimes but that saying sorry, trying to put mistakes right and accepting appropriate consequences with good grace are part of learning and growing up and, once over, mistakes are forgiven and forgotten.



PUPILS AWARDS

At Ballylifford PS we like to acknowledge and recognise the pupils' positive behaviour, application and attitude to school life by having various awards.

Principal Awards & Class Line Cup are presented weekly where one pupil from each Key Stage is presented with Principal Award certificate who have followed the Golden Rules and School Values really well for that week. The class line cup will also be presented to the class who have gained the most points for lining up correctly in the morning, break and lunch time for that week.

Pupil of the Month certificates will also be awarded at monthly assembly at the end of each month.

STAFF CAR PARK & ROAD SAFETY

In response to a number concerns from parents in previous years regarding our staff car park, please note that staff have priority for parking and parents/guardians/childminders are urged to park and drive **slowly, carefully and responsibly**, showing regard at all times.

Can we ask all parents/guardians to please refrain from dropping their children off at school in the morning while parked on the main road as it is extremely dangerous and may lead to a serious accident.

This is particularly important with regard to the safety of all pupils, staff, family members and the whole school community. Thanks for your co-operation.

SWIMMING

P5-P7 swimming lessons for term one and term two will commence on Thursday 14th September in the Greenvale Leisure Centre, Magherafelt. The cost of each session is £3.50 which covers the cost of the swimming lesson and transport.

There will be **NO** swimming in term three.

AFTER SCHOOLS ACTIVITIES

- P1/P2 After Schools Club - (Mon- Fri) 2-3pm supervised by Wendy Heath and Orla Rocks
- P7 Transfer Club - Tues & Thurs 3-4pm with Ms Hurl & Mrs Muldoon **starting 5th September**
- Gaelic Football coaching - Wednesday 3-4pm with Mr McElroy **starting 13th September**

The P3-P7 After School programme will usually take place on Monday and Tuesday afternoons this year to allow for staff meetings, staff training and curriculum planning for the remaining days.

Arrangements are in place to hold other activities throughout the school year. We are always very keen to include parents/grandparents/family members in our after school programme. We welcome a variety of clubs in the areas of sports, art, drama, languages, gardening, cooking and any other suggestions. If you would like to help or get involved please contact the school office.



P1 HOMEWORK SACK/DUO BOOK BAG

There has been a very positive response regards the homework sack/duo book bag for all P1-P7 pupils which was introduced last September. We request all new P1 pupils to purchase one at a cost of £4 which can be collected from the school office.

The homework sack/duo book bag ensures all homework, reading books, newsletters etc are organised and kept together. It also means parents will not have to buy new homework sacks annually as they are made from strong material and should last for the seven years at Ballylifford PS.

ANTI-BULLYING WEEK

The Anti-Bullying Week 2017 theme is "**All Equal, All Different, All Together**".

Anti-Bullying week is the week beginning 13th November. Children in all year groups will be concentrating on the definition, causes and effects of bullying and discussing anti-bullying strategies and procedures. This will involve activities to promote anti-bullying across the curriculum.

If you have concerns that your child may be being bullied, it is important that you talk to class teachers at an early stage. Concerns of a serious nature should be raised with our Safeguarding team of Mrs. Sweeney (Designated Teacher) or Mr. McElroy (Deputy Designated Teacher).

Bullying is an issue which is taken very seriously and all incidents will be dealt with as outlined in our Anti-Bullying Policy. We have also introduced a **School Safety Net** through our Anti-Bullying Procedures to make all pupils aware if they have any concerns or worries that **all** staff in school are there to help.



MACMILLAN CANCER COFFEE MORNING

After our beginning of Year School Mass on Friday 29th September at 10am, all parents, family members & friends of Ballylifford PS & local community are invited to attend **MACMILLAN CANCER COFFEE MORNING** from 10:30 - 11:30am
All money raised will go to the local charity, MacMillan Cancer.

DATES TO REMEMBER

HALLOWEEN DISCO

The Halloween Disco organised by the PTA has been provisionally set for Thursday 26th October from 6:30pm - 8:00pm.
A light supper will be provided for all children.
More details will be sent home in due course.

Friday 8th December 2017:

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception - All pupils will attend Mass at 10am
Christmas dinner -Pupils finish school at 1pm

Wednesday 13th December 2017

Annual School Carol Service in St. Patrick's Church Ballinderry at 7:00pm followed by our Open Night for P1 Admissions September 2018

Tuesday 20th December 2017:

Whole school Christmas Pantomime Trip to the Grand Opera House, Belfast - *"Peter Pan"*

SACRAMENTAL DATES

No dates have been set yet for Sacramental celebrations. We will inform all parents of agreed dates as soon as we have a collective meeting with Derrychrin PS and Fr. Donnelly.

BEGINNING OF YEAR MASS

Our annual opening Mass with Derrychrin PS to celebrate the beginning of the school year has been provisionally set for Friday 29th September at 10.00 am All children from Year 1 to Year 7 will attend and we hope that many parents, families and friends will be able to join us.

CHRISTMAS PANTO

We have arranged for children to attend the Christmas pantomime "Peter Pan" in the Grand Opera House Belfast on Wednesday, 20th December. Details of prices and times will be issued in due course.

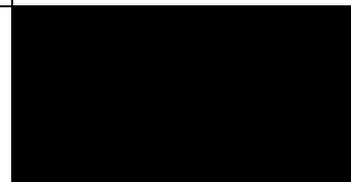


Sanctions



1

FIRST REMINDER



2

FINAL REMINDER



3

ONE MINUTE TIME OUT



4

BREAK/LUNCH TIME
TIME OUT



5

BEHAVIOUR FORM



6

CONTACT
PARENT/GUARDIAN





Rewards



1	Homework Pass
2	A Certificate
3	Games/Toy Box
4	Computer/iPad Time
5	Rewards Box
6	Free Time Book