



BALLYLIFFORD PS

NEWSLETTER

Term 1 - 2019



MORNING PRAYER

As part of the Catholic ethos in Ballylifford PS, we begin each school day at 9:00am with morning prayer. Mr McElroy leads it on a Monday and Friday and Mrs Sweeney, Ms Hurl and Mrs Muldoon leading it the rest of the week. The following prayers are said each morning: The Morning Prayer, Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be. We would encourage parents / guardians to practice these prayers with the children.

YEAR GROUP ARRANGEMENTS

We would like to inform all parents of year group arrangements for this academic year. Mrs Sweeney will continue to teach P1 & P2 with Caroline Quinn as Classroom Assistant, Ms Hurl will continue to teach P3 & P4 with Orla Rocks & Wendy Heath as Classroom Assistants. Mr McElroy / Mrs Muldoon (Monday & Tuesday) will continue to teach P5, P6 & P7 Class with Rosemary Donnelly as Classroom Assistant Monday to Wednesday.

FLU VACCINE

All pupils have received their letters regarding the delivery of the Flu Vaccines by the school nurses which will take place on the Wednesday 16th October.

If you do not wish your child to get this vaccine, a form still needs to be completed and returned to the school. Vaccine has to be returned for the non-returned forms as well.

PARISH BULLETIN

Parish Bulletin can be viewed online using our school website and clicking on Parish News tab on the main homepage.

NEWSLETTERS

Our School Newsletters are issued termly. 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 APP 'SCHOOL NI'

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.

FRIENDS OF BALLYLIFFORD PTA

The Friends of Ballylifford held their AGM recently and have arranged dates for their annual events. Please keep an eye out for future events and if anyone would like to get involved, please contact the school office or any member of the PTA.

HOMEWORK SACK/DUO BOOK BAG

We continue to encourage all P1-P7 pupils to use the homework sack/duo book bag as it ensures all homework, reading books, newsletters etc are organised and kept together. It helps pupils develop their organisational skills and 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. If any pupil needs to purchase one, they can be bought from the school office at a cost of £5.

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

The children as always look super in their school uniforms and a big thank you to all parents / guardians 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 / guardians 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.**

An additional letter has been issued to all parents regards these procedures

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 at 2pm and P3-P7 pupils at 3pm.

The school bell will ring at **2:50pm daily** to allow the **P3-P7** children to get ready for home time to ensure they are collected on time and to avoid any delays for parents / guardians / family members.

We would ask for all pupils to be collected promptly to allow teaching staff to return to their classrooms to complete any duties, school development work, staff meetings, cluster group meetings and to plan and prepare for the next day.

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 especially P1 - P5. P6 and P7 pupils are independent readers and are encouraged to read AR Books, Novels or class guided reading books. We would encourage all parents to sign homework diaries weekly on the line provided at the bottom of each page.

We have also included termly target setting in homework diaries again this year to encourage pupil ownership of their learning and areas for development. It also means parents / guardians are kept informed of their child's learning and there will be an opportunity to review their targets with them.

HEALTHY BREAK & LUNCH POLICY

Recently we have had quite a number of children who have had no snack at break time. We ask all parents to please pack a healthy snack for break time and 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/Vegetable sticks
- Plain biscuits -Rich Tea, Digestives, Crackers etc.
- 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)*

Children are encouraged to bring a healthy lunch to school every day along with a bottle of water. 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 as they will be given opportunities to drink throughout the day. The cost of dinner is £2.60 and a menu has been issued to all pupils and on our school website.

HEAD LICE

We would encourage all parents to check your child's hair 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.

GUITAR

P6- P7 pupils **ONLY** will recommence guitar lessons on a Thursday afternoon 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. Unfortunately, P5 pupils will be unable to be included this year due to group numbers.

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

We ask that parents / guardians should keep their children at home if they are feeling unwell or infectious. Please refer to the Guidance on infection control in schools and other childcare settings provided by the Public Health Agency.

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.

TIN WHISTLE

P3 to P7 pupils are currently learning the tin whistle with Mrs Sweeney every Friday as part of **MAPS Day**

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT ALL CHILDREN BRING THEIR TIN WHISTLE AND MUSIC FOLDER TO SCHOOL EVERY FRIDAY

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.

PARENT / TEACHER MEETINGS

The Parent / Teacher meetings for Term One will be held on Tuesday 12th and Wednesday 13th November starting at 1:30pm. **All pupils will go home early at 1:00pm on these two 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

At the beginning of each new academic year, class teachers always revise the 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, school safety net and Worry Box. 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 Mrs Muldoon (deputy designated teacher for child protection) should you wish to raise a child protection issue.

A copy of all Child Protection information & 'Parent's Awareness Leaflet' are sent home with each family in September and is also available to view on our school website.

As part of our consultation procedures we would like to remind parents that all policies linked to Child Protection are available to view online using our school website and on request from the school office.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS & UNIFORM GRANTS

School dinners cost £2.60 per day (£13.00 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 has been issued to all pupils.

Major breaches of discipline may result in loss of playtime at break or lunch time or a behaviour reflection sheet will be sent home with pupils for parents to sign.

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.

PUPIL AWARDS

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

Weekly Principal Award certificates & School Values Cup are presented to pupils who have followed the Golden Rules and School Values really well for that week. Each class who gains most points for lining up correctly in the morning, break and lunch time for that week are rewarded with extra play on Friday or Golden Time at the end of each month.

Pupil of the Month certificates are also awarded to each year group at monthly assembly on the last Tuesday of each month. This year we have introduced a '**Super Literacy**' and '**Super Numeracy**' certificates to acknowledge their positive learning in both curriculum areas.

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.

We would also ask for NO cars to be parked in front of the double green gates at the side of the school at any times while pupils are collected at home times. This is particularly important with regard to the safety of all the whole school community. We are very grateful for your co-operation.

SCHOOL BUS PARKING

Can we ask all parents / guardians to please refrain from parking in front of the blue wooden gates at the entrance to the school canteen / boiler house yard. The School Bus has priority for parking here to ensure children get on and off the bus in the morning and afternoon safely. It also means that the bus can depart the school site promptly to collect pupils at other locations. Thank you for co-operation.

SWIMMING

P5- P7 swimming lessons for the school year recommenced on Thursday 12th 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. The pupils are extremely lucky as they have an opportunity of three full years of developing their swimming skills.

AFTER SCHOOLS

- P1/P2 After Schools Club - (Mon- Fri) 2- 3pm supervised by Wendy Heath and Orla Rocks
- P7 Transfer Club - Tuesday 3 - 4:15pm with Ms Hurl / Mrs Muldoon / Mr McElroy
- Burns Skills School takes place every Wednesday
 - P1 & P2 from 2:00pm - 3:00pm
 - P3 - P7 from 3:00pm - 4:00pm

The P3-P7 After School programme will usually take place on Tuesday - Thursday 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 and a timetable will be sent home in due course. 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 anyone would like to help or get involved please contact the school office.

IRISH LANGUAGE LESSONS

We have continued with our Irish language lessons for our P3-P7 pupils. The enthusiasm and willingness shown by the pupils is fantastic and they are extremely lucky to Mrs Sweeney who is a fluent Irish speaker, leading the weekly lessons on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons. This is an excellent opportunity for the pupils to learn their native language through many themes and also gain a better understanding of their culture. We intend include our Irish language on a daily basis at whole school level and include it in Sacramental celebrations throughout the year.
Maith sibh na paisti!

ANTI-BULLYING WEEK

The Anti- Bullying Week 2019 theme is
"CHANGE STARTS WITH US".

Anti-Bullying week is the week beginning 11th 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 Mrs Muldoon (Deputy Designated Teacher), Mr McElroy (Principal)

Bullying is an issue which is taken very seriously and all incidents will be dealt with as outlined in our Anti-Bullying Policy. We also have **OUR SCHOOL SAFETY NET** and our '**WORRY BOX**' 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.

Our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors will help educate their peers on bullying, lead on anti-bullying campaigns, promote a culture which celebrates and tolerates difference and help keep their peers safe both online and offline.

BIRTHDAY PARTY INVITATIONS

We would like to remind all parents that it has always been school policy for birthday party invitations to be distributed by parents outside of school hours. Please can we ask all parents/guardians to ensure birthday party invitations are to be given to children outside of school hours to avoid any pupil who is not invited feeling upset or distressed. Any parent who wishes to give birthday invitations out to their child's class mates provided there is an invite for all, may do so, by placing all invites in an envelope and given to the class teacher for distribution.

OLD £5 and £10 PAPER NOTES

We would like to advise all parents that the old paper £5 & £10 bank notes from Ulster Bank, Danske Bank & Bank of Ireland have been withdrawn from circulation on 30 Sept 2019. If the school receives any of these notes, they will have to be returned.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY **HALLOWEEN FANCY DRESS &** **MOVIE NIGHT**

Halloween fancy dress & movie night organised by the PTA is on **Thursday 24th October from 6:00pm - 8:00pm**. A light supper will be provided for all children. £3 admission.

CHRISTMAS DINNER

Friday 6th December 2019
(All pupils is go home early at 1:00pm)

SANTA TEA PARTY / COFFEE MORNING

Sunday 8th December 2019
In St. Patrick's Hall at 11am after Mass

CAROL SERVICE & OPEN NIGHT

Thursday 12th December 2019
Annual Christmas Carol Service in St. Patrick's Church, Ballinderry at 7:00pm followed by our Open Night for P1 Admissions - September 2020

CHRISTMAS PANTO

Wednesday 18th December 2019
Pantomime "Beauty and The Beast" in the Grand Opera House, Belfast. Details of prices and times will be issued soon.

NO SACRAMENTAL DATES HAVE BEEN
CONFIRMED AS YET BUT PARENTS
WILL BE NOTIFIED ASAP

P7 Transfer Club

P7 Transfer Club has started again for P7 pupils on Tuesday 10th September with Ms Hurl and Mrs Muldoon on Tuesday afternoons from 3-4:15pm and Friday afternoons from 2-3pm with Mr McElroy.

Golden Rules



Our School Values

Welcome
Learning Respect
Nurture Achievement
Empathy

P1 and P2 Sanctions

1. First Reminder
2. Final Reminder
3. No movement on reward track
4. One minute time out
5. Name entered in class behaviour book
6. Call to parent by class teacher

P3 - P7 Sanctions

1. First Reminder
2. Final Reminder
3. One minute time out
4. Loss of outside play at break-time / lunch-time
5. 10 minute time out in classroom with work and behaviour form completed with class teacher. The form will be brought home, discussed and signed by parent / carer.
6. If a child exhibits persistent poor behaviour, parents will be contacted and a meeting arranged to discuss the issues.

Rewards

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

Behaviour Reflection Sheet

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

I did not make a good choice today by not following the Golden Rules.
Tick the box to show which rule(s) you didn't follow.

- ☐ 1. We are gentle
- ☐ 2. We work hard
- ☐ 3. We are kind
- ☐ 4. We listen
- ☐ 5. We look after property
- ☐ 6. We are honest

What happened?

What I should have done?

Please discuss with your child the importance of following the Golden Rules in school at all times.

Pupil: _____

Parent: _____

Teacher: _____