

**BALLYLIFFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

142 Ballinderry Bridge Road

Cookstown

Co Tyrone

BT80 0AY

**PRINCIPAL:** Mr Ciaran McElroy**Tel / Fax:** 028 79418388**Email:** [info@ballylifford.cookstown.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@ballylifford.cookstown.ni.sch.uk)**Website:** [www.ballyliffordps.com](http://www.ballyliffordps.com)**Twitter:** @BallyliffordPSTuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020

Dear Parents / Carers,

We would like to welcome everyone back to a new school year and we hope that 2020/21 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.

We know that everyone was so pleased to return to school last week and it was fantastic to see all the children again after the lockdown. We will be doing our best to ensure the children settle back in smoothly and we are very aware of their academic, physical, social and emotional needs.

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

As you may be aware there has been DE guidance conveyed to schools on a regular basis. As a school we will continue to monitor and review all current guidelines and arrangements in place to ensure a positive impact on everyone connected to our school.

We are also very aware of the broad levels of stress and anxiety that has been placed on families over the last few months and we aim to help children and families as much as possible over the next few months and throughout the academic year.

All communication with parents/carers will be carried out via our school website, Schools NI app and our school Twitter account. We ask that all parents download and update the Schools NI app settings by sending test notification and restarting notifications on your mobile device in order to receive messages and updates from our messaging system.

We would like to thank you for your understanding, patience and continued support at this time. If you have any concerns please feel free to contact myself at [cmcelroy918@c2kni.net](mailto:cmcelroy918@c2kni.net) and we will try to help in any way possible.

Yours sincerely

Mr Ciaran McElroy  
(Principal)

## COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

- If your child is displaying any of the symptoms of COVID-19, they should remain at home and follow the latest Public Health advice.

### ***Symptoms of Covid-19 include:-***

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back, or;
  - **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual), or;
  - **anosmia** - the loss or a change in your normal sense of smell (it can also affect your sense of taste)
- If any child presents as unwell, the school has a non-contact thermometer which may be used. The child will be brought to an individual room where they can wait in isolation with a member of staff while medical advice is sought, and parents/guardians contacted. The staff member will remain with the child until collected.
  - Parents will be advised to follow the PHA guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection. If you have symptoms of coronavirus infection (COVID-19), however mild, do not leave your home for 10 days from when your symptoms started. This action will help protect others in your community while you are infectious. If you live with others and you or one of them have symptoms of coronavirus, then all other household members must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days. The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill.
  - If there is a confirmed case of someone in the school having the COVID-19 Virus, the school will follow the Department of Health's 'Test, trace and Protect' strategy. Therefore, the name and contact details of everyone who enters the school building will be recorded, including school staff, pupils, parents and visitors. More information is available on the gov.uk website

If your child or anyone in your household has any of the symptoms above, you should get a test for Covid-19. The latest full letter for Parents and Carers from the Education Minister can be found at the link below:

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/education-restart-letter-parents-and-carers-minister-education>

## **STAFFING FOR 2020/2021**

Year group arrangements for the school academic year.

<b>Class</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Teaching Assistants</b>
P1 & P2	Mrs Sweeney	Caroline Quinn & Rosemary Donnelly
P3 & P4	Ms Hurl	Orla Rocks
P5, P6 & P7	Mr McElroy / Miss Quinn	Wendy Heath & Orla Rocks

Mrs Muldoon is on a one-year career break for 2020/2021. We welcome Miss Quinn to the Ballylifford PS staff who will be Principal Release teacher for the P5/P6/P7 class every Monday and Tuesday. Mr McElroy will be SEN co-ordinator for the year ahead.

### **IN CLASS ARRANGEMENTS**

- In class pupils have their own allocated desk space which they will use throughout the school day; desks will be cleaned down at the end of each school day. Pupils should not bring items, such as toys, from home into school. All individual learning resources will be kept in a desk tray provided for each pupil.

### **HOMEWORK**

- All main items of homework will be shared with the pupils online via the learning platform 'Seesaw'.
- Initially the term will begin with no homework but this will be phased in after a number of weeks. We will continue to make arrangements as to how this can be done safely and to allow pupils and parents time to access 'Seesaw' and familiarise themselves with the platform.
- Information on how to access and use 'Seesaw' has been shared with parents. We would ask all parents to sign up and complete registration following the information sheet previously issued.

### **FIRST HOLY COMMUNION**

- Ballylifford PS First Communion will take place on **Sunday 20th September at 12:00noon.**
- First Communion children may be accompanied into the church only by their parents & siblings - brothers & sisters. Unfortunately, nobody else is allowed to attend. Each family will have a pew at which to sit - creating a 'family bubble'. We are restricted to a maximum number of 48 being in the church at any time so we ask people to be considerate of this number. We aim to make this a very special occasion for our First Communion children and hope that they all enjoy their big day.
- All First Communion services will be broadcast live on Ballinderry Parish Webcam - no recording shall take place.

### **STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY**

#### **Reminder of school closure:**

School will be closed on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September to facilitate all staff to attend The Loughshore Primary School Cluster staff training day.

### **ROAD SAFETY – BALLINDERRY BRIDGE ROAD**

- With the continued large volume of traffic and the high speed on the main road outside the school, we would encourage any parents/carers to please use the school car park for morning drop-off. We want to ensure the safety of our pupils and family members at all times and help reduce the risk of any serious accidents.
- If any parent/carer or family member prefers to use the the parish car park opposite the school, please ensure to hold your child's hand at all times while crossing the road and never allow them to cross the road by themselves.

### **MORNING DROP OFF / SCHOOL ARRIVAL TIMES**

- School will be open from 8:45am each day and pupils may arrive at school between 8:45am - 9:05am.
- Upon arrival, pupils must walk directly to their classroom where Teachers/Assistants will be present to greet the pupils as they arrive.
- Before entering the classroom, pupils must use the hand sanitiser provided.
- Parents/visitors are **not** permitted to enter the school building under any circumstances.
- If you are in any way uncomfortable about arriving when others are here please feel free to drop off a little later and pick up a little earlier than school hours. Please let us know if this is your intention so we can assist you.
- We would ask If a large number of people happen to be in the staff car park at these times, please keep your distance and wait a few minutes to allow people/vehicles to disperse.

### **SCHOOL COLLECTION TIMES**

From **Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September**, school finishing times will be as follows.

<b>P1</b>	Week One -12noon Week Two -1:00pm Week Three – 2:00pm
<b>P2</b>	<b>2:00pm</b>
<b>P3 – P4</b>	<b>2:50pm</b>
<b>P5 – P7</b>	<b>3:00pm</b>

- All children will be brought to the main playground by their class teacher at the end of the school day regardless of the weather.
- If any child/children in the P5/P6/7 class have siblings in P3/P4, they are free to be collected at **2:50pm** to avoid any extended waiting times for parents/carers or family members.
- They will remain in their class groups and collected as normal as they see parents/carers arrive. Can we ask all parents/carers/family members to be **punctual** when collecting their child/children.
- Please do not congregate in groups, collect the children and move swiftly to your vehicle with awareness of other adults and children in the area. Adults should socially distance themselves from others at all times.
- To help avoid any congestion in the school car park, there will be **NO** parking allowed in the staff car park at school collection times. Only one gate will remain open to allow pedestrian access for parents/carers/family to collect the children from the playground.
- Please inform all adults that collect your child/ children of these arrangements.

### **BREAK/LUNCH TIMES**

- We will have staggered breaks and dinner times for the children in their bubbles.
- Whilst in school, all pupils will remain in a membership 'bubble' with their own class.
- Each class will eat their healthy break in the classroom and have their own period of outside play in a designated area of the playground during break time.
- It is essential that coats are brought to school by pupils every day. Pupils will be brought outside during breaktime, irrespective of the weather, to allow time away from the classroom. (Except in extreme circumstances).
- Pupils will follow a similar routine at lunchtime whereby they will eat their lunch in the school hall, followed by a period of play outside in a designated area of the playground with their own class.
- Pupils' healthy break and those taking packed lunch should bring their items of food in a washable/wipeable container/lunchbox.
- All children need their own water bottle which should be clearly labelled. Children will not be able to refill their bottles throughout the day.
- Lunch containers, lunch boxes and water bottles should be cleaned daily.
- Can we remind all parents to please provide a small healthy snack for their children daily to eat at break-time. The school are unable to provide any snacks should any child forget to bring a snack.

### **SCHOOL UNIFORM**

- Pupils will be required to wear full school uniform upon our return to school. Children are required to wear school uniform as usual and encouraged to change when they go home each day. We would encourage clean uniforms as often as possible.
- Cloakroom areas of school will not be used by pupils, so coats will be hung over the children's chairs in the classroom.
- The PE curriculum will be delivered outside on dry days throughout the week. Children can wear their school PE clothing, school half zip tops and school jerseys to school on these days and also every Friday.

### **EQUIPMENT AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

- Initially pupils will not be permitted to bring school bags, toys or any other items to school.
- All children should bring a pencil case with pencils, crayons/colouring pencils, rubber and a sharpener.
- Please ensure it all fits in the pencil case. It will remain in school and will be used only by them. We would encourage you to have a second well stocked pencil case at home for completing homework tasks
- Children can use our school **duo bag/homework sack** with the school crest on the front to help bring home any letters, worksheets or books. P2-P7 children currently have these bags and P1 children can purchase them from school office at a cost of £4.

### **SCHOOL MEALS & DINNER MONEY**

- School dinners cost £2.60 daily and £13 weekly (under review). Please send correct money in a sealed envelope/clear money bag/clingfilm as we will not be in a position to offer change so sending in exact money will help us greatly.
- As a school obviously want to handle as little money as possible in school. Please ensure all dinner money is exact and in a sealed envelope clearly labelled with your child's name, the amount of money and dinners taken.
- The school menu can be viewed on our school website and will be updated regularly.

### **DATA CAPTURE FORMS & PARENTAL PERMISSION AGREEMENTS**

- Parents/Carers will be asked to complete a Data Capture and Parental Permission Agreement consent forms. These will be issued electronically to update our records accordingly and provide the school with the most up to date contact information for all our pupils and parents. The forms can be completed on our school website and further information will be issued to parents/carers on when and how to complete these forms.

### **MEDICATION**

- Pupil medication e.g. inhalers should be brought into school on the first day back, these should be kept in school from that point in a sealed bag/container. Each classroom will have its own locked medical cabinet/storage for pupil medicines and medical information. Only staff have access to the cabinets/storage. Any new or updated medical information or reports should be shared immediately with the school.

### **P1 & P2 AFTER SCHOOLS CLUB**

- Unfortunately, due to the current situation there will be no P1 & P2 After School Club for the foreseeable future. We will continue to monitor this and we will keep you informed when it is safe to run the P1 & P2 After School Clubs and other after schools clubs again.