



# BALLYLIFFORD PS NEWSLETTER Christmas 2020



## CHRISTMAS DINNER & JUMPER DAY



The whole school had a wonderful Christmas Dinner & Jumper Day on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December. Thank you again to Brigid Ann and Orla who always serve a wonderful dinner for staff and pupils.

## THE CHRISTMAS STORY CELEBRATIONS



Unfortunately, we were unable to have our annual Christmas Carol service this year which is always a special time for the whole school. Our fantastic P1/P2 pupils told the Story of Christmas along with some Christmas songs to the rest of the school via webcam. The P3-P7 pupils really enjoyed the wonderful Christmas Story performance and they also got the opportunity to sing a number of Christmas Carols and songs. The videos can be viewed on our school website.

## PRIMARY 1 ENROLMENT 2021

Admissions criteria is now available for children starting P1 in September 2021. All forms are published on the EA website. [www.eani.org.uk](http://www.eani.org.uk) The portal opens on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 12noon and closes on **29<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 12noon** Admissions can be completed online using a smartphone, tablet, laptop or computer. If any parents of prospective P1 pupils would like to visit our school to get a feel for school life in Ballylifford PS, please contact the school office to arrange an appointment for a tour of the school.



Pre-School and  
Primary School Online  
Admissions take place online



The Online Portal will open  
on 7 January 2021 and  
close on 29 January

Regularly updated information and guidance  
will be provided to parents by the EA and  
schools over the coming weeks and months

For help and advice, parents/ guardians can contact our Admissions Helpdesk via emails: [preschooladmissions@eani.org.uk](mailto:preschooladmissions@eani.org.uk) or [primaryadmissions@eani.org.uk](mailto:primaryadmissions@eani.org.uk)

## SANTA & ELF VISIT BALLYLIFFORD

Santa and his Elf, Twinkletoes, paid a special visit to Ballylifford. Each pupil received a selection box and joined in with Santa to sing some Christmas songs. They reminded the boys and girls how we can stay safe by washing their hands and to social distance at all times.



## HEALTH & WELL-BEING PARENT WORKSHOP

Previously this term, HIP Psychology had worked with our Key Stage 2 pupils and the staff as part of staff development this year on the areas of resilience and well-being.

The programme has been a joint initiative with our local Loughshore Primary Schools (Derrychrin P.S., St. Peters P.S., Moortown, St. Patrick's P.S, Mullinahoe, & St. Patrick's P.S., Loup) focusing on Health & Well-Being of everyone during the current COVID pandemic.

HIP Psychology comes with a wealth of experience having worked with over 130 schools in the last two years as well as working with Ulster Rugby delivering sport psychology support.

The workshop was an interactive, engaging webinar that provided parents with strategies to support their child.

The sessions covered three key themes:

- How to support the different areas of your child's well-being.
- Resilience what it is and practical strategies to enhance it.
- Effective Communication with your child, dealing with praise and supporting them through setbacks.

Thank you to all parents who attended the online webinar.



As part of our Health & Well-Being initiative this year linked to the COVID pandemic and Education Restart, we are delighted that Lorretta Daly from 'Fresh Little Minds' is currently delivering a six week programme to our P1-P4 pupils.

In this energising and fun six week programme, 'Fresh Little Minds' encourages the children to go on an adventure exploring emotions and learning calming techniques that helps their bodies feel better. Within each session children will also complete a gratitude practice and passport booklet.

The six sessions will cover the themes:

- GROW WEEK 1 - GET SET GROW!
- GROW WEEK 2 - BRAINZOTIC!
- GROW WEEK 3 - KINDSHIP!
- GROW WEEK 4 - ALL BOTTLED UP!
- GROW WEEK 5 - PEOPLE TIME!
- GROW WEEK 6 - WINNING WAYS!

We are delighted we can provide the programme for our pupils and we are confident that they will thoroughly enjoy it gaining a positive experience.

### CREDIT UNIONS WINNERS

Congratulations to all winners of the Credit Union Art Competition in November. There was such a high standard with the pupils producing wonderful pieces of Art.

Thank you to Philomena McGuckin for treating them to some fabulous prizes.





The Education Authority (EA) Literacy Service is pleased to announce the launch of the first edition of its Literacy Newsletter. The content of the newsletter is aimed at all parents and children who at some point in their school career, may experience difficulties in literacy. It is interactive and engaging and will appeal to all age groups. This issue focuses on spelling and contains lots of useful, practical ideas and resources for children and young people to use at home. The newsletter also contains details as to how it can be read to the parent and/or child using assistive technology (Texthelp Read & Write and Immersive Reader). It is available for pupils and parents to access from home via the link below. The link below can be copied and pasted into the Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge browser to explore the new interactive resource for pupils, parents and schools:

<https://sway.office.com/GqRFD5xCBes1e2Hr?ref=Link>

### **THE IRISH NEWS LITERACY PROJECT**

In January our KS2 pupils will take part in the award-winning Irish News Critical Literacy Project which brings an invigorating 8 weeks of activities that offer a different way to challenge the knowledge and understanding of young readers while introducing them to the wonderful world of newspapers in conjunction with the Irish News.

**THE IRISH NEWS**  
**YOUNG NEWS READERS**

### **ANTI-BULLYING WEEK 2020**



Brilliant work by all the children who took part in class activities and also to the P5-P7 children for wearing odd socks to mark the importance of Anti-Bullying week 2020 and the theme 'UNITED AGAINST BULLYING' 'The Starfish Story' reminded the pupils that even the smallest thing can make a huge difference and if we can help just one person with a simple gesture, then we must not let that opportunity pass by without doing something kind.

### **STEM VIRTUAL WORKSHOP**

P5-P7 pupils got the opportunity to participate in a STEM virtual workshop delivered by SENTINUS with the pupils making a moveable machine/car. They then completed a Science investigation to find out the distance and time travelled using a ramp. The science investigation template included questions, predictions, factors and resources which was also linked to Numeracy and Literacy.

The pupils developed many STEM skills and with many future engineers enjoying the practical learning.



## EXECUTIVE UPDATE ON CHRISTMAS

### BUBBLING

Recently, the NI Ministers outlined a package of measures agreed by the Executive. Shops, hairdressers, restaurants, places of worship and hotels were among places that re-opened from December 11.

The Executive also agreed Christmas household bubbling arrangements from December 23-27. Three households will be able to come together for this period in domestic settings, outdoor public spaces and places of worship. One of the households will be able to include their existing household bubble.

Please follow up-to-date advice at:  
[www.nidirect.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/coronavirus)

If a member of your family is displaying symptoms of Covid-19, they must have a test and all family members must remain at home until the test results come through. Please note, as of Monday 14th December, the period of isolation has reduced from 14 days to 10 days.



Remember, if any parents have a concern or query, please do not hesitate to contact the school office on 02879418388 or by email [info@ballylifford.cookstown.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@ballylifford.cookstown.ni.sch.uk)

Please remember to visit our Twitter page @BallyliffordPS, our school website [www.ballyliffordps.com](http://www.ballyliffordps.com) and sign up to SCHOOLS NI app to receive regular updates.

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## IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

School will finish for Christmas Holidays at 3:00pm.

**Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

School will reopen for ALL pupils.

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**This year continues to be a very difficult time for everyone but a massive thank you to our whole school community for the hard work, dedication and support that has brought us safely to this point. We would like to commend all the children who have been fantastic. They have engaged with their work in a happy, positive manner and followed all COVID guidelines.**

**On behalf of all pupils, staff and governors of Ballylifford PS we would like to thank everyone for all your support, encouragement and co-operation. We would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year. We hope and pray that the whole school community have a safe and peaceful Christmas.**

*Happy Christmas and  
Peaceful New Year*