



Education Authority, South Eastern Region
Ballymacward Primary School



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2017

**WELCOME BACK
TO SCHOOL**

2018

Dear Parents,

It is my pleasure to welcome you all to the new school year and to thank for all the gifts and cards that staff received at the end of last term. We are also delighted to welcome our new P.1 pupils along with Adah in P.4. We hope that they will all be very happy at Ballymacward Primary School.

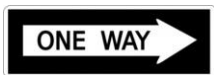
The following are some reminders about arrangements relating to school life.

Times

Our volunteer parents are once again providing a Breakfast Club at a cost of £1 per day from 8.15am to 9am. Children should be brought to the blue classroom door at the top of the playground. Further volunteers would be most welcome, even if you could only spare one session for a few weeks.



All children must be in class for registration at 9.15am as late arrivals are a disruption to the lessons. Children may come into their classrooms from 9.00am. If your child is late, please access the school through the front door at reception. If you need to pass on a message to a teacher, we would ask you to write a note or contact reception rather than interrupt the teacher's morning preparation and prompt lesson starting time.



Children in P1 will initially finish their day at 12 noon. From Monday 11 September, they will finish at 2pm along with the P.2's. Children in P3 - P7 finish at 3pm. Children exit through their rear classroom doors and are escorted to the playground gate. Parents must come to the gate to collect their child as it is not safe for the children to cross the car park or lane alone. It would be preferable if parents could park in the church car park as access for the school bus can be disrupted.

When exiting the school grounds we would ask you to drive in by the lower gate and exit by the top gate in keeping with our one way safety system.

Waiting Class will be operating from Monday 4 September from 2pm - 3pm, initially for children in P2. From 12 September onwards P.1 children can also use the waiting class. A small charge of 50p per day covers the cost of a snack. Waiting Class is also only possible with the help of volunteer parents, so if you could spare an hour here or there we would be most grateful if you would contact the school office or Mrs. Smyth.

Healthy Break

We operate a healthy break scheme in school to encourage the children to eat fruit and drink milk. For pupils in P1 - P3 Healthy Break costs £1 per week and for pupils in P4-P7 the cost is £1.50 per week. We would encourage everyone to avail of this scheme, but if you would prefer to provide a healthy break for your child please only send fruit and a plain biscuit or bread based snack. Fizzy drinks / chocolate etc. are not permitted.

School Meals

All children eat together at lunch times and can either have a hot school meal or bring a packed lunch. During lunchtime, staff will encourage children to eat everything they have been given including vegetables and fruit. Trying new foods and eating different foods each day will have a really positive impact on children's long term health. School receives additional funding for all pupils who receive free school meals. If you are eligible please make sure you apply. Forms are available from the school office. A menu for school meals is attached and will shortly be available on the school website. Meals cost £2.60 per day and can be paid daily or weekly in advance. Fizzy drinks are not permitted at lunch times. Packed lunches should be in keeping with our "Food in School Policy" i.e. sweets, chocolate, crisps or biscuits should not be included in your child's packed lunches. Instead, please replace these items with healthier alternatives. For ideas, the following websites contain useful information:



<http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/lunchboxes> www.littlesteps.eu www.enjoyhealthyeating.info
If you would like to send a water bottle in with your child, we can arrange for this to be filled and your child can access it during the day.

See our Food in School Policy on the school website under 'Parents' . . . 'Lunchtime Arrangements'.

Your child could get free school lunches each day if parents receive any of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under the Immigration and Asylum Act
- Child Tax Credit, or Working Tax Credit and have an annual income of less than £16,190*
- Working Tax Credit "run-on" - the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit

Further information can be found at <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/nutrition-and-school-lunches>

Dates for your Diary

A comprehensive list of planned events will be issued on Monday. A holiday list sheet has been distributed today and this is also available on the website and facebook.

After School Clubs

Ballymacward is receiving Extended Schools Funding this year which will be used to support children in after-school clubs. We hope that this will be up and running within the next few weeks. In the meantime, Spartan Coaching will be offering Soccer Coaching on Wednesdays from 3pm - 4pm; details to follow. P.7 support classes will operate on Mondays and Thursdays from 3pm - 4.15pm.

A Reminder of Who's Who in Ballymacward P.S.

Teaching Staff

P1 - Mrs Yakdan
P2/3 - Miss McConvey
P4/5 Mrs. McGuigan
P6/7 Mr Sadlier

Classroom Assistants

Mrs. Smyth
Mrs. Kane
Mrs. Steele
Miss McLeod



Secretary - Ms Armstrong Dinner Lady - Mrs McGarrity Building Supervisor - Mrs. Owens

Chairperson of the Board of Governors - Mr McConnell
Chairperson of the PTA (Friends of Ballymacward) - Ms Owens
Designated Teacher for Child Protection - Mrs Yakdan
Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection - Mr. Sadlier

Keeping up to Date

The school website (www.ballymacwardps.net) now also contains our Facebook feed. You will find the latest information via Facebook. We will be sending home data capture forms next week for you to complete or check details on. In an emergency (e.g. weather closures, late return of transport from a school trip, etc.) we will send a text message to the mobile number which you have nominated and also post a message on Facebook.



Uniform

The children all looked great in their uniforms today. We would remind you that the children should wear black shoes & change into black plimsolls when inside school.

Holidays during term time

Parents are advised that children should not be taken out of school for holidays during term time. Such absences have to be recorded as 'Family Holiday - Not Agreed'. If you feel that a holiday is essential, given family circumstances, please contact the principal to discuss, as it may be possible to come to an agreement.

See the following links for further information:

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/school-attendance-matters-parents-guide>

<http://www.eani.org.uk/schools/miss-school-miss-out/>

The holiday list has been distributed and is also on our website and Facebook pages.

PTA

Our PTA, The Friends of Ballymacward, will be meeting for the first time this year on Wednesday 20 September at 7pm in the school. A large attendance would be appreciated.

Upcoming Events (see also the holiday list)

Tuesday 12 September 2017: Board of Governors meeting 7pm

Tuesday 19 September: Curriculum Evening 7pm for all parents

Wednesday 20 September 2017: PTA meeting - all welcome, 7pm

Tuesday 26 September 2017: Heart Start training: resuscitation and defibrillator training: £2 all welcome.

Friday 29 September 2017: School closed for staff training

Friday 13 October 2017: Flu vaccinations, P.1 - P.7

Friday 27 October 2017: Parent / Teacher meetings during the day (children off school)

Monday 30 October - Wednesday 1 November: School closed for Halloween Holidays

Friday 1 December 2017: Open Morning

Tuesday 5 December 2017: P.7 Service of Light and Commitment for Confirmation, 7pm St. Peter's, the Rock

Tuesday 12 December 2017: School Christmas Show: 11am & 7pm

Thursday 14 December 2017: Community Carol Service: 7pm St. Peter's, the Rock

Thursday 20 December 2017: Closes at 12 noon for Christmas Holidays

Tuesday 6 March 2018: P.3 First Confession, 7pm St. Peter's the Rock

Sunday 13 May 2018: P.4, First Holy Communion, 11.30am St. Joseph's, Hannahstown

Other dates to follow a.s.a.p.

Getting Involved in School Life

There are many opportunities to get involved with school life and we are particularly keen to hear from volunteers for Breakfast Club, Waiting Class, PTA and Gardeners! Please speak to me if you feel you can help in any way.



As always, if you would like to discuss any school related issue or if there is any issue causing concern or uncertainty, please do not hesitate to contact me as soon as possible. My door is always open.

Brendan Sadlier

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PRINCIPAL

4/9/17