



BALLYLIFFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Monday 22nd June 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

As the school year draws to a close, in a way none of us could have predicted. I hope that our pupils, their families and the wider Ballylifford school community are keeping safe and well. There are many positive signs that things are slowly returning to a new sort of normal and we hope this continues.

Re-opening of Schools

There has been a lot of engagement with the Department of Education (DE) and the Employers' bodies on the wider re-opening of schools. We continue to wait on appropriate guidance for schools on when and how we will be re-opening for the next academic year. The health, safety and well-being of all our pupils, teachers, school staff and school community must take precedence going forward.

As we approach next term, we will keep you updated once the information and the necessary guidance materials have been provided to schools. It will allow the necessary planning and preparatory work to take place. Hopefully we will be in a position soon to inform you of what provision will be in place for September and what the new school day will look like. We would ask you to please keep an eye on our school website and Twitter account for updates.

School Reports

The school reports will be available for collection on **Monday 29th June**. In order to limit the number of adults arriving at the same time, we are offering a collection between **10am and 12noon**. For maximum protection and in line with current hygiene measures, we ask that **ONLY 1 ADULT** per family attends. We would also ask that you wash your hands thoroughly before travelling to school for collection.

The reports along with the children's books and belongings will be available from each classroom. Once reports and books have been collected, we would appreciate if you leave the school promptly in order to maintain social distancing guidelines. We would ask all adults to follow the one-way system in place by entering by the back-entrance door and leaving by the school hall exit door. There will be **NO** access via the front entrance.

We would also kindly ask parents to bring in any school textbooks, resources or reading books they may have at home. There will be a box outside each classroom, and we ask that you place any items you are returning into these boxes. Thank you in advance for your co-operation and understanding.

Please note, due to the COVID pandemic the annual report format has been modified for this year and is only a snapshot of the children's learning and attainment for this academic year from September to March. Pupil progress is not based on assessment results as they were not completed this year. We have enclosed two copies of your child's annual End of Year academic report. Please sign one report which can be returned in the new school year and the second copy should be retained by you. I would ask you to spend time reading and discussing the report with your child. These are individual reports and I would encourage you not to make comparisons with other children. All children excel in various areas of the curriculum as well as areas that can be developed in the next school year. If you have any queries about your child's report, please feel free to contact the class teacher.

Seesaw and Online Home Learning

Over the last number of weeks, we have been working on developing a new communication and learning tool between the school and parents called Seesaw. From September, Ballylifford PS will use Seesaw which is a platform for pupil engagement to support their online home learning.

Teachers will be able to use Seesaw for online learning and empower the pupils to create, reflect, share, and collaborate. It will provide the children with meaningful learning experiences. It is an opportunity for teachers to capture pupil learning in class and it will also be a form of communication with parents about pupil progress.

Children will have the opportunity to show their learning, using photos, videos, drawings, text, PDFs, and links. They will also be able to take home paper copies of school work, complete it and then send a photo of it back to the teacher. The teacher can then provide feedback which goes to the child and the child's parent.

The Seesaw Parent & Family app is excellent for communication between the school and parents who can use this app on their phones. Seesaw is private and you will only see posts created by your child/children or their teacher. It's simple to get student work in one place and share with families, and nothing is shared without teacher approval.

The Seesaw Class app for all children from P1-P7 and they can use this app on their home device.

A Seesaw invitation letter for parents has been included with each child's End of Year report. Children will get their class app sign up sheets when they return to school in August/ September. We would encourage all parents to sign up ASAP.

Virtual Sports Day Certificates

Healthy Kidz Virtual Sports Day certificates will be issued with pupil reports to all the children who participated over the five weeks and completed their Sports Day on 13th June 2020. We hope you enjoyed all the activities and well done to everyone who took part.

Summer Learning Tips

Summer time is a fun and exciting time for all pupils, filled with outdoor activities and sports. During the summer months, families are extremely busy and may forget to include learning into their busy schedules. By encouraging reading and other forms of learning through outdoor play and practical activities it will support your child's reading and ensure continuous development and progression.

- Encourage your child to read at least 15-20 minutes every day
- Motivate them to read anything at their reading level that interests them; whether it is comics, magazines, graphic novels, recipes, eBooks, audio books etc.
- Practice letter names, letter sounds and high frequency words /sight words
- Tricky words and revision of spellings
- Number facts / procedures and Multiplication facts
- Revision of Maths topics and key Maths facts
- Discuss and develop Mathematical language
- We would encourage pupils to continue using our suggested educational websites and apps on our school website covering many curriculum areas to support their learning.

CONGRATULATIONS TO P7 PUPILS

Congratulations to all the P7 children who now know their new schools for September 2020. These schools are very fortunate to be getting such talented, caring and kind children. They have been throughout their time at Ballylifford PS a credit to their families, their community and school. We hope to celebrate their time at Ballylifford in the near future when it is safe to do so. We hope they enjoy the gifts they will receive and the good luck messages from all the staff. We wish them every success for the future and we will miss them all very much.

On behalf of the Board of Governors and staff of Ballylifford Primary School, I would like to thank you for your continued support and co-operation during the past year especially in your efforts adapting to remote learning. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very restful, enjoyable and most importantly, a safe summer break. We look forward to seeing everyone again in September, refreshed and energised for the new school year

Kind Regards



Mr Ciaran McElroy
Principal