



BALLYMURN NEWS 27TH JANUARY 2022



Dear Parents/Guardians,

I wish you all a Happy New Year, as I write our first newsletter of 2022.

I was sorry to hear on my return that so many of your Christmas holidays were disrupted by Covid, and hope that those who have been ill are feeling much better. When we returned to school, we had a very large number of pupils absent for the first seven days, but attendance is much closer to normal levels now, and teachers have been able to move on with the curriculum. I have communicated the guidance to you in relation to changes in rules for close contacts, and in the case where a child feels unwell, they must stay at home and be tested. You will have received an email informing you that if your child needs to isolate due to Covid-19 diagnosis, or because they are a household contact, please contact us if you wish, and we will be able to organise work for your child.

Hopefully, after this term, school will become more normal, and less affected by Covid procedures and disruptions as the Spring comes in.

Newsletter Update

We include a lot of important information in our newsletters each month and it is very important that parents read our edition each month, to be sure that you are kept up to speed on school events. Sometimes, newsletters fall close together, but we still feel it is important to issue a monthly edition to keep parents up to date. Due to the midterm break being only three weeks from today, the next newsletter will contain important information for parents only, with a class report at the end of March's newsletter. Similarly, the Easter break takes up much of April, so that month will also be an information bulletin, with the April/May class reports combined in May.

Primary Language Curriculum Training

The staff are due to do a half day of in-service training for the new Primary Language Curriculum each term. This term's training will take place on Wednesday afternoon, March 16th, meaning children will finish school at 12.15pm on that day.

Changes to School Calendar

Please note that the newly announced Bank Holiday on March 18th has led to some changes in our school calendar. School reopened early last August to take a day's holiday on March 18th, so we will now be closed on Thursday, June 2nd in lieu of the newly announced Bank Holiday. Please see the box below or our website for an updated list of school dates.

Stay Safe Programme

Teachers will commence the Stay Safe programme with classes in February/ March. This is a personal safety programme, and it is important to read the letter that you have received in relation to this, in order to support any questions your child may have on the programme.

Arts in Education Residency Programme

Earlier this school year, we made a submission to apply to be included in the BLAST 2021 programme. (Bringing Live Arts to Students and Teachers) We are delighted to say that we were one of the

successful schools, and our 5th and 6th class pupils now have the opportunity to take part in a seven week programme with our artist in residence, John Busher. Mr. Busher will take the class for a session each week, where the children get the opportunity to work and collaborate with a professional artist on unique projects. Keep an eye on our Facebook page to see how this is going!

New Furniture

We were delighted to receive a grant recently to update the furniture in our school, as many of our tables and chairs have been in use for a very long time. We will have all the chairs in our school available for families to take away for home use over the next while if they wish.

Grandparents Day

Yesterday, as part of Catholic Schools Week, we celebrated Grandparents Day. Unfortunately, restrictions are still in place in schools, meaning we couldn't hold our annual mass and celebration in school, but Grandparents were very much on our minds yesterday, and the children completed pieces of artwork or cards to take home to them. We very much hope for a return to our normal Grandparents Day this time next year!

Bus Éireann School Transport Applications

Bus Éireann School Transport Portal opened yesterday for the 2022 - 2023 school year.

You must register your child before Friday 29th April for both primary and post primary school buses if required.

There is a school bus available which services the Ballymurn area, the full cost for a ticket for the school year is €100 for primary pupils but may be less if your child has a medical card.

Please see <https://www.buseireann.ie/inner.php?id=522> for further details.

Absences -Please remember to fill in our return to school form if your child has been absent from school. This is not just a school policy, all schools are obliged to record reasons for pupil absences on the official roll. You will find the form by clicking this link <https://forms.gle/5RospC9xXZBshSnaA>

As always, we must remind parents that we are also obliged by law to report instances where children have been absent for a cumulative total of twenty days or more during the school year to Tusla- We do realise that many more families than usual will fall within this category this year due to Covid related absences, but our reporting obligations remain the same. Please talk to us if you have any concerns in relation to this.

Hurling 365

Hurling 365 has resumed every Tuesday morning for Senior Infants-2nd Class from 8.30am -9.10am, and on Thursday morning for 3rd-6th class. The children are really enjoying this initiative and we are very thankful to all the volunteers who make this happen. If your child has an interest in GAA but has yet to get involved, please consider bringing them along.

Christmas Performance

We hope that all families enjoyed watching the video of our Christmas plays. The children put huge effort into rehearsals, and we must thank all the staff for their hard work in making it happen.

Parents' Association

We'd like to thank the P.A for the fabulous Christmas treat they provided before the school holidays. All of our lucky pupils got a lovely selection box, and really enjoyed their hot chocolate and cookies in class.

Garda Vetting - It is a legal requirement that any parents who wish to be involved in school activities e.g. Rackard League, Hurling 365 etc., must be Garda vetted through the school. We realise that many parents are already Garda vetted through the G.A.A and other organisations, but unfortunately, everybody still needs to go through the school vetting process. If you would like to become involved and have not been vetted previously, please contact the school office for a form. This also applies if you are giving a lift to another child to matches.

Parking- Please remember to park with care on the street outside the school. Do not double park or block access to staff cars. The car park spaces provided are for staff use and the school bus only. We also ask that people please do not park directly opposite the school, as our bus for pupils with Special Educational Needs parks there. Please do not park in these spaces when dropping off or collecting your child from school. Please be conscious of how/where you park, taking the children's safety into account at all times.

Communication - Parents are reminded that if you have a concern/issue which you would like to raise with the school; you must make an appointment to speak to your child's teacher, through the school office. Because of Covid-19, these appointments will take place over the phone wherever possible. Emails can be sent directly to the class teacher, but if a message is time sensitive, it is best to email it to the office, and Leanna can ensure the teacher gets the message, as a class teacher may not see a direct email in time.

Le gach dea ghúí,

Emer O'Gorman
Príomhoide

Dates / Upcoming Events:

- Midterm Break: School closed from February 21st-25th inclusive
- Primary Language Curriculum In-service Training: School closes for pupils on Wednesday, March 16th at 12.15pm
- St. Patrick's Day Bank Holidays: School closed on March 17th and 18th
- Easter Holidays: School closes on Friday, April 8th at 12.15pm and reopens on Monday, April 25th at 9.20am
- May Bank Holiday: School closed on Monday, May 2nd
- Confirmation: Friday May 6th at 11am
- First Holy Communion: Saturday May 14th at 11am.
- June Bank Holiday Weekend: School closed on Thursday June 2nd, Friday June 3rd and Monday June 6th

Class Reports

Ms. Ormonde's Crescent Class

The Crescent Class have had yet another busy month. Our theme this month has been 'food.' We did a lesson where we used food to paint in art. We also did a tasting session where we cut up, smelled and tasted a variety of fruit such as a coconut, mango, apple and orange. The boys and girls loved doing this lesson.

In P.E. this month we have been continuing to practise our basketball skills. We have been learning to pass the ball in many different ways such as by rolling, throwing or bounce passing. Next month we are going to try throwing at a target in the air or on the ground.

We have been working a lot on lining up in our classroom and we have added a new line up area to our classroom. The pupils check their name each morning to see what number they are and whenever we need to leave the classroom, they stand on the correct set of footprints to help remind us where to stay in the line. They are all doing an amazing job with this.

Ms. O'Gorman's Junior and Senior Infant Report 😊

Our classroom was very quiet at the start of the month, because lots of our pupils' return to school was delayed, but we are now nearly all in school and working very hard. We have been doing lots of work on Literacy, and Ms. Sheehan and Rachel have been doing fun station activities with us. Juniors are starting to bring home their very first readers, and Seniors have moved on to much more difficult readers. Teachers are very impressed with how good everyone is getting at reading! Seniors have started learning about Narrative Writing, whilst Juniors are learning how to do dictation.

In Gaeilge, everybody really enjoyed our 'Teicneolaíocht' lessons, where we learned how to discuss all the types of technology we use at home. We discovered that some of our class have a very big fondness for video games, and discussed how we should all make sure that we don't spend too much time on devices!

We have been working away at number in Maths, with Seniors focussing on The Story of 8 and 9, whilst Juniors have been working on Number 3.

Our Aistear theme on our return was Polar Explorers- We had a lot of fun in our role play and small world areas, pretending to be Arctic Explorers and various polar animals. We also made Polar Animals using Junk Art Materials, and painted excellent polar bears too. The highlight of Aistear this month has been reverse integration- This is where we have teamed up with the Crescent Class, and children from each room get the opportunity to do an Aistear station each week in the other room. It's been so much fun.

In Science we've been learning about the polar animals in more detail, and in Geography, we have been learning about the Weather. We look forward to continuing this great work between now and the midterm break.

Ms. Kehoe's 1st and 2nd Class Report 😊

January went quicker than expected in 1st and 2nd class. The class has been working hard and learning about lots of new things.

We explored the different provinces around Ireland and learned about the different counties that are in each province and where they are located. The children were interested in this and enjoyed recalling them. We have started exploring colder climates like the Arctic also, the people who live there, the weather and various animals.

For grandparents day the class made some lovely cards for all the grandparents near and far. We learned a little song about grandparents for the special day too.

The class has been working on a poster in art. It is a poster competition the green school committee organised. We hope to finish them this week.

We have been doing athletics in P.E over the last few weeks and the children are enjoying the group relays and racing against different groups.

Wishing everyone a happy and healthy new year for 2022!

Mrs. Brophy's 3rd Class Report 😊

Happy New Year to all our families from 3rd Class. We have returned to school with a bang! The children have been working very hard on all their subjects and learning lots of new information. In Maths we have covered the topic of length and division. We are trying very hard to learn our multiplication tables. So far we have learnt 2x, 4x, 8x, 5x and 10x.

In English we finished reading our novel 'Charlotte's Web' by E. B. White and we watched the movie version of it. We absolutely loved this novel and thoroughly enjoyed meeting Wilbur, Charlotte and all the other farm yard animals. In writing we are beginning to work on the 'narrative' genre.

In Irish we covered the theme 'Ar Scoil' and the children worked very hard in class. We have been learning all about school life in our Abair Liom. We have also just finished learning the first 100 most common words in Irish.

In SESE we studied WW2 and how the children managed during this turbulent period. The children studied Ration Books, how evacuees were treated and the Blitz. We did some lovely Blitz art also and the children wrote diary entries pretending they were one of the young evacuated children. We are currently studying the country Spain and examining the political map of Europe. We are learning the capital cities of many European countries too. Later this week we shall be examining materials and properties. We are going to investigate how a 'nappy' works? How does it hold the moisture? What special properties does it contain? What happens when we pour water on to it? We are looking forward to this experiment.

In PE we have focused on games. We have been learning how to play basketball. We have been practising our chest pass, dribbling and overhead passes. We finish with a friendly match between two teams. The children are really enjoying being outdoors and active.

Ms. Lawlor's 4th/5th Class Report 😊

January has flown by in 4th and 5th class and the children have been working hard on many different topics.

In Maths, we have been learning about different types of numbers, symmetry, length, long multiplication and long division with decimals. The children enjoy doing Maths stations every Tuesday morning, where they get to further develop maths skills such as problem-solving in smaller groups.

In English, we have started to read David Walliam's novel Bad Dad. The children are enjoying the story so far and we have some wonderful, expressive readers in our class who love to read the story aloud. The reading is going well in Irish too, the children are working on their pronunciation of the words. We are saying the Irish alphabet regularly and learning sight words and tongue twisters in Irish too.

For History, the children have been learning about the Romans. They are using the tablets to research information for their projects. They're doing a great job and we'll be looking forward to them presenting their finished projects in February.

Art has tied in with symmetry and the Romans. The children made mirror reflections of their names and have also spent some time creating their own Roman mosaic. 5th Class enjoyed taking part in the Arts in Education programme, I'm sure we'll be amazed by the artwork they produce over the next few weeks!

Ms. Morrissey's 5th/6th Class Report 😊

Everyone has had a very positive return to the new school year and cannot believe it is the end of the month already!

In English we have started our new novel Wonder by R.J Palacio. This is a gorgeous story about a boy with a facial disfigurement beginning his journey into the sometimes cruel world of Middle School. We are going to witness many highs and lows seeing life through Auggie's eyes but hopefully we will also learn lots of important life lessons on how to treat others.

In Irish we have been working very hard on the theme Sa Bhaile. We have learned lots of new key phrases and words and are hoping to finally create a 'dream house' and become the real estate, describing all of the assets of these wonderful houses as Gaeilge! Maith sibh.

In Maths we have been super work with percentages, increasing and decreasing a number by a percentage and also looking at time. We converted 12 hour and 24 hour time formats, looked at the relationship between time, average speed and distance and finally had a look at the wonderful world of time zones!

In SESE we have been learning a little bit about good food habits and what good stuff we get from the different foods that we eat. For example carbohydrates give us energy (grains, pasta, fruit and

vegetables), proteins help with growth and repair of our muscles (nuts, poultry, meat, fish, eggs), fats keep our bodies warm and keep our organs safe (meat, oily fish, dairy products, nuts) and vitamins and minerals keep our bodies strong and healthy (fruit, vegetables). We also looked at how athletes use this information to help improve their performance.

We also tuned into a wonderful one off Well-being Webinar which gave us some wonderful advice on how to mind our heads and bodies in the new year.