BALLYMACRICKETT PRIMARY SCHOOL
SAFEGUARDING BULLETIN
March, 2026
Issue 1

Dear Parents and Guardians,

At Ballymacrickett Primary School, the safety and wellbeing of our pupils are at the heart of everything we do. Since January we have held two comprehensive safeguarding assemblies to ensure our children feel empowered, safe, and supported—both in the physical world and the digital one.

Please review the following updates and discuss them with your child at home.

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1. Emotional Wellbeing: Lifting the Weight 🎒

During **Children's Mental Health Week**, we spoke to the children about how worries can feel like carrying a **heavy bag of books**.

- **The Analogy:** We explained that when we keep worries inside, the bag gets heavier and harder to carry. By talking to a "Trusted Adult," we "unpack" those books together, making the load much lighter.

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK & THE 'HEAVY BAG OF BOOKS' ANALOGY

- **Periodic Table of Emotions:** The children explored a **Periodic Table of Emotions** to help them find the exact words for how they are feeling, moving beyond just "happy" or "sad."
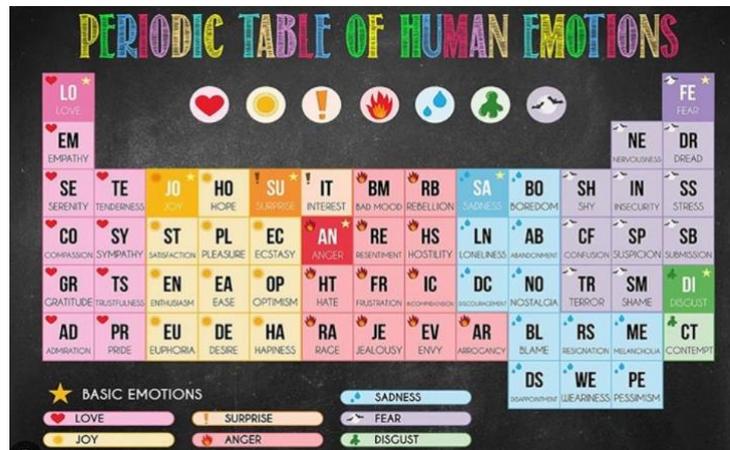
2. Digital Safety & "The Big Bad Trend" 🐷💻

Our P4–P7 students have been working with a Google Storybook, ***The Three Digital Pigs and the Big Bad Trend*** (attached as a separate PDF).

- **Brick House Thinking:** We are teaching children to build "brick houses" online by being sceptical of viral trends and always checking with an adult before trying something new.

- **Doom Scrolling:** We also addressed **unproductive device use**. Using another storybook, ***Finn's Bright New World*** (also attached as a separate PDF), we discussed how "doom scrolling" can affect our mood and sleep, and how to spot when it's time to put the device away.

3. Creative AI & Digital Hygiene 🤖

To coincide with **World Book Day,** we showed the children the positive power of technology:

- **AI in the Classroom:** Using **Microsoft Copilot** and **Google Gemini**, students generated alternative book endings and created brand-new characters.

- **Safer Schools NI:** Good digital hygiene must evolve alongside tech. Our staff and students are currently undergoing **Safer Schools NI App** training. We strongly encourage all parents to download the app and join us in this training.

4. Lenten Focus: The Great Digital Fast 🕊️

In support of **Trócaire**, we will hold a school-wide **Digital Fast on Friday 27th March**.

- We are asking children to disconnect from non-essential screens for the day to rediscover offline play and reflection.

- We kindly suggest a donation of **£1 per child** for Trócaire.

5. Car Park & Transport Safety 🚗

- **Parking Cones:** We have introduced new parking cones to mark "No Parking" zones. Despite previous letters and a Student Council video, some adults are still not following the rules. Please respect the cones; they are there to protect your children.

- **Seatbelts:** It has been noted that some children are not wearing seatbelts on the school bus or in cars. Please ensure your child "clicks" every single time the vehicle moves.

6. Water Safety: The Glenavy River 🌊

As the weather improves, a reminder that the **river in the Glenavy** can be dangerous. Banks are slippery and the current can be deceptive. Please ensure children never approach the water without adult supervision.

7. Identifying Help: Blue Lanyards & Hi-Viz 🦺

We have reminded the children how to spot a "Trusted Adult" instantly:

- **Inside School:** Look for a **Blue Lanyard**.