

Ballymoney Nursery School January 2021 Newsletter



Happy New Year

Welcome to our January newsletter and welcome back to Ballymoney Nursery School after the festive season. I hope you have all managed to spend some time with your loved ones and from the bottom of my heart I wish you all a better year ahead in 2021. All of our staff would like to sincerely thank you for your thoughtfulness at Christmas. Your kindness was very much appreciated by everyone. As far as we have been informed, we are to open as normal and will continue to do so until told otherwise. If this is to change, please be assured you will be texted and messaged through the school messaging app.

Safeguarding our children

Nut free zone

The safety of all the children in our care is of utmost priority to us and ensuring they are safeguarded. Therefore, we are a nut free zone to ensure that children with a nut allergy are kept safe within the Nursery School. If you wish to send a birthday cake into Nursery for your child to enjoy with their classmates it **needs to be nut free -this includes not containing traces of nuts**. We don't want a child to be disappointed on their birthday however we will **NOT** be able to open a cake out of the box if it states it **may contains any traces of nuts**.



Covid-19

In line with the Department of Education's announcement on 31st December 2021, the Nursery has reopened to all our children. As you will undoubtedly be aware the number of people testing positive for Covid-19 in Northern Ireland is at an all-time high. In light of this, today all staff reviewed the measures we have in place to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 and would like to remind you that:-

- Only one adult is to accompany a child to Nursery School.
- All adults are to wear a mask on the approach to the school and when dropping their children off and picking them up.
- When outside the school, please use the ground markings to socially distance from other families and don't congregate and chat outside with others.

- Both entrance doors will be open from 8.55am.
- Back in September there were two different times emailed to parents/carers for the children in each class to arrive and be picked up. We would like everyone to arrive at their allocated time and to arrive no earlier than 5 minutes before. This will ensure there are not too many people within the entrance vicinity at any one time. Morning Group 1 - drop off at 9am and pick up at 11am and Group 2 - drop off at 9.10am and pick up 11.10am. Afternoon group 1 - drop off at 12.30pm and picked up at 2.30pm and Group 2 - drop off at 12.40pm and picked up at 2.40pm. We will review the timings weekly and they may change based on how quickly the first group of children arrive.
- This week, we are aware that there will be primary school children learning from home. Please only bring them with you on the nursery school run if it is absolutely necessary to help minimise the number of people outside the school.

If you decide that your personal preference is for your child not to attend Nursery as they may have an older sibling at home due to their school being closed, please contact us to let us know.

If your child or anyone in your house is showing any signs of Covid-19, please ensure your child does not attend school for 14 days. The following main symptoms to look for are: -

- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature
- loss of taste or smell

Please let us know if your child is off school due to self-isolating. If symptoms start at the weekend or a test has been confirmed as positive at the weekend please email me to let me know as I will be checking my emails daily.

If you or anyone in your house is being tested for Covid-19 **please inform us immediately and do NOT send your child to Nursery**. If your child is already at nursery when you become aware a test for someone in your house is required, please contact us and pick your child up.

Change of clothes bags

We have purchased drawstring bags for each child to keep their spare clothes in at Nursery School. These have been filled with the clothes you left into the nursery for your child and they are now on their coat pegs. There is a different colour of bag for each class. I am aware that some children were coming to Nursery with a bag. I would ask that you **no longer** send your child to school with a bag as everything they should need will be in their drawstring bag. If you would like to add anything to their bag, please label it and bring it into school.

Absences

If your child is going to be absent from nursery for reasons that are not Covid-19 related, please ensure you let us know why they are off. This can be done either by telephoning the school or filling in an online absence form which can be found on our school website.

Learning experiences within the Nursery School

Christmas

We were very busy last month with our preparations for Christmas. The children enjoyed writing their letters to Santa and then walking to the post box at the end of our path to post them. We were very fortunate Santa received them in time to send his replies along to our Christmas parties! All the children enjoyed their Christmas party and learning the different games that were played.



Action Mental Health

Thank you to everyone who donated money on Christmas Jumper day to support Action Mental Health NI. We are delighted that we raised £110 for such a worthwhile local charity.

Dunelm Christmas Hamper raffle

Thank you to everyone who bought numbers in our Christmas hamper raffle. We have spent some of the money already to buy a 'Kindle Fire for Kids' for each room which will hopefully be arriving next week! These will be used for children to access educational apps as well as develop their skills in taking photographs.



Winter Weather

This month the children will be talking about the different kinds of winter weather. They will be using/mixing blue, white, and grey to make cold colours and discussing why they look cold. They will also be using fabrics/papers in cold colours for collage (any contributions eg shiny papers/sweet wrappers, tinfoil would be very welcome) and will be making pictures/patterns in crayons/oil pastels. The children will be discussing the appearance of frost, and how it feels.

You could encourage your child to look at patterns on glass or leaves when out and about. Discuss what happens if you breathe on it, or apply other warmth and why? If you would like to get involved perhaps you could encourage and develop the key vocabulary associated with this topic e.g. frost/y, ice, freeze / freezing, melt/melting, cold, nip, sparkle, crackle



Winter clothes

We have a fantastic outdoor area and the children will be out exploring in it. It is also proven that being in the outdoors helps mitigate the risk of Covid-19. Thank you, to everyone who brought wellingtons boots for their child into Nursery School. It would be beneficial if all children came to Nursery school in a pair of waterproof shoes that you didn't mind that got wet or dirty. By coming to Nursery in these shoes, each class can be more spontaneous and go outside in the moment without worrying about changing their shoes which can be quite time consuming.

Please ensure your child comes to nursery with warm clothing to help wrap them up when we go outside. We will continue encouraging children to become independent when putting on hats, scarves/snoods, coats, gloves and would suggest that you continue the same at home. We will be talking about ways of keeping warm - food, heating, clothes, the importance of layers for insulation and the suitability of different fabrics for protection against wind, wet and cold.



Parental Partnership

Christmas Performances

We are very proud of all the children for having the confidence to perform as a class at Christmas time. For most of the children this would have been their first ever performance. I hope you enjoyed having the opportunity to watch it over and over again on Seesaw.



Home learning bags

Thank you to everyone who has shared photos of their children using their home learning bags. It has been great for all of us to see them in use and also the skills your children are developing at home.

Important Information

Pre School Admissions for 2021-22

Application forms for admission to the Nursery School in September 2021 will be available to complete online at www.eani.org.uk/admissions from noon on Thursday 7th January 2021.



Forms must be submitted by **12 noon on Thursday 29th January 2020**.

Children born on or between **2 July 2017 and 1 July 2018** are eligible to apply for admission to a funded pre-school place.

Children born on or between **2 July 2018 and 1 July 2019** are eligible to apply for admission to a penultimate (underage) place. These are allocated if there are still any funded places available after target age (pre school) children are admitted.

Please note, that all our current pre pre school children need to reapply to attend here for their pre school year.

Primary School Admissions for 2021-22

Application forms for admission to Primary School in **September 2021** will be available to complete online at www.eani.org.uk/admissions from noon on **Thursday 7th January 2021**.

Forms must be submitted by **12 noon on Thursday 29th January 2020**. There are videos on the EA website which show you how to upload your child's birth certificate.

Nursery Assistants

Unfortunately, Mrs Simpson has had to take time of work and we wish her well and look forward to welcoming her back to Nursery in the future. Miss Johnston will now be working in Ms McCarron's classroom bubbles. I would like to welcome Miss Chloe Cunningham who will be working in Mrs McClelland's class on Mondays -Thursdays.

Eco-Schools

As we continue with our initiative to encourage **less waste and more recycling**, we would invite you to bring in any used **Christmas cards** which the children can use for craft activities. There will be a box at the entrance doors the week beginning **4th January 2021** for cards to be deposited in and they will then be quarantined and not be used until the week beginning **18th January 2021**.



School Fund

We would like to thank those of you who have paid the **School Fund** for the year and remind those who are paying each term that £40 for this term (January -Easter) is now due. 😊

Unwell children



Thank you to everyone who has been conscientious and cautious and kept their child home if they have been feeling 'under the weather'. In the event of your **child being ill, especially with a vomiting/diarrhoea bug**, please do not send him/her to school. The Public Health Agency advises that **48 hours is left** from the last episode of illness before your child returns to school. In addition, if your child is on an **antibiotic they must not attend school until the course is completed**.

We have been fortunate that by us all working together, the school managed not to be affected by Covid-19 during Term 1. By working in partnership with you, we remain positive for the term ahead.

Best Wishes

Principal