

BALLYMENA NURSERY SCHOOL
OCTOBER 2020 - NEWSLETTER



We are delighted at how well the children are adjusting and settling in to "the new normal" Nursery School one-way system and are becoming familiar with the daily routines. A free guide to settling young children into pre-school settings is available to download from Early Years - the organisation for young children.

<http://www.early-years.org/parents>.

Free parental membership is also available. Please read this newsletter carefully as it contains some important information and dates for your diary. Please also check our nursery website and your Tapestry posts regularly to keep up to date with the busy life of the nursery school.

EDUCATION MATTERS/SHARING FROM THE START/MEDIA INITIATIVE FOR CHILDREN.

You may be aware of the initiatives endorsed by the Department of Education - "Education Matters".

www.nidirect.gov.uk/education-works. Peace IV initiative Sharing From the Start, www.sharingfromthestart.org. and "Together in the park" respecting differences

www.earlyyears.org/bookstore/respectingdifference. We will be

implementing these programmes throughout the nursery year to support our recovery curriculum. The format for the delivery of these programmes will be a "work in progress" during the Covid restrictions, as we as a staff team develop alternative approaches, other than face to face contact with our friends from Castle Tower Nursery Unit and First Steps community Playgroup.

INTERESTING ITEM

Unfortunately we will not be able to operate our traditional Friday "show and tell" sessions at present due to Covid restrictions.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

We missed being able to speak with you face to face during our parent induction sessions but trust you have all accessed the presentation posted on Tapestry on 28th September.

SELF-HELP SKILLS - HOW YOU CAN HELP!

The children have shown great resilience by walking independently into school and they are learning to

hang up their own coat. A boy's blue coat has been misplaced. Can you please check at home if your child has an extra coat? Please send an outdoor coat with your child and name all of their personal belongings.

You can order name labels on-line on www.MyName tags.com quoting our nursery school identification 976. The nursery will receive 5% commission.

Please also practice putting on and taking off shoes at home, in preparation for changing into their wellington boots when we introduce outdoor play. Please make sure your child has a pair of welly boots in school with their name clearly marked on each boot. The more you do for your pre-school child, the more your child will learn a sense of helplessness and learn to rely on adult support.

Self-help skills and self-esteem are intertwined and important life skills which support the development of physical skills and healthy, happy kids in line with our Education Works themes.

LENDING LIBRARY FOR CHILDREN & PARENTS

Sadly, this service will be delayed until Covid restrictions are relaxed.

SCHOOL FUND MONEY

For those parents who have opted to pay monthly, £20 is now due for October. If possible, direct bank transfer is the preferred option to

minimise handling of money. Bank details are available on request. **Please ensure that payment is made on the first school day of each month.** This money goes towards your child's healthy break, Christmas and birthday presents, baking ingredients, etc. Please note that we follow DENI nutritional standards for healthy breaks guidelines -

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/early_years_standards

and Public Health Agency - www.publichealth.hscni.net

"Healthy breaks for pre-school children" and "Getting a good start healthy eating from one to five".

PARKING MATTERS

We have been advised by the traffic wardens to inform parents that they should not park on the double yellow lines. Please use the Leisure Centre carpark but please do not use the disabled spaces unless you are entitled to do so and please leave the staff car-parking spaces and yellow emergency access box clear. Your co-operation is much appreciated.

PARENT-TEACHER

CONSULTATIONS/ Parenting N.I

Again, unfortunately due to Covid restrictions, we are not permitted to have face to face parent-teacher consultations. You will receive a short written settling-in report from your class teacher via Tapestry on Monday 12th October.

If you wish to have a short 10 minute telephone conversation with your class teacher regarding your child's settling-in report, please contact the school office (028 2565 2011), preferably on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday from 10 am when Ruth, our school secretary will be able to allocate a 10 minute appointment slot for you.

Mrs. Coulter and Mrs. Mc Gall will be available to morning class parents on Monday 19th and Tuesday 20th October between 8.45 and 11.15 am and Mrs. McMullan and Mrs. McGall will be available to afternoon parents on Thursday 22nd and Thursday 23rd October between 12.30 and 3.00 pm.

In order to facilitate this telephone service, there will be no morning classes on Monday 19th and 20th October and no afternoon classes on Thursday 22nd and Friday 23rd October.

**Parenting week 19th-23rd October
"Celebrating Parenting in Challenging times" hosted by Parenting N.I
(info@parentingni.org)**

SCHOOL CLOSURES

School will be closed for Half-Term on Wednesday 28th, Thursday 29th and Friday 30th October. School recommences Monday 2nd November.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Any photographs of your child displayed in school for display purposes will be given to you throughout the year - "happy memories"

ECO SCHOOLS AWARD

We are proud of our school's Green Flag Award. We would appreciate if parents and children would continue to pick up any litter you see around the school grounds and place in the bins provided.

UNDER-FUNDED SCHOOL

BUDGETS

Unfortunately, Ballymena Nursery School along with the majority of schools in N. Ireland, are relying more and more on fund-raising efforts from parents and donations from local businesses. However, with family pressures of Covid lockdown, furlough schemes and unemployment, everyone is feeling the financial pressure. If you know of any companies/ businesses or individuals who would wish to support our nursery school by giving a small donation, please inform Ruth in the school office.

FUND-RAISING

We plan to have a Christmas fire-side quiz to raise funds for school. We would encourage you to try and support this fund-raising effort.

LEARNING FOCUS OF INTEREST FOR THIS MONTH

This month's focus of interest is AUTUMN, HARVEST and HIBERNATION. Our Nursery song sheet for September and October is on our nursery web-site.

We have decided, that we will introduce painting for the children to enjoy. Unfortunately, in accordance with Covid guidelines and restrictions, we will not be permitted to use our usual painting aprons. Regrettably, we cannot afford to fund disposable, protective aprons for 104 children on a daily basis, so please be prepared for messy uniforms going home!!

TAPESTRY

If you are having any problems/issues with the Tapestry app., please e-mail our ICT co-ordinator, Mrs. McMullan - smcmullan206@c2kni.net

AREAS OF LEARNING AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

There are six areas of learning in the pre-school curricular guidance for N. Ireland Nursery curriculum. <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/curricular-guidance-pre-school-education>.

An excellent series of free downloadable leaflets ("Learning Together" series) is accessible at www.early-education.org.uk. This is

a wonderful resource and it is well worth taking the time to visit this website. Topics covered include "Helping Children with their Behaviour"; "Helping children cope with change"; "Going out to play and learn"; "Young children and technology" etc.

ADVANCE NOTICE...3Yrs + REVIEW

This programme has been sponsored by The Early Intervention Transformation Programme (EITP). We have been assigned two health visitors who will be coming into school on Tuesday 3rd, Wednesday 4th and Friday 6th November 2020. The Health Visitors will be available to give advice and help with any concerns relating to your child's personal or social development, toileting or bedtime routines. (www.publichealth.hscni.net)

SCHOOL WEBSITE

www.ballymenans.ballymena.ni.sch.uk

Please remember that in order to support our Eco-Schools Award, we will no longer be issuing paper copies of our newsletter. **Remember that it is your responsibility to log on to the web-site at the beginning of each new month to read the newsletter, song and rhyme sheet and take note of any important dates and up-coming activities/events.**

