

# BALLYMENA NURSERY SCHOOL

## OCTOBER 2023 - NEWSLETTER



We are delighted that the majority of the children are settling well and are becoming familiar with the daily school routines. Thank you for your patience and support during this vital settling-in phase of Nursery school.

If your child is needing a little more time to settle in or if you are concerned about any aspect of their development, please check out our Parents' Board in the hallway where there are lots of leaflets and contact numbers for Parenting NI - a charity which supports parents. Alternatively click on this link to their website <https://www.parentingni.org/> or speak to your child's teacher.

Please read this newsletter carefully as it contains some essential information and dates for your diary. Please continue to check our Nursery website and your Tapestry posts regularly to keep up to date with the busy life of our Nursery school.

### **LEARNING FOCUS OF INTEREST FOR THIS MONTH**

This month's focus of interest remains **SETTLING IN** and **ALL ABOUT ME**, leading into **AUTUMN**, **HARVEST** and **HIBERNATION**.

As we begin our outdoor play this month, we have attached a handy self-help skills sheet at the end of this newsletter.

### **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](http://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.

### **EDUCATION MATTERS/GETTING READY TO LEARN/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](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/education-works)

Getting Ready to Learn (GRTL) <https://www.gettingreadytolearn.co.uk/parents/> and The Media Initiative Respecting Difference Programme <https://www.early-years.org/respecting-difference>

We will be implementing these programmes throughout the nursery year to support our pre-school curriculum. Further details will be shared with you.

### **TRANSFORMING TO BECOME AN INTEGRATED SCHOOL**

In March 2023 the parents were given an opportunity to vote for or against our transformation to Integrated School status. We had an overwhelming YES vote and so our transformation process continues this year. We hope that the returning parents alongside those of you who are new to the school will continue to support us on this journey. Want to find out more? Click on the link below

<https://view.publitas.com/integrated-education-fund/a-short-guide-to-integrated-education-for-nursery-schools/page/1>

More details and opportunities to show your support will follow throughout the year.

### **PARENT MEETINGS**

You can request an appointment to discuss your child's settling-in with your class teacher via the Tapestry App. This appointment will be a short 10-minute slot and can be carried out in person or by telephone. Please specify your preference when booking.

**Mrs. McKay** will be available for parent meetings throughout the full day on **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October** and **Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October**.

**Mrs Scott** will be available on **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October PM only** or **Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October AM only**

**Mrs McGall** will be available on **Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October** throughout the full day.

These dedicated appointment times will have a slight impact on class running times.

**Please note there will be NO PM classes on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October And NO AM classes on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October. All other times will be covered by substitute teachers.**

### **ECO SCHOOLS / Recycling/ Fundraising**

Once a term, we plan to have a collection of used clothes, shoes, handbags, bric- a-brac, CDs, DVDs, books, toys, quilt covers, towels or curtains etc. ID clothing van will be parked in the car-park at the main entrance of the school to collect your bags from 8.30 am to 9.15 a.m. (for morning classes) and then from 12.15 pm to 1.00 p.m. (for afternoon classes) on **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> October**. Please give your unwanted items directly to the driver of the van. We will receive 50p per kilo towards our school fund and earn supportive points for the maintenance of our Eco School's green flag status.

### **WEEKLY LENDING LIBRARY**

On the week beginning **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> October** we will be beginning a lending library with the children. Your class teacher will notify you of which day library will run for your child's class. Thank you to our willing volunteers who have kindly agreed to commit to this service and have undergone their Access NI Enhanced Police Checks to ensure all your children are kept safe. We would encourage you to develop a love and respect for library books by sharing these books with your children and then returning them to Nursery to allow us to clean and re-issue to other children the following week.

### **THE BIG BEDTIME READ**

The first of our Getting Ready to Learn Themes will be The Big Bedtime Read <https://www.gettingreadytolearn.co.uk/themes/bigbedtimeread/>

We plan to hold 2 early evening story-time sessions on **Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October** during which the children will be invited to come to Nursery, dressed in their PJs, with their teddy, to enjoy a bedtime story with their friends. Parents must stay with their child for this time, and we ask that no additional children are brought along - this will be your special opportunity with your child.

The sessions will run 6-6.30pm or 6.45-7.15pm. Parents should plan to attend just one of these sessions as we need to accommodate as many as possible.

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### **SCHOOL FUND MONEY**

For 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 note that monthly payments should be made promptly on the first school day of each month. Any cash payments should always be placed in an envelope clearly marked with your child's full name and can be placed in the low-level letterbox, located to the right of the main entrance door. School fund money goes towards your child's healthy break, Christmas and birthday presents, playdough ingredients, etc. Text messages will be sent out to remind parents of overdue payments.

### **ROAD SAFETY/ PARKING MATTERS**

Please continue to follow the one-way traffic system, reduce your speed to 10 mph and use the footpath in the Leisure Centre car park. We have been advised by the traffic wardens to inform parents that they should not park on the double yellow lines outside Nursery school on Trostan Avenue.

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.

### **TAPESTRY**

Thank you to all of you who have registered for and are using our App regularly. We hope you are finding it a useful tool for communication in both directions. If you are having any problems/issues with the Tapestry app, please speak to Mrs McGall who will happily try to help.

**SCHOOL WEBSITE - [www.ballymenanursery.co.uk](http://www.ballymenanursery.co.uk)**

Please remember that 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 website at the beginning of each new month to read the newsletter and take note of any important dates and up-coming activities or events.

**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> October	SCHOOL CLOSED - Staff Development Day
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> October	NO afternoon classes (Parent Meetings)
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> October	NO morning classes (Parent Meetings)
Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> October	"Big Bedtime Read" 6-6.30pm OR 6.45-7.15pm
Monday 30 <sup>th</sup> October - Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> November (inclusive)	Half-Term Holiday - SCHOOL CLOSED
Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> November	School Development Day -SCHOOL CLOSED
Advance Notice	
Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> November	Children in Need Day (Teddy Bears' Picnic)
Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> November	Individual School Photos (Cool for School)

## **SELF-HELP SKILLS - HOW YOU CAN HELP TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD!**

Thank you for your patience when leaving your children into Nursery as they became familiar with the staff and their school.

Please teach your child how to be independent -

### **Coats**

Practice putting on/off their coat and hanging it up on their peg.

Some children like to put their hood on first & then find their arms while others enjoy doing The Flip [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gux6T\\_OY8n4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gux6T_OY8n4)

We will support whichever method works best for your child!

Please send an outdoor coat with your child every day and clearly name all their personal belongings. You can order name labels online on

<https://www.mynametags.com/#> quoting our Nursery school identification 976.

The nursery will receive 5% commission.

### **Shoes**

Please also practice putting on and taking off shoes at home, in preparation for your child changing into their wellington boots for outdoor play.

**Please provide shoes which are easy for your child to work with independently with a velcro fastening.** At this stage of physical development, most young children are unable to fasten laces or buckles. You can imagine your child will not appreciate being the last one out to play if they are struggling with tricky footwear!

Please make sure your child has a pair of welly boots in school with their name clearly marked on each boot.

Please remember:- ***The more you do for your pre-school child, the more your child will learn a sense of helplessness and learn to continue to rely on adult support.***

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

***Please encourage your child to try self-help skills and support and congratulate them on their efforts.***