**Ballymena Nursery School**

**March 2024 Newsletter**

**** ****

It is hard to believe that we are quickly approaching the end of the second school term. You have been amazing parents, encouraging the staff and supporting your children through childhood and seasonal illness.

Hopefully, with Spring finally here and with warmer weather approaching, the children and staff will enjoy the educational and health benefits of learning from and playing in the nursery gardens as we prepare to plant and grow our flowers and vegetables and hunt for minibeasts.

Please read this newsletter carefully and note the important dates coming up this month.

**Focus of interest for learning in March**

The World Around Us including…

Spring time/ World Book Day/ Mother’s Day/ St. Patrick’s Day/ Easter

**School Fund**

For those who pay £20 school fund money monthly, March fees are now due. Please remember that although these payments are voluntary, they serve to enhance your child’s learning experiences by paying for visitors, treats, play resources etc

If you are in arrears and are struggling to pay these monthly contributions please speak to your child’s teacher who will arrange a suitable repayment plan.

**A BIG thank you**

We have loved having many of you to visit the nursery classrooms to speak to the children about your job in helping others. We have all learned so much in a really fun way. The children have talked about and played out what they have learned through role-play and small world. If you are involved with our Maths in a Bag programme whether that be with your little one at home or helping to clean and check the resources in nursery each week. Thank you - your support means so much to us but ultimately it is the children who benefit.

**Maths in a Bag**

We trust you have enjoyed, benefitted from and feel inspired by being involved in our Maths in a Bag programme. It will continue until the end of term. Please return all bags before the Easter holidays. Looking forward to resuming library time after Easter.

**World Book Day- Thursday 7th March**

We are looking forward to our annual World Book Day, when we would encourage you to send your child’s favourite book with them to Nursery and they may dress as a character from their story book. Please do not go to additional expense by purchasing costumes; you can be creative and make your own, or your child may wear casual clothing. This will be a non-uniform and fun day when the staff will be invited to dress as their favourite book characters too. The children will receive a £1 World book day voucher to spend in local book shops.

Please read the attached article which I think makes interesting reading, refocusing the priority of World Book Day back to it’s origins. Commercialism has a lot to answer for!!

<https://inews.co.uk/inews-lifestyle/parents-rejoice-schools-are-ditching-world-book-day-costumes-2932361#:~:text=%E2%80%9CI%20get%20that%20it's%20fun,much%20more%20do%2Dable.%E2%80%9D>

Please bear this in mind before you rush out to the shops or spend hours creating a costume!

Children will learn to love reading by copying what they see. If you read your child will be more likely to enjoy it too. Books, magazines, manuals it doesn’t matter!

Sharing a reading time with your child regularly increases their language skills, improves their concentration and imagination, supports brain development and of course provides you with an opportunity to develop a special bond with your child as well as cultivating a lifelong love of reading. What’s not to love?

**Eco Schools and Recycling**

Mrs McKay has been busy researching, planning and preparing to help us learn more about how to care for the world we live in. We are teaching the children the importance of reducing, reusing and recycling our waste and to conserve energy. We plan to have another clothing collection to raise money for school funds in April (date to be confirmed). If you want to donate items please place them in the recycling bins in the pram shelter at the front of the school. A massive £350 has been raised from our last collection. Thank you for your support.

**Colour Day**

Our next colour day will be on Thursday 14th March. As usual we ask that you don’t go to any additional expense for this event but instead encourage you to help your child find the appropriate colour to wear on the day and generally when out and about. Our colour for this month is green. Play will be particularly focused on green on colour day.

**Celebrating the Richness of Diversity and Respecting Difference**

**OUR ETHOS**

At Ballymena Nursery School, we pride ourselves in providing a warm, welcoming and safe environment which is respectful and supportive of everyone.

**OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

We aim to enable children, in a friendly and caring atmosphere and through stimulating play, to develop their full potential in every aspect of growth.

Together we have been learning so much from our educational programmes of Getting Ready to Learn and the Early Years Media Initiative as well as celebrating Chinese New Year and this month, St. Patrick’s Day and Easter. As a school preparing to transform to integrated status, we believe these programmes alongside our ethos and mission statement help to promote a nursery where everyone belongs, is nurtured and feels safe.

Ballymena Nursery School #BelongingNurturingSafe

If you would like us to join you in celebrating a festival, tradition or important day in your culture please speak to your child’s class teacher so we can discuss how best to do this.

**Dates for your diary:-**

Thursday 7th March World Book Day / Non-uniform day

Thursday 14th March Green Day/ St. Patrick’s Celebration

Monday 25th March PM Classes Energy to Burn ‘Bunny Bop’ and Easter Egg Hunt (last session before Easter)

Tuesday 26th March AM Classes Energy to Burn ‘Bunny Bop’ and Easter Egg Hunt (last session before Easter)

We hope to have Irish dancers/fiddle players to visit before St. Patrick’s Day and lambs before Easter. We also plan to plant vegetables and flowers in our garden. If you would like to help facilitate any of these activities please speak to your child’s teacher asap.

**School closure dates**

**Nursery School will be CLOSED on the following dates:**

**Wednesday 6th March** **NO AM class - Mrs McKay**

**Friday 8th March NO AM class – Mrs McGall**

**Monday 11th March** **NO PM class – Mrs McKay**

**Tuesday 12th March NO PM class – Mrs Kennedy**

**(to facilitate Health Visitor 3+ reviews & parent teacher meetings)**

Friday 15th March School Development Day

Monday 18th March St. Patrick’s Day holiday

Monday 25th March PM classes finish for Easter

Tuesday 26th March AM classes finish for Easter

***Wednesday 27th March***

***to Friday 5th April (inclusive)*** Easter holidays, re-opening Monday 8th April.

Have a lovely Easter holiday – don’t eat too many chocolate Easter Eggs!