

Ballydown Primary School & Nursery Unit



Covid update

August 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We are delighted that school will be reopening this September with some more normality returning! The latest guidance issued by DE last week allows for some more freedom and flexibility to the school day. You can access a full copy of this at www.education-ni.gov.uk. We hope this school year will run much more smoothly and more of our usual activities can be reintroduced.

We will continue to maintain some precautions to limit the spread of Covid and will review these in accordance with guidance from DE. Please be understanding that things can change at short notice, as we are all aware from over the past 18 months.

I am looking forward to seeing you all very soon.

Yours sincerely

Brian Murphy
Principal

1. Introduction

On Thursday 12th August 2021 the NI Executive agreed that schools can return with more normality and flexibility. The executive agree that it is vital that teaching and learning is given priority.

2. The School Day

To help ensure the health and safety of all the children, staff and families at Ballydown, we will continue to apply a range of measures to minimise the spread of the virus.



- Enhanced hygiene and cleaning measures will be used.
- Class bubbles will continue, but will be relaxed to some degree to allow for whole year groups to mix.
- Staggered arrival and pick up times will be maintained to minimise groups of adults gathering and to allow for children to remain better spaced.

3. Restart Dates and Times

- Tuesday 31st September – Induction day for **all pupils P2-P7**, full uniform, snack, water. Half day with children finishing from 11:45am. Siblings will leave together.

	Finish time Tuesday 31st August	Exit via
Nursery	Follow guidance already given for September	Nursery garden gate
P1	Follow guidance already given for September	gate
P2	11:50	gate
P2/3	11:55	Front door
P3	12:00	Front door
P4	12:05	Front door
P4/5	12:10	Front door
P5	12:15	Assembly door
P6	12:15	Assembly door
P7	12:15	Assembly door

NO BUSES AVAILABLE TUESDAY 31ST AUGUST

- Wednesday 1st September full day for P2-P7.
- Nursery and P1 to follow their individual intake guidance issued in June.

4. Arrival and Pick up Times

In order to stagger arrival times at school and to help avoid large gatherings the school doors will be **open from 8:45am-9:05am**.

On arrival to school all children should go **straight to their classrooms**. Children are to use 3 separate entrances and exits depending on their class/age. P3-P7 children should be encouraged to make their own way to their entrance point.

Red Area- P1 & P2 enter/exit via side gate.

Blue Area- P2/3, P3, P4 & P4/5 enter/exit via front main door

Green Area- P5, P6, P6/7 & P7 enter/exit via assembly door beside nursery

Finish times Monday-Thursdays

	Finish time	Exit via
Nursery	Follow guidance already given for September	Nursery garden gate
P1	Follow guidance already given for September	gate
P2	1:50 pm	gate
P2/3	1:55pm	Front door
P3	2:00 pm	Front door
P4	2:50 pm	Front door
P4/5	2.55pm	Front door
P5	2:55 pm	Assembly door
P6	3:00 pm	Assembly door
P7	3:00 pm	Assembly door

Early Friday Finish

Because of our earlier start time each morning school will continue to finish early on Fridays for **ALL** pupils. We hope this will make it easier for parents having only one collection on Friday and allows for a nice start to the weekend.

	Finish Time	Exit via
P1	Follow guidance already given for September	
P2	1.50	Side Gate
P2/3	1.50	Front door
P3	1.55	Front door
P4	2.00	Front door
P4/5	2.05	Front door
P5	2.10	Front door
P6	2.10	Assembly door
P7	2.10	Assembly door

5. Parking

To allow for our playgrounds to be back in use staff parking will return to the front of school. Be aware that this will limit parking for parents. Please allow for traffic to keep moving. Do not block access around the roundabout. Do not park in the bus stops and please allow for buses to enter and exit. Try to keep to your pick up times and don't arrive too early!

6. Social Distancing – Protective Bubbles

The executive has allowed the easing of formal classroom bubbles. We will endeavour to keep children apart as much as possible but will allow for whole year groups to mix with their peers at playtimes.

Social distancing of 2m between the adult staff working with each class should be maintained, where possible. Social distancing should be maintained as far as is practical between adults and pupils.

Parents should maintain social distancing when collecting children and are encouraged to wear face masks.

7. Staggered Break and Lunch

We will continue to stagger breaks and lunches to allow for less interaction between large groups of children and adults.

8. Break, Lunch and Hot Meals

We are continuing to encourage healthy snacks for break and lunch time. No fizzy drinks will be permitted in school, but I would encourage each child to have a water bottle of still water to sip throughout the day. Please ensure water bottle is labelled.

Hot meals will be served in the canteen. Please book dinners via the Ezpayment app. Ensure dinners are booked by 8:30am each day.

Dinners will be served in the canteen, where we will continue to keep groups separated, as much as possible. Packed lunches will be eaten in the classrooms.

9. Hygiene

Regular and thorough attention to hygiene is essential to minimise the spread of the virus. Children will wash their hands thoroughly on arrival to the school and will be a repeatable discipline throughout the school day. We ask that children **bring a kitchen roll** at the start of term which we can use for hand drying.

Hand sanitising material will be made available at each entrance point to the school.

Pupils will be encouraged to **bring their own labelled hand sanitiser** to stay in school as well as a pack of tissues to encourage our “catch it, bin it, kill it” approach. The importance of good respiratory hygiene will be discussed and explained to children.

10. School Uniforms

Children at Ballydown should wear their school uniform each day.

11. Physical Education & After School Activities

PE will continue as normal.

Athletics- Fridays will continue to be athletics coaching. Children may wear their athletics kit to school ie school polo shirt, school jumper/cardigan, **BLACK** (no coloured/patterned leggings please) leggings/shorts/track bottoms, trainers.

After school activities will resume in September. A list of activities will be sent home with dates.

12. Displaying Symptoms of Covid-19

If your child is displaying Covid symptoms **DO NOT SEND THEM INTO SCHOOL.**

PHA guidance- what to do if:

- Your child has covid symptoms- keep your child in isolation and book a PCR test. Your child should continue to isolate until a negative PCR test is returned.
- Your child is identified as a close contact. Book a PCR test and keep your child at home until a negative test returned. Children can return to school once they have a negative PCR test.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT WE HAVE UP-TO-DATE CONTACT DETAILS FOR ALL PUPILS.

13. Schools NI

Please download the free Schools NI app onto your phone to keep up to date with the latest news, events and updates at Ballydown. We use this app to send messages to parents.

To download the Schools NI App in order to get information sent from the school – 1)

Go to the app store.

2) Type in Schools NI.

3) Download the app.

4) Click Find School, then Down, and type Ballydown – this will place Ballydown PS as a favourite.

5) You then need to go to your phone settings, click on notifications and make sure you have allowed notifications to be received.

14. Teaching Staff List 2021-22

Principal Mr B Murphy

Vice Principal Mr T Russell

Nursery- Mrs N Walker

P1 Mrs J Wright

P1 Mrs D Russell/ Mrs M Thompson (Wednesdays)

P2 Miss J White

P2/3 Mrs S Lindsay

P4 Mrs B Glass/ Mrs J Hetherington (Wednesdays)

P4/5 Mrs J Duke

P5 Mrs J Brown

P6 Mrs P Coulter/ Mrs J Hetherington (Thursdays & Fridays)

P6/7 Mrs K Blair

P7 Mr T Russell

If you have any further questions or queries, please do not hesitate in contacting me:

Email: bmurphy490@c2kni.net

School Phone Number: 02840662738

ALL OF THIS GUIDANCE WILL BE REVIEWED MONTHLY AND IS SUBJECT TO IMMEDIATE CHANGE IF GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE CHANGES.

