Friday 24th August 2023

Dear Parents/Guardians

Almost time for school again! I hope you all had a relaxing and enjoyable summer break. A warm welcome to our new Nursery and P1 pupils and parents. We hope Ballydown will be an exciting, fun and interesting place for your children to learn. We look forward to seeing you on Wednesday 30th August.

Dinner Money

School dinners will cost £2.60 per day (£13.00 per week) Nursery £2.50. Ezpayment will continue to be the app used for paying for dinners. Parents of new nursery or P1 pupils will need to download the app. You will receive instructions on how to do this and your child's UPN number. **Dinners must be booked in by 8.30am each day** so that system is updated for the start of school. Dinners will begin Friday 1st September for P2-P7.

Teaching Staff

Nursery	Mrs Walker	**P5**	Mrs McCrum (covering Mrs Barnard's maternity leave)
P1	Miss Gowdy	**P6**	Mrs Coulter/Mrs Hetherington
P1	Mrs Russell/Mrs Thompson	**P6/7**	Mrs Blair
P2	Miss White	**P7**	Mr Russell VP
P2/3	Mrs Lindsay	**SEN**	Mrs Wright
P3	Mrs Irvine	**Principal**	Mr Murphy
P4	Mrs Glass/Mrs Hetherington		
P4/5	Mrs Duke		

School Times

The school **doors open at 8:45am** (Please be aware that there is no supervision before this time). Children should be in school and ready to begin registration and lessons **at 9:00am**. P1 & P2 enter via the side steps. P2/3-P7 enter via the front doors. Nursery and P1 please follow specific times for the settling in period.

Healthy Breaks

All children should bring a **healthy snack for break**. We strongly encourage those who take packed lunch to pack a healthy lunch box. **No fizzy drinks** will be permitted in school, but I would encourage each child to have a labelled bottle of still water to sip throughout the day. We greatly appreciate your support in helping to keep your child/children healthy and in developing healthy eating habits at an early age. (see attached list)

School Uniform

At Ballydown we pride ourselves on the smart appearance of our pupils. Wearing a uniform helps to create a structured and respectful environment and it helps to set a very high standard for visitors and when we are on trips. The uniform list is available below. Please take note of the correct PE uniform, black shorts/leggings and white t-shirt. **Black shoes** should be worn with uniform. Trainers may be changed into for playtimes. **Athletics kit** may be worn on Fridays. Remember to make use of our uniform swap/sale shop. Items will be available over the next week in the outdoor classroom.

Illness/Medical, absences, appointments and / or changes to transport arrangements
Please remember that any absences from school or changes to transport arrangements require a **written absence note** from the parent or legal guardian. Please make a phone call to the office if your child is going to be off for more than a day. If your child becomes ill during the school day we will monitor them and inform you if they need to be sent home.

For safety reasons children **must not leave** the school premises without the Principal's or class teacher's permission. **Please contact the office** before you collect your child and sign them out.

Please inform your child's teacher if your child has or develops any medical condition or allergies. Children who require medication/epipens etc for allergies or use inhalers must have this medication in school and ensure it is in-date.

It is very important that your child attends school every day unless they are ill. Attendance is closely linked to achievement in school, as well as confidence and the development of social interactions. Attendance is monitored by our Educational Welfare Officer. Any child's attendance which falls below 85% will receive a letter on behalf of the EWO.

100%	**0 days**	**Excellent**
95-99%	**1-8 days absence**	**Good/very good**
95%	**9 days absence- 1 week and 4 days of learning**	**Satisfactory**
90%	**19 days absence- 3 weeks and 4 days of learning missed**	**Poor**
85%	**28 days absence- 5 weeks and 3 days of learning missed**	**Very poor**
80%	**38% days- 7 weeks and 3 days of learning missed**	**Unacceptable**
75%	**46 days absence-9 weeks and 1 day of learning missed**	**Unacceptable**

Nursery-P3 Collectors
In the interests of child protection and keeping your child safe can I ask that you complete a **named collectors' sheet for nursery–P3 children**. If someone different will be collecting your child, please let the teacher know that morning with a written note or phone call to the office. Children **cannot** be sent with other parents unless permission has been given and school has been informed.

Hometime
Parents/carers of P1-P3 children should approach the class teacher to collect their child and let the teacher know. Please remind your children that we exit onto a busy car park and to always be aware of road safety and not to use this area as a playground. Parents please **BE VIGILENT! In the interests of safety children should not be playing on the front steps/pump.**

Finishing times from Monday 4th September:
P2 1:55pm
P2/3 1:55pm
P3 2:00pm
P4 & P5 2.55pm
P6-P7 3:00pm

Buses will resume from **Friday 1st September**.

School will finish **early on Friday for all pupils** with a staggered finish beginning at 1:45pm.

Car Parking
We understand that our car park is very busy and not really big enough for the number of people who use it. We wish we could make it bigger! Can I please ask you to be mindful of **safety** and to help keep the traffic moving. Please do not leave cars unattended for long periods of time. Allow buses a clear entrance and exit. Please leave the disabled spaces free. **On Fridays the back playground will be open to allow for parking. Please avail of this.**

Teacher meetings
At Ballydown Primary we hope to make parents feel welcome and all staff wish to be approachable. If you wish to discuss your child's progress or have any concerns at all about your child, please feel free to make an appointment to speak to the class teacher or principal after school. Mr Murphy aims to be out at the front of school most mornings, so feel free to ask him if you have any questions.

School Website www.ballydownprimary.org.uk
Our school website will keep you up to date with upcoming events and keep you informed on what has been going on in school. If you cannot find what you are looking for on the website, then do not hesitate to call into the school office.

Information Afternoon
Each Teacher, P2-P7, will be holding a parent information/welcome afternoon on **Tuesday 5th September** 2pm-4:30pm (times for each year group to be confirmed).

Afterschool Activities
We have a range of clubs led by outside agencies and school staff.
Evo Soccer will begin Monday 5th Sept for P2-P7
Other clubs will commence from week beginning 18th September.

Breakfast Club
Breakfast club will resume from Wednesday 30th August from 8:05am. £3 per day. Please book in using Ezpayment app. Bookings should be made at the beginning of each week, so staff are aware of numbers for supervision and for purchasing food.

Holiday List
Please find a copy of this year's holiday list below. Don't worry you will receive a reminder before each school closure.

Finally, I would like to wish you and your children a happy and successful year at Ballydown Primary School. If you require any advice or have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you in anticipation of your support.

Yours sincerely
Mr B Murphy
Principal

Ballydown Primary School & Nursery Unit
Holiday List 2023-24

Term 1

Begins **Wednesday 30th & Thursday 31st August - half day**

11:45am staggered finish for **ALL** pupils P2-P7 (no dinners) (Nursery & P1 follow instructions already given)

Friday 1st September normal Friday P2-P7 (Dinners available, Nursery & P1 follow instructions already given)

Half Term Monday 30th Oct- Friday 3rd Nov (inclusive) 5 days

Christmas Hols – Finish Thursday 21st Dec half day (no dinners)

No school Friday 22nd Dec- Wednesday 3rd January 2024 (inclusive)

Term 2

Begins Thursday 4th January 2024

Half term 12th- 16th February 2024 (5 days)

St Patrick's Day – off Monday 18th March

Easter hols- Finish Thursday 28th March half day (no dinners)

No School Friday 29th March- Friday 12th April (inclusive- 2 weeks & 1 day)

Term 3

Begins Monday 15th April 2024

May Day- off Monday 6th May 2024

Bank holiday- off Monday 27th & Tues 28th May 2024

School finishes Friday 28th June 2024 half day (no dinners)

Includes 5 staff development days

(holidays may be subject to change)

SCHOOL UNIFORM

We have a uniform, which we prefer children to wear. Please encourage your child to take a sense of pride in their appearance and to dress smartly for school each day.

BOYS	**GIRLS**
Grey trousers/shorts	Grey skirt/pinafore
Grey Ballydown Sweatshirt	Grey Ballydown Cardigan
Red Polo Shirt	Red Polo Shirt
Dark socks	White socks/Grey/red tights
Black shoes	Black Shoes

(Girls may wear red gingham summer dresses in September & term 3)

White shirt & tie for formal occasions and school photos

P.E. UNIFORM

White polo shirt
trainers (which are suitable for doing P.E.)
Athletics kit for Fridays- Plain black Shorts/leggings/track bottoms, red polo shirt or athletics top, school jumper or red Ballydown hoodie, trainers. Please dress appropriately for all weathers, as we try to go out in all but extremes.

Labelling

It helps everyone; parents, teachers and children if children can easily recognise their own belongings. Please help by putting your **child's name on every** item brought to school, especially coats, jumpers and ties.

Jewellery

In the interests of safety jewellery is not encouraged in school. If earrings are worn they should be a simple stud earring.

We understand that uniform is expensive and children grow quickly. We provide a uniform swap/sale where you can obtain items of uniform. It is so good to see uniforms being reused. Not only does it save us all money but it cuts down on waste.
Please ask if you have any concerns over uniform costs and require some support.

Healthy Eating

It is so important for us to encourage our children to eat healthily and to help them develop good habits for life. A nutritionist and Education Authority School Meals Advisor has been involved in developing our break time guidelines. The list below, **covering break only,** has been authorised by the Board of Governors and there is now an expectation that all parents will adhere to the list provided below. We continue to encourage you to send healthy items in your child's lunch box and to limit the number of treat items. We really appreciate your support.

This list refers to break time only

Acceptable to eat	***Not Acceptable*** ***(except as Friday treat)***
Fresh Fruit **Fresh/raw veg e.g. chopped or slice carrots, peppers, sugar-snap peas** **Fruit salad (fresh or tinned in fruit juice NOT Syrup)** **Bread: white or brown bread, rolls/bread muffins, baguettes, bagels, wheaten, soda, potato, tortilla or pitta bread spread with butter or margarine** **Crackers or bread sticks with spread e.g. butter or margarine, cheese.** **Low sugar yoghurts** **Cheese portion** **Sandwich with sugar-free filling such as ham, salad, chicken or cheese**	**Dried fruit (coated in chocolate or yoghurt) or glace cherries** **Crisps** **Confectionary i.e. chocolate or sweets** **Sugary spreads including jam, honey, marmalade or chocolate spread and peanut butter** **Cereal bars (due to high sugar content) / biscuits / cake bars / cakes** **Sweet or high fat pastries/breads e.g. cake muffins, brioche, croissants, Danish pastries** **NUTS (due to nut allergies)**

Foods eaten at break time will be monitored by the class teachers. Parents or carers are encouraged to please help their children to stick to these guidelines. We really appreciate your support and know that it is in the best interests of our children.

As a treat, on **Fridays** only, children can bring in **1 treat item**. We all enjoy a treat and want children to learn and understand that on occasion this is ok to enjoy.

To Drink

Permitted	Not Permitted
Tap Water **Unflavoured, still bottled water** **Milk – whole, semi-skimmed or skimmed unflavoured milk**	**Fruit juices including pure fruit juices** **Smoothies** **Sparkling water** **Energy/sports drinks** **Squash** **Fizzy Drinks including those labelled'diet', 'zero' or 'no added sugar'**

Children can also have unflavoured/still bottled water on their desks to drink at any time.

We have a number of children with Nut Allergies in school. Please <u>do not</u> send in nuts for snack/lunch or items containing <u>nuts</u>.

To Ballydown Primary School

Pupil's name – _____

Reason for Absence_____
_____
_____
_____

Dates of Absence_____

Signed_____ Date_____

✂ **……**

To Ballydown Primary School

Pupil's name – _____

Reason for Absence_____
_____
_____

Dates of Absence_____

Signed_____ Date_____

✂ **……**
……..

To Ballydown Primary School

Pupil's name – _____

Reason for Absence_____
_____
_____
_____

Dates of Absence_____

Signed_____ Date_____

Ballydown Primary School

Collectors P1-P3

2023/24

To help us to keep your child/ren safe it is very important for us to know who can collect pupils from school. Please write down the name and contact number for the adults who you give responsibility to for collecting your child/ren. **If someone different will be collecting your child, please inform the school office**.

Many thanks

Child's Name:……

Class:……

Name of collector	Contact number

Signed:…….parent/guardian

Date:……

Please return to your child's class teacher