

Ballymacrickett Primary School, Prospectus



2021-2022

BALLYMACRICKETT PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY UNIT



Principal: Mr D. Mulholland B.Ed., D.A.S.E., M.Ed., P.Q.H

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Dear Parent,

Thank you for considering Ballymacrickett as a choice of school for your child. I hope this prospectus gives you an insight into our school with regards to our vision, the organisation, curriculum provision and the administrative procedures.

In Ballymacrickett a strong partnership exists between the home, the school and the parish. If you choose our school for your child and he/she is accepted to attend, we look forward, as a staff, to working with you the parents, to ensure our school vision becomes a reality.

I hope you will find this document useful in helping you make an informed decision for your child and I look forward to meeting you at our open evening.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'D. Mulholland'. The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined.

D. Mulholland
Principal

OUR VISION

"Happy Together, Learning Forever"

Ballymacrickett Primary School and Nursery Unit promotes learning for life and high achievement by working with children to:

- practise the Catholic faith in their daily lives; (CRC Article 14)
- have high self esteem - respecting themselves, others, our local community and the world around us;
- recognise their talents and acquire the knowledge and skills to be their individual best; (CRC Article 29)
- become happy, enthusiastic, highly motivated life-long learners;
- be able to work independently and collaboratively;
- gain the necessary skills to equip them for our ever changing world.

We believe that each child will succeed through experiencing quality in:

- a Catholic ethos of support and encouragement, where diversity is embraced and success is celebrated; (CRC Article 14)
- a broad and challenging curriculum, ensuring inclusion and equality of opportunity; (CRC Article 28)
- a learning partnership between school, home, parish and the wider community;
- a safe, healthy, stimulating learning environment; (CRC Article 24)
- innovative teaching and an investigative approach to learning.

We demonstrate our commitment to working as a learning community by:

- continually striving for improvement by working together towards common goals.

Ballymacrickett Primary School and Nursery Unit

Past and Present

In 1856 formal schooling began in the 'old school' on Chapel Road, Glenavy. In 1937 a new, three classroom school was built on Scroggy Road, Glenavy. Between 1937 and 1968 both schools shared responsibility for the education of local children. In 1968 the school on Scroggy Road was extended to accommodate all children.

With the increase in the population of our community over recent years there was once again a need for a larger school building. In 2003 the Department of Education approved funding for the building of a new school and nursery unit at Ballymacrickett. Planning began, and although progress was slow, development on our new school site was started in September 2007.

Our new building at Ballymacrickett was completed in November 2008. It is in an outstanding rural location and incorporates exciting facilities and up to date resources to promote the all round development of the children in our community.

Today there are 368 children at Ballymacrickett Primary School and 26 children in the Nursery Unit.



BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Rev. Colm Mc Bride	Trustee Representative
Mrs Anne Mc Court	Trustee Representative
Mr Donal McLaughlin	Trustee Representative
Mrs Josephine O' Boyle	Trustee Representative
Mr Joe Mulholland	Parent Representative
Mr Henry Phillips	E.A. Representative
Mr Christopher Horner	E.A. Representative
Mr Stephen Eastwood	Elected Teacher
Mr Daniel Mulholland	Principal

MEMBERS OF STAFF (School Year 2020/2021)

TEACHING STAFF

Nursery Teacher	Mrs Bonner		
P1	Mrs Hegney	P4	Mrs Clarke
P1	Miss Lee	P5	Miss McCormick
P2	Mrs Kearns	P5	Mrs Black
P2	Mrs Fannon	P6	Mrs Phillips/Miss Moran
P3	Mrs Magee	P6	Mr Eastwood
P3	Mrs O'Neill	P7	Mrs Mc Allister
P4	Miss McKavanagh	P7	Mr Geoghegan
Reading Support	Mrs Gallagher	Principal	Mr Mulholland

NON TEACHING STAFF

Caretaker	Mr Mc Crory	
Cleaners	Mrs Cormican, Mrs Brazier, Mrs Cunningham	
Secretary	Mrs McGrandles	
Clerical Assistant	Ms Ward	
Classroom Assistants	Miss Mulholland	Mrs Singleton
	Mrs Fox	Mrs Dobbin
Special Needs Assistants	Mrs Logan-Mulholland	Mrs Hanna
	Mrs Campbell	Mrs Mc Donald
	Mrs Clenaghan	Miss Mc Donald
	Mrs Murray	Ms Ward
	Mrs Hanna	Mrs Carty
	Mrs Forester	
	Mrs Gordan	
Nursery Assistant	Mrs Eastwood	

PASTORAL CARE AND DISCIPLINE

Pastoral Care (CRC Article 3)

At Ballymacrickett, pastoral care permeates all aspects of school life. It reflects the attitudes, beliefs and practices of our Catholic faith and involves all members of our school community - children, parents and all other adults who contribute to the well-being of each child.

The atmosphere in the school is based upon good relationships between staff/children/parents. As a staff we work as a team, respecting each other's roles and recognising individual talents and expertise. We are concerned with the needs and well-being of each child and with the approaches and programmes we implement in order to aid his/her personal development.

We recognise and value the important role that parents play in their child's education and make every effort to ensure that parents feel welcome, and that they are kept informed on each aspect of their child's development. Through ongoing communication with parents we get a greater understanding of each individual child's needs, and by working in partnership, we set realistic goals to ensure each child achieves his/her personal best.

Child Protection (CRC Article 19)

The Staff of Ballymacrickett, teaching and non-teaching, accept responsibility for the welfare of all children in their care. In accordance with the Child Protection Policy administered in the school, staff will be vigilant and where child abuse is suspected or where a disclosure regarding abuse is made, steps will be taken to inform the relevant investigative agencies in the interests of the child.

Drug Education (CRC Article 33)

The management and staff of Ballymacrickett Primary School are acutely aware of the danger inherent in the drug culture which is becoming so pervasive among young people today.

As part of the Health Education Programme followed in the school, teachers promote a healthy lifestyle in all classes. In KS2 lessons are undertaken where the effects of smoking, alcohol and drugs are studied and discussed. P6 and P7 children have opportunity to join 'Smokebusters' and P7 children are encouraged to join the junior section of the 'Pioneer Total Abstinence Association'.

All staff remain constantly alert and would immediately report any disclosure by a child regarding misuse of drugs.

Healthy Eating and Exercise

In Ballymacrickett we promote a healthy lifestyle in our children. Parents are encouraged to provide a healthy break and lunch for their children, and children are taught the importance of eating a healthy balanced diet. Exercise and fitness is promoted through P.E., active play at break and lunch and also through participation in after school sports clubs.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

In Ballymacrickett we aim to promote positive behaviour. All children have opportunities to earn stickers and certificates for efforts made in all areas of school life. Our school Behaviour Policy is based on the school's values and beliefs.

We aim:

- to provide a supportive environment which will foster the growth and development of caring and responsible children;
- to create a well-ordered school in which children can learn effectively;
- to develop in our children a sense of self-worth and self-control.

We expect the whole school community to act in a positive and caring way towards each other. To this end we have agreed school charter with our children, which we implement fairly and consistently.

We require our children:

- to be punctual for all school activities;
- to respect their own and other's property;
- to be given permission before being excused from class;
- to play fairly and for enjoyment;
- to wear school uniform;
- to move through the school in a calm and ordered way.

A high standard of child behaviour is expected within the school environment and outside school hours.

Should the unlikely need for child suspension or expulsion arise, we shall follow the procedures laid down by the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools.

Acceptance for admission to the school implies parents' acceptance of our school's Behaviour Policy.

Anti-Bullying

Ballymacrickett operates a strong Anti-Bullying Policy and all children are made aware that bullying will not be tolerated. Children undertake lessons where they are taught about what constitutes bullying, how to deal with it and how to report incidences of bullying. The support of parents is sought in order to ensure that the policy is fully understood and implemented by the entire school community.

Health and Safety/Security

We endeavour to provide a safe and healthy working environment for both staff and children. Staff operate agreed guidelines for the supervision of children throughout the school day and in relation to educational visits and extra-curricular activities. Arrangements for safety and security of children are kept under regular review. Parents are also asked to respect the school security procedure and are requested not to go to a classroom without reporting to the office first.

Road Safety

The Governors and Staff of our school believe that we have an important role to play in helping to reduce tragedies on the roads. We believe in educating for life in a very real sense and see Road Safety Education as a basic life skill. We promote this through the cross curricular work and by playing a full part in approved Road Safety Schemes.

Charging and Remissions Policy

In line with the requirements of the Northern Ireland Education Reform Order 1989, it is the policy of the Board of Governors to:

- **maintain the right to free school education for all children;**
- **establish that activities organised wholly or mainly during school time should be available to all children;**
- **require parents to pay charges for board and lodging for their children on residential trips, taking account of any relevant remission arrangement;**
- **confirm its right to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or in support of activities organised by the school;**
- **make charges in respect of optional extras, as determined by the Board of Governors.**

Charities (CRC Article 24)

We feel that regular fund raising events for charities help develop a sense of awareness in our children and a sense of caring for those less fortunate than ourselves. During Lent each year, the school community undertakes a huge fund raising campaign. Our main appeals in recent years have included: Trocaire, Help the Aged, Tsunami 'Buy a Boat', Phab, Irish Pilgrimage Trust, CLIC (Caring for Children with Cancer), The Roald Dahl Foundation, DEN-L (Developing Education Network in Liberia), Multiple Sclerosis Society, Barnardo's, Dwarf Olympics, Brain Tumour Research, Cancer Research and Rett Syndrome Research Trust.



Admissions

In selecting children for admission to the school, we will apply the criteria as set out by our governors. Copies are available on the Education Authority's website or can be requested in hard copy from the school office.

Induction Policy

The purpose of any induction policy is to ensure that the transition from home to school is as speedy and enjoyable as possible for the incoming P1s and their parents.

The induction policy for our school will take the following format.

Parents of children who have been accepted to attend Ballymacrickett Primary School will be notified in April 2021 by letter.

P1s First Visit to the School: June 2021

On this day we aim to give the new P1 children an opportunity to visit their P1 classroom, to look around it and meet their teacher.

Gradual 'Phasing-In': September 2021

We feel it is important to introduce young children to new situations gently. In the beginning they have a lot to take in and it would be unfair to overburden them with too much too quickly. It is for this reason that we phase the P1 children in gradually over a number of days, so that the teacher has a better chance to get to know them and vice-versa. Children will start school in small groups in September and you will be notified of the date your child is due to commence. During this period P1 children should be collected at 12noon. After this "settling in" period has passed, the P1 school day will finish at 2pm from Monday to Thursday and 1:30pm on Friday.

Documents Available on Request

There is a statutory requirement to make certain information available to parents. This includes curriculum details, statements of school policy, formal papers sent by the Department to the Principal and procedures for complaints about the school curriculum and related matters. Copies are held in the school office and can be viewed by arrangement with the Principal. Many are also available to view on our school website.

Ballymacrickett Fundraising Committee

The Committee has the following aims:

1. To develop and maintain collegial relationships among parents, staff and children; and
2. To generate money to buy additional educational resources for the school in an effort to provide the most enriched experience possible for every child.

Each year new parents are encouraged to become associated with the Fund Raising Committee.

The Northern Ireland Curriculum (CRC Article 28)

The N.I. Curriculum is implemented in all classes. It is a skills based curriculum and aims to provide children and young people with life skills and the ability to learn throughout their whole lives.

It is hoped that a child who experiences the N.I. Curriculum for their school life will develop the following attributes:

- integrity and commitment
- concern for others and tolerance
- pragmatism and openness to new ideas
- optimism and self belief
- curiosity and creativity
- determination and resourcefulness

Much more information will be made available to you when your child starts Primary 1 but for now it is sufficient to say that the curriculum contains three main aspects.

1. Developing thinking skills and personal capabilities
2. Personal Development and Mutual Understanding
3. Assessment for Learning

These three aspects are delivered through the following learning areas:

Religious Education

The Arts

Language and Literacy

Maths and Numeracy

Personal Development & Mutual Understanding

Physical Education

The World Around Us

Special Needs Provision

The identified educational needs of each child will be catered for by his/her class teacher with the support of our Special Needs Co-ordinator, Mrs Gallagher, and relevant outside agencies. Additional help may be provided for children experiencing difficulty with reading. Parents will be kept fully informed of any such provision or support.

Music Tuition

Music tuition is provided in Ballymacrickett Primary School by EA's Music Centre and some teaching staff. An annual fee is charged for hire of instrument (Violin or Flute) and a weekly lesson. Children in P4 are tested each year and places offered to successful candidates.

This is a great opportunity for children who have musical ability to develop their talent.

Homework

Homework is regarded as an integral part of every child's learning. It is also a way of keeping parents informed about the learning experience of the children. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their children's homework. We encourage our parents to contact their child's teacher if there are any difficulties regarding homework.

DELTA (Developing Early Learning and Thinking Abilities)

In order to assist parents to become involved in their child's learning, a course is provided for parents of Primary 1 children in the early part of the autumn term. Valuable information is given on how parents can assist their children with literacy, numeracy and how to develop thinking skills.

We have been running this course for a number of years and parents find it informative and very enjoyable.

Assessment, Reporting and Record Keeping in our School

Assessment of children's work is an integral part of our school. The main purposes of assessment are to:

- Establish through a variety of means what each child is able to do.
- Assist the teachers in providing learning experiences to further develop each individual child.

Teachers will make an assessment on each child in November. We invite parents to read these records and see the samples of their child's work at the annual parent/teacher meeting towards the end of Term 1. A second series of parent/teacher meetings may be held in Term 2. Children's books are also sent home each term for parents and children to reflect on performance, and set targets for improvement. Standardised tests are used in May to formally assess each child's progress. Parents receive a written report on their child's progress once in each school year. The records of each child's attainment and work samples are passed on to each successive teacher.

Grammar School Entrance Tests

Children in Ballymacrickett are given the opportunity to take Grammar School Entrance Tests. The results in 2019/2020 GL Assessment were as follows:

14 children achieved a *Grade A*

10 children achieved a *Grade B*

8 children achieved a *Grade C*

8 children achieved a *Grade D*

(40 Children took the GL Assessment. 7 children opted out of the tests.)

Curriculum Complaints

Where parents consider that the curriculum provision for their child is not satisfactory, they are invited to express their concern to the school through:

1. The class teacher, with permission of the Principal.
2. The Principal.
3. The school Board of Governors.
4. The EA's complaints tribunal for curriculum matters.

School Administration

School Hours

9.00am - 12.20pm

Break 10.45am - 10.55am

1.00pm - 3.00pm

Lunch 12.20pm - 1.00pm

Classes are dismissed as follows:

P1, P2

Mon-Thurs 2.00pm Fri. 1.30pm

P3, P4, P5, P6, P7

Mon-Thurs 3.00pm Fri. 1.30pm for P3, 2.00pm for P4 - P7

Opening of School Day

School begins at 9.00am

Children arriving at school from 8.45am onwards are supervised by the teaching staff in their respective classrooms. All children should be in class by 9.00am.

Extended School

We operate a morning club where children are supervised from 8:00am. This is to facilitate parents who are working and require child minding facilities at this time of the day. There is a small charge per morning per child. Breakfast is also available.

We also operate an afternoon club for the younger children who finish class at the earlier time each day but wish to stay and travel home with older brothers and sisters.

Recreational activities are organised for these children. There is also a small charge for this club.

A wide range of after school clubs are usually offered to children although due to Covid restrictions, these have not been offered so far in the 2020/2021 school year. The children benefiting from these clubs range from P1 - P7.

After School Child Care

A child care facility, 'Little Crickets' operates from 3pm to 6pm within walking distance of Ballymacrickett Primary School. Children availing of this provision are escorted from school by the staff of 'Little Crickets'.

Transport Arrangements

Education and Library Boards provide free transport for a primary school child between home and the nearest suitable school where the home is more than 2 miles from that school. In the case of Ballymacrickett Primary School this takes the form of providing a bus pass for use on public transport. Children travelling a shorter distance can pay daily for their journey. Bus routes to and from Ballymacrickett include Glenavy village, Crewe/Tullynewbank, Ballinderry and Feumore.

Dinner and Lunch Time Arrangements

School meals currently cost £2.60 per day. We ask that money for the week is brought to class on Mondays, preferably in a labelled envelope. If the child is absent, dinner money can be carried forward to the following week. If you think your child is entitled to Free School Meals you must make a claim by filling in Form S.M.1 (which can be obtained in the school) and returning it to EA's Headquarters.

Rooms under supervision are provided for those children who bring packed lunches.

School Uniform

Our uniform colours are Navy Blue and Pale Blue

P1 - P3

Navy Trousers for Boys

Navy Skirt or Pinafore for Girls

Pale blue blouse/shirt

Navy knitwear

Striped tie

Black shoes

P4 - P7

Navy Trousers for Boys

Navy skirt for Girls

Pale blue blouse/shirt

Navy knitwear

Striped tie

Black shoes

Ties may be obtained from the school.

School Savings

We operate a savings scheme in the school. If you wish your child to participate in it, please obtain a form from the office. The Camlin Credit Union, Crumlin will process your application and your child will receive a Savings Package and notification of when he/she may start saving. Savings day is Wednesday. Books are returned to children in time for the following week.

NB Savings money is not handled by the teachers. When brought to school it goes straight into a savings folder and is sent directly to the Credit Union. Please do not send anything for the teacher in the savings wallet.

Parents in School

Parents are always very welcome to contact the school to discuss their child's progress, the curriculum or any problem that may have arisen in the course of the school day. It is important, however to contact the teacher outside class times to arrange this. Contact should be made through the school office.

Throughout the school year there will also be a number of occasions when parents can get together to enjoy a different type of event e.g. School Shows/Concerts, Sports Day and other events organised by the Fund Raising Committee. Parents are very welcome to come along. Again, due to Covid restrictions, such events have not been organised so far in the 2020/2021 school year.

Parents are also most welcome as volunteer helpers for various activities during the course of the year. We value the contributions that our current pool of parent helpers have given and would encourage new volunteers to become involved.

Now that you have read our School Prospectus I hope you will have some idea of the rich and varied life your child will have while at Ballymacrickett Primary School.

You can be assured that, by working in partnership, your child will receive the highest standard of education from our team of committed teachers and support staff, and that his/her happiness and well-being will be our concern at all times during his/her years at our school.