

# Parent Information Booklet

Ballyduff National School



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# Letter of Welcome

Dear Parents and Guardians,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you and your family to Ballyduff NS. As Principal, I am honoured to lead a school that is rooted in Catholic values while also embracing a spirit of inclusivity, respect, and care for every child.

We are proud to be an inclusive school where diversity is welcomed and celebrated. We recognise that each child comes to us with unique gifts, backgrounds, and needs. Our aim is to provide a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment where all students can flourish academically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually.

We believe that education is a partnership between home, school, and parish. Your involvement is vital, and we deeply value the trust you place in us. Together, we can help each child reach their full potential and develop into confident, caring young people who contribute positively to their community.

Throughout the years, we look forward to working closely with you and sharing in the many milestones and achievements of your child's educational journey with us.

We are excited for the year ahead and all that it will bring.

Warm regards,

Elizabeth O' Grady

Principal





## A Typical School Day

<b>9:10am</b>	School bell rings and doors open.
<b>11:00am-11:10am</b>	Break
<b>12:30am – 1:00pm</b>	Lunch
<b>1:50pm</b>	Junior and Senior Infants go home
<b>2:50pm</b>	First to Sixth Class go home

### Points to note:

- Junior Infants go home at 12:00pm for the first two weeks in September.
- Infant children should be accompanied to the school yard in the morning and collected from the yard at home time. They will not be permitted to leave the school premises after school, unless an adult is there to collect them.
- Children should not be dropped to the school yard before 9:05am. No responsibility is accepted for children arriving before this time.
- We encourage all children to organise their own belongings, for example, carry school bags, tidy lunch boxes, hang up coats etc.
- From First Class up, children are encouraged to walk into the school yard themselves to further develop age-appropriate independence skills.

### Parking

All parents should park in the church car park and children should walk on the footpath up to school. **Please do not put a child's life at risk by parking, reversing or turning at the school gate.**

### Important Dates for the 2026/2027 School Year

- The new school year starts on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2026.
- Infants will go home at 12:00pm for the first ten school days. They will start for the full school day, until 1:50pm, from Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2026.

# The School Year



## School Calendar 2026-2027

Ballyduff NS adheres to the Department of Education and Youth's guidance on the standardised school year. Below are some key dates for the next school year. You will receive a detailed school calendar in September.

<b>First Day of Term One</b>	Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2026
<b>Autumn Mid-Term Break</b>	Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> Oct – Friday 30 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2026
<b>Final Day of Term One</b>	Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> December – 12:00pm Finish
<b>Christmas Holidays</b>	Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> Dec – Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2027
<b>First Day of Term Two</b>	Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> January 2027
<b>St Brigid's Bank Holiday</b>	Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> February 2027
<b>Spring Mid-Term Break</b>	Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> & Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2027
<b>St Patrick's Day</b>	Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> March 2027
<b>Final Day of Term Two</b>	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> March – 12:00pm Finish
<b>Easter Holidays</b>	Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> Mar – Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2027
<b>First Day of Term Three</b>	Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> April 2027
<b>May Bank Holiday Weekend</b>	Friday 30 <sup>th</sup> April – Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup> May 2027
<b>June Bank Holiday Weekend</b>	Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> June – Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2027
<b>Final Day of Term Three</b>	Friday 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2027 – 12:00pm Finish

\*Please note that due to the ongoing implementation of the redeveloped Primary Curriculum, all schools will be assigned a number of training days in the next school year. These days are assigned by the Department of Education. We will notify parents of these days as soon as we receive notification.

# School Ethos

## School Mission Statement

The Mission Statement of Ballyduff National School is to equip each child with lifelong learning skills in a Christian Community. We aspire to join the head, the heart and the hands in motivating the children to learn. We acknowledge the disadvantaged in our school, and we work in a professional manner, to cater for the needs, sensitivities and responsibilities of all the children in our care. We prepare them to lead full lives, contributing positively to their community. Children are the messages we send to a time that we will not see.

*Mol An Óige Agus Tiocfaidh Sí*

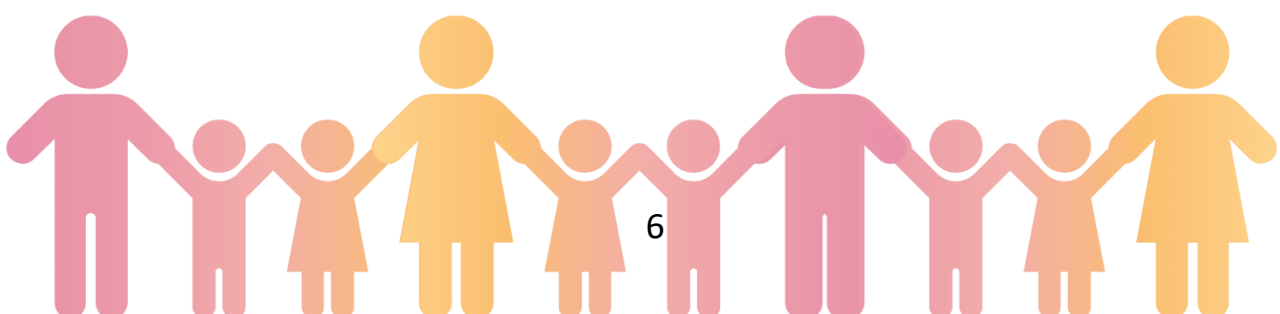
## School Motto

***"When parents and teachers work together, the children are the winners."***

Our school motto reflects our belief that a strong partnership between home and school is essential for every child's success. By working together, sharing information and supporting one another, we can create a positive learning environment where children feel valued, confident and encouraged to reach their full potential.

## DEIS

As a DEIS Rural school, we receive additional supports and resources to help us provide the best possible education for all pupils. These supports allow us to offer a range of initiatives that promote inclusion, wellbeing and attendance. DEIS Rural status enables our school to focus on ensuring that every child is supported to reach their full potential in a caring and positive learning environment.



## LINK – School Completion Programme

We are very fortunate to have the support of LINK- Learning Initiative North Kerry which is funded by the Department of Education and Youth. They support our school through funding for in-school initiatives, subsidising school costs and practical support like targeted counselling, group interventions and staff training. LINK also run a transition programme for 6<sup>th</sup> Class- 'Head Start for Secondary School' and where necessary, they can continue to support our children as they move on to post-primary school.



## Child Safeguarding

The Board of Management of Ballyduff National School is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children in its care and to providing a safe, supportive and caring environment for every pupil.

In accordance with the requirements of the **Children First Act 2015**, the **Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (Revised 2023)** and other relevant child protection legislation, the Board has completed a Risk Assessment and has adopted a Child Safeguarding Statement. These documents are available to view on the school website.

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is **Mrs Elizabeth O' Grady** and the Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDL) is **Ms. Áine Corridan**.

Teachers are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015 and have a statutory obligation to report concerns that meet the threshold for mandated reporting to **Tusla – Child and Family Agency**. Any child protection concerns brought to the attention of school staff are dealt with in accordance with the Child Protection Procedures.

## Special Educational Needs

Our school is fully committed to supporting children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and ensuring that every child is enabled to reach their full potential. We follow the SEN Guidelines (2023) and use a whole-school approach to inclusion, recognising that all children learn in different ways and may require different levels of support at different times. Support may be provided within the classroom by the class teacher through differentiated teaching and targeted interventions, or, where deemed necessary, pupils may receive additional support from a Special Education Teacher (SET) and/or assistance from a Special

Needs Assistant (SNA). Where children are receiving support from agencies such as Speech and Language or Occupational Therapy etc, **we kindly ask parents to inform the school and to share any relevant reports as soon as possible** so that we can work together effectively in supporting your child. If you have any concerns regarding your child, please do not hesitate to contact us, as early communication allows us to offer support, guidance, and, where appropriate, make referrals to outside agencies to ensure the best possible outcomes for your child.

## Autism Class

Ballyduff NS is proud to have a dedicated Autism Class that provides a supportive, inclusive, and nurturing learning environment for autistic children. The class benefits from excellent facilities, including a dedicated classroom, a sensory room, and an enclosed soft play area, all designed to meet the individual needs of our students. The Autism Class plays an important role in our school community, enabling children to learn, develop, and thrive while participating in school life. Through a caring and inclusive approach, we support each child to reach their full potential and foster a strong sense of belonging for all.

Admissions to the Autism Class are guided by Department of Education policy and our school's Admission's Policy. As demand for places can exceed availability, a waiting list operates in accordance with these procedures.



# School Facilities

## School Building

The school is wheelchair accessible and consists of

- Seven spacious classrooms
- One Specially Equipped Autism Classroom
- Three support teaching rooms.
- Large General Purpose Hall
- Sensory Room
- Secretary's Office
- Principal's Office
- Staff Room
- Lift access to upstairs classrooms
- Wheelchair Accessible Toilets and Changing Facilities

## Outside Facilities

- Spacious play area including basketball court, football/hurling pitch and all-weather area.
- Selection of outdoor toys such as skipping ropes, hula-hoops, footballs, basketball etc.
- Enclosed soft play area for junior children.
- Outdoor Garden with picnic area.
- Wooden Play House with play kitchen.
- Yard marking for games such as hop-scotch.



# School Uniform

## Boys

- Navy Trousers
- Blue Shirt
- Navy V-neck Jumper
- Red Tie

## Girls

- Navy Pinafore, Skirt or Trousers
- Blue Shirt
- Navy V-Neck Jumper or Cardigan
- Navy socks or Tights
- Red Tie



**All children should have a school crest sewn to their school jumpers/ cardigans. Crests are available to purchase from the school office for €4 each.**

## PE Uniform

- Half-Zipped Crested Jumper available from Dan Fitzgerald's, Tralee.
- Plain navy shorts or tracksuit bottoms.
- Plain white polo t-shirt.

## Summer Uniform

- Boys and girls may wear plain navy shorts, blue short sleeved shirt, red tie, navy ankle socks with their school jumper/cardigan if necessary.

**Please label all of your child's uniform and any coats or jackets that they bring to school.**

## Board of Management

Ballyduff NS operates under the Rules for the National Schools and is subject to the provisions and guidelines of the circulars issued by the Department of Education and Youth (DEY). The DEY inspectors monitor the implementation of the curriculum in the school. Reports from these inspections are published on the DEY website.

National schools are managed by the Board of Management (BOM)

### Current Board Members

<b>Chairperson</b>	Mr Teddy O' Sullivan
<b>Secretary</b>	Mrs Elizabeth O' Grady (Principal)
<b>Patron's Representative</b>	TBC
<b>Mother's Representative</b>	Mrs Caroline Houlihan (Treasurer)
<b>Father's Representative</b>	Mr Tadhg O' Sullivan
<b>Teachers' Representative</b>	Mrs Áine Corridan
<b>Community Representative</b>	Mr Pádraig Doyle
<b>Community Representative</b>	Mrs Sarah-Anne Ross

The Board of Management plays an important role in the governance and overall management of the school. It is responsible for ensuring that the school operates in accordance with Department of Education guidelines, the school's Catholic ethos, and all relevant legislation. The Board supports the principal and staff in providing a safe, inclusive, and effective learning environment for all pupils, while also overseeing policies, finance, staffing, and the maintenance of the school building. Working in partnership with parents and the wider school community, the Board ensures that the best interests of all children remain at the centre of decision-making.

## School Staff

The Department of Education and Youth has allocated Ballyduff NS four Mainstream Class Teachers, one Autism Class Teacher, three Special Education Teachers and six Special Needs Assistants for the 2026/2027 school year.

Our staff will comprise of:

<b>Junior &amp; Senior Infants</b>	Mrs Olivia Buckley
<b>First &amp; Second Class</b>	Ms Siobhan O' Connor
<b>Third &amp; Fourth Class</b>	Ms Elizabeth O' Grady (Principal)
<b>Fifth &amp; Sixth Class</b>	Ms Martina Rochford
<b>Autism Class Teacher</b>	TBC
<b>Special Education Teachers</b>	Ms Sheila Egan Ms Orla Casey Mrs Aine Corridan (Job-Share) TBC (Job-Share)
<b>Special Needs Assistants</b>	Ms Pat Lucid Ms Marie O' Caroll Mrs Ann O' Connor Mrs Mary Dowling Mrs Niamh O' Connor Ms Nicola Walsh
<b>Secretary</b>	Ms Lisa O' Connor
<b>Care Taker</b>	Mr Ritchie Power
<b>School Lunches</b>	Mrs Mary O' Mahony

Throughout the year, we will have the support of staff from external agencies such as L.I.N.K. (School Completion Programme), Hurling and Football coaches, Irish Dancing Teacher and Fitness Instructors, amongst others.

## Communication with Parents

It is important for you as parents, for your child and for us in Ballyduff NS, to have open, positive communication with each other. If you have any queries, problems or concerns regarding your child please contact your child's teacher to make an appointment to meet with him/her. It is not always possible for the class teacher to meet 'on the spot' so in order for both teacher and parent to get the most of such a meeting please contact the school in advance to arrange a time to give you the attention and privacy that you may need. When making an appointment, please indicate the nature of your concern, to ensure that the same can be dealt with efficiently and resolved in a timely manner.

### Aladdin



Our school uses Aladdin Connect as the main platform for communication between home and school. Through the Aladdin app, parents can receive school notices, view messages from teachers, submit explanations for absences, give permissions, update contact details and make payments where applicable. We encourage all parents and guardians to download the app and enable notifications to ensure they receive important school information promptly and stay connected with school life. All parents will be given instructions and log-in details for Aladdin on enrolment.

### School Website



Our school website is an important source of information for parents and pupils. It provides updates on school events and activities, school policies, newsletters, calendars and other useful information. Parents are encouraged to visit the website regularly to keep up to date with school news and announcements.

## School App

We also have a school app which allows parents to view news and up to date school events. Details will be provided to all families in September.

## Parent/ Teacher Meetings

Annual parent/teacher meetings take place in October/November. If parents need to meet teachers outside of this time, a meeting can be arranged through the school office.

## Newsletters

We issue termly Newsletters for Parents to keep you informed about activities taking place in school.

## School Reports

School Reports are issued for all children in June each year. The results of Standardised tests are also sent to parents before the end of the school academic year.

## School Office

Lisa, our secretary, is available in the school office at the following times:

- Monday: 8:45am – 1:15pm
- Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday: 8:45am – 12:15pm

If you need to contact us outside of these hours, please send a message on Aladdin or send an email. We will respond to your query as soon as possible. As all other staff will be supporting children in their classrooms, messages may not be checked until after 2:50pm. We request your patience and understanding in this regard.

# The Curriculum

Our school follows the Primary School Curriculum, ensuring that all pupils receive a broad, balanced and inclusive education that supports their academic, social and emotional development.

At present, primary education is undergoing an important period of change, with a redeveloped curriculum being gradually introduced across all schools over the coming years. This implementation will take place on a phased basis to allow for careful planning and effective practice in classrooms.

All teachers will be provided with the necessary training and ongoing supports to guide this process. The staff in Ballyduff NS are fully committed to engaging positively with this professional development to ensure the best possible learning experiences and outcomes for all children.

The new curriculum will place a strong emphasis on active, engaging and inclusive learning, helping children to develop key skills, confidence and a love of learning that will support them throughout their education.

The redeveloped curriculum is organised into new subject areas:

- Primary Languages (Gaeilge, English and Language Awareness)
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)
- Social and Environmental Education (SEE – including History and Geography)
- Wellbeing (Including PE and SPHE)
- Arts Education

Teachers use a variety of resources to explore the curriculum with all children, including but not limited to:

- Teacher designed tasks and activities,
- Concrete materials and artefacts,
- Online tools such as websites, videos, presentations and Apps.
- Books including teacher guides, manuals and children's books/workbooks
- Use of the school environment, surroundings and local community.

## SPHE

Ballyduff NS delivers Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE), in line with the national curriculum and Department of Education guidelines, in an age-appropriate and sensitive manner that supports children's wellbeing, relationships and personal development. The Stay Safe Programme is also taught as part of SPHE to help children learn about personal safety, appropriate boundaries, and how to seek help from trusted adults.

Parents and guardians will be informed when these programmes are being taught, and relevant information about content will be shared in advance where appropriate. While SPHE is a compulsory part of the curriculum, schools may allow limited withdrawal from certain aspects of RSE, at parental request. If parents have any questions or concerns, at any stage, they are encouraged to contact the school, so that these can be discussed and addressed.

## Junior Infant Curriculum / Stage One

In Junior Infants, the curriculum focuses on helping children settle happily into school and develop a strong foundation for future learning. Play-based and active learning is central, allowing children to learn through exploration, movement, talk and hands-on experiences. There is a strong emphasis on

developing early language, communication, numeracy and social skills, while also supporting wellbeing, independence and confidence.

The curriculum encourages curiosity, creativity and positive relationships, ensuring that each child feels safe, included and supported as they begin their school journey.

Before any formal learning can take place, children need a solid base in foundational skills which are the focus of Junior Infants. A few examples of what these include are:

- **Primary Language Curriculum**

- Oral Language – Speaking and Listening
- Rhymes, Stories & Picture Books
- Shared Reading- using ‘Big Books’.
- Collaborative Reading
- Collaborative Writing
- Using the class library



- **Pre-Reading Skills**

- Looking and Listening
- Auditory Discrimination
- Matching / Odd One Out / Spot the Difference
- Sequencing- First / Next / Last
- Left to Right Orientation

- **Pre Writing Skills**

- Pencil Grip
- Colouring – developing accuracy
- Hand eye coordination
- Matching – drawing lines.
- Copying simple shapes / drawing pictures

- **Phonological Awareness**

Early phonological awareness refers to a child's ability to hear, recognise and play with the sounds in spoken language. In infants, this includes skills such as recognising rhymes, identifying syllables in words, hearing and producing initial sounds, and listening carefully to sound patterns in words. These early skills are developed through songs, nursery rhymes, storytelling and playful language activities, and they form an important foundation for learning to read and spell.

- **Early Maths Development**

- Matching
- Sorting
- Early Counting and Number Recognition
- Recognising shapes and colours
- Spatial Awareness
- Comparing Quantities
- One-to-one correspondence



## Parental Involvement

In Ballyduff NS, we live by our motto “When parents and teachers work together, children are the winners.” We greatly value the support and involvement of parents, as working together helps create the best possible learning experience for every child. There are several ways that you can get involved and make a positive contribution to the school community:

- Going forward for election to the BOM when the opportunity arises.
- Becoming involved in the Parents’ Association- all parents are invited to meetings so you can still attend and keep up to date with school activities without becoming a member of the committee.
- Fundraising
- Supporting the school’s extra-curricular activities.
- Volunteering time for gardening around the school.

## Parents’ Association

Our Parents’ Association plays an important role in supporting the work of the school and strengthening the partnership between home and school. It provides a valuable link for communication, organises fundraising and school events, and works closely with the school community to enhance the learning environment for all pupils. We greatly appreciate the ongoing support and involvement of all parents. We strongly encourage all parents to attend the Parents’ Association meetings and become involved in the school community.

Some of the regular work of the Ballyduff NS Parents’ Association includes:

- Organising an annual Christmas Hamper Draw. This is one of the PA’s biggest fundraisers and has been running for over 20 years.

- Assists with Carol Singing, Christmas Carol Service, School Concerts, Fundraisers and other school events.
- Organising treats for special events such as First Holy Communion, Confirmation, Christmas, Easter and Graduation.

Fundraising goes towards providing special treats to all children, subsidising costs of school events such as swimming, dancing and funding extra-curricular activities such as Music and Drama.

When parents and teachers  
work together, the children  
are the winners.



## Helping your child settle in to school

There are many ways in which you can help your child to settle into and enjoy school life and in particular their first year in Junior Infants.

- Write their name on **EVERYTHING** – coats, hats, bags, lunchboxes, clothing etc
- Teach your child how to take off and put on his/her coat, and how to open and close zips, buttons, buckles and laces.
- Show your child how to use and flush the toilet properly and how to wash their hands properly.
- Encourage your child to share their toys and to tidy up after playing.
- Choose a lunch box and flask that is easy to open.
- Give some thought to lunches – try to provide a lunch/snack that they can eat independently. For example, peel oranges, cut apples etc. Easy to open foods are best to promote independence.
- Talk to your child about their new school. Look at our school website together to help familiarise them with the facilities and activities that they will soon experience for themselves.
- Sing nursery rhymes and songs- this greatly helps phonological awareness in preparation for early reading skills.
- Read stories with your child regularly- discuss the story together.
- Explore colours in the world around us. Play games involving naming colours, sorting items of similar colours, painting/colouring etc so they naturally become familiar with the colours all around us.
- Encourage and help build resilience (the ability to bounce back from adversity) Encourage good behaviour and praise them positively.
- Have fun together! Play is a child's tool for learning and they learn best when having fun with their friends and adults!



## Homework

- Children will be assigned age-appropriate homework on weekdays- no homework is assigned at weekends.
- Junior Infants will begin to receive homework at the end of September.
- Their homework will be accompanied with a homework sheet which outlines each of the tasks to be completed each night.
- If you have any questions about their homework, please contact the class teacher with a note or on an Aladdin message.

## Tips to support your child's learning at home

- Check your child's bag every night.
- Ensure your child has pencils, colours, eraser and sharpener for school. Have spares at home for homework and for free play.
- Chat to your child about what they are learning at school. Try to build it into everyday activities- e.g. if they are learning numbers- ask them to count out the cutlery for dinner. For phonics, can they play eye-spy with sounds- e.g. I spy something that sounds like...

## Toys and Games that support learning

- Jigsaws and puzzles – support concentration and problem solving.
- Lego/Play Dough- supports motor skills as well as concentration & creativity.
- Art & Crafts: Scissors, Glue, Colours and Paint help develop fine motor skills
- Role -Play Materials: Develop social skills and emotional development.
- Skipping & Ball Play- develop coordination and gross motor skills.
- Card Games: Develop social skills, turn taking, following rules and builds resilience when we don't win every time!



## Extra-Curricular Activities

Extra-curricular activities are an important part of school life in Ballyduff, providing children with opportunities to develop new skills, discover talents and build confidence outside the classroom. Participation in activities such as sport, music, art and clubs encourages teamwork, leadership, creativity and a sense of belonging. These experiences enrich pupils' education and contribute positively to their overall wellbeing and personal development.

### External Supports

For some activities, the school engages with external coaches to give the children the opportunity to have expert guidance in specialist areas, such as:

- Swimming Lessons: First to Sixth Class have 6 lessons each year in Ballybunion Sports and Leisure Centre.
- Irish Dancing: Junior Infants to Second Class have a six week block of lessons with dancing teacher, Michael Murphy.
- GAA Coaching: Hurling and Football coaches from Kerry GAA work with all classes throughout the year.
- Ballyduff Tidy Towns: We work closely with Ballyduff Tidy Town's Committee on projects within and beyond our school grounds. They support us in educating the children about Biodiversity and the importance of take care of our natural surroundings.
- Music and Drama: We engage in the support of Kilmoyley School of Music to produce a school play. Due to the time and expense required, we hope to run these every two years.



## In School Awards

- Active Schools Award: Through the Active School initiative, we promote the importance of physical activity and encourage all pupils to enjoy being active every day for their health and wellbeing.
- Digital Schools: As a Digital School, we use technology to enhance teaching and learning, helping pupils develop the digital skills they need to learn, create and communicate effectively.
- Food Dudes School: Our participation in the Food Dudes programme encourages pupils to develop healthy eating habits by enjoying a variety of fruits and vegetables as part of a balanced diet.

## School Sports

Ballyduff NS has a very proud sporting tradition. We aim to give children the opportunity to try out a wide variety of different sports through in school PE lessons and also through representing the school in different sporting competitions.

Some school sporting events in which we participate include:

- GAA: Football and Hurling: Cumann na mBunscoil, Mini-7s, Individual Skills competitions and several non-competitive fun blitzes.
- Soccer: FAIS competition; School lunch time soccer league.
- Athletics: Indoor and Outdoor Schools Athletics competitions.
- Basketball: Indoor School competitions.



## Non-Sporting Extra-Curricular Activities

In addition to sporting activities, we strongly believe that children should have the opportunity to participate in alternative events. Some of these include

- Credit Union Quiz
- Credit Union Art Competition
- Chess Club

## Student Council

Our Student Council gives pupils a voice in school life by representing their classmates, sharing ideas and working with staff to help improve our school community. Our student council is made up of representatives from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Class. Some initiatives led by our Student Council include:

- Organising Fundraising Events such as Bake Sales, Jumble Sales.
- Making decisions about how to use money raised e.g. resources for break times.
- Organising Halloween Party for all Class.
- Maintenance and development of our school garden.
- Organising charity fundraisers such as Easter Raffles to raise money for charities close to the school such as Palliative Care, UHK.



## Additional Information



### School Books

Our school participates in the Free School Books Scheme, which provides all pupils with the required schoolbooks, workbooks and core classroom resources free of charge. This initiative helps to reduce the financial burden on families and ensures that every child has access to the materials they need to fully participate in school life and learning.

Parents will be given a list of additional resources that they will need to provide for their children such as pencils, colours, folders etc.

School contributions will be finalised shortly for the 2026/2027 school year. Parents will also be asked for contributions towards different activities during the year such as swimming, school trips etc.

### School Lunches



Our school also participates in the School Meals Programme, which provides all pupils with a healthy lunch each school day. The programme supports children's wellbeing and learning by ensuring they have access to nutritious, hot food throughout the school day. It also promotes healthy eating habits and helps create a positive and inclusive school environment for all pupils.

We avail of the services of a company called 'The Lunch Bag' to provide this service. Participation is optional, and pupils may choose to opt out of the programme or avail of the school lunches on selected days of the week. Details of the associated App and log in details will be provided to all families.

Parents will need to provide healthy drinks and a snack for small break each day.

## Healthy Eating Policy

Ballyduff NS has a Healthy Eating Policy which encourages healthy eating and aims to help children develop good eating habits. We ask parents and guardians to provide packed lunches that include healthy foods such as sandwiches, wraps, fruit, vegetables, yoghurt, cheese, and water. Foods that are high in sugar, salt, or fat, such as sweets, chocolate bars, fizzy drinks, and energy drinks, are not permitted at school and should not be included in lunchboxes.

By working together, we can help children make healthier choices, stay energised throughout the school day, and develop habits that support their overall wellbeing.

## School Savings Scheme



Our School Savings Scheme, using Post Office Savings Stamps, encourages pupils to develop positive saving habits from an early age. Children can save small amounts regularly throughout the year and may use their savings towards the cost of their annual school tour. Saving Stamps are on sale every Friday in school for €4. Children who wish to save larger amounts are encouraged to continue their savings independently outside of school.

## Health Issues / Medicine

If your child has any health concerns such as allergies, asthma etc, please advise the school accordingly.

If your child needs any medicine while at school, special arrangements can be made. **Under no circumstances, can any child have medicine in their school bag or take medicine unsupervised in school.**

## School Insurance

In addition to the school Public Liability Insurance, the Board of Management advises that all children avail of 24 Hour Personal Accident Insurance. This covers the child 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Annual cost is €7.00 per child approximately and can be paid via the school office at the beginning of the school year.

## School Absences



Regular school attendance is important as it helps children make the most of their learning, build friendships, and take part fully in school life. If your child is going to be absent or late, please notify the school as soon as possible and provide a reason for the absence. You can notify the school through the Aladdin for Schools App. Registration details will be provided to all families on enrolment.

**In accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, schools are required to notify Tusla's Educational Welfare Service when a child accumulates 20 or more days of absence during a school year.**

## Mobile Phones /Social Media





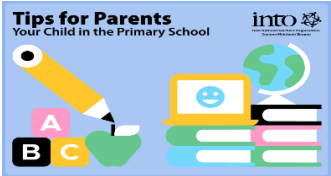

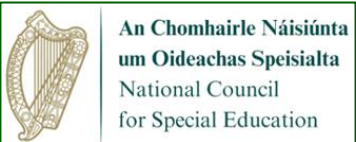

Children are not permitted to have mobile phones in school. If a child does have a mobile phone in school, it will be taken by a teacher and will be returned directly to the parents.

We encourage all parents to be vigilant when it comes to children using technology and social media. Please see [www.webwise.ie/parents/](http://www.webwise.ie/parents/) for up-to-date information and support on how to ensure your child is kept safe and makes the most of their time online.



## Further Information

If you would like more information on how to support your child's transition to primary school, the following agencies have support and information for parents, relevant to Ireland's primary schools.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Gov.ie</b> Dept of Children, Disability and Equality</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>NCCA</b> National Council for Curriculum &amp; Assessment</p>
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">   </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Ready For School Support Materials</b></p> <p>The Department of Children, Disability and Equality have a variety of resources to support parents with children starting school.</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">   </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Guidance for Parents</b></p> <p>The NCCA has developed a number of resources to help parents support your child's learning in primary school.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>INTO</b> Irish National Teachers' Organisation</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>NCSE</b> National Council for Special Education</p>
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">   </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tips for Parents</b></p> <p>The INTO hope this publication will give you an understanding of the modern primary school and how it works.</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">   </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Guidance for Parents</b></p> <p>The NCSE has developed guidelines to support parents of children with special educational needs during big changes in their child's educational journey.</p>





## **Ballyduff National School**

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