



BROUGHSHANE  
ROAD  
BALLYMENA  
Co ANTRIM  
BT43 7DX

**Principal:**  
Mr. J. Brady  
B. Ed. Hons, M. Ed, PQH  
(NI)

### **School Closures – Adverse Weather Conditions**

As you will be aware we had to close on Wednesday due to the snow. It is always a difficult decision to close the school at any time and one that must be taken following careful consideration of all the factors involved. This includes consideration of the safety of children, parents & staff in relation to travelling to the school and health & safety issues with the condition of the school site itself. School closures occur in one of two ways. Either we are instructed to close by DENI (as during the recent storms) when we closed for 2 days or we make the decision to close ourselves. When making the decision ourselves we consider the following main factors:

- Is the school site safe enough to bring 400+ children and accompanying adults on to?
- Will enough staff be able to get to work to ensure appropriate supervision for the pupils?

We also try to take the decision in good time as we appreciate that everyone involved needs to make arrangements. Sometimes this means announcing a closure the day before it is due and at other times it means waiting until the day of the possible closure as was the case this week. In making our decision this week we came on site at 6.30am to assess the situation and once we considered all of the factors we began the process of closing the school, informing everyone by approximately 7.15am. While we appreciate a “same day” closure can cause problems this is due to the fact that our **1<sup>st</sup> option for consideration is always keeping the school open if possible.** We would suggest that parents, as no doubt many of you did, make provisional arrangements for childcare etc. during periods of poor weather that can be brought into operation at short notice. We would also like to remind you that the only way you will hear about St. Brigid’s closures will be through our official text messaging service and through the BBC website. We do not communicate these decisions via social media though we do welcome parents sharing information in this way once we have made a text/ BBC announcement. We do know that another St. Brigid’s was listed on one facebook page on Tuesday evening as being closed the next day and this caused confusion as this school’s address was not included in the posting. Hopefully the above helps parents understand the procedures currently in place. We would be pleased to hear from you if you have any suggestions as to how we could improve the notification service and we thank you for your support going forward.

### **Incredible Years (Primary 1-3 Parents)**

The Incredible Years programme is an excellent programme that we organise each year in partnership with Ballykeel PS. It is designed to support parents with their children’s development at home and covers areas such as setting boundaries on behaviour, supporting children’s learning, strengthening children’s emotional health and social skills and setting rules, routines and limits at home etc. The feedback from participants in recent years has been excellent and we would encourage parents to take up the places that are available as they are limited. The programme lasts for 6 sessions and all are delivered in Ballykeel PS by trained staff. Exact dates and times are not available just yet but sessions take place in the morning (usually 9.15am-11.15am) during February- March and crèche facilities are provided for parents attending. Transport can also be provided for parents attending and everything is funded so there is no cost to attend. If you are interested, please contact Mrs. Brady asap. Parents who have previously completed the programme are welcome to attend again.

### **Primary 1 Parents – Postponed Phonics Meeting**

This meeting has been rescheduled for Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February at 9.15am.

### **Catholic Schools Week**

Catholic Schools Week takes place from Mon 29<sup>th</sup> Jan to Fri 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb. Two dates for your diary are the Annual Grandparent Assembly on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> Jan at 9.15am to which all grandparents of children at the school are invited and our St. Brigid’s Day Mass in All Saints Church on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> February at 10.00am

### **Monday Morning Mass**

P7 classes will attend Mass on Monday morning at 10.00am in All Saints Church. As the children will be walking to the church they require appropriate footwear and a coat.

### **Do This In Memory Programme – 1<sup>st</sup> Holy Communion Children (P4)**

The above programme is organised for all P4 children making their 1<sup>st</sup> Holy Communion this year. The children, their parents and other family members are invited to attend a series of masses between now and their Communion day. The 1<sup>st</sup> mass takes place in All Saints Church on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> February and will be followed by a parents meeting immediately afterwards. Further dates will be given to parents when we have received them.

**Other Notices On Reverse.....**



T 028 2563 3450  
F 028 2563 3458

### Class Assemblies

The following Class Assemblies will take place on Friday mornings at 9.15am. All family members of the children involved are warmly invited to attend. Mrs. McCann (P2) on Fri 26<sup>th</sup> January/ Mr. Cunningham (P5) on Fri 2<sup>nd</sup> February/ Miss. McAfee (P2) on Fri 23<sup>rd</sup> February/ Mr C. Killough (P6) on Fri 16<sup>th</sup> March and Mrs. Killough (P1) on Fri 23<sup>rd</sup> March.

### Parent/ Teacher Meetings/ Primary 7 Transfer Meetings

**Newcomer parents** – Week beginning Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> January. **School will continue as normal this week with finishing times unchanged.**

**Local Parents** – Week beginning Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February. Appointment times will be forwarded to parents at the start of next week. Please note that during the above meetings school will finish at 1.00pm for all classes on Monday 5<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> & Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February. Parents of children in P7 will be given 2 appointment times running one after the other. This is to enable them to meet the class teacher followed by a meeting with Mr. Brady to complete the Transfer Form.

### School Camogie Team

Well done to our Camogs who participated in the Cumman Na mBunscol Indoor 5 a Side competition in the Antrim Forum this week. They acquitted themselves well and missed out on a semi-final place by 1 point. Well done girls!



**Our school hurling team who participated in the Indoor 5 a Side competition last week**



**Our Camogs who just missed out on their 5 a side semi-final this week**



**Certificate winners from assembly last week**



**Handwriting Licences were presented last week**

