



## ***Braidside Integrated Primary and Nursery School***

**89 Fry's Road, Ballymena Co. Antrim BT43 7EN  
1989- 2019: 30 Years of Integration**

**028 25647899**



**Principal: J McAuley  
www.braidside.co.uk**

**17/9/2021**

Dear Parent/ Guardian,



I hope this newsletter finds you all safe and well. Since our return just over 2 weeks ago, the children have been settling well into their new classes. It is great to see them participate well in class, interact with their classmates and teachers and engage in different activities.

From next week our P1 classes will be staying until 1pm and will have their lunch in the dining hall, which I'm sure they are looking forward too. The move to the dinner hall from classroom-based lunches has been positive; the children enjoy seeing others and moving to another location in the school. Please note, if your child takes school meals and has any dietary requirements, please do make the school aware. We have specific forms which we will ask parents to complete and which will be forwarded to the EA kitchen.

Towards the end of September, all the teachers will be providing parents with an information sheet about the year ahead, in terms of topic details and any specific class related information. Throughout these first few weeks, teachers are very much focused on settling in processes, pupil wellbeing, getting to know the children and completing some baseline assessments to ascertain where the children are in their learning. We prioritise in school time and for that reason; with the exception of perhaps P7; homework will not start in earnest until October.

### **Making contact**

At this time, when we are unable to have parents in the school premises, if you have a query you may contact the school office or send an email

([info@braidsideintegratedps.ballymena.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@braidsideintegratedps.ballymena.ni.sch.uk)). If there is a specific issue you wish to discuss, I would ask all parents to make an appointment with the class teacher in advance of accessing the school. **All visitors to the school are required to wear a face covering on the premises.**

I would continue to encourage parents to visit the website and Facebook page regularly to ensure you are up to date with all relevant information. Please visit your child's class page where teachers will place information, pictures and updates on the work happening in school. A large number of families have now downloaded the SchoolsNI app and this allows us to send alerts to parents when information is placed on the website.



### BIKE TO SCHOOL WEEK: Mon 20<sup>th</sup>- 24<sup>th</sup> September

Next week will be Bike to School week and we hope lots of children will take the opportunity to travel actively to school. We have had great success with our Sustrans programme and love to see the children coming to school this way.

On Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup>, our Sustrans officer Johnny McCrystal will be in school for Dr Bike sessions, which the P5-7 children can avail of, if they are having issues with their bikes.

Fingers crossed we get a reasonable week in terms of the weather!

### Staffing Updates

Next week we will say goodbye to one of our long-serving members of the Foundation Stage Team, Diane Christie. We will be very sad to see Diane leave us. She has been a highly skilled, experienced and valued classroom assistant who has welcomed many P1s to Braidside over the years. We would like to offer Diane our best wishes for the future!

Following a recruitment process in the summer, Tanya Magill will begin the role of P1 assistant next week.

### ENGAGE II



In September 2020, the Department of Education launched the “Engage Programme” with the objective of supporting children and young people as they returned to school following the first lockdown from March- June 2020. The aim was that the programme would “*limit any long-term adverse impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on educational*

*standards by supporting pupils’ learning and engagement... through provision of high quality one-to-one, small group or team teaching in every school in NI.”*

All schools were allocated funding on the basis of their enrolment size and free school meal entitlement. The funding that Braidside received enabled us to engage a full-time teacher for the remainder of the 2020-21 school year. A plan of numeracy support, designed to give children a boost, was put in place and children throughout P3-P5 were identified through assessments, who would receive small group support in an intensive manner for a period of 6-8 weeks. This enabled the children to develop and reinforce their mathematical knowledge, as well as expand their confidence and enthusiasm.

Now as we commence 2021/22, a further year of Engage funding has been confirmed and we are delighted to note that, we will provide numeracy sessions throughout the year for a variety of classes. The numeracy sessions will be delivered this year by Miss O’Kane and Mrs Speers.

### COVID-19

On our school website parents should find a flow chart for pupils in a school setting, from the PHA, for reference.

Parents are reminded that children who are experiencing any COVID symptoms should not be sent to school. We continue to promote regular handwashing, good hygiene measures supported by a rigorous cleaning regime in school. We would ask

that parents continue to revisit good hygiene habits at home, especially as we approach cold and flu season.

I hope we can all look forward to another successful school year. We will continue to keep parents abreast of events and activities in school and we thank you for your continue support.

Yours faithfully,

\_\_\_\_*J McAuley*\_\_\_\_

Principal.