

# Dromara Primary School



***‘Happy children;  
learning and achieving together.’***

36 Hillsborough Road, Dromara, Co. Down, BT 25 2BL

Phone/Fax: 028 9753 2875

Website: [www.dromaraps.org](http://www.dromaraps.org)

Email: [info@dromaraps.org](mailto:info@dromaraps.org)

## Information Booklet 2023/24

Although you may be familiar with many procedures in Dromara Primary, please take time to read this booklet as some information has been updated.

Please note in particular information regarding:

- School dinners including free school meals;
- Paying via SchoolMoney App;
- Administration of medication;
- Communication (Primary365 App / email / SMS / Website / Facebook).

## Staff

Mr A Armstrong	Principal
Mrs H Milligan	Vice-Principal/Year 6 Teacher (Learning Support Co-ordinator)
Mrs C Price	Year 1 Teacher
Miss V Briggs	Year 2 Teacher (Mon-Thu)
Mrs K Irvine	Year 3 Teacher
Mrs R Vaughan	Year 4 Teacher (Mon-Wed) / Year 2 Teacher (Fri)
Mrs J Reain	Year 4 Teacher (Thu-Fri)
Mr B Bovis	Year 5 Teacher (Mon-Tue)
Mrs S Cairns	Year 5 Teacher (Wed-Fri)
Mr D Blakely	Year 7 Teacher
Mrs C Law	Learning Support Teacher (Mon-Wed)
<i>Secretary:</i>	Ms Christina McClenaghan
<i>Classroom Assistants:</i>	Mrs V Bennett, Mrs J Dawson, Mrs S McCrea, Ms M Megarry, Mrs D Perry, Mrs L Rice, Mrs C Skillen, Miss E Somerville, Mrs M Thompson, Mrs R Winter, Mrs D Wilson
<i>Buildings Supervisor:</i>	Mrs A Graham
<i>Cleaner:</i>	Ms C Killen
<i>Ancillary Staff:</i>	Mrs L McMullan, Ms C Killen
<b>Child Protection</b>	
Mrs H Milligan	- Designated Teacher
Mr A Armstrong	- Deputy Designated Teacher

## Board of Governors

<i>Transferors</i>	Mrs I Burrows (Chair), Mr R Kernaghan, Mrs L Dougan
<i>Parents</i>	Dr A Heanen
<i>Teacher</i>	Mrs H Milligan
<i>EA-SE</i>	Mrs I Martin (Vice-Chair)
<i>Secretary</i>	Mr A Armstrong

Welcome to another year in the life of Dromara Primary - with an especially warm welcome to the Year 1 pupils who are starting out on their school careers, and to other pupils who are joining us in other year groups. We hope that you have had a restful summer and that pupils and parents are ready to join with all our staff to make this year another special one.

**We trust that this booklet will prove useful. Please keep it in a safe place for reference. Also remember to check our website regularly for updates. We encourage you to 'like' our Facebook page and that you keep an eye on your email, so please provide us with an up to date email address and mobile phone number to receive text messages.**

## **Attendance**

Please have your child in school ready to start work by 9.10am. Children arriving after this time will be marked as 'late'. At Dromara PS child safety is of paramount importance, so **please do not leave pupils off before 9.00 am.**



**All pupils should proceed directly to their classes.**

**Please drop pupils off at the appropriate gate/door and vacate the school grounds. Parents should not remain in the playground or accompany their child(ren) into school.**

In the afternoons, please collect children promptly and keep us informed if you are running late or if someone different is going to be collecting your child or if there are changes to arrangements for how they are to travel home e.g. not getting the bus and will be collected.

Please do not bring dogs into the school grounds.

Parents should enter the school grounds and collect pupils rather than waiting outside the gates.

Messages must be relayed via – a note to the teacher or a phone call to the office. Non-urgent messages can be relayed through an email on [info@dromaraps.org](mailto:info@dromaraps.org)



**Start dates and holidays** – please refer to the last page.

Parents have been notified of specific days/times on which their children should attend as part of our transition arrangements for Y1 and Y2.

Y1 finish at 12.15pm each day until Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

From Monday 25<sup>th</sup> to Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September, they will finish at 12.55pm and will require packed lunch or school dinners ordered.

From Monday 2<sup>ND</sup> October onwards, they will finish at 1.45pm.

Y2 finish at 1.55pm each day.

Y3 finish at 3.00pm on a Monday & Tuesday (from Mon 4<sup>th</sup> September); 1.55pm on Wednesday to Friday.

Y4-7 finish at 3.00pm each day.

***It is vital that all Y1-3 pupils are collected promptly as teachers have additional teaching commitments.***

We cannot emphasise enough the importance of regular attendance and the school policy is available on the website. *“Excellent attendance at school is important to allow a child or young person to fulfil their potential. Young people who regularly miss school without good reason are more likely to become isolated from their friends, to underachieve in examinations and/or become involved in anti-social behaviour.”* (DENI)

Establish a good routine for your child. Every day counts. Remember, 90% attendance may not seem too serious, but that child will have actually missed 3 weeks and 4 days of teaching!



## **Focus on Punctuality**

Children who miss school or are regularly late can never recover certain essential parts of their school day such as settling down to get ready to learn, the lesson's introduction, important announcements, explanations and the thinking that makes learning come alive and gets them ready for the rest of the day. Of course, when your child grows up and seeks a job, they will quickly learn that employers need reliable, dependable and responsible people to fill employment positions. Being punctual from an early age equips them with the skills to keep it up as adults.

You may think that your child is only missing a few minutes in the morning, but a pupil who is 10 minutes late every day will miss 30 hours of teaching during the year. Lack of punctuality affects learning and behaviour, not only of the pupil who is late, but also for all other learners in the class. Pupils arriving late disrupt the class and reduce learning time for the rest of the class. *If your child arrives more than 10 minutes late, they are marked as 'late after registration closed' which records an absence for that morning session.*

### **Pupil Absences and Appointments**

Hopefully your child will be healthy and in school every day. However, if they are absent, please ensure that you provide a reason for any absences. We are required by DENI to record all absences with reasons, as well as late marks. Educational Welfare may investigate if reasons are not given or if unacceptable reasons are given. **Please contact school by telephone or email on the first day of absence.** If a child is off school and no contact has been made with the school, we may contact you to confirm why your child is absent or an absence slip may be sent home on your child's return. However, it would be helpful if you could let us know immediately.

Remember, if a child is attending a medical appointment for part of a session and you have notified us in advance, the child will still receive a present mark if they return to school during a morning session or leave after afternoon registration. We would ask that you try not to remove siblings from school for appointments for other children. Please help us to keep our records up to date and accurate.

### **Personal Data and Permission Form**



Your child will receive a **data collection sheet and a permission form**. We would ask parents to amend/complete these and return them to the class teacher by **Friday 8<sup>th</sup> September**. **Please ensure the school office is notified of any changes in your personal information, especially mobile telephone numbers.** In case of emergencies, it is important that we hold at least 2 contacts for each child.

### **Curriculum Information**

This will be posted on our school website during the first term. Select the 'Classes' drop down menu from where you can navigate to your child's class page.

### **School Policies and other downloadable documents**

The 'Parents' page drop down menu gives access to policies, absence slips, etc. Alternatively, if you require hard copies, please contact the school office.

### **Meetings with Staff**

#### ***Remember:***

- If you wish to speak to a teacher, ***please make an appointment*** as teachers have other duties/meetings/preparation mornings and afternoons. Please do not just 'pop in', especially when dropping off children in the morning.
- Messages can be relayed to teachers via a note with your child (older pupils can relay messages verbally) or through the school office.

Thank you for keeping interruptions to a minimum.



### **Procedures for concerns**

If you have any concerns, contact the office to arrange an appointment with your child's teacher. Please inform the office what the concern is about and the teacher will make contact with you – very often concerns can be resolved with a brief phone call. If necessary, a follow-up appointment can then be made with the Principal or Vice-Principal.



## **Medication (including inhalers) and allergies**

It is essential that the school is informed of any medical requirements immediately, including any medication taken outside of school that may have a bearing on the pupil's learning or behaviour.

- **Medication in school**

In all cases, an 'Administration of Medication' form must be completed. If your child requires long term medication, eg, an inhaler, please ensure that they have it in school. If a pupil requires medication to be taken in school for a short period e.g. antibiotics, then the form must be completed by a parent and agreed with the Principal before medicines are sent into school. This form is available on the website. All medicines must be handed adult to adult, not sent in your child's bag.

- **Allergies**

Pupils with allergies and food intolerances (as opposed to dislikes) should be identified to the school immediately. If a pupil requires an EpiPen/anti-histamines then an appropriate care plan should be drawn up in consultation with the school. If a pupil has a dietary need and receives school meals, a meeting needs to be arranged with the Principal and catering staff before a meal can be supplied.



## **Behaviour and safety**

We would greatly appreciate parental support in reinforcing the messages we encourage the children to remember: *No rough play; Good manners and politeness; Being friendly and including others; Always do your best etc.* For those pupils travelling by bus it is important that they remain seated at all times, be courteous and get on/off the bus safely.



## **School uniform and belongings**

Please ensure that your child comes to school neat and tidy, in correct uniform, including black shoes, **with all items clearly labelled**. 'Signature Works' and 'School Trends' supply our embroidered items. Pupils should refrain from wearing jewellery (including earrings) and from using cosmetics/tattoos, nail varnish, etc.



Please ensure that your child has all items requested on the 'class equipment' sheet and that all belongings including pens, rulers etc are labelled. Do not bring valuable items to school. We cannot be responsible for them. If your child loses a reading book, there will be £10 charge for replacement. Due to budget restraints, parents may also be asked to replace lost exercise books, etc. Please encourage your child to take good care of their belongings.

## **Money**

### **We now operate a cashless system.**

Apart from a few occasions, all purchases must be made via the SchoolMoney App. Details on how to register are available on the school website or from the school office.

## **School dinners**

Meals cost £2.60 and will be available from Friday 1<sup>st</sup> September (meals for that week should be ordered on 30<sup>th</sup> or 31<sup>st</sup> August). This cost is under review by Education Authority, but we will inform you immediately of any changes.

School dinners should be ordered via the SchoolMoney App – meals for the week ahead can be ordered up to midnight on the Sunday evening before.

It is also possible to order and pay for multiple weeks in advance. If a child is absent, then paid meals will be refunded.



*Payment needs to be made before a meal can be provided.* *If your child requests a dinner which has not been paid for, someone from school will contact you to ask you to bring a packed lunch instead.*

Orders are placed with Ballynahinch kitchen by 9.40 am. **As meals are prepared offsite, we do not have the facility to provide meals for children who have forgotten to order one or arrive late.** The kitchen sends the exact number of meals ordered.

### Free School Meals

Could your child be entitled to a

**FREE school meal?**



All meal entitlement ends on 30<sup>th</sup> June each year. If you received free school meals previously and have not yet reapplied, please do so as soon as possible. Application is made through The Education Authority who then inform the school of children who are entitled to Free School Meals. ***If you are eligible, please make sure you apply for Free School Meals by the end of September, even if you think you may not actually use them. This affects our school budget.*** Please contact the school office if you require further information. We can only provide a free meal to children where we have received confirmation of entitlement from the Education Authority. **Unless we have been notified in advance, if your child arrives to school after 9.40 am, please provide them with a packed lunch.**

### Healthy Eating and allergies



Please try to ensure that your child has a healthy snack for their break. We will continue to encourage children to choose healthy options and to reinforce the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. We encourage pupils to stay hydrated during school, as there is a proven benefit to their health and learning ability. However, we ask that pupils **only bring bottles of water** to school. Please do not send any fizzy drinks, juice or 'power' drinks. Policy is available online.

**As we have several pupils who have nut allergies, therefore we would remind parents not to send foods containing nuts into school – thank you for your support.**

### Extra-curricular Activities and Events

Children can normally participate in a wide range of activities throughout the year. Details will be updated on the website. Please remember to return any permission forms promptly.

### Morning and Afternoon Wrap-Around Care

Unfortunately, there was a very low response to the morning club last term and we are unable to run it for the foreseeable future.

### Our School

The staff have been busy over the summer making sure that the school and grounds are clean and tidy. Please do all you can to help us keep it that way by ensuring that it is litter free inside, in the playgrounds, car parks, garden and community areas. Please remind your child(ren) of the importance of looking after our school.

### **Car Parking**

- Please do not park on the yellow zigzag lines at the front of the school.
- Regarding these markings, The Highway Code states,
- **“Keep entrance clear of stationary vehicles, even if picking up or setting down children.”**



Please do not park on double yellow lines.

Regarding these markings, The Highway Code states, **“No waiting at any time.”**



- **Please do not park in/across driveways of residents. There have been instances when nursing staff or ambulances have not been able to gain access.**
- Please do not park on the driveway in/out of the car park (**or on the footpath**) as this blocks other cars from getting in/out. Park in the designated parking spaces.
- Please exercise courtesy and patience in the vicinity of the school, especially at peak times.
- The school takes the safety of its pupils and those who are dropping off and picking up very seriously, but it needs your co-operation to ensure that this is done safely.
- **Please pass this note on to child-minders/nurseries/relatives that may collect your child(ren).**  
Pupils should enter school via the pedestrian entrance. Please use the footpaths provided.

We ask everyone to be vigilant when using the car park, both when driving and when walking across the car park to footpaths.

Thank you for your help in keeping **your** children safe.



### **Infection Control advice for parents**

If your child is feeling unwell, it is advisable to keep them off school until they feel better, especially with colds, coughs etc. They will recover more quickly and this reduces the risk of spreading infections. The guidelines below are general and if you are in any doubt please contact your doctor.

Parents are very good at letting us know if a child has an infection, so please continue to do this.

- **Vomiting/Diarrhoea**

If your child has been sent home from school with vomiting/diarrhoea or has had these symptoms before coming to school, they should not return to school until they have been symptom free for 48 hours.

- **Common childhood infections**

## **When should my child return to school?**



<b>Chicken Pox</b> When all spots have crusted over **	<b>Conjunctivitis</b> None*	<b>Diarrhoea &amp; Vomiting</b> 48 hours from last episode	<b>Glandular Fever</b> None*	<b>Hand, foot &amp; mouth</b> None*	<b>Impetigo</b> When lesions are crusted & healed or 48 Hours after commencing antibiotics
<b>Measles or German Measles</b> 4 days from onset of rash **	<b>Mumps</b> 5 days from onset of swelling **	<b>Scabies</b> After first treatment	<b>Scarlet Fever</b> 24 hours after commencing antibiotics	<b>Slapped Cheek</b> None* **	<b>Whooping Cough</b> 48 Hours after commencing antibiotics
	<b>Flu</b> Until recovered	<b>Head Lice</b> None*	<b>Threadworms</b> None*	<b>Tonsillitis</b> None*	

\*\*Please inform the school urgently of these conditions due to the serious risk to vulnerable children and pregnant women.

\*Although there is no specific exclusion period for these infections, if your child is not feeling well they should be given time off to recover as well as preventing spread of the illness. Treatment may be required.

- **Head injury advice**

Observe your child carefully and please seek medical advice if any of the following occur or you have concerns about your child:

- They complain of increasing headaches despite taking simple painkillers
- They vomit more than once
- They complain of dizziness
- They appear confused (disorientated or muddled up)
- They become increasingly drowsy/difficult to rouse



- They develop eyesight problems
- They have a fit (call 999 for an ambulance)
- They have problems understanding/speaking
- They have a loss of balance or problems walking
- They have clear fluid/blood coming from nose/ears or new deafness in one or both ears
- They collapse or are unconscious (call 999 for an ambulance)

For any concussion injury we would strongly suggest that your child is assessed by a qualified medical doctor. This is a priority and should be undertaken without delay. For our information, please inform school if your child has sustained a concussion injury, especially when this has occurred outside school.

## Communication



### Primary 365 App, Website, Facebook, Text, Email, Telephone and School Office

*"Parents and teachers work together for a common goal:  
to facilitate the best educational experience possible for the children".*

As ever, we will have a busy year and school may communicate with parents in various ways.

Monthly **newsletters** are available on the website. These contain information for the following month and we ask parents to make a note of dates/times.

#### **Primary365 App**

As we are now paperless, **it is vital that you download the Primary365 App**. Instructions are on the school website. All newsletters and other notes will be placed here. The advantage is that notes will not get missed in schoolbags and you will, on most occasions, have the information before your child comes home.

We would remind parents to regularly check the **school website**, [www.dromaraps.org](http://www.dromaraps.org), which is frequently updated – it's a great place to find answers! Perhaps you could bookmark the page on your phone or save it in the browser of your computer or tablet for quick access to up-to-date information. This includes:

- |                               |                            |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| - Contact Information         | - Updates on the Home Page |
| - Newsletters                 | - Calendar                 |
| - Policies and forms          | - Class pages              |
| - Extra-curricular activities | - Dinner Menu              |



Our **Facebook page** is also regularly updated. We encourage you to 'like' the page so that you will receive updates, and 'like' and 'share' posts, but Facebook is for information only - Messenger is not available and we appreciate parents not leaving comments.



A message may be sent from school via **text** or **email** to a child's primary contact number (supplied to school on the data collection form). This is usually in an emergency situation or for important reminders.



Non-urgent messages may be left on our answering machine or sent by email. **Office hours** are 9.00 am – 12.45 pm and there is no guarantee that telephone messages or emails will be picked up outside of these times.

Teachers may write messages in your child's **homework diary** and notes from school will be sent home in their **schoolbag**. Please check daily. It is a parent's responsibility to return any permission forms on time. If a permission form is not returned, an alternative activity will be provided for your child.

Parents can contact school by sending a note in with your child, speaking in person to the office or telephoning /sending an email.

# Holidays and Closures 2023–24\*

School begins for all Y2-7 pupils on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> August at 9.00 am  
School will end for all pupils at 12.15pm Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> - Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> August

Y1 pupils will be given individual starting dates and times as part of their induction.

Normal school hours from Friday 1<sup>st</sup> September with bus and school meals available.

## **School closed on the following dates (all dates are inclusive):**

Mon 30 Oct 2023 - Fri 3 Nov 2023 (5 days) half term

*School will close on Friday 27 Oct at 1.00pm*

Fri 22 Dec 2023 – Wed 3 Jan 2024 (9 days) Christmas

*School will close on Thu 21 Dec at 12.15 (Y1-3 + older siblings) / 12.25pm (remaining Y4-7 pupils)*

Mon 12 Feb 2024 - Fri 16 Feb 2024 (5 days) half term

*School will close on Friday 9 Feb at 1.45pm (Y1) / 1.55pm (Y2-3 + older siblings) / 2.05pm (remaining Y4-7)*

Mon 18 March 2024 (1 day) St Patrick's Day

*School will close on Friday 15 March at 1.45pm (Y1) / 1.55pm (Y2-3 + older siblings) / 2.05pm (remaining Y4-7)*

Thu 28 March - Wed 10 Apr 2024 (10 days) Easter Holiday

*School will close on Wed 27 Mar at 12.15 (Y1-3 + older siblings) / 12.25pm (remaining Y4-7 pupils)*

Mon 6 May 2024 – Tue 7 May 2024 (2 days) Bank Holiday + Staff Day

*School will close on Friday 3 May at 1.45pm (Y1) / 1.55pm (Y2-3 + older siblings) / 2.05pm (remaining Y4-7)*

Mon 27 May - Tue 28 May 2024 (2 days) Bank Holiday + Staff Day

*School will close on Friday 24 May at 1.45pm (Y1) / 1.55pm (Y2-3 + older siblings) / 2.05pm (remaining Y4-7)*

School Year Ends: Fri 28<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 12.15 (Y1-3 + older siblings) / 12.25pm (remaining Y4-7 pupils)

## **Other early closings if appropriate:**

*Parent Interview weeks – all children finish at 1.00pm (Week before half term in October & February.)*

*\* Dates and times are subject to change. Parents will be notified as soon as possible of any amendments.*

Thank you for your co-operation in making school a happy, safe environment for your child.