



**School Personnel:**

Principal: Shane McGrath

Deputy Principal: Joan Martin

In-School Management Team: Moya Walsh

Teaching Staff: Shane McGrath, Sinead O'Sullivan, Eilís Ryan, Claire Upton,  
Moya Walsh

SEN Teaching Staff: Claire Lynch and Joan Martin.

Special Needs Assistants (SNA): Margaret Moore, Maeve Ryan and Margaret McGrath

Ancillary Staff: Helen Dunleavy-Ryan (Secretary), Philip Cantillon (Caretaker)

**School Contact Details:**

Address: Ballinahinch, Birdhill, Newport, Co.Tipperary. V94R234

Phone No: 061 379404

E-mail: [ballinahinchns@gmail.com](mailto:ballinahinchns@gmail.com)

School Website: [www.ballinahinchns.ie](http://www.ballinahinchns.ie)





### Our Mission Statement

- We, the teachers of Ballinahinch National School, wish our school to be a place where all pupils are happy and feel secure.
- We wish our pupils to be well-rounded individuals, who respect others and are tolerant of differences.
- We will strive to help each pupil in our care to achieve his / her full potential

Ballinahinch National School is a co-educational, Catholic, primary school which strives to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and addressed. While Ballinahinch N.S. is a school with a Catholic ethos, it also has due recognition for all other religions. Our school will strive to promote, both individually and collectively, the professional and personal development of teachers through staff development programmes. Our school will encourage the involvement of parents through home/school contacts and through their involvement in the Parents' Association. Our school will endeavour to enhance the self-esteem of everyone in the school community, to imbue in the pupils respect for people and property and to encourage in them the idea of being responsible.

Ballinahinch N.S. will promote gender equity amongst the teachers and pupils.

Déanfaimid iarracht Gaeilge a labhairt.

Our school Motto is:

“Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí”



## **Aims:**

1. To provide a secure and happy atmosphere in which children can learn effectively.
2. To encourage children to become responsible and independent.
3. To foster an attitude of care towards people and things around us.
4. To ensure that children reach the highest possible level in literacy and numeracy, appropriate to their individual ability.
5. To help children to express themselves creatively through language, movement, art and music.
6. To provide children with a wide range of physical activities at both group and individual level.
7. To help children, through religious and moral, historical, geographical and scientific studies, to explore the world in which they are growing up and to understand their own particular place within it.
8. To integrate all children fully, whatever their needs and backgrounds.

## **Creating a Positive Learning Environment**

In Ballinahinch N.S. we strive to facilitate learning by providing a comfortable, safe and secure working environment for staff and students. We do this by taking a positive approach to discipline, using praise and encouragement, and by affirming positive attitudes to work and behaviour. Unacceptable behaviour is dealt with according to our code of discipline and behaviour as outlined below.

## **Code of Behaviour**

### **General Rules:**

1. School starts at 9.20 a.m. All pupils should be in class by then to avoid disruption. Lateness for school and absences require a note from parents to our Aladdin School App. The school will be open to receive pupils at 9.05 a.m. each morning and not before that. Supervision starts at 9.05a.m.

Entrance doors are locked at 9.25 a.m. for security reasons and during school hours entry is through the main door where a buzzer system operates.

(a) On dry days children will drop their bags to their classrooms and play in their designated play yards.

(b) On wet days children go to their classrooms where they will be supervised until their teacher comes to class at 9:20am.

School ends at 2p.m. for Infant and Senior Infant Classes and at 3p.m. for all other children. It is important that children be collected promptly at these times. Collecting children earlier, except in the case of medical or other necessary appointments, should be avoided whenever possible as it causes disruption to classes. Persistent late collection of children causes upset for the child and inconvenience for teachers.

2. It is a strict rule that all children walk into and out of school in an appropriate manner, respecting teachers, fellow pupils and all adults, and addressing them properly. This will be enforced in school and should be reinforced in the home.
3. Pupils should exit the school via the front gates.
4. Pupils are encouraged to speak politely at all times. Foul language or aggressive tone of voice is never allowed and must never be used.
5. Involvement in sport and pastimes is actively encouraged in school and a plentiful supply of footballs, Hurleys, helmets, sliotars, basketballs, skipping ropes, draughts, chess, games etc. is available in the school. Please encourage involvement in leisure time activities at home as a healthy active child is a happier child. Games which are violent and involve kicking, punching, bullying or verbal abuse are strictly forbidden.
6. No child may leave the play area during breaks without permission from the teacher in charge. Children may not leave school, at any time, without notification from the parents/guardians to the class teacher/Principal via Aladdin, and must, subsequently, be collected at the classroom door.
7. Chewing gum, crisps or lollipops are not allowed. Lunch leftovers must be taken home. This is to help general hygiene in the school and, ultimately, your child. This is also a part of the Healthy School Lunch Policy to help you monitor lunches. Glass bottles are not allowed because of the obvious danger they pose.
8. School uniforms must be worn at all times.
9. Cycling in or around school grounds at any time is strictly forbidden. Skateboards and scooters are not allowed in school at any time during or after school.
10. All school property and furniture must be treated with respect.
11. Parents will be asked to pay for any wilful damage caused by their children.
12. In the interests of safety children are allocated play areas which vary in wet or fine weather. Children are made aware of their area and must play in these areas at break times.
13. Smoking on the school grounds is prohibited by law.
14. Children are not allowed to walk on the perimeter wall or climb trees in the school grounds. Parents are asked not to allow smaller children accompanying them to the school to do so.
15. Mobile phones are not allowed during school hours.

### Mobile Phones:

It is recognised that mobile phones can be intrusive and distracting in all situations and particularly in schools. In addition to the inconvenience, the debate still goes on about the possible harmful effects of the frequent use of mobile phones. Children could be particularly vulnerable in this issue. The Board of Management of Ballinahinch N.S. forbids the pupils to use mobile phones during the school day.

### **Class Rules**

Each individual teacher has his/her own class rules which will be communicated to pupils early in the year.

### **School Uniforms & Dress Code**

1. The school uniform consists of a blue polo shirt and school tracksuit. School shorts may be worn also. The uniform is available to buy from the Sportsman Dream in Nenagh only and further details are available through the school website – [www.ballinahinchns.ie](http://www.ballinahinchns.ie)

### **Sanctions:**

In every school today it is accepted that there is a need for sanctions to register disapproval of unacceptable behaviour. The sanctions which are operational in our school are reasonable.

The following strategies may be used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour:

- 1) Reasoning with the pupil.
- 2) Reprimand (including advice on how to improve).
- 3) Loss of privileges for the offending child, such as school tour. Parental co-operation can be of great value here, i.e. to ban television for a period, to withdraw some privilege at home (e.g. pocket money) as this reinforces the home-school link.
- 4) Detention during a break under supervision of class teacher.
- 5) Prescribing additional homework.
- 6) Referral to Principal.
- 7) Communication with parents.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the Principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future, the pupil may have to be suspended for a temporary period. Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of Rule 130(5) of the Rules for National Schools.

The Chairperson or Principal is authorised by the School Board of Management to exclude a pupil or pupils from the school for a maximum initial period of 3 days, for being continuously disruptive or for a serious breach of discipline. Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case in accordance with Rule 130(6).

### **Positive Approach:**

Every effort is made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school. Ballinahinch N.S. places greater emphasis on encouraging positive behaviour than on sanctions in the belief that this will, in the long run, give the best results.

We teach the children pride in themselves, their school and their community. Children are encouraged in each class and through the whole school to be positive and well behaved towards each other. Each year lessons on the topic of bullying are explored in the school. Here children's attitudes towards each other are challenged. The "Stay Safe" and "Walk Tall" Programmes are taught

in each class. Good behaviour, good attendance and achievements are acknowledged in the school. In the “Alive O” Religion programme, and new “Grow in Love” Religion programme, there is great emphasis on respect and love for one another.

In each class lessons are taught to promote positive behaviour. This is also stressed at school assemblies which are held throughout the year. We encourage all parents to co-operate with the school staff and management by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules, and by visiting the school when requested by the Principal or other members of the staff.

You, the parents, play a crucial role in shaping the attitudes which produce good behaviour in our school and in the community. Please take full advantage of all formal and informal channels of communication made available by the staff.

If you wish to discuss some issue with a teacher please ring the school secretary, Helen, at 061-379404 or e-mail [ballinahinchns@gmail.com](mailto:ballinahinchns@gmail.com) to make an appointment. Likewise communication via our school app, Aladdin, is highly recommended.

When children are registered in Ballinahinch N.S. it is agreed that each parent/guardian accepts and supports the school’s Code of Behaviour.

#### **Home/School Links:**

Ballinahinch N.S. welcomes all parents to contact the school, but interruptions must be kept to a minimum. All meetings with the Principal or Class Teacher must be by appointment.

Phone: 061-379404

E-mail: [ballinahinchns@gmail.com](mailto:ballinahinchns@gmail.com)

Please follow our school affairs on our website at [www.ballinahinchns.ie](http://www.ballinahinchns.ie) or via our school Twitter page which is @ballinahinchns.

#### **Parent/Principal Meetings:**

##### **Informal Meetings:**

The Principal is in regular contact with parents by phone or by meeting them informally at the school gate or main front door.

##### **Formal Meetings:**

Meetings may be arranged by appointment in the Principal’s office at the request of parent(s)/guardians or Principal.

##### **Parent/Class Teacher Meetings**

The child’s education and welfare are best served where there is regular contact between parent and teacher on matters relating to the child’s progress and well-being. Parent/teacher meetings, therefore, form an integral part of our school’s programme. In Ballinahinch N.S. parent/teacher meetings take one or more of the following forms:

1. Parents may meet with the teacher on a one to one basis, by appointment, to discuss the child’s progress or other matters of concern to parent or teacher. Such meetings may be initiated by either the parents or the class teacher.

2. Parents of infant children are in regular contact with the class teachers when delivering or collecting their children, and any small problems that tend to arise are sorted out on a personal level between parent and teacher. If a problem needs further attention, an appointment may be made to discuss the matter more fully with the parent(s), class teacher and principal.
3. Teachers like to meet with parents on an individual basis to discuss each child and thereby come to a fuller understanding of their needs, to advise parents on matters of class rules, homework, curriculum etc. These meetings are held during the month of November. This is a great opportunity for teachers and parents to get to know each other, to get to know school and class policies and to encourage good attitudes to homework and good behaviour.

### **Junior Infant Induction Day:**

In June, all new Junior Infants are invited with their parents to visit their new teacher in the Junior Infant Classroom. This induction morning gives the children the opportunity to meet with their new teacher and to also meet the other children who will be in their class.

On this morning between 9:20 and 12pm the children will play with toys and/or colour a picture. The Principal and teacher will be present to answer any further queries you may have about your child's first day at school.

Please be positive with your child in preparing him/her for school and explain to him/her what will happen re: teacher, other children, breaks, sitting down, tidy-up time. On arrival it is very helpful if you can show your child into the classroom and greet the teacher. After meeting the teacher and some other children and finding a place to sit please leave promptly because your child will pick up your anxiety. Most children, even if initially upset, soon become distracted by their surroundings and settle down.

### **Assessment:**

The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences. All efforts will be made to match the curriculum to the abilities, aptitudes and interests of each pupil. This is to ensure that all children progress at a level appropriate for them and reach their own potential.

Regular consultation occurs between the Special Educational Needs Team and class teachers to identify children at risk with a view to providing educational support. When children are seen to be encountering learning difficulties parents are requested to come to the school for a progress report with the class teacher and S.E.T. Team. We operate an independent objective assessment programme in Ballinahinch N.S. and the results are communicated to parents on the end of year report, and when they are invited individually to discuss the results and their child's general progress at school.

All children in 1st to 6th classes are monitored annually on objective English and Maths tests each May to check if any corrective action or intervention is needed.

Senior Infants are given a Middle Infant Screening test (M.I.S.T) to monitor progress at Infant level.

No child will be placed in a Learning Support teacher's class without prior consultation with, and the consent of parent(s)/guardian(s). Consultation also takes place to review progress, and when children have made sufficient progress they no longer go to Learning Support.

### **Annual Reports:**

Individual Reports on pupils are issued at the end of each academic year. This is done through our school app Aladdin. Each parent/Guardian will receive a pdf version of their child or children's report and these are also stored on our school system for future reference if required. These reports are sent out a week in advance of the summer holidays each year.

### **General School Communications:**

Communication with Parents regarding information on school and community events is communicated to parents regularly via Aladdin, our school app. This system has been working brilliantly for us and allows us to communicate with parents/guardians quickly and safely. It also allows parents/guardians to pay for certain school items such as school tours via a very convenient e-payment system. Absence notes or early collection notes can also be sent via our school app directly to our secretary and class teacher. This is a great system with many benefits to the school and the parents/guardians and it is very user friendly.

### **School Policies:**

All our school policies can be viewed on our school website – [www.ballinahinchns.ie](http://www.ballinahinchns.ie) in the Parents Area. Here you will find such policies as our Homework Policy outlining homework times for each class group, our healthy eating policy where ideas for lunches and what can and cannot be eaten in our school along with many more policies.

### **Name Tags:**

In order to avoid unnecessary distress to the pupil all personal possessions MUST be labelled with the child's name - i.e. coats, shirts, jumpers, ties, lunch boxes, bicycles, pencils, pens, rulers, rubbers, colouring pencils, school books, copies etc.

The school cannot accept responsibility for lost items. Please do this at the beginning of the school year, or when you replace an item. Lost items will be displayed in the lost and found area on a monthly basis and then donated to charity.

### **Sport & Leisure:**

We encourage active participation for all pupils in a variety of sports and games. A central element in School Policy is the promotion of the 'Sport for All' philosophy: "There is more to sport than medals, competitions and championships, and we must continue to foster and promote its social and recreational aspects. In particular, as far as children are concerned, the emphasis should be on active participation by all, rather than competitive performance by a few. Above all the participants should enjoy their experience"; ("Sport for All", Department of Education & Science).

Each class has one hour per week of physical education. We endeavour to allow children to experience sports and leisure activity as an enjoyable and healthy part of life. To quote the Department of Education & Science 'Curriculum for Physical Education in Primary Schools 2001': "Physical education is built on the principles of variety and diversity, not of specialisation". The school has a well stocked sports' press, and all teachers avail of this for a variety of P.E. activities in the hall, or externally on the basketball court and grassed areas.

We have an array of board and leisure games in the school for use by children on wet days. The school has fostered links with local sporting organisations with a view to encouraging children to get involved in sporting activities in their communities. We facilitate external coaching in GAA Games,



rugby and gymnastics. We provide swimming lessons and dance classes, and display information on local clubs, summer camps etc.

We have a great culture of sport and fun in our school and we love to see the children out playing a variety of games at lunchtimes and representing our school in GAA, Soccer, Community Games and much more.

### **General Information:**

Under the Education Welfare Act 2000, we are now legally bound to report absences over 20 days to the Education Welfare Office.

If your child is absent for more than 20 days our school system will highlight this and Tusla will be informed where relevant.

### **To answer a few questions:**

**Q.** We usually go on holidays in June or September; will this be counted as absences?

**A.** Yes, all days missed will be counted.

**Q.** Do we need to send in notes for absences?

**A.** Yes, you do via our school app, Aladdin where a list of options for your child/children's absences will be available to select from.

### **School Tours:**

We operate school tours at the discretion of individual teachers. Every effort is made to give a variety of tours to children as they progress through school. The school feels tours are a good educational and social occasion for children and teachers and encourage children to participate. We keep costs to an absolute minimum and sufficient notice is given for children to save up for their tour. Each parent/guardian is sent the details of the school tour which contains departure time, cost and what the pupils will require on the tour. Any medical conditions should also be highlighted to the class teacher before each school tour.

### **Board of Management:**

The Board of Management is responsible for the direct government of the school in accordance with:

- \* The Rules for National Schools.
- \* The Constitution of Boards and Rules of Procedure.
- \* Circulars issued from time to time by the Minister.

### **The Board Membership is made up as follows:**

- \* 2 nominees of the Patron
- \* 2 elected Parents (one being a mother, one being a father).
- \* The Principal.
- \* One elected member of the teaching staff
- \* 2 extra members proposed by the Nominees above.

The Board of Management of Ballinahinch National School operates an equal opportunity policy. The names and officers of the current Board of Management can be accessed through the school office.

### **Medical Conditions:**

If your child develops any of the following illnesses you must contact the school immediately at 061-379404 or via the Aladdin school app.

- Bacterial Meningitis
- Chicken Pox
- Head Lice/ Nits
- Measles
- Ringworm
- Rubella
- Scabies
- Scarlet Fever
- Strep Throat (Streptococcal)
- Threadworms
- Viral Meningitis
- Whooping Cough (Pertussis)

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact the school via:

Phone: 061 379404

Email: [ballinahinchns@gmail.com](mailto:ballinahinchns@gmail.com)

For all updated information, photos etc. visit our web-site: [www.ballinahinchns.ie](http://www.ballinahinchns.ie)

We hope your time with us will be beneficial, both educationally and socially. You are very welcome to Ballinahinch National School where all we ask is the everybody try their best.

Tá fáilte romhaibh go leir chuig Scoil Náisiúnta Baile na hÍnse.

Mise le Meas,

**Shane McGrath**

Principal Ballinahinch N.S.

