



A New Year at Rathmore

We are so pleased to welcome you to a new school year at Rathmore. To our new parents in the Nursery and P1 we extend a very special welcome to the Rathmore family.

We are on the journey towards transforming to a Controlled Integrated School in September 2025 as 82.3% of our parents voted 'Yes' to this direction in June 2023. Last year Governors and staff completed the formal Public Development Plan Process. This year, as we await the Minister of Education's approval, we will continue to work closely with EA, NICIE and IEF to reflect on our current school culture and continue to plan for this exciting step as a school community.

Staff Update



Our best wishes to Mr Lyle McFarland as he commences his new teaching post in a Belfast Special School. We are grateful for his leadership of our Foundation Stage & P2 teaching team over the last 3½ years. Good luck in your new job.

We are delighted to welcome back Mrs Katie Francis to Rathmore PS. She joins Mrs Janeen Best and Mrs Tara Fadaei in P2 Teaching Team.



Parent Information Meetings

Our Parents' Information Meetings for P2 - P7 will take place 2 - 5 September 2024 in your child's classroom. At these meetings, your teacher will outline the necessary information for the year. We encourage you to attend. Please enter your child's classroom via the playground doors. Further details and reminders will be sent via Seesaw.

P2 – Monday 2 Sept at 1.25pm

P3 – Tuesday 3 Sept at 1.25pm

P4 – Tuesday 3 Sept at 2.30pm

P5 – Wednesday 4 Sept at 2.30pm

P6 – Thursday 5 Sept at 2.30pm

P7 – Monday 2 Sept at 2.30pm

New School Year - Important Reminders

The children are welcomed at their classroom door at 8.45am each day. For reasons of safety, no child should arrive for school before this time as there is no supervision of the children prior to 8.45am. To develop independence, we encourage P3 – P7 Parents to leave their children to the playground gate, when possible, to allow the children to journey to class by themselves. It will take a few days for children to become confident about their journey and class door. We are here to help, direct and welcome them with a smile. Lessons begin promptly at 9am so please do all you can to bring your child to school on time. Late arrivals should enter through the main office entrance. Nursery & P1 Children are brought directly to their class door each day.

Finishing Times Reminder - September 2024

	Monday - Thursday	Friday
P1	See P1 Induction Pack	
P2	1.55pm	1.55pm
P3	1.55pm	1.55pm
P4	Mon– Wed 3pm, Thurs 1.55pm	1.55pm
P5	3pm	1.55pm
P6	3pm	1.55pm
P7	3pm	1.55pm

Pedestrian Entrances & Road Crossing Patrol

Rathmore usually has two crossing patrols to assist with road safety. Mr Hodgen will be on the Rathmore Road from approx. 8:40-9:05am, 1:30-3:05pm. *We have a vacant post on Killeen Avenue so there is no adult helping children cross this road at the location.* Please set a good example for your child, and others, by using the designated crossings.

The main entrance (Rathmore Road), field entrance (Lyndhurst Avenue) and side entrance (Killeen Pathway) will remain two-way, with pedestrians staying to the left of their path and respecting others' journey.

Communicating with School

Often parents want to clarify or discuss issues with school staff. You can contact the school office by email/phone/letter or by note to the teacher via your child (school-bag post). Face to face meetings will be accommodated as the need arises, following a phone call. As staff are teaching throughout the day, please allow 48 hours for a response to your query.

Thank you for signing up to your new 2024-25 Seesaw. This will be used throughout the year for teachers to communicate with parents.

Our School Office can be contacted by:

E: info@rathmoreps.bangor.ni.sch.uk

T: 028 91 270399

Nursery: 028 91 469192 (direct telephone)

Change of Pick-Up Time

Teachers do not have telephones in their rooms and so last minute changes cannot be accommodated. If you have a scheduled appointment for your child, please inform the teacher or office with at least 24 hours' notice so arrangements can be made for their safe collection from the school front door, at the agreed time.

Absences

Our Educational Welfare officer has asked school to remind families that all children should attend school when they are well enough to do so. Note: School should also be notified (by email or phone to the office) of any reason for absence on the first day of absence with a prediction of how long the absence may be.

School Illness & First Aid

It is vital that we have up to date contact details for your child, so please link with our office urgently if you need to update any details. If your child is unwell during the school day, a staff member will phone, in order of emergency contacts, to arrange your attendance. If your child receives a bump to the head, you will be informed by email, receive the EA Concussion Leaflet and we will monitor their presentation. If they receive First Aid (other than head) your teacher will notify you via Seesaw.

Please refer to PHA guidance on infection control in school settings (see attached).

Medication

Children with EpiPens (two required), inhalers or other essential medication should bring these to school on their first day along with a copy of the current care plan, where appropriate. Please check that medication is in date. All medication should be clearly labelled with the child's name and will be stored safely in school.

To administer any medication in school during the year, parents must first complete and return the "Request for school to administer medicine" form as attached.

Home Learning

Written homeworks will be established by each year group with start dates and details communicated with you at your Information Meeting and by Seesaw. This is an important part of the learning process for our pupils and we encourage all families to establish a good routine for their completion each week. Homework will continue to be sent home on Friday afternoons, (homework grid will be sent in paper form) so each family can organise their time in a way which is most suitable to the demands of their family life.

Until homework begins, we recommend that our P2 - P7 children spend time reading and revising number bonds (FS & KS1) and/or table facts (KS2).

Wrap-Around Care

Breakfast Club

We are delighted that Breakfast Club will start on Monday 2 September 2024. Breakfast Club opens at 8am each morning at a cost of £3 per day. Breakfast Club is paid in advance using our School Money System. Orders close on Sunday night for the week ahead. Our Breakfast Club Registration Form is attached for those children who wish to attend Breakfast Club for the first time. Please complete and return this to the School Office by Friday 30 August 2024.

Our School Money System has gone live for your booking convenience today. The named first contact for P1 – P7 will receive an automated text with the link details attached.

(P1 can attend Breakfast Club from Monday 16 September 2024).

YMCA After-School Club

YMCA have worked throughout the summer with many of our Rathmore children and will continue our After-School provision at the end of each school day. YMCA will continue to provide their play sessions alongside our calendar regarding all half days and holidays and will operate usual pick-ups from the playgrounds. Please contact them directly regarding places for your children: -

T: 07591840361
E: afterschool@northdownymca.org
F: @ymcaafterschoolclub

School Dinners

School Dinners commence on Monday 2 September 2024. This year school dinner cost remains the same at £2.60 per dinner. Dinners are paid in advance using our School Money System. Orders close on Sunday night for the week ahead. If dinners are not booked, a home packed lunch will be necessary. Please find our School Dinner Menu attached.

*** Children with dietary requirements must complete an EA Special Diet Form (attached) and meet with the Head of Kitchen to discuss our menu before any dinners are booked. Please contact the school office to arrange. ***

Free School Meals/Uniform Grant

We encourage all those who were eligible for Free School Meals or think they are now eligible, to complete the EA online application process on eani.org.uk (Home-Financial Help-Free School Meals). This will ensure you can access Free School Meals as soon as possible.

Severe Food Allergies

We have a number of children in school who suffer from life threatening allergies. Please do not send any products containing nuts into school as Rathmore is a Nut Aware School.

Break

We encourage our children to eat a healthy break and ask for your assistance in this. Please pack one item e.g. fruit, scone, pancake, crackers, cheese, vegetable sticks for your child each day. We do not permit children to swap items due to the prevalence of serious food allergies.

Drinks – Water only

Please send a filled water bottle to school each day as we encourage water breaks. Please note glass bottles and fizzy drinks are not permitted in school.

After School Activities

Our After School Activities run by teachers and/or outside agencies will commence in October 2024. Information will be communicated in due course.

Outdoor Play Equipment

The outdoor play equipment is to be used solely by children during school time, when they are supervised by staff. Please ensure that when you are leaving or collecting children from school that no child under your supervision uses this equipment. Please note that this includes the P1 Outdoor area.

Staff Car Park

Due to limited spaces, this carpark is for staff parking only. Should you have a blue disability badge and require access to the car park, press the barrier buzzer and show your blue pass. The turning circle must be left clear for emergency vehicle access.

Parking Around Rathmore PS

Your support would be appreciated when parking near to Rathmore PS. Our school receives a number of complaints from residents or concerned people when parents park over the zig-zag lines and residents' driveways. Please show consideration to each other and our local residents.

Smoke-Free School Gates

Rathmore is part of the Smoke-free School Scheme. We remind parents not to smoke in our grounds or around our school gates.

Dog-Free Grounds

We remind parents not to bring dogs on to our school grounds.

PTA Fundraising Success

Thank you for your School Fund and event support during 2023-2024. We are so grateful as your donations raised funds to enhance our outdoor spaces, classroom Calm Corners, curricular areas and resource our classrooms.

Our amazing Committee kept us motivated and are looking forward to welcoming new members this year at our first meeting. Our PTA AGM details will be sent home soon.

Our voluntary School Fund remains at £30 per child which will go live next week. If you are in a position to contribute, we appreciate every penny donated as this money is completely ring-fenced for your children's play resources.



'Raffy's Thought for the Month:
'Celebrate each other'
We are all special

www.rathmoreps.co.uk

'Caring, learning, excelling together.'