

MULLAVILLY PRIMARY SCHOOL



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Principal (Acting): Mr P Ritchie (BSc, MEd, PGCE)

27 August 2026

Dear Parent/Guardian

Welcome and staff update.

May I take this opportunity to firstly welcome everyone back after the summer break. I hope you all had a happy and enjoyable summer. A special welcome to our new families in Primary 1 and throughout the school.

At the end of the last school year, I updated you on the situation with the potential appointment of a new principal for Mullavilly. I wanted to let you know that after much careful thought and consideration I have decided not to apply for the position on a permanent basis. While I feel I could do the job well and would have the support of the staff and wider Mullavilly family, I have decided to put my wonderful family first, I want to be the best dad I can be for Jacob, Oliver and Martha. The prospect of fresh, new leadership taking over the reigns and driving Mullavilly forward is also an exciting one that I feel is in the best interests of our school.

I have held discussions with the EA this week and they are ready to begin the process of appointing a new principal. The chair of our governors, Ruth Irwin will be making contact with the relevant people with the EA and she will lead the process alongside other governors. The EA also appoint two representatives who sit on the interview panel to help assist the governors. I will have no part to play in the process moving forward in any way. It is unclear exactly how long this process will take but it is anticipated a new principal could potentially be in place by January 2026, depending on notice periods for the successful candidate.

Until such time as a new principal is appointed, I will continue in my role as acting principal. Alongside my acting principal duties, I have also been acting SENCO, which is very time consuming and leading SEAG prep. All of this has been additional work on top of the other roles I lead in school, notwithstanding teaching P5/6. I am sure you can imagine 6 months of doing this with only 1 day in the office has been a challenge but one I have given my very best effort in. Moving forward this term, the board of governors agreed it would be wise to have two principal/SENCO release days in the office. This is for the benefit of me but also for the school in general and the children.

I am pleased to inform you that Miss Buchanan has been appointed to teach P5/6 on Monday and Tuesday. I am very excited to have Miss Buchanan on board. We will be working very closely together and planning and preparing P5/6 in the same way I always have. Indeed, I am sure she will have a positive impact on me as well as the children moving forward. She will also help to deliver our learning support for children on Wednesday and Thursday. Can I assure any parent who has any concerns with this that we have the very best interests of every child at heart, and I am striving to do my very best in the current circumstances. We are starting the new school year on a positive note with lots to celebrate and be proud of. Let's keep that feeling going moving forward.

I would like to let you know if a few key dates in the early weeks of the new term:

- Tuesday 2nd September – P5/6 swimming begins (letter will be sent out on Thursday 28th)
- Wednesday 10th September – Whole school meet and greet, 3.15pm. (more details to follow)
- Tuesday 16th September – Friends of Mullavilly meeting to plan for Term 1
- Wednesday 17th September – Written calculation workshop. Mr Ritchie will lead a parents workshop on the 'how and why' we complete our written calculations in addition, subtraction , multiplication and division the way we do. (More information will follow.)
- Monday 22nd September – start of cycle to school week
- Friday 26th September – Bling Your Bike Day

I hope you appreciate the effort being made to communicate with parents in an open and transparent way, via the app and Facebook. The addition of a second parent teacher meeting and a greater number of parent workshops and sessions when parents come into school with their child all reflects this. I would again like to commend the staff of Mullavilly. The dedication and professionalism I have seen as they have been preparing the last number of days for the new school year is outstanding.

Finally, it has indeed been an honour to lead our school over the last 8 months. I will continue to give everything I have as long as I am acting principal. I appreciate the overwhelmingly positive support you have shown me and the school in recent months. I look forward to showing that support to the new principal in any way I can when they are appointed.

Yours sincerely



P Ritchie (Acting Principal)