



Hezlett Primary School

1 Ballywoolen Road, Castlerock BT51 4TZ Tel. (028) 7084 8395

Principal: Mrs D Winters

Dear Parent,

10/02/23

As you know Mr McGeehan resigned as our crossing patrolman before Christmas. I applied immediately to have him replaced, but EA have been dragging their heels and eventually we were made aware that because of the need for EA to save money, no crossing patrol people are being replaced when they resign or retire. It has now materialised that this has actually been happening since 2020.

Mr Robert O'Hara has been standing in as patrol man since Christmas until EA reassessed our school's need and advertised the post. School has been covering the cost of his employment since then. We cannot afford to do this indefinitely – EA pay all crossing control people. EA have made it very clear to me over the last few weeks that they will not be employing Mr O'Hara, training him, or indemnifying him should an accident take place on the crossing. This goes for any voluntary Crossing Control People.

I have gone down every avenue to put pressure on EA to reconsider our situation and they have put a contingency plan into action. This does not, however, involve replacing our crossing patrol person. That decision is currently irreversible. From Monday 20th February, the yellow bus will be picking pupils up from the back of school, at the double gates on the Ballywoolen Road. This will negate the need for these children to cross the road in the afternoon. There are only a few children using the blue bus and staff members will be responsible for crossing these children. **Any other child crossing the road must be in the company of a parent.** As you know this road is fast and dangerous and on a weekly basis a number of people ignore the 20mph flashing warning lights, so it is not appropriate for pupils to cross here unaccompanied.

Markings for the new bus stop will be in place in due course. Until then I must ask that you do not park between the end of the Ballywoolen Rd and the double gates into the senior playground in the afternoons. The bus stop on the far side of the road will remain in place for the Blue Bus, which is too large to use the Ballywoolen Rd bus stop. I have made a request for this bus stop to be halved in size to accommodate more parent parking.

I apologise for this withdrawal of service to our school. Unfortunately, it is completely out of my control and is a worrying sign of things to come with regards to cuts in educational provision.

Yours sincerely

Donna Winters
Principal