



BALLYBAY KINDERGARTEN CLG & MONAGHAN WALDORF SCHOOL CLG

CALENDAR 2024/25

Throughout the year in the Waldorf tradition, we celebrate festivals to connect with the cycle of nature, establish a yearly rhythm for the children and to strengthen the community. We hope the students and their families to join these special days of celebration.



AUTUMN/WINTER "SAMHAIN" TERM

Start of school year (ALL)	Wednesday 4th September 2024
Michaelmas - Harvest Festival	Celebrated Monday 30th September 2024
<p>Michaelmas, as it is observed in Waldorf schools is the "festival of courage." Michael, the archangel who inspires courage, is associated with this festival time. Through the inspiration of this angelic being the lowly peasant George could persevere to complete the daunting task of slaying the dragon. Our Michaelmas festival includes all sorts of apple activities, a harvest 'pottuck' picnic and silk dyeing in natural dye pots.</p>	
Last day of school before mid-term break (ALL)	Friday 25th October 2024
First day of school after mid-term break (ALL)	Monday 4th November 2024
Martinmas - Lantern Walk	Celebrated Sunday 10th November 2024
<p>The story of St. Martin of Tours, a Roman soldier who abandoned his position of high rank and wealth to devote his life to serving the poor is at the centre of this festival. St. Martin is best known for his kindness toward a poor beggar freezing outside. Martin used his sword to cut his cloak in two and gave one half to the beggar. This act of compassion, which gave the beggar warmth and hope, is why this festival is also called the Festival of Compassion. The essence of this festival is to acknowledge the light that shines forth from each of us. This light needs to be protected, just as the lights inside our lanterns do so that they don't blow out. We meet in the school garden, to light the lanterns that the children have made and take a walk around the beautiful wetlands. Hot drinks and treats to be enjoyed at the school afterwards and a story of St. Martin followed by joining together for songs.</p>	
Advent Garden	Celebrated Sunday 1st December 2024
<p>Advent is a four-week festival, the four weeks leading up to Christmas and Winter Solstice. It has a religious meaning but it can equally be celebrated as a special occasion to bring warmth and light to winter days. To mark this special time and as we approach the darkest days of the year, we must search for that inner light and strength to sustain us through dark times. The "Advent Garden" spiral is lit in a darkened room. The children traverse an evergreen spiral to light their own candle from the source, deep within the centre of the spiral. Each child carries their candle back along the spiral path and sets it down within the spiral and so gradually the room fills with light. It is a lovely event to watch – with peaceful reverence. Hot beverages and treats to be enjoyed thereafter.</p>	
Christmas play & Winter Solstice Festival	TBD
Last day of term 1 (Primary School)	Thursday 19th December 2024
Last day of term 1 (Kindergarten)	Friday 20th December 2024



WINTER/EARLY SPRING "IMBOLC" TERM

Start of second term (ALL)	Monday 6th January 2025
St Brigid's Day Bank Holiday	Monday 3rd February 2025
Candlemas	Celebrated Tuesday 2nd February 2025
<i>Candlemas is a time of year when the lengthening of daylight hours becomes noticeable. The day is celebrated because it means that winter will soon be over, and spring will come. Children hand-dip candles in the cold of the garden as a symbol to keep the warmth and light through the next six weeks.</i>	
Last day of school before mid-term break (ALL)	Friday 14th February 2025
First day of school after mid-term break (ALL)	Monday 24th February 2025
St Patrick's Day Bank Holiday	Monday 17th March 2025
Last day of term 2 (Kindergarten)	Wednesday 9th April 2025
Last day of term 2 (Primary School)	Thursday 10th April 2025



SPRING/SUMMER "BEALTAINÉ" TERM

Start of third term (ALL)	Monday 28th April 2025
May Day Bank Holiday	Monday 5th May 2025
May Day Festival	Celebrated Tuesday 6th May 2025
<i>May Day is celebrated to welcome the beautiful summer season and the longer days. Known as Bealtaine in the Celtic tradition. We greet the new warm season by wearing garlands and flower crowns. It is tradition to dance around the maypole while singing joyful summer songs. The children make streamers and paper flowers to add to their garlands. Parents/guardians are invited to bring in greenery for the garlands and to decorate the classrooms and school. Shared food and drinks thereafter.</i>	
Last day of term 3 (Primary School)	Thursday 29th May 2025
June Bank Holiday	Monday 2nd June 2025
Last day of term 3 (Kindergarten)	Tuesday 24th June 2025