



The Brownlee Newsletter

September 2021

"A school where the individual is valued in a supportive and safe environment, where everyone's learning experience is celebrated."

Dear Parents,

We are really looking forward to seeing everyone back at school again tomorrow. I hope you have had a lovely summer break and all being well, this year will see a gradual move to greater normalisation.

As a school, we are still taking a careful approach and basing many of our routines on the recent Covid guidance published by the Department of Education. This guidance is to be reviewed over the next few weeks and I will keep you up to date if anything changes. Although we want to ensure that everyone is kept safe and we mitigate against infection as far as possible, it is also very important that we create as welcoming and normal a school environment for the children.

I believe that even with the lengthy period of lockdown last term, the children did not miss out on much of the content of the curriculum. This was very much down to the hard work by parents, teachers, classroom assistants and pupils who ensured that lessons were still taught both online and in school. Our internal standardised tests helped to confirm this and we were very pleased with the overall progress made by the children. Unfortunately, our pupils did lose out on many educational experiences, whether this was due to the reduction in practical activities, educational visits or coming together to do workshops with other local schools. I hope that there will be more opportunities for such experiences in the weeks and months ahead.

Below is some information which you will hopefully find helpful as the children return to school tomorrow.

ARRIVING AND DEPARTING SCHOOL

We are still operating the 'Bubble' system in school so each class will work and play separately as far as possible. This approach will remain under review in light of infection rates in the local community and in our school.

Children will continue to arrive and depart on a staggered basis. P1 will have separate arrangements and Mrs McFarland will have informed parents of these.

These are the times for the remainder of this week:

Arriving

08:40 – 08:50

P2 pupils plus older siblings will enter the school by the main entrance door and go straight to class.

08:40 – 08:50

P3 and P4 pupils plus any older siblings will enter the school by the front garden entrance door and go straight to class.

08:50 – 09:00

P5 and P7 children will enter school by the front assembly hall entrance door and go straight to class.

08:50 – 09:00

P6 children will enter school by the main entrance door and go straight to class.

Departing

P1 and older siblings will leave by the main entrance at 11:45.

P2 and older siblings will leave by the front assembly hall entrance at 12:00.

P3 and older siblings will leave by the garden entrance at 12:00.

P4 and older siblings will leave by the garden entrance at 12:15.

P5 and older siblings will leave by the front assembly hall entrance at 12:15.

P6 and older siblings will leave by the main entrance at 12:15.

The remainder of P7 will also leave by the front assembly hall entrance shortly after 12:15 once the P6 children have cleared the doorway.

From the 31st August onwards, children from P2-7 will leave at the following times:

P2 leaves by the front assembly hall entrance at 14:00.

P3 leaves by the front garden entrance at 14:00.

P4 leaves by the front garden entrance at 14:45.

P5 leaves by the front assembly hall entrance at 14:45.

P6 leaves by the main entrance at 15:00.

P7 leaves by the front assembly hall entrance at 15:00.

Older siblings who finish at approximately the same time as a younger brother or sister will leave together through the door designated for the younger child.

If there is an occasion when your child arrives late for school, parents must ring the school and they will be told their child should enter and which door they should use.

USE OF SCHOOL PLAYGROUND AT ARRIVAL AND PICK UP TIMES

The school playground may be able to be used by parents for parking, arrival and pick up times if outside activities are not taking place. All pupils who are dropped off in the playground must enter the school at their allocated entrance via the front garden. Pupils must NOT walk to the front of the school through the staff car park.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

As I mentioned last term, we are asking that all children wear their proper school uniform from now on. In order to facilitate PE and after-school sports, we have introduced the new Brownlee tracksuit. From what I understand, there has been a delay in some of the sizes of the tracksuit arriving in time for school to begin. If this relates to your child, then they should come to school in their normal school uniform but wear a pair of trainers on their PE days.

All children should also keep a pair of black plimsolls in school for occasions when it is wet and PE will be taking place indoors.

Hopefully this delay in the delivery of some tracksuits will only be for a few weeks.

SCHOOL MILK AND MEALS

All meals and milk payments are made through the Brownlee App. If you are downloading this for the first time or reinstalling it on your phone, the passcode is 11111. If you wish your child to take milk, this can be paid for each term or alternatively for the complete year at a discount.

On Tuesday 31st August, we are operating a full school day, however, there will still be no school meals available. This includes free school meals. All the children will require a packed lunch on that day. School meals will then resume as normal on Wednesday 1st September.

If you have applied for free school meals, could you please check with Mrs Oliver that your application has been processed and your name is on the list? If it is not, then you will have to pay for school meals or alternatively provide a packed lunch for your child until your application has been fully processed by the Education Authority. You can contact Mrs Oliver at 028 92665635 or by email at coliver759@c2kni.net

EARLY-BIRD AND AFTER-SCHOOL CLUB

The Early-Bird Club will operate from 8.00am tomorrow, Wednesday 25th August and you can book your place using the Brownlee App. After-School Club will start on Tuesday 31st August and again this can be booked on a daily or hourly basis using the Brownlee App. *No child should be on the school grounds prior to 8.40am unless they are attending the Early-Bird Club.*

SWIMMING

We are pleased to announce that swimming will begin for P5 on Tuesday 7th September. The cost for the session and bus transport will be £2.60 per pupil each week and this can be paid on the Brownlee App.

VISITORS AND PARENTS IN SCHOOL

Visitors and parents are welcome in school by appointment. Appointments can be made by telephoning Mrs Oliver at Reception. On entering the school, a face covering should be worn. We also have a hand sanitiser station at the

main entrance which should be used before entering the school. General queries can always be made through email or ClassDojo and we will endeavour to respond to these as soon as possible.

BANK HOLIDAY

School will be closed for the August Bank Holiday on Monday 30th August.

AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Some after-school activities will hopefully begin over the next few weeks. These will be outdoors only and more information will follow shortly.



PTA

As parents you are all automatically members of the Parent Teacher Association and I would like to encourage as many as possible to become involved in the various events that the association organises. We will keep you informed as to when the first meeting of the PTA will take place and I would encourage you to attend. We will decide closer to the time if this will be a meeting in person or remotely using Zoom.

HEALTHY BREAK / LUNCH



Brownlee Primary School in conjunction with the Eastern Health Trust operates a healthy eating policy. Children should bring a piece of fruit, yoghurt, sandwich or cereal bar (*not chocolate*) for break and a healthy lunch. Crisps, fruitwinders, chocolate bars and sweets are **not** part of our healthy eating policy and children should drink milk or water. Children are also encouraged to drink water during class. Water should be brought to school in bottles with 'sports tops' to prevent spills. If necessary, these can be topped up during the day.

SCHOOL EVACUATION

In the event of a whole school evacuation, all children and staff will proceed to the grounds of Railway Street Presbyterian Church. Using this evacuation point will ensure that children are a safe distance from the school building and we have access to indoor facilities and the internet so we can message parents.

MUSIC LESSONS / INSTRUMENTAL TUITION

The Lisburn Music Centre and Mr Cichy will be offering tuition again this term. Mrs McManus will keep parents informed regarding what tuition is available and how you can register your child. All lessons are carried out in line with social distancing and Covid procedures.



ABSENCE NOTIFICATION

If your child has been absent from school, i.e. due to illness etc. please inform your child's teacher using ClassDojo.

CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

Should you have a concern or complaint about any aspect of our school's provision, please follow the procedure below:



- 1) The first point of contact is with your child's class teacher.
- 2) If the matter remains unresolved you can meet with the Vice- Principal and / or the Principal. Additional meetings or reviews can be agreed if appropriate.
- 3) In the unlikely event of the issue still not being resolved any parental concerns / complaints should be made in writing to the Chairman of the Board of Governors at the address below;

*Mr Gordon Lindsay
54 Lombard Park, Lisburn. BT28 2UJ*

SAFEGUARDING POLICIES

On our school website, we have quite a number of policies detailing our school's approach to Safeguarding. These include; Child Protection, Pastoral Care, Positive Discipline, Anti-Bullying, Attendance, Internet Safety, Use of Social Media, Mobile Phone Policy, RSE Policy etc. All of these policies are extremely important and we would like parents to take some time to read them and be aware of their contents. These policies are regularly updated by the Board of Governors in light of new circulars from the Department of Education and subsequent updates will be placed on the school's website. We also have the overview of our Child Protection procedures in several different languages for your convenience.

We value parental opinions on such policies and if you have any suggestions or concerns that you would like to raise, please do not hesitate in either completing the response form through the website or alternatively write to us and mark your letter for the attention of the Principal.

<https://www.brownleeprimary.org/safeguarding-policies>

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

There is a list of school holidays published on the school website.

<https://www.brownleeprimary.org/school-holidays-closures>

Please remember to check our website and ClassDojo for updates, photographs and general information. All newsletters are also published on the website and can be downloaded. The school website address is www.brownleeprimary.org

Yours sincerely,

Colin Elliott

Principal