



The Brownlee Newsletter

September 2017

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

Dear Parents

May I take this opportunity to welcome everyone back to school, after what I trust has been a very relaxing and enjoyable summer break. I especially welcome any new families who are joining us and hope that everyone will quickly feel part of the Brownlee school community and make lots of new friends in the days and weeks that lie ahead.

OUR AIM

The overall aim of Brownlee Primary School is to see each child develop to his / her optimum potential in all aspects of their education whether this is academic, physical, social or spiritual. I am always aware that our success as a school is very dependent on the support that each teacher receives from every child and the home from which they come. We very much appreciate the input from parents and trust that this will continue to develop as we work together throughout the year ahead.

BUILDING WORK

Once again I would like to apologise for the school not being able to open on Wednesday. Unfortunately, the building work in the school has run well behind schedule and the decision had to be taken on Tuesday afternoon to remain closed until Thursday. This had to be done in consultation with the Chairman of the Board of Governors and the Education Authority and was in the interests of the safety of the children.

The building work at the front of the school will continue for another few weeks and in the meantime the temporary main entrance to the school will be via the front garden. There is a door bell to notify Mrs Oliver that someone is at the door, however, there is no CCTV or automatic system to remotely open the door. Mrs Oliver or a member of staff will have to greet all visitors at the door and escort them into the school. With this in mind, we would greatly appreciate it if parents would only come to this door if it is vital that they speak to a member of staff in person and the matter cannot be dealt with by phone. We would also ask that all children be on time in the mornings as latecomers will again have to be escorted into the school by a member of staff.

All children will also leave by this exit in the afternoons. We will try to stagger this as much as possible to avoid congestion and to ensure that all children are safely delivered to their parents or carers.

Your patience and co-operation during this time will be greatly appreciated.

MRS MCMANUS

It is lovely to welcome Mrs McManus back to Brownlee after her maternity leave last year. Mrs McManus will be working 4 days each week and on Friday another teacher called Mrs Gray will be teaching P6 and focusing on PE and ICT.

GENERAL INFORMATION

This year Brownlee Primary is again at its full pupil compliment. We are obviously delighted that there is such a high demand for places in our school, however, at the same time this will bring some additional challenges and we will require the full cooperation of all our parents to ensure that everything runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Your child's safety and wellbeing is paramount in all the procedures we have in place.

ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL

We would like to remind parents that entrance to the school playground is by the front garden only and children should not be entering through the school car park. This is due to the high volume of vehicles using the car park between 8.15am and 9.00am. Children going to the playgroup can enter by the car park gate after 9.00am as the car park will not have vehicles entering after this time.

It is also very important to note that once your child enters the school playground in the mornings they become the responsibility of the school. Children should **NOT** leave to playground and return to the front garden, even if parents are still there.

Children arriving prior to 8.40am should be attending the Breakfast Club. Any children found in the playground prior to 8.40am will be collected and placed in the Breakfast Club and the supervision fee of £1 will be charged.

MEETING WITH TEACHERS IN THE MORNING

8.40am – 8.55am is designated time for teachers to make final preparations for starting the school day. If you urgently need to speak to your child's teacher at that time, please report to reception first. Also if your child is late for school due to an appointment, please drop them off at reception as opposed to disrupting the teaching in the classroom.

COLLECTION FROM SCHOOL

We would ask that all parents and child minders arrive on time to collect their children from school. Teachers will be unable to supervise children who are not collected as they will have afternoon classes and meetings

to attend at 2pm and 3pm. Children who are not collected will be placed in the After-School Club and a supervision charge of £1 per every 15 minutes or £4 for up to 1 hour will be required. Please also note that this arrangement will also apply to child minders who do collections at other schools before coming to Brownlee.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Please ensure that your child comes to school in the correct school uniform. We believe that the uniform presents a united and collegiate approach which instils a sense of ownership and pride in our children. You will receive a copy of our school uniform policy for your information.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROVISION

The after-school provision will continue to be on offer this year from 2-6pm with fun, crafts, games and a homework club. We are also offering after-school provision for children in P1 for the month of September. This will run from 12 noon each day. Further details and enrolment forms can be obtained from Reception.

P1 INDUCTION AFTERNOON

Mrs McFarland is planning a follow-up to the P1 induction afternoon in June and this will take place on Thursday 21st September from 1.15-2.00pm. All parents of P1 children are encouraged to attend and Mrs McFarland will be explaining the P1 curriculum and how you can help your child during this very tentative stage of their education. Mrs McFarland will send out details of this meeting in a separate letter to parents as the month progresses.

P2 – P7 PARENTAL INFORMATION AFTERNOONS

On **Thursday 7th September** we will be having parental information afternoons, where all parents are invited to visit their child's classroom. Teachers will provide parents with a list of topics / areas that will be covered during the course of the year and will discuss ways in which we can work together to help your child achieve their potential. The P1 Information Afternoon will take place later in the month.

PLEASE NOTE.....

On **Thursday 7th September** the first session for P2 – P3 parents starts at 1.15pm – 1.50pm in your child's classroom. There will then be a second session for parents with children in P4 – P7 which will run from 2.15pm – 2.50pm. Your child will be supervised in the assembly hall during these meetings and can then be collected as normal at 2pm and 3pm depending on which meeting you are attending. .

PARENT / TEACHER INTERVIEWS FOR PARENTS NOT LIVING IN THE FAMILY HOME

We have parent / teacher interviews each November and February when the class teachers discuss the progress of the children with parents. In the past we have tried to facilitate additional face to face interviews for parents who are not living in the family home due to a

separation or divorce. Unfortunately, we will no longer be able to do this in the future, however, if both parents feel they are unable to attend the parent / teacher interview together then a separate telephone interview can be arranged for the other parent at a mutually convenient time.

PHOTOGRAPHS, COLLECTION AND CONTACT INFORMATION



All parents will receive a Data Collection Form, which we would ask you to complete and return to school. It details all contact and medical information as well as when we can use your child's photograph in school. The vast majority of parents are quite happy for their child to appear in the local newspaper, television, video, school website etc, however, others have extenuating circumstances whereby they wish to limit where their child's image is used. You will also receive a copy of our Child Protection policy and a form for you to inform us of who will normally be collecting your child. Please complete the forms and return them to school as soon as possible.

LOCAL VISITS

During the year teachers may wish to take their children on short local visits such as the Library, the Linen Museum, Castle Gardens, Railway Street Presbyterian Church, The Island Centre and Wallace Park. Children walk to these locations under the supervision of the teacher and classroom assistants. In order to save administration and additional work for staff and parents we normally ask parents to give permission for such visits in advance. You will obviously be informed when these are taking place, however a permission slip will not be necessary for each occasion. Should you have any questions or concerns about a particular visit, please do not hesitate to contact us. If you are happy for your child to be part of these local visits in the city centre, please complete the section on the Data Collection Form. Any visits requiring vehicle transport will still require a separate parental permission slip.

AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

After-school activities this term will commence on the week commencing Monday 11th September, with the exception of the **Transfer Club which begins on Wednesday 6th September**. Most activities are open to all children from P4 -P7, however we may need to amend this if uptake is too large for certain activities. During the year we will also have an after-school programme for P1-3 which will run between **2-3pm** and for P4-7 between **3-4pm**.



A list of clubs will be sent home on a separate sheet.

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.

Information about the first PTA meeting will be sent home over the next week and I would encourage as many as possible to attend. We will endeavour to look after the children of those attending the meeting.

SCHOOL MEALS

School meals are available daily at a cost of £2.60 per day. Should you wish your child to have school dinners, please send the appropriate payment at the start of each week, indicating which day(s) your child will be taking dinners that week. If you feel that you are eligible for free school meals, please contact reception as soon as possible for an application form. Your child is not entitled to free school meals until your application form has been accepted by the Education Authority so if you are unsure as to whether you are still eligible or are awaiting confirmation, your child's school meals will have to be paid for.



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, fruit winders, 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. A copy of our School Policy for Healthy Breaks and Lunches is attached for your information.

MILK

Milk will be available for break from Monday 18th September. The cost of milk for the Autumn Term is £12.81 per child. If you wish for your child to receive milk, please send the full payment to school by Tuesday 12th September. Cheques should be made payable to the 'Education Authority'. Please note that children in P1 will automatically have milk available to them through the P1 Healthy Snack programme, which is paid for by the P1 fund.

PRE-SCHOOL

Once again are very pleased to welcome the children and leaders from the Brownlee Playgroup. This pre-school provision is organised by Little Rays and we are delighted that they will have a full compliment of children for this September. We want children, parents and staff to continue to feel very much part of the Brownlee family and we look forward to integrating them into many of our activities throughout the school year.

SCHOOL EVACUATION

In the event of a whole school evacuation, all children and staff will now proceed to the grounds of Railway Street Presbyterian Church. We piloted using this location last year and it was very successful. Using this new 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 text parents. Due to the current building work and obstructions around certain school exits, we may have a fire drill within the next few weeks to ensure that a swift evacuation of the building can be made.

AQE FORMS

I would like to remind P7 parents that the closing date for applying for the AQE Entrance Tests for Grammar Schools is Friday 8th September. Application forms can be downloaded from; <http://www.aqe.org.uk>

MUSIC LESSONS / INSTRUMENTAL TUITION

The Lisburn Music Centre will be offering tuition in piano, singing, violin and clarinet. Other music tuition such as guitar and drums will also be available as the year progresses. We have already received enrolment forms from parents in June but if there are any pupils in years 4, 5, 6 or 7 who would like to enroll for music lessons, then they should contact reception or Mrs McManus for more details.



ABSENCE NOTIFICATION

If your child has been absent from school, i.e. due to illness etc. we require a written note of explanation sent to school on the day of your child's return. We really appreciate a phone call if your child is going to be absent, however, we still require a written note from parents for our audits by the Education Welfare Officer.

To have a minimum disruption to your child's education, it is expected that holidays will not be taken during term time. However, if it is necessary to do so for exceptional reasons, a *'Request to remove a Child from School During Term Time'* form should be completed and forwarded to the school at least two weeks in advance. This form is available from the school secretary.

CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

From the responses from the parental questionnaires in October 2016, we were very pleased to note that parents felt confident that any concerns they brought to the attention of Brownlee staff would be dealt with appropriately. In order to reinforce this, I would like to remind you that we value the views and opinions of all our parents and have a procedure in place if you find you have a concern at any time relating to your child.



- 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 emailing the school through the website or alternatively write to us and mark your letter for the attention of the Principal.

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

There is a list of school holidays published on the school website. Please note that we have had to change the dates of our Easter holidays from those originally posted on the website. This is to keep our holidays in line with the majority of secondary schools in the area. This alteration will also give us an additional day for the Christmas holidays. I hope this will not cause you any inconvenience at this stage.

DIARY DATES SO FAR FOR SEPTEMBER

Thursday 7th September

- Parental Information Afternoon. (Details above)

Tuesday 12th September

- Swimming begins today for P5. Information relating to this **will be sent out by Mrs Halliday and Mrs King.**

Monday 11th, 18th and 25th September

- P6 will be visiting Lisburn Library between break and lunch.



Thursday 21st September

- P1 induction afternoon from 1.15 – 2.00pm.

Further information will be sent out as it becomes available. Please remember to check our website 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

Back to School

→ with God ←

Sunday 2017

Join us for an all-age service to pray for and support children, young people and school staff at the start of a new school year

10.30am

Sunday 3rd September

Railway Street
Presbyterian Church

Be
wise!

