



The Brownlee Newsletter June 2018

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

Dear Parents

It is hard to believe that we are at the end of another school year. This has been an extremely busy and successful year for our school and I want to take a moment to sincerely thank all the teaching and support staff for their commitment and hard work throughout the year.

First of all, I want to thank all of you who attended our PTA Summer Fair on Friday night. We could not believe that we managed to have our own little microclimate over the school while the rest of Lisburn was being bombarded with torrential downpours and flooding. This was a huge event in our annual calendar and we were delighted with the support we received. We raised an amazing £1200 after expenses from the fair and every penny will go directly to purchasing resources for all the classes and for our new Accelerated Reading Scheme which is being introduced in September. I want to take this opportunity to say a very sincere thank you to our PTA for all their practical support, fundraising and donations to the school over the past year. There is so much that we simply could not do without their support.



I know I have told you before how tight money is for all our primary schools, however, this is the first year that it has actually impacted on our staff. Unfortunately, from September we will be unable to afford the additional day of special needs support during which Mrs McKee took groups of children for Maths Recovery and Talk Boost lessons. We are also losing Mrs Woods' class for the more academically able P6 and P7 children which took place during school each Wednesday. Mrs Woods will still be running the after-school transfer club but will no longer be taking the children out of class to do additional work throughout the day. Some parents have actually contacted me recently to suggest a voluntary parental donation to the school each year or a scheme where parents purchase resources such as books, felt tips etc. This is similar to other schools in the area and this may be an avenue we will have to explore after next year.

Although our school is full and we are unable to take additional children unless spaces become available, the budget our school receives is inadequate for the running of the school and the effective delivery of the Northern Ireland Curriculum. I will naturally try to apply for additional funding and resources at every opportunity but unless more central funding is given to primary schools in the near future more significant staffing reductions will have to be made over the next few years. My only comfort is that all the other schools around us are in a similar position and therefore the current arrangement for funding all our schools is untenable.

Families First Award

Now for some really good news. Several months ago one of our parents, Mrs Katie Kerr, nominated Brownlee Primary School for a special award from Families First NI. This was in recognition of the school's commitment to pastoral care and investment in our pupils. The awards ceremony was on Saturday 2nd June with Mrs McFarland and Mrs Duffy attending. We are humbled and delighted to be recognised in this way and especially to be nominated by one of our parents, however, we were totally thrilled to actually win the award. This is a fantastic accolade for our school and I believe it is a wonderful endorsement of the work carried out by all our teaching and support staff as we create a happy and productive learning environment for all our children. I again wish to thank Mrs Kerr for taking the time to nominate our school and also for the kind and encouraging messages and letters we receive from parents during the year.



School Bookfair

The recent school bookfair was very well supported by children and parents. I want to thank the members of the PTA and school staff for their help in manning the bookfair. We were able to raise a total of £518.72 which gives us a commission total of £246.73 to go towards new books for the school.



Residential Visit to Chester and Liverpool

Our residential visit to Chester and Liverpool leaves on Monday 11th June. In preparation for this I am holding a parents' meeting at 2.15pm on Tuesday 5th June.

Post-Primary Placements

A few weeks ago the children from P7 received notification of their post-primary schools for next year. I was pleased that many of the children obtained a place in their first preference school and I know that everyone will be a real credit to their parents and Brownlee, wherever they go. We have a lovely P7 class and I would like to wish all of them every success for next year. We will really miss them here in Brownlee.

Sports Day

Sports Day was a huge success this year with beautiful weather. I want to thank all of you for turning out to support the event and to the children who were excellent as always. I also want to express my gratitude to Miss Woods who organises our Sports Day each year.



Free School Meals

If your child is currently eligible for free school meals it is important to note that the Education Authority now require that a separate application is made annually and entitlement cannot be carried over into the following academic year. If you need a new form, please speak to one of our school secretaries, Mrs McAteer or Mrs Oliver. If your form is not processed prior to the 1st September, your child will either have to pay for school meals or bring a packed lunch with them to school.

posted on our website for your information.

Diary Dates

Friday 1st June

- PTA Barbecue from 5.30 – 7.30pm

Monday 4th June

- P6 visiting Fort Hill Integrated Primary School for a Maths Trail.
- P7 Leavers' Photos taking place today.
- Mr Stephen Waite from Queen's University Belfast will be carrying out some research with children from our P3 class.
- Family Portrait Evening – 6.00 – 8.00pm.

Tuesday 5th June

- P1 Farm Visit.
- Fort Hill Integrated College are having their Induction Day for P7 children.
- P7 are visiting Friends' School for cricket activities.
- Residential visit parents' meeting.
- After-School Club Pizza Night. Additional information has been sent out regarding this event.

Wednesday 6th June

- P3 are doing a Shared Education visit to Fort Hill IPS to do a workshop with Fitness Freddy.

Thursday 7th June

- We will be distributing our Sports Day medals at a special assembly today.

Friday 8th June

- Break the Rules Day.

Monday 11th June

- P5-7 Residential visit to Chester, Liverpool and North Wales.

Friday 15th June

- The school will be closed to pupils for staff training.

Monday 18th June

- Bible Club begins this week.

Tuesday 19th June

- Induction afternoon for next term's P1 children. 2.15pm.

Wednesday 20th June

- West Midland Theatre Company present 'Arabian Adventure'.
- Lisburn Fun Run. Those children who are taking part will be notified separately.

Thursday 21st June

- P7 will be presenting 'Brownlee's Got Talent'.

Friday 22nd June

- P7 Multi-Sports activities as part of Shared Education.

Saturday 23rd June

- Our school choir will be singing as part of a concert in Wallace Park from 11.00am – 1.00pm

Tuesday 26th June

- Leavers' Assembly at 10.30am.
- School reports will be distributed this week.

Wednesday 27th June

- Children from P1 are visiting Lisburn Fire Station.

Thursday 28th June

- Children from P3 are visiting the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum at Cultra.

Friday 29th June

- School will finish for the summer break at 12.00 for P1-3 along with older siblings and at 12.30pm for P4-7 children. There will be no school dinners or after-school club on this day.

School will re-open for three induction days for all classes on **Wednesday 29th August, Thursday 30st August and Friday 31st August. School will close at 12:00 for P1-3 along with older siblings and then at 12.30pm for P4-7 on these days. School will then operate as normal on Monday 3rd September and children will leave at 2.00pm and 3.00pm respectively with the After-School Club operating as normal.** Parents of children entering P1 will be given specific instructions as to when their child will start school.

As more information becomes available, I will update you. In the meantime, I would like to wish you all a very enjoyable and restful summer break and thank you for your support this school year.

Yours sincerely

Colin Elliott

Principal