



The Brownlee Newsletter

September 2019

*"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 the new families who are joining us in P1 and in other classes. I 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.

THANK YOU

I would like to say a massive thank you to parents and pupils on behalf of myself and the staff for the lovely cards and tokens of appreciation that we received at the end of last term. There is really no need to do this, however, your cards and positive comments certainly meant a lot to the staff so thank you again for taking the time to do this.

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 the 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 taking them directly to the classroom. Parents should not go beyond the reception area without the permission and supervision of a member of staff. This rule is for the protection of parents as much as ensuring the safety of children.

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 for the first 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 26th September from 1.15-2.00pm. All parents of P1 children are encouraged to attend the meeting when 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 5th September** we will be having parental information afternoons, when 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 as detailed above.

PLEASE NOTE.....

On **Thursday 5th 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 October 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 are still no longer able to do this due to the size of classes, 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 new 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, Class Dojo, 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 Safeguarding policies and a form for you to inform us of who will normally be collecting your child.



You will notice that this year's Data Collection Form is quite extensive. This is due to the requirements of GDPR and the various information and permission we now require from parents. Thank you for taking the time to complete these forms and returning them promptly.

LOCAL VISITS

During the year teachers may wish to take the children in their class on short local visits such as the Library, the Linen Museum, Castle Gardens, Railway Street Presbyterian Church, The Island Centre and Wallace Park. Pupils 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 9th September, with the exception of the **Transfer Club which begins on Wednesday 4th 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 after-school activities is attached to the end of this newsletter.



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.

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, fruitwonders, 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 9th September**. The cost of milk for the Autumn Term is £14.49 per child. If you wish for your child to receive milk, please send the full payment to school by **Wednesday 4th 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 we 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 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.

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 6th 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 please speak to Mrs McManus, our Music Co-ordinator.



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

We intend carrying out a parental opinion survey during the Autumn term, however, based on the responses from previous parental questionnaires, 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. We value the views and opinions of all our parents and have a procedure in place if you find you have a concern relating to your child. This is detailed below. Our Complaints Procedure is currently being updated in light of new Education Authority procedures and we will be sharing this with parents in due course.



- 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.

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

There is a list of school holidays published on the school website and I have also attached this to the end of this newsletter.

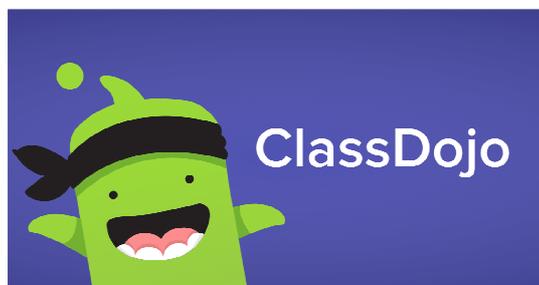
RESIDENTIAL VISITS (Preliminary Announcement)

We are planning a residential visit to Edinburgh for our Key Stage 2 pupils from the 21st – 23rd April 2020. In addition, there may also be visits to Dublin for the P6 and P7 classes as part of Shared Education programme. We will keep you informed about these in the next few weeks.

ClassDojo

Each class teacher will be providing parents with information about ClassDojo and how to register to receive messages from the school. This is an extremely useful resource and a great way to keep in contact with parents. Over the next few weeks

ClassDojo will become our preferred way of providing parents with information, although the monthly newsletter will still be published on the school's website. I would encourage all parents to download the ClassDojo app and register using the information provided by your child's teacher.



Gathering Drum Visit

On Tuesday 10th September we will have percussion workshops with Mr Joe Loughin taking place for all classes throughout the school. I want to thank one of our parents, Mrs Gillian Boyd, who was able to organise this Gathering Drum workshop for us at no cost to the school.

DIARY DATES SO FAR FOR SEPTEMBER

Wednesday 4th September

Transfer Club begins for P7 children.

Thursday 5th September

- Parental Information Afternoon. (Details above)

Monday 9th, 16th and 23rd September

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

Tuesday 10th September

- Swimming begins today for P5. Information relating to this will be sent out by Mrs Halliday and Mrs King.
- Visit from the Gathering Drum percussion workshop.

Thursday 26th September

- P1 induction afternoon from 1.15 – 2.00pm.

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



After-School Activities September-October

We are offering a range of After-School Activities this term as outlined below. Please keep an eye out for additional letters and reply slips that will be sent home for further information. These activities will begin week beginning **Monday 9th September**.

Key Stage 1, 2pm-3pm:

Day	Activity	Dates
Tuesday	360 Health Clinic Pilates	Beginning Tuesday 10 th September. Further information will be sent home regarding dates and payment.
Wednesday	Burns Skill School Basketball	Beginning Wednesday 11 th September. Further information will be sent home regarding full dates and payment.
Thursday	Burns Skill School Football	Beginning Thursday 12 th September. Further information will be sent home regarding full dates and payment.

Key Stage 2, 3pm-4pm:

Day	Activity	Dates
Tuesday	360 Health Clinic Pilates	Beginning Tuesday 10 th September. Further information will be sent home regarding dates and payment.
Wednesday	Burns Skill School Basketball	Beginning Wednesday 11 th September. Further information will be sent home regarding full dates and payment.
	P7 Transfer Club	Further information will be sent home regarding dates and payment.
Thursday	Burns Skill School Football	Beginning Thursday 12 th September. Further information will be sent home regarding full dates and payment.
	Starbooks Café	Further information will be sent home by Mrs Cardwell for this club.





BROWNLEE PRIMARY SCHOOL **HOLIDAYS AND CLOSURES 2019/2020**

Autumn term starts August	Wednesday 28 th Thursday 29 th and Friday 30 th (<u>Half Days</u> and no school meals)
Half term holiday	Monday 28 th October – Friday 1 st November
Christmas Holiday	Monday 23 rd December – Friday 3 rd January (<u>Half Day on Friday 20th Dec.</u> no meals or After School Club)



Half term holiday	Monday 17 th - Friday 21 st February 2020
Staff Training Day	Monday 16 th March (<i>School closed for pupils</i>)
St. Patrick's Day	Tuesday 17 th March
Staff Training Day	Monday 6 th April (<i>School closed for pupils</i>)
Easter Holidays	Tuesday 7 th April – Friday 17 th April (<u>Half Day on Friday 3rd April.</u> (<i>no meals or After School Club</i>))



VE Day holiday	Friday 8 th May
Staff Training Day	Friday 22 nd May (<i>School closed for pupils</i>)
Late May holiday	Monday 25 th May
Summer term ends	Tuesday 30 th June (<u>Half Day</u> , no meals or After School Club)

Please note that we have redistributed our school holidays so we are closed for a full week during the October and February half terms. This is to help facilitate families who wish to take a holiday at a more off-peak time of the year. We hope that by doing this we will be able to reduce the number of pupil absences during term time for this reason.