



The Brownlee Newsletter

January 2019

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

Dear Parents

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy New Year and I trust you had a restful and enjoyable Christmas. I want to begin by thanking you for attending our Christmas Carol Services in Railway Street Church on the 12th December. It was lovely to see the church filled with parents and friends supporting the children as they gave excellent performances of 'What The Animals Saw' (P1-3) and 'Lights, Camel, Action' (P4-7). I know there was a huge amount of work went on in the background during the rehearsals and preparation for the carol services and I want to sincerely thank all the staff and parents for their assistance in helping the children prepare lines and organise costumes. Once again I would like to thank Railway Street Presbyterian Church for the use of their church building. The amount raised for both our partner schools in Burma and India came to an amazing £630. This will go directly to purchasing resources for the schools and supporting teacher training in Destiny Academy in Burma. We have already had an enquiry from Destiny Academy asking for advice regarding a published music scheme for the whole school. With the money raised we will be able to not only advise, but purchase this scheme for the school.



Christmas Fair and PTA

The Christmas Fair was also a huge success with excellent support from parents, past pupils and friends of Brownlee Primary School. We raised over £2000 which is an excellent total and exceeds last year's amount. I want to sincerely thank the PTA and all the staff who were involved in the organisation of the event.

Weather

Should we have a spell of severe weather during this month and you are unsure if the school is open, please visit our website at www.brownleeprimary.org. A closure notice will be posted before 8am if we find ourselves in a position where we cannot open the school. We will also use the school texting service so please ensure we have your current mobile phone number.



We are now at the beginning of our Spring Term in school, which takes us up to the Easter break. This term traditionally has few interruptions and therefore a major proportion of the curriculum for each year group is covered during this time. The results of the Grammar schools' entrance tests for P7 children will be published on Saturday 26th January and I will be holding parent meetings for all P7 parents the week beginning Monday 28th January to discuss their child's choice of school for next year. A letter regarding this will be sent directly to P7 parents this week.

In addition, there will be parent / teacher interviews for all parents from P1-6 during the week beginning Monday 11th February. The children will also be undertaking some mid-year class tests towards the end of January and early February to assist with our internal assessment.

Coats

We would ask that all children have a warm coat and a hood to wear in the playground. We like the children to be outside as much as possible at break and lunch and therefore a warm waterproof coat is a priority. Please make sure all coats, sweatshirts and PE kits are clearly marked with your child's name.



After-School Activities

After-School activities will be continuing this term and will begin next week. A sheet giving specific details is at the end of this newsletter and will also be published on the school's website.

Enrolment for P1 in September 2019

The enrolment period for children who will be starting Pre-school or P1 in September 2018 closes on **Thursday 31st January**. We want to ensure that every parent of a prospective P1 and Pre-School child has made their application on time. Even if you already have a child attending Brownlee and have a younger sibling of P1 age in September 2019, it is vital that you register and complete an online application form. The criteria for applying for P1 can be found on our Brownlee school website and there are links to take you directly to the Education Authority's website through the Admissions page on the school's website. If you have any difficulty, please feel free to contact the school.

Post-Primary School Visits

This is an important time for children in P7 as they consider their school choices for next year. I would encourage both children and parents from P6 and P7 to attend as many open evenings as possible and I am always available should you wish to discuss the matter with me. Some of the local Grammar and Secondary schools will also send representatives to visit the P7 children during class time to provide information on their schools.

After-School Club Bookings

I am aware that this information was sent out to parents during December, however, it is timely to remind everyone again at the beginning of the new year.

Over the past few months we have had up to 14 additional children being booked into the After-School Club each day on an adhoc basis. This basically means that some parents have asked for their children to be booked into After-School Club with sometimes only a few hours' notice. This has caused us some significant problems such as;

- *Children are confused as they are unaware they are staying for After-School Club and members of staff have to take time locating these pupils and informing them of the new arrangements.*
- *After-School staff find themselves with many more children than they had originally planned for and we have had to look at getting additional resources or more staff to supervise the greater number of children.*
- *As all payments should be made in advance through the monthly booking form, there is an increased workload on Mrs Wilson, Mrs Young and Mrs Oliver as they calculate hours, invoice parents and arrange for additional payments to be made.*

From the beginning of January, we will have to insist that children are booked into the After-School club and accounts settled using our monthly booking form as stated in our school's After-School Club policy. I am aware that a few parents have bespoke payment plans with the Board of Governors and we will continue to honour these arrangements. We will only be able to accept last minute bookings in the case on an emergency such as a car breaking down or serious disruption to traffic.

Mrs Wilson has already distributed the monthly booking forms for January and for your convenience I have also attached the booking forms for each month on an After-School Club page on the school's website.

I hope you will understand that the safety of children is our paramount concern and secondly we have to be able to facilitate the smooth running of the After-School Club so it will be able to remain sustainable for many years to come.

Principals' Conference

I will be attending a Principals' conference on Thursday 17th and Friday 18th January. Should you need to urgently speak to a senior member of staff during this time, please contact Mrs McFarland.

Diary Dates

Friday 18th January

There will be a football tournament at Lisnagarvey High School. Miss Woods will send out information to the children involved in this.

Friday 25th January

There will be a netball tournament at Lisnagarvey High School. Miss Woods will send out information to the children involved in this

Saturday 26th January

P7 children who sat the entrance tests for local grammar schools will receive their results this morning. We wish all those awaiting these results every success and are here to help them in the decisions that need to be made for next school year.

Monday 28th January – Tuesday 29th January

P7 Transfer Interviews will take place.

Thursday 31st January

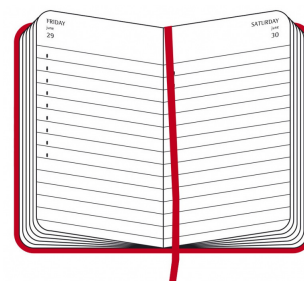
Closing date for pre-school and P1 applications for children starting in September 2019.

We will keep you informed of any new information as the month progresses.

Yours sincerely

Colin Elliott

Principal



After-School Activities January-February

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. **Please note that Burns are offering basketball on a Wednesday and Soccer on a Thursday to facilitate the availability of coaches.**

Key Stage 1, 2pm-3pm:

Day	Activity	Dates
Tuesday	360 Health Clinic Pilates	Running from 15 th January until 9 th April. Further information will be sent home regarding dates and payment.
Wednesday	Burns Skills School Basketball	Running from 16 th January until 10 th April. Further information will be sent home regarding dates and payment.
Thursday	Burns Skills School Soccer	Running from 17 th January until 11 th April. Further information will be sent home regarding dates and payment.

Key Stage 2, 3pm-4pm:

Day	Activity	Dates
Monday	P5-7 Peace Proms Choir	Continuation from December.
Tuesday	360 Health Clinic Pilates	Running from 15 th January until 9 th April. Further information will be sent home regarding dates and payment.
Wednesday	Burns Skills School Basketball	Running from 16 th January until 10 th April. Further information will be sent home regarding dates and payment.
Thursday	Burns Skills School Soccer	Running from 17 th January until 11 th April. Further information will be sent home regarding dates and payment.
	Craft Club	Further information will be sent home by Mrs Lockhart for this club.

