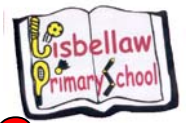




Lisbellaw Primary School Newsletter - September 2009



Dear Parent,

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as Principal of Lisbellaw Primary School. I am delighted to join the school and look forward to a successful and happy future working with pupils, parents, staff, Governors and the wider community.

We are pleased to welcome all our children back after a restful summer holiday and give a special welcome to all new children and their parents. We wish all those who have moved on to secondary school a happy experience at their new schools.

We have enrolled 24 new pupils to Year 1 and 27 to the Nursery. We look forward to building good relationships with our new parents and assure all of our parents that we continue to be committed to achieving excellence for all children. We provide children with a rich learning experience so that they will be able to live and work with confidence in a fast-changing world.

We are very fortunate to have a dedicated and caring staff who are happy to talk to you should you have any concerns.

We have outlined below our vision for the school. The full Mission Statement and Aims are available from the office on request.

Lisbellaw Primary School – Vision

We will all work together in a caring environment where tolerance, respect for others and a readiness to listen are essential. We will value each pupil putting them at the centre of education. We will seek to nurture their academic, creative, emotional, physical and spiritual needs, enriching their lives and preparing them for the future.

I feel that this is an appropriate time of year to convey some important points regarding school.

New School Building

We are delighted that the new school building is progressing very well. Years 4, 5, 6 and 7 are in temporary classrooms located around the senior playground. Children from these classes will be walking across the front of the school. Parents who are leaving children to Breakfast Club may drive into the school grounds but after 8.40 a.m. there is no access to cars onto this area. Therefore, after this time in the interest of safety, we would kindly request that parents do not drive into school grounds (except those who have a medical reason for doing so).

We would ask that if possible you park at Cloghcor Crescent and walk with the children to the school gates. Miss McElwaine will organise a Park and Stride system each morning as last year. Parents willing to help please see Miss McElwaine (this will begin on Monday 7th September).

Your cooperation in this is very much appreciated. We hope our new school (which will have excellent parking facilities) will be ready this time next year. A meeting was held with the architect last Monday and excellent progress is being made.

School Holidays

Holidays (including Exceptional Closure Days / Baker Days) are in your child's Homework Diary.

Swine Flu

As we begin the school year, we are outlining the advice we as schools have been given about swine flu as on 21st August 2009.

GENERAL INFORMATION What is swine flu?

Swine flu is a respiratory illness caused by a new strain of the Influenza virus which has been named pandemic (H1N1) 2009 by the World Health Organisation.

What are the symptoms of swine flu?

The symptoms of swine flu are similar to the symptoms of normal, human seasonal flu and include:

- Fever
- Fatigue;
- Coughing;
- Sore throat;
- Headache
- Runny nose;
- Pains in the limbs or the joints.
- Some people with swine flu have also reported vomiting and diarrhoea.

If children become unwell

If children become unwell at home it is important that they stay at home. If the illness is mild and there are no underlying risk factors then it can often be managed like normal flu by staying in bed and taking over the counter preparations. However, those with underlying conditions and with more serious disease should stay at home and telephone their GP or GP out of hours service. If a child becomes unwell at school then we will make arrangements to send them home as soon as possible. As in all circumstances we are asked to ensure that there is someone available at home to look after the child. Therefore, it is important that your emergency contact details for parent, guardians and carers are kept up to date.

Now that we have moved to the “treatment” phase, in most circumstances, it is not recommended that our school should envisage closing. This is because the virus is becoming increasingly widespread within the community. People are likely to be repeatedly exposed to the virus in their everyday lives so that closing the school will no longer be effective in slowing the spread of the virus. In some special circumstances, for example a school with children who are particularly vulnerable to infection or because of insufficient staff numbers, a decision may be made to close the school. However it is important to point out that swine flu has to date, been a relatively mild illness, and as far as possible our school will plan to manage for ‘business as usual’.

What can we as a school and parents do to slow the spread of Infection?

By practising good hygiene everyone can play their part and help to reduce the spread of all viruses, including swine flu:

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water to reduce the spread of virus from your hands to face or to other people;
- Clean hard surfaces (e.g. door handles) frequently using a normal cleaning product;
- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, using a tissue when possible;
- Dispose of dirty tissues promptly and carefully;
- Make sure children follow this advice.

We know that this is ‘common sense’ but they are important principles to reiterate for all of us working on this issue.

We will keep you updated on further developments. In the meantime further useful information can be found on the following:

The swine flu Public Helpline operates between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday on 0800 0514 142.

More general information can be obtained from various websites, including:

Public Health Agency – www.publichealth.hscni.net

Health Protection Agency – www.hpa.org.uk

The Department of Health, Social Service and Public Safety – www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

The Department of Education – www.deni.gov.uk

Information Evening for Parents

Monday 21st September, will be Parents' Night for Yr 1 – Yr 4 parents and Tuesday 22nd September for Yr 5 – Yr 7 parents. All parents are invited into school to meet their child's teacher and hear about the curriculum for the year. Please keep this evening free and try to come along. Each meeting will only last ½ hour.

A good turnout of parents is encouraged and feedback from parents and teachers in previous years has indicated the usefulness of such meetings at the beginning of the school year. A separate note will follow later this month detailing arrangements for these meetings.

Parent-Teacher Meetings

Teachers keep Mondays after school free to meet with parents (by appointment). Please contact the class teacher directly or by sending a note if you would like to discuss your child's progress and behaviour. If problems arise, I would encourage parents (in line with school policy), to liaise with the class teacher in the first instance.

PARENT – PUPIL – TEACHER MEETINGS

These will be held in school on Monday 26th and Tuesday 27th October in the afternoon. School will close at 12.30 p.m. on those days. School meals will be served.

Permission Slips

Class teachers will be sending leaflets home soon with information on procedures and curriculum details applicable to particular year groups. This information includes slips seeking parental permission for children being taken on class trips, for the publication of photographs/ names in school/press, internet safety and the use of mobile phones (anyone needing a copy of our Mobile Phone policy please call with secretary). These slips need to be returned promptly – *if not returned within a short period, it will be assumed that no objection is being made by parents and the child concerned is allowed to participate in the trips / have their name published.*

Home Learning Policy

The Home Learning Policy is included in your child's Homework Diary. It outlines the Purpose, Principles and guidelines for Home Learning for the parents, teachers and pupils.

The teachers will be happy to hear any comments or concerns you might have as we work together to provide the best possible education for the children who attend this school.

A note to the teacher is needed and avoids confusion should your child, for one reason or another, be unable to complete all or some of the work.

Pastoral Care / Child Protection

The school operates an Anti-Bullying Policy and if there are any problems in this area parents and children are encouraged to inform the class teacher or Principal immediately.

Mrs Coalter is the designated person who has responsibility for Child Protection and any areas of concern may be discussed with either her or Mrs Logan (in confidence).

Child Protection guidelines are issued to parents on alternate years but if you would like a copy of this or any other policies please feel free to contact the office.

The Responsibilities of Parents

We ask our parents to support their children and the school by:

- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying;
- Advising their children to report any bullying to a class teacher, a designated teacher, or the principal, and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any form of bullying;
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken;
- Keeping a written record of any reported instances of bullying;
- Informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved.

PASTORAL CONCERNS:

DESIGNATED TEACHER: Mrs R Coalter

Code of Conduct

The School Code of Behaviour is to be found in your child's Homework Diary. We look forward as always to your support as we reinforce positive behaviour which gives children the qualities they need to become happy, well-adjusted adults, able to contribute to society in a meaningful way.

Our school discipline policy, which includes privileges called GOLDEN TIME, is very effective.

Children in Years 1 and 2 are given half an hour of free activity on a Friday afternoon. Children in Years 3 - 7 have 1 hour of Club time on Friday afternoon- this will begin on 25th September.

The aim of Golden Time is that pupils will take responsibility for their own behaviour, and realise that there will be consequences, resulting in loss of some Golden Time if their behaviour is not acceptable. Classroom Assistants and Dinner Supervisors will also use this procedure during break-time and lunch-time.

All pupils are given a grade for Effort and Behaviour on a Friday (see Homework Diary). Please check the grade and give praise where it is due and encouragement to help improvement if there is a B grade.

All children are expected to get an A grade because there is an opportunity to earn lost golden time back.

We welcome the help of parents who can volunteer to help with clubs from 2.00 – 3.00 p.m. on Fridays.

The School Day

The school day begins at **9.05 a.m.** and children are supervised in their own classrooms from 8.45 a.m. No responsibility can be taken for them before this time.

The school day for Y1 & Y2 pupils ends at 1.45 p.m. (Yr 1 will finish at 12.30 p.m. until 14th September). Please try to be prompt as Y1 and Y2 teachers and classroom assistants go to teach in other classes at this time.

If there are any changes to the normal end of day procedures please inform the class teacher.

Pupils will not be allowed to go home with a friend or any adult unless the teacher has been informed by a parent in writing.

A bell rings at 3.00 p.m. for those pupils travelling on the school buses and another at 3.05 p.m. for those remaining.

At the end of the day, pupils should not wait at the end of the school path for long periods. For their own safety they should return to school and report to a teacher if they have not been collected after 10 minutes.

We recommend that children in Years 1 – 3 remain in the school building at the end of the school day until collected by parents or carers. Older children may walk to the end of the path or wait at the school gates if parents give permission.

Children who are walking or being collected are not permitted to leave school until the second bell after the first buses have gone.

Children with passes for a school bus are only permitted to travel on the bus to which their pass applies. In certain circumstances eg. if a child is travelling on another bus to a birthday party etc a note is needed to the class teacher informing her of this. Children who do not have a bus pass and wish to travel on a bus with a friend for some reason need to bring a note to the class teacher informing her of this. Bus arrangements are not part of the school's role – if problems regarding travelling arrangements arise contact needs to be made directly with the

Transport Department in the District Office (66 343900). However, any indiscipline problems on the bus need to be relayed to school so that they can be followed up immediately.

After School Club / Homework Club

An After School Club, which runs between 1.45 p.m. and 3.00 p.m., is available for children in Years 1 and 2 at a cost of £1.50 per day.

A Homework Club will run **on school days only** and operate the following programme:

3.00 – 3.30 p.m. Play / relaxation

3.30 – 4.00 p.m. Snack

4.00 – 4.45 p.m. Homework / story time

4.45 – 5.30 p.m. Activities to include art and craft, PE, computers etc.

The club is run by fully qualified classroom assistants and there are appropriate levels of supervision depending of the number of children.

The cost is £6 per day or £10 for 2 children.

There are still places if your child would like to join either of these clubs.

Breakfast Club

The club will be open from 8.10 a.m. – 9.00 a.m. and the following costs apply.

Cereal & Milk	40p	Toast, butter & jam	30p
Orange/Apple Juice	30p	Tea	20p

The Healthy Munch Box Challenge

Our school will be continuing to take part in The Healthy Munch Box Challenge this school year as part of the Health Promoting School Award which the school will be assessed for early in 2010.

Our healthy break / lunchtime will continue in line with our Break / Lunchtime Policy. P1 and P2 operate a snack time where the teachers will liaise with parents and collect snack money.

Reminder: Water

Children may bring water to school for use during class time.

Uniform

It is advisable to write each child's name on all clothing and footwear to avoid possible loss. Teachers will check sweatshirts for names. All P.E. kits should be named clearly. Details will follow shortly regarding Lisbellaw Primary School P.E. kits.

Lunch Arrangements

P1's go home at 12.30 p.m. until Monday 14th September 2009. After that they stay until 1.45 p.m. and join the rest of the school for lunch. First sitting is at 12.15 p.m. and second sitting at 1.00 p.m. The dining hall is well supervised.

Charging Policy

It is the policy of the school to charge for:-

- (a) the cost of some of the materials for art and craft if the child wishes to take home the finished product, which costs more than £2.00.
- (b) clubs where a cost to the school is incurred.
- (c) swimming badges obtained at the Lakeland Forum.
- (d) costs associated with admission to places of educational interest which are organised as part of the curriculum.
- (e) the cost of replacing a defaced, damaged or lost book or item of school equipment.
- (f) costs associated with the provision of individual tuition on a musical instrument, provided by W.E.L.B. Peripatetic Music Service.
- (g) optional activities, which take place wholly or mainly outside school hours and are additional to the education provided by the school, for the purposes of meeting the statutory requirements. Participation in such activities is to be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet such charges as are made.

Absence from School

Notes are required for all school absences and should be forwarded to the class teacher. Please note that the school roll is now taken twice per day and hence missing a number of morning or afternoon sessions will affect attendance rates. Should a child be unwell it is best they remain at home.

School should be notified in advance of planned, longer absences from school – although such absences are not encouraged. Teachers do not set formal work for children who miss school due to holidays – instead, they are asked to read or keep a diary of their experiences.

Transfer

During last year we had much uncertainty about Transfer Tests. We realise that this uncertainty causes parents concerns but the children at Lisbellaw Primary School are receiving a high quality of education and are well prepared for any type of assessment including the 3 AQE tests girls will sit on 14th November, 28th November and 5th December and the GL tests which the boys will sit on 21st November. Teachers will liaise closely with parents. More details will be given at the Parent's Evening on 22nd September.

School Book Fair

The school Book Fair will be held in school from Monday 9th November until Thursday 12th November 2009. Children will have the opportunity to purchase books throughout the day and it will be open to parents from 8.45 - 9.30 a.m. and 2.00 - 4.00 p.m. on the above days.

The school receives 55% of sales in commission and this is taken in books to supplement class libraries.

This will also be BOOK WEEK when no written homework will be set in order to allow time for reading (with the exception of Year 7).

P.T.A.

We value the continued support of the Parent Teacher Association and they will undoubtedly keep you informed of events through regular correspondence. Your continued involvement and participation in their fund raising events is welcomed.

The effort of last year's Committee has helped to buy a wide variety of resources and subsidise many other school activities. This school is extremely fortunate in having such a dedicated group of helpers – thank you.

Peanut Allergy

Some children in school have peanut allergies and must not be exposed to peanuts in any form. We therefore ask everyone not to bring peanuts or food containing peanuts to school.

School Records

If there are any changes in your home address, telephone number, contact details, family circumstances, child's medical information etc. please let your child's teacher know immediately so that our school records can be updated. This is very important should we need to contact parents during school hours or escort children to hospital to receive medical attention – the latter being done only when attempts have failed to contact parents/guardians or immediate attention is considered essential.

School Development Plan

This year the staff will continue to review Revised Curriculum practices (notably

- Talking and Listening
- The World Around Us
- I.C.T.

Many teachers will avail of training in relation to the curriculum notably P3, P4 and P7 teachers; Incas (assessments) will be carried out with all P4 – P7 children next month.

Registering children

A large number of pre-school children's details are currently on computer record- i.e. Primary 1 aged children due to start school in September 2010 or later.

All children who attend nursery schools or classes must also be registered with a primary school. Returning the accompanying sheet will help us to add to and update our records – thank you.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN WHO SUFFER FROM ASTHMA:

We realise the importance of children having an appropriate inhaler with them in school at all times. However, in the event of a child forgetting their inhaler, we would like to have a spare (in date) one in school – labelled with the child's name and any other instruction deemed necessary. The class teacher will hold this in a secure place.

Be Wary!

As well as children starting school, headlice often like to start school. In line with school policy, parents should check their child's hair regularly and inform the school immediately, if lice have been detected.

Please note: Following the Smoking (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 and the School's Smoke-free Policy, parents/visitors are asked to refrain from smoking inside school premises – thank you.

Please feel free to contact me or the class teacher by appointment if you have any concerns about your child or need further clarification on any points.

I wish you and your children a happy and healthy school year.

Yours sincerely

I Logan (Mrs)
Principal