



# Buick Memorial Primary School Newsletter

## Friday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023



Parents and Carers,

Welcome to the new academic year at Buick! We are delighted with how well our new Nursery and Primary 1 pupils have embraced school life and we look forward to meeting more P1 pupils next week!

Our P2-P7 children have thoroughly relished being back in school and it is lovely to see those smiling faces ready to learn, grow and enjoy their time at school. As parents and carers, you have been very supportive by dropping children off at the gates at the correct times and complying with our requests. Thank you! It is essential that you continue to read the Weekly Newsletter to keep informed of all things Buick over the coming weeks and months.

### Attendance

We will continue to complete Attendance Records each morning electronically via SIMS. It is imperative that all children are in school on time each day and prepared for the day ahead. Parents must contact the school via telephone to inform us if their child is going to be absent. This communication is essential in keeping our school attendance records accurate and to maintain a safe learning environment for everybody at Buick. Upon return to school, pupils should bring a note to explain their absence. These notes are kept for discussion with the Education Welfare Officer in circumstances where attendance falls below 85%.

Children who arrive late should make their way to the front door in the morning. Parents who are late at collection time must recognise the stress that this can cause a child. Furthermore, this delay prevents Buick staff from completing their 2pm-3pm teaching roles, whilst they await the late collection.

### Uniform

Our children look incredibly smart in their new dark brown uniforms. We hope to maintain this standard of presentation throughout the academic session. **Parents should ensure that their child wears black or brown shoes to school – not trainers!** It is important to have your child's uniform and shoes labelled clearly with their name as these can easily be muddled up within a primary school environment. Also, could all parents please ensure that each child has a coat for outdoor play every day? We try to have as much fresh air and active play as possible to promote children's health and holistic wellbeing. Thank you in advance.

Our new PE kit will be encouraged during all Physical Education lessons. Please note that leggings are not part of our school uniform and pupils should not be wearing these to school on a daily basis. We hope to receive the items that were out of stock next week and we will contact you when they arrive. Please do not contact the office for new orders. There will be additional opportunities for parents to purchase further uniform items (jumpers and polo shirts) from the school in January and again in June.

### SEAG Registration

Primary 7 parents are reminded that SEAG Registration is still open. Please ensure you have registered if you wish your child to sit the SEAG Transfer. Please visit <https://seagni.co.uk/> for further registration information and to gain information on the timings and new contents of the assessments.

Registration for SEAG is a parental responsibility and the school cannot complete such applications. The closing date for submission is Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2023.

The SEAG Entrance Assessments (now only 2 papers) will be held on the following dates:

- Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2023
- Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2023

### Parking

We would kindly ask parents to park responsibly and not on in the bus lanes at the back of the school, or on the zig-zag or yellow lines on Main Street. Children's safety is of paramount importance and we need your full co-operation in this matter. We appreciate that Pottinger Steet and parking at the back of the school can also be difficult to navigate at times, however, it is essential that everybody parks responsibly. Please share this information with grandparents or childminders who don't receive this Weekly Newsletter.

### Free School Meals

We have a number of children enrolled within the school who would be entitled to free school meals but are not registered as such. If your child is not currently on the 'Free Meals Register' and you feel that they could/should be, please visit [www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals](http://www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals) to make an application. It is in the school's best interest to have all children who are eligible registered as such, as this impacts on the budget allocated for this academic year.

Parents who have applied should not presume their child will receive a free school meal immediately. Only parents who have completed the registration process and who have received written confirmation, will be on our list. The Education Authority has stated that pupils who are awaiting processing should pay £2.60 per day if availing of a school meal, until the registration process has been completed.

### Dining Centre and Lunches

Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> September is Week 2 of our new Lunch Bunch Menu. School dinners remain at a cost of £2.60 per day. Any pupil with a food allergy must complete the relevant form before availing of food from our Dining Centre. These forms were sent home this week with every child. If your child doesn't have any allergies, please do not return this form to school.

We would like to remind parents that they should clearly name pack lunch bags too as they can easily get muddled in a school environment! Also, please do not send food to school which your child cannot open or does not like! It is important that children have enough food and drink to sustain them for the full day. Parents are encouraged to be mindful about sending in big bags of sweets as lunch. Nutrition is essential for growth, please carefully consider the content of your child's packed lunch.

On Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September, we will be serving an amended menu of:

Spring Rolls  
Fish Fingers  
Sweetcorn and Mashed potatoes  
Chocolate sponge and custard

### Nut Allergies

We have a number of pupils in school with allergies to particular foods such as nuts. Buick is a 'NUT FREE SCHOOL'. We respectfully ask parents to think carefully about what items they give to their child. Please encourage healthy eating and do not send any nut products into the school environment. We must eliminate the risk of anaphylactic reactions. Your co-operation in this matter is essential in keeping all children safe.

### Medical Needs

We have a small number of children in school with medical needs such as diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, anaphylaxis and allergies. Parents of these children should complete an AM1 and AM2 form (which were sent home this week and are available on our school website for new needs identified throughout the year) and return them to school. Miss Peters will then approve the administration of medication and return agreed and signed forms to you, for your reference.

For children who fall under the high-risk categories, we must complete a Care Plan and Risk Assessment annually. If you feel that your child requires one of these Plans, please contact Miss Peters directly as soon as possible. Children who previously had a Care Plan received forms yesterday to be updated and these should be returned to the School Office. It is essential that parents share all relevant medical information or changes in conditions with their child's class teacher throughout the academic year.

### After School Clubs

During Term 1 we plan to offer an After School Club to P1, P2 and P3 pupils. This will help their social interaction and provide them with an activity beyond the normal school curriculum. Further details on Clubs and times will follow next week.

### Prize Day Awards

We are still awaiting a number of cups being returned by P2-P7 pupils (last years's P1-P6). Please ensure all cups are returned next week. Thank you.

### Music Exams

We are delighted to share with you that Holly Livingstone achieved Distinction in her Grade 4 flute exam and Ollie Wilson achieved Merit in his Grade 2 flute exam. Superb results! We wish them both all the best as they begin Year 8 in their new schools.

The Education Authority's peripatetic music service will continue to provide tuition at Buick throughout this academic session. Miss Bell (strings) and Mr McCubbin (woodwind) will be commencing lessons next week.

### Transport

A number of our children travel by bus to school each day. This week, these children met with Miss Peters, Miss Harkin and Miss Greer to arrange their buses, discuss travelling safely to and from school and bus passes were distributed accordingly.

Unfortunately, these plans have now been amended by the Education Authority and we await further information on the routes and provision being put in place for our children.

### Parental Role

At Buick, we want to promote effective partnership working. If you have any comments, queries or concerns about school practices you should speak with your child's class teacher in the first instance. If matters are not satisfactorily resolved, you should contact Mr Beattie or Miss Peters to arrange a meeting. We would also like to remind parents of their responsibilities with regard to naming Buick Memorial Primary or any Buick personnel on any social media platforms. Please see the attached letter from the Ballymena Primary Principals' Association.

Additionally, Buick staff should not be contacted on their personal mobiles or social media accounts to ask a school specific question. All communication should come via the school office. Thank you in anticipation of your support in this matter.

### Covid

Unfortunately, Covid is still present within our community, and its spread is likely to increase over the coming winter months. We have already had our first cases at Buick this week!

We will be following the Public Health / NI Direct Guidance which states:

If you have a positive COVID-19 test result, you should follow the advice below:

- stay at home and avoid contact with other people for five days (or three days for children and young people under 18 years of age) after the day of the test, or from the day symptoms started (whichever was earlier)
- avoid contact with people you know [to be at higher risk from COVID-19](#) for 10 days especially those with a weakened immune system
- do not visit others in a health or social care setting for 10 days
- continue to take precautions, such as regularly washing your hands and wearing a face mask, particularly in crowded indoor places
- let everyone in your household and have had close contact with know



ParentingNI

**Monday  
18th  
September  
2023**

**HELPING CHILDREN  
MANAGE CHANGE &  
TRANSITIONS**

Change is inevitable in childhood, so children need to feel able to manage. Sometimes change will impact on how they behave and they may need some guidance to process what's happening. As a parent, you can help them learn to cope with changes in their lives such as moving to a new school, getting ready for a new sibling, moving house, etc.

ParentingNI

**Online Session**  
**7pm - 8pm**  
**Call to Register**  
**0808 8010 722**  
**Mon-Thurs 9.30am - 3.30pm**  
**Fri 9.30am - 12.30pm**

**Class Letters**

Today, each child has received a printed letter from their class teacher to inform you of the class routine /plans for the year ahead. Please ensure you read this letter carefully and that your child is prepared for each school day.

*Buick staff have thoroughly enjoyed meeting their new classes and are seamlessly getting back into a routine again.*

*Thank you for your continued support as we drive forward developments for all children at Buick.*

*Have a lovely weekend!*

Kind regards,  
R. Peters (Acting Principal)





## Ballymena Primary Principals' Association

### Joint Guidance on Social Media Posting

We tend to forget that almost anybody can see what we are posting online and comments that may have been made in the heat of the moment can easily be copied and then shared by others, even after the original post has been deleted. As Ballymena schools, we wish to urge our school communities to work together, communicate appropriately and remember at all times that parents/carers are representatives of their schools. Inappropriate actions on social media can impact negatively on the life and welfare of those connected with the school.

The partnership of parents and school is central to achieving the best pastoral and educational outcomes for all our pupils.

- All parents have a responsibility in role-modelling effective, appropriate and safe communication on social media.
- Parents/Guardians should be aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social networking by accessing their own school's social media policy.

#### Methods of proper school communication with parents/carers include:

- School prospectus, school website, newsletters, texting service, emails, letters and face to face meetings.
- Pictures taken of school members be confined to the school's website.
- Parents should be aware that primary aged children should not be on social media platforms. It is the parents' duty to protect their children from unhelpful social media contact. It is also not the school's responsibility to deal with any social media issues which have taken place outside school.
- Parents should not share complaints about a child, teacher or school through social media as such action, and *subsequent comments by others*, may cause significant emotional distress to those persons referenced and/or the school community as a whole. Every school has a published Complaints' Procedure which should be adhered to by both parents and the school.

Please remember that perceived complaints written in the heat of the moment and posted on social media may have a personal bias and not necessarily reflect the whole truth about a situation or incident to viewers. We therefore advise parents not to be drawn into liking or commenting on such postings if they see them on social media.

**Complaints to do with in-school incidents, should they arise, should be pursued through the appropriate channels by:**

- Making contact with the class teacher, the Vice Principal or Principal.
- A meeting can then be arranged at a mutually convenient time to try and bring about a resolution to the issue.
- All schools have a complaints procedure that should be followed.

Parents/carers should also be aware that defamatory/unhelpful comments made online will naturally be viewed negatively by the school as the parent/carer has chosen to disregard the school's Complaint Policy. The parent may have to be asked to come in and speak to Senior Management about this breach in policy and the matter dealt with face to face, which would have been the preferred method of dealing with the initial complaint.

**THANK YOU TO ALL OUR PARENTS WHO PARTNER WITH US WITH FRIENDSHIP AND UNDERSTANDING.**

