

# Buick Memorial Primary School Newsletter

## Friday 29<sup>th</sup> August 2025



Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to the new academic year at Buick! Team Buick has had a few changes over the summer months and we are delighted that new permanent recruitment is complete!

Nursery - Mrs Gault & Miss Morgan

Primary 1 - Miss Stirling & Miss A. Greer

Primary 2 - Mrs Gamble/Mrs Carleton, Miss Harkin & Mrs McDowell

Primary 3 - Mrs Hunter/Mrs McKay, Mrs Barr & Mrs Service

Primary 3 - Mrs Shirlow, Miss McLaughlin and Mrs S. Greer

Primary 4 - Miss Gibson, Mrs Rainey & Mrs E. Greer

Primary 5/4 - Miss A. Stewart & Miss Henry

Primary 5 - Mr Maybin

Primary 6 - Mrs McQuiston/Mrs Cumberland

Primary 7 - Mr Beattie, Mrs Steele and Mrs Francey

Primary 7 - Mrs McCleery, Mrs Moffett & Mrs Glover

SENCO - Mrs Kennedy



We currently have a temporary SEN Classroom Assistant vacancy for 25 hours per week. Parents or Carers who have Level 3 Health and Social Care Qualification are invited to send their expression of interest and CV to Miss Peters by Friday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2025. Thank you.

### Child Protection

During our Staff Development Days, all Buick staff completed updated Child Protection Training. This training heightens our awareness of our role in protecting children.

If you have any concerns about your child's safety in school, you can speak to Mr Beattie, (Designated Teacher for Child Protection), or to Mrs Shirlow, (Deputy Designated Teacher). If you are still concerned, you may contact the Principal, Miss R Peters, who oversees the Safeguarding Team within Buick Memorial Primary School. Additionally, you may contact the Board of Governors. Our Child Protection Governor is Rev. Philip Moffett.

If you have any concerns about a child or community activity out of school hours, you can talk to a Social Worker at the Social Services Gateway Team on 0300 1234 333 or PSNI on 101.

Like all primary schools, Buick links with PSNI Officers to engage in Operation Encompass. This is a legal requirement which ensures appropriate information is shared accordingly.

As professionals, we have a legal duty of care for children. As part of this, 'Notes of Concern' are completed inhouse if staff have any worries regarding a child's presentation. This presentation includes their attendance, personal hygiene, nutritional provision, growth and development, uncharacteristic behaviours and comments/worries they share about home life. If appropriate, these records may be shared with Social Services.

If your individual circumstances or family composition has changed over the summer, please contact the school to inform us. These open lines of communication will ensure each child's needs are met.

### Primary 7 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 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 19<sup>th</sup> September 2025.**

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

Saturday 15th November 2025 (AM): Entrance Assessment Paper 1

Saturday 22nd November 2025 (AM): Entrance Assessment Paper 2

Saturday 24th January 2026: SEAG Outcomes released

### Attendance

We will continue to complete Attendance Records each morning electronically via SIMS. It is imperative that all children are in school by 9:05am 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 (after 9:05am) should make their way to the front door in the morning. Parents who are late at collection time (2pm/3pm) must recognise the stress that this can cause a child. Furthermore, this delay prevents Buick staff from completing their 2pm-3pm teaching roles, or After School Clubs 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 PE kit will be encouraged during all Physical Education lessons.

Please note that leggings and jogging bottoms are not part of our school uniform and pupils should not be wearing these to school on a daily basis.

We will reopen our Uniform shop in Term 2 to allow parents to purchase additional school wear.

### 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.

### Dining Centre and Lunches

Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> September is Week 1 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.

Breakfast club will commence on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September from 8am-8.45 each morning. (Cost £1 plus food purchased)

#### Price list for Breakfast Club and Break-time:

- Toast - 30p
- Cereal -Cheerios, cornflakes, rice krispies - 50p
- Strawberry or grape cup (when available) - 50p
- Croissants - 50p (Monday & Wednesday)
- Pancakes - 30p (Tuesday & Thursday)
- Cheesy Bagels  $\frac{1}{2}$  - 50p (Friday)
- Apple or Orange juice carton - 50p
- Chocolate or Strawberry milkshake - 50p

We would like to remind parents that they should clearly name pack lunch bags too as they can easily get misplaced or swopped 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. As nutrition is essential for growth and brain development, please carefully consider the content of your child's packed lunch.



## 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.

## Transport

A number of our children travel by bus to school each day. Today, we distributed new bus passes for use on Monday morning (1<sup>st</sup> September). Parents should remind their child about travelling safely to and from school on the bus.

## 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.

### Applying for Free School Meals & Uniform Allowance

**1. Are you eligible?**

You must be:

- in receipt of a qualifying benefit
- OR
- be an Asylum Seeker supported by the Home Office Asylum Support Assessment Team (ASAT).

**Qualifying Benefits:**

- Income Support;
- Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance;
- Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit;
- Child Tax Credit or Working Tax Credit with an annual taxable household income of £16,190 or less;
- Universal credit and have net household earnings not exceeding £15,000 per year.

**2. What documentation do you need?**

You will be asked to upload proof that you are receiving a qualifying benefit:

- Tax Credits Award Notice
- Universal Credit Payments breakdown or
- Proof of Benefit letter (if you are in receipt of Income Support, Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Related Employment and Support Allowance or the Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit).

**3. What else do you need?**

- National Insurance Number
- Children's names
- Dates of Birth
- Schools they will be attending
- Address
- E-mail and telephone number
- Bank or building society account and sort code details.

**4. Where do you apply?**

Apply for Free School Meals and Uniform Allowance for the new school year beginning September, through the Education Authority's online portal, EA Connect. If you haven't already registered an EA Connect account, it's quick and easy to do. Information can be found on the EA website.


**5. What happens next?**

We aim to process applications within 4 weeks. However, in the busy period of June to September, this can take up to 5 weeks. Please do not contact EA for an update on your application within the 5 weeks of submitting your application. If you have provided incorrect or insufficient supporting documentation, you will receive a tailored email advising you to resubmit your application with details of the correct documentation you need to provide.

You will receive an email from EA once your application has been approved and processed.

**If you require help...**

- [www.eani.org.uk/fsm](http://www.eani.org.uk/fsm)
- 028 9041 8044
- [mealsanduniform@eani.org.uk](mailto:mealsanduniform@eani.org.uk)

  
**eaconnect**

### Pupil Information

On Monday, Pupil Data Collection sheets will be sent home to all parents. Please amend and return to Buick as soon as possible, to allow SIMS to be updated accurately.

### Medical Needs

We have individual children with specific medical needs such as diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, anaphylaxis and allergies. Parents of these children should complete an AM1 and AM2 form which will be sent home on Monday. These are also available on our school website for new needs identified throughout the year.

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.

### Parental Role

At Buick, we want to promote effective partnership working. If you have any comments, queries or concerns about school practices or Education Authority Policies, 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 completing homework on time and supporting their child's holistic development. Buick staff will be contacting parents who consistently fail to return homework, reading books/textbooks, or reply slips by the set deadlines on ParentMail.

Parents are also strictly forbidden from naming Buick Memorial Primary or any Buick personnel on social media platforms. Please see the attached letter from the Ballymena Primary Principals' Association which is in operation across all local primary schools.

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, which is open from 8:45am - 3:30pm each day. Thank you in anticipation of your support in this matter.

We are delighted with how well our new Nursery and Primary 1 pupils have embraced school life and we look forward to meeting more 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. We look forward to another productive year at Buick.

Have a lovely weekend!

Kind regards,  
R. Peters  
Principal

# GIVE BLOOD Save Lives

Book now for your local community  
blood donation session!

## VENUE

Cullybackey Methodist Church Hall  
Cullybackey

## DATE & TIME

Wed 17 September 2025  
12:30 – 19:30

Northern Ireland needs 1200  
blood donations per week.

That's 1 every 8 minutes.



Scan to book your  
appointment.

 [www.NIBTS.org](http://www.NIBTS.org)

Northern Ireland  
Blood Transfusion Service



# Registration Night

## Wed 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept 6.30–7.30pm



Weekly Meeting times:

Rainbows (Age 4–7) Wed 6.30–7.30pm

Brownies (Age 7–10) Wed 6.30–7.30pm

Guides (Age 10–14) Wed 7.30–9pm

Rangers (Age 14–18) Mon 7–9pm

**Register online or on the night**  
**Look forward to seeing you!**



**Girlguiding**  
Cullybackey

Dr John McKelvey Community Centre, Cullybackey