



Lurgan Junior High School

Gilford Road
Lurgan
Co Armagh
BT66 8SU

Telephone: 028 3832 3243 Fax: 028 3832 7823 email: agraham013@c2kni.net (Principal's Secretary)

Principal: Mrs L E Currie B.Ed., PQH

September 2016

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The month of September brings with it a return to school, to after school activities, and also the inevitable routines and habits that for you as parents and carers will mean a less relaxed household where homework becomes the norm and evening journeys to various church and community events take priority.

Firstly, I want to take the opportunity to welcome back all of our Year 9 and Year 10 students. On behalf of all staff, I wish each and every one of them a happy and successful year. A special welcome to our Year 8 students who have settled well in these initial few days. We will do our utmost to ensure their progress throughout the year.

I wish to inform you of a few changes that have taken place this year.

1. **SCHOOL NURSE** - This year we have no school nurse. In these frustrating economic times, this luxury proved too difficult to sustain financially. As an educational institution priorities must go to teaching and learning. However, 10 members of staff have received first aid training and a number of non-teaching staff are continuing to look after those students who have specific medical needs. Our First Aid Policy has also been updated to take changes into account.
2. **FIRST AID AT LURGAN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

We have a team of dedicated First Aiders who are trained in how to handle accidents – from minor cuts and scrapes to more serious falls and bumps.

Except for very minor incidents, we will let you know what has happened, either by sending a letter home with your child or by contacting you by phone.

It is important to remember that injuries or illnesses that happen at home are your responsibility. Should a child come into school with an existing illness or injury, we feel it's only fair to refer them back to you.

Medicines in School - It is essential that the school is aware of any regular medication that your child has to take, for example an inhaler for asthma, or epipen for allergies.

Children who are prescribed medicines for particular ailments should not be in school if the timing of the dosage is crucial. You should discuss this with your G.P. at the time s/he prescribes the medicine.

Once your child is feeling better, s/he may return to school even if the medicine is not finished. The school day is usually short enough to time the dosage for before and after school time. If tablets or medicines have to be brought into school, they should be brought to the Vice Principal's (Pastoral Care) office. They must be in the original packaging and have your child's name, class and dose to be taken, clearly marked. Inhalers and Epipens may be kept by the children with a spare left in Mrs. Thompson's Office (Reprographics) labelled with Student's name and class.



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This advice on medicines in schools is based on guidelines issued by the Education Authority. Please do not hesitate to get in contact with Mrs. Kerr, V.P. Pastoral if there are any problems in this area. Return form to your child's Form Teacher only if there has been an allergic reaction.

Plasters/Paracetamol - Please complete form at the end of the letter and clearly state if your child has ever had any allergic reaction to the above.

3. **UNIFORM** - As a school, we very much appreciate the high standards of uniform and appearance of our young people.
 - School Shoes – There are a few students who on return to school have not adhered to the regulation footwear. It is important that students do not wear trainers or canvas shoes or shoes with brand names in evidence. Leather school shoes are part of the Uniform Schedule and this must be adhered to for reasons of Health and Safety.
 - School Skirts – Again the majority of girls have skirts to the back of the knee. A small number have very short skirts. Parents will receive letters within the next week requesting that a new skirt is purchased to meet our Uniform Policy.
 - Hair – Boys' haircuts to be no shorter than a No. 2. Girls' hair only NATURAL hair colour acceptable.
 - Make-up – Less than one per cent of our students have very bad skin conditions e.g. acne. On receipt of a medical certificate from a skin consultant, school will naturally permit some light camouflage make-up to support the child. If make-up is worn by any other students, they will be challenged and the School Behaviour Policy applied.
 - Earrings – these are not permitted in school
 - No Hoodies – Grey school sweaters are to be worn if students require this additional layer. A waterproof raincoat can be kept in schoolbags.
 - Leggings in Girls' PE - These are never to be worn in PE Class. Skorts or Navy tracksuit bottoms to be worn in Winter Term.
4. **FREE SCHOOL MEALS** - All Year 8s received an application form at the Year 8 Induction Evening.
 - If someone has been on the Free School Meals Register at Lurgan Junior High School they will receive a pre-printed form from the Education Authority during the summer.
 - They must be completed and returned to Free Meals Section in the Education Authority.
 - Students cannot receive Free School Meals until school receives an approval letter from the Education Authority. We would request that students bring a packed lunch or money until school receive notification.
 - If parents require a form for Free School Meals, they can receive this from The Citizens Advice, Social Services, School or the Education Authority (Southern Region).
5. **ROAD WORKS** - please note that throughout this term, there will be slight disruption at roundabout near school, I would advise students to begin their journey early (further details on school website).
6. **CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT** - Class changes at Christmas
Controlled Assessment will take place during September, October and November. By Christmas, all marks will go to create a rank order. On the basis of the rank order, your child may change classes. It is important you encourage your child to be consistent in effort and performance.
7. **DETENTION** - On the rare occasion when/if your child is placed in detention, a letter will be sent home with your child and a text message sent to the parent's mobile phone.
8. **DENTAL TALK FOR ALL STUDENTS** - this will take place on Friday, 9th September. All students will be given the opportunity to order a gum shield (This is a requirement for students playing contact sport e.g. rugby).
9. **SCHOOL BUSES** - As you are aware first period begins at 9.00 a.m. This start time was negotiated and agreed with Translink in Term 2 and 3(2015-2016). I understand that many parents have contacted Translink to confirm earlier bus times and Translink have explained there is no change. Translink informed me on Wednesday that students would be in school for 9.00 a.m. On Monday, 5th September Mr. Gary Mawhinney



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from Translink audited the arrival of the buses. He is very aware of the issues. At a meeting with me, he agreed to relook at the schedule. He believes that transport issues will settle as routines develop. On arrival to school from buses, we would encourage students to go immediately to first period class.

10. HOMEWORK/SHOW MY HOMEWORK

Homework is not an end in itself. Homework is set to enable the students to progress more quickly than would be the case without the opportunity to do work outside normal school hours. In particular, it enables our students to:

- Reinforce and practise basic skills
- 'extend' the school day by continuing/finishing work started in class
- Extend their learning, for example through additional reading or research
- Show what they can do beyond the limited time imposed by the timetable
- Explore and exploit resources for learning found outside the school and, in particular, at home
- Develop the skills, confidence and motivation needed to study effectively on their own.

It also enables parents to:

- Become more closely involved in their child's education
- Become better informed about what their children are doing in school.

It enables the school to:

- Extend the range of learning opportunities for students
- Encourage students to develop the skills they will need for life-long, independent learning.

Our students record their homework in their Student Planner. Homeworks are normally given in the first part of the class in order that students can record relevant information accurately.

As parents, we would ask that you check your child's Student Planner and sign it to demonstrate that all homework is completed to a high standard. Form teachers will check Student Planners at Form time on a day that class and Form Teacher have agreed. The Student Planner is also an opportunity for you to liaise with Form Teacher about any concerns you may have.

Later in the year, Lurgan JHS intend to use a Homework App called 'Show My Homework'. When this is operational, the school will provide more detail.

Please keep phone calls to school at a minimum. A number of parents this week have requested at 3.15 p.m. that their child is informed of new home arrangements after school. Unfortunately, with a school of over 650 students, such messages cannot always be communicated.

Mrs. Bleakney in the front office is extremely helpful and for this we are incredibly grateful. Please be extra considerate in future and understand that by planning effectively there may be no need to contact school at all. By working together we can develop your child's independence and initiative.

All that remains is to wish you and your children an excellent school year.

Yours faithfully,

L.E. Currie (Mrs.)
Principal

-----reply slip-----

My son/daughter _____ (insert full name of student) ____ (class) has had an allergic reaction to plasters/paracetamol.

Signed: _____

Date _____



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