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Dear Parent,

Welcome back to Cavehill Primary. I trust that you have had a lovely summer and are looking forward to getting back into routine. I would particularly like to welcome any new pupils and parents who are starting Cavehill; I trust that you will feel welcome and happy being with us.

We are really looking forward to the new academic year and spending time with your child. **Please note that the children require a packed lunch tomorrow (Friday 31st August) as the school meals service does not recommence until Monday 3rd September.**

You will be aware that the lack of funding for education has been very much in the media spotlight throughout the last year and this continues to pose a significant pressure on Cavehill. We were informed in April that we were no longer eligible to receive Extended School funding which amounted to approx. £28000 per year and was used to subsidise or provide for many of our after school clubs/tuition and also made a significant contribution towards the cost of our Jigsaw Counselling, which was further supplemented by grant funding secured by the PTA. We will be endeavouring to source additional funding to provide a limited amount of counselling this year but, at present, this is unlikely to be on the same scale as it has been in recent years.

After school clubs will be provided but there is currently no funding to subsidise such clubs. Further details will be provided once we have more information to share. Breakfast Club will continue, but as this was also subsidised by Extended School funding, the cost will have to increase by 50p to **£2 per day** to now include payment for staff costs which had previously been significantly covered by this external funding.

I would like to thank parents for their support for the school in many ways and would ask that you continue to be generous in your school fund contributions, as we will be relying on this money to help provide additional resources for the children.

There may be occasions when you have a query or concern. If this is so, then I would remind you that, in the first instance, you should contact the school office to arrange a suitable time to speak with the **class teacher** as it is the class teacher who is normally best placed to clarify or address any query or concern. If this matter is not resolved at that stage, then a meeting with the Head of Key Stage can be arranged, following that a meeting with the Vice Principal and then, if necessary, a meeting with the Principal can be organised. The vast majority of matters can be easily resolved if they are addressed promptly; concerns that linger, tend to fester and become more difficult to sort out.

I want to assure you that while, occasionally, school and home may not always agree; we will always endeavour to keep the needs of our children at the centre of our actions and decisions. We are looking forward to working in partnership with you as we journey through the school year together.

Principal: Mr S Orr M.Ed., B.Ed. (Hons), PQH(NI)

Please read the following important information relating to arrangements for 2018-19.

Yours sincerely,
S Orr
(Principal)

Child Protection and Safeguarding is most important. We must always put the safeguarding needs of our pupils first and to that end, Miss Hylands is the Designated Teacher for Child Protection, Mr Taylor and Mr Bennett are Deputy Designated Teachers. Mrs C Warnock is the Designated Governor for Child Protection. Mr Orr is also a member of the Safeguarding Team. A copy of our Child Protection policy is available from the school web site or by contacting the school office.

Pupil Data Information

Please note that it is essential that we have current contact and medical information on our system for each pupil so please inform us if you change address or telephone number or if medical needs alter throughout the year in order that we can keep our records up-to-date. Our Data Protection information and other GDPR documents can be found on the school web site.

School Dinners

It is school policy that dinner money is collected on a Monday morning. This arrangement ensures teachers have more time to teach rather than collecting and counting money on a daily basis. The cost of a dinner currently remains £2.60 per day. Parents of P1-3 children should send money in an envelope with the days required written on or inside the envelope. If paying by cash, then it is most helpful if the **correct amount** is sent to school in separate envelopes for each child if you have more than one child attending the school. All cheques should be made payable to **Education Authority**. A copy of the menu can be found on the school web site or may be obtained from the school office.

Attendance and Punctuality

It is essential that children arrive to school punctually in order to achieve and learn. Children missing days or arriving late will find it more difficult to catch up and this in turn can impact on the teacher and rest of the class. The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) monitors all attendance rates and punctuality on a regular basis. If a child's attendance falls below 85% then this is automatically brought to the attention of the EWO – even if absence notes are submitted. The EWO may then decide to investigate the reason for such a level of absenteeism and a referral to this service may result. A formal written warning about a referral will be issued in the first instance. **Please note that we do not have the resources to look after children after they are due to finish for the day and so pupils must always be collected promptly.**

School attendance is a matter that the Department of Education and the Public Accounts Committee take a keen interest in and schools must ensure that appropriate action is taken. **It is essential that family holidays are not taken during school holidays as it is very rare for school to authorise any absence for this purpose.** Medical and dental appointments should be arranged outside school hours although it is accepted that this may not always be possible. Please ensure that you inform the school promptly about any absence by telephone, note, email or using the absence form on our web site.

Breakfast Club

Our Breakfast Club will continue this year. **Please note that this will start on Monday 3rd September at 8am at a cost of £2 per day** (initially for P2-7 pupils, although it may be possible for P1 pupils who have older siblings at the school to start coming to the Breakfast Club providing they are settled enough to cope with doing so – please contact school if you wish your P1 pupil to be considered for this). **Please note that no member of staff is available to supervise children who arrive before 8.45am unless they are attending Breakfast Club therefore please do not leave your child at school before this time.**

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Individual school photographs - These will be held in school on **Wednesday 5th September**. Children must wear school uniform for their individual photograph as this photograph is placed on their individual school record. Children should report to class as normal on Wednesday morning and each class will be called to the Assembly Hall when the photographer is ready for them. Family group photos will also be taken with siblings who attend the school. Team photos will be taken at a later date.

Tuesday Notes – we send home notes on Tuesdays; however, there will also be occasions when notes have to be sent home on other days of the week. Please note that our school web site will provide information on what is happening around the school and is a good point of reference should you lose a note!

School Uniform

Please ensure that your child wears correct school uniform each day. The uniform is: sweatshirt and white polo shirt with grey trousers/skirt and black shoes for both boys and girls. In the summer pupils may wear grey school shorts or a school summer dress. Our official school uniform is available from Ski and Sport and TESCO (online) and only uniform supplied by these companies should be worn.

We would ask that girls wear plain grey tights rather than any other colour in the winter if they do not want to wear socks. Please note that uniform is shoes not boots. Boots must be taken off and stored on coat pegs.

All articles should be marked with the child's name, as lost items can cause a lot of distress and take up a great deal of time each year. Please write a name or even initials on the label of clothing to help us. Please note that while we do all that we can to ensure that clothing does not go missing and try to locate anything that has been lost, school is not responsible for, nor will we offer to replace any lost item.

Jewellery – Due to health and safety concerns, pupils may wear a watch and stud earrings – please do not send your child with other jewellery as they will be required to remove it. Pupils are required to remove earrings or to cover them with a plaster during PE sessions. We appreciate your support with this request.

PE uniform for 2018-19 – Parents have already been informed about the PE uniform that children in P5-7 are required to wear during PE sessions. The PE uniform requirement is: **a plain white T Shirt and navy shorts or navy tracksuit bottoms/leggings and trainers.**

Car Park – Please note that there is limited car parking space within the school grounds. Cars must not be parked on the double yellow lines as this is not only dangerous to our children and other pedestrians, but it causes congestion in the car park which results in slowing down movement of vehicles. If there are no free spaces, then cars will need to be parked outside of the school grounds or parents may decide to walk or cycle to school instead. The governors are determined to ensure that the safety of all users remains a paramount concern and will consider other options should a problem occur. While it can be frustrating trying to drop off/pick up children from school, we expect all adults to be polite and courteous on school grounds, being good role models to our children. The cones around the carpark have been placed on the guidance of the PSNI to help with user safety and therefore it is essential that cones are not moved.

Health and Safety Matters

Please be aware of the following points:

- ✓ Please note that Cavehill is a **NUT FREE ZONE**. We have a large number of pupils with severe allergies to various types of food – nuts, kiwi, dairy etc. and therefore ask for your continued cooperation to ensure that everyone is protected. As a result, **we ask that you do not send in any Birthday Cakes to school** as often they either contain traces of nuts or even nut-free cakes may contain other ingredients that some children are allergic to; we have had occasions when cake has been distributed and some children in the class have not been allowed to get a piece due to their allergies which can be difficult for a child to appreciate and understand. Depending on their age, the class may mark their birthday in a different way e.g. singing 'Happy Birthday'.
- ✓ **Please do not send your child to school before 8.45am unless they are attending the Breakfast Club as there will be no one available to supervise them.**
- ✓ All pupils should enter the premises by the entrances allocated to their class and not by the main/visitor entrance.

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- ✓ Parents of pupils above P3 should only escort them to the main playground. This helps promote pupil independence and confidence and reduces the number of adults on the premises at such a busy time.
- ✓ All adults may only enter the premises via the office entrance after speaking to the office staff.
- ✓ Due to a change in use and with respect to child protection issues, staff toilets are not public toilets and therefore not open to parents during the school day - in the case of an emergency, parents may use the **disabled toilet** in the foyer.
- ✓ Children who arrive late must use the main entrance and should wait at the entrance until the door is opened if the secretary is not in her office at that particular moment.
- ✓ Children cycling to school should wear helmets for their own protection.
- ✓ Drivers please note that the speed limit in the school grounds is 5mph and it is essential that you do not park on the yellow lines next to the central grass area. Walking children to school or parking outside the school gates helps to reduce congestion. Please be aware that there is a one-way system operating within our premises and we appreciate your support in adhering to this system.
- ✓ There is a voluntary one-way system in operation in the roads surrounding the school and we ask parents to adhere to this procedure in order to help with safety and also to help maintain good relations with our neighbours. Please do not obstruct any driveways belonging to the residents living close to the school.
- ✓ Please ensure that you supervise your child once they are collected at 1.55pm. Pupils should not be permitted to play in the grounds or run along the side of the classrooms as other pupils are still working at that time of the day and this can cause a distraction.

2-3 Club and After School Clubs

We are in the process of organising the 2-3 Club which operates for siblings of children who are in P4-7 at the school and other after school activities. More information will follow in due course.

Some Diary Dates (more to follow in due course):

Term 1

Thursday 30 August - children finish at 12noon

Friday 31 August – children stay for full day and **bring a Packed Lunch**

Monday 3rd September – Normal school day with school meals service operating. Breakfast Club will operate for P2-7 pupils.

Wednesday 5th September – Individual school photographs will be taken

Friday 28th September – McMillan Cancer Coffee Morning and Grandparents' Day

Monday 1st October – School CLOSED for Staff Training

Friday 26th October - Full day

Monday 29th October – Friday 2nd November - School CLOSED for Half-term break

Friday 21st December – Last day of term (children finish at 12noon) and non-uniform day. No lunches provided and Breakfast Club will operate as normal.

Term 2

Monday 7th January – School starts as normal

Monday 18th and Tuesday 19th February – School Closed for Half-term Holiday

Monday 18th March – School CLOSED

Tuesday 16th April – Last day of term (children finish at 12noon) and non-uniform day. No lunches provided and Breakfast Club will operate as normal.

Term 3

Monday 29th April – School starts back

Monday 6th May – School CLOSED for May Day

Monday 27th May – School CLOSED for Bank Holiday

Friday 28th June – Last day of term (children finish at 12noon) and non-uniform day. No lunches provided and Breakfast Club will operate as normal.

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