



Consett Junior School

Christmas 2021 Newsletter

Welcome to our December Newsletter,

With only 3 weeks of term left, as usual we are full of busy here at Consett Junior School.



Our children have spent a lot of time producing their Christmas Dance's, the school band have spent many hours preparing and practicing at breaks and lunchtimes under the tuition of Miss Water's and Mr O'Dowd has given up his Saturday afternoon to dress our amazing Christmas Tree. Over the next few days, the children will be putting up their class decorations, ensuring we are ready for the festive period to start.

We are always overwhelmed by the generosity of our families throughout the year, but even more so at this time of the year - we have had donations to the Christmas Toy appeal every day. Just yesterday, we were almost brought to tears by a donation from one family of a huge delivery of items for older children - so many kind gifts. I must also recognise the generosity of staff, who have also taken part in the appeal. The people of our community always stand up to be counted at such times.

Our hope for our families this winter, is that they stay safe and well and that they remain free from illness. We have all had to work within a strange time, the children remain, as always, full of brightness and light and keep us all going.

I hope everyone has an amazing Christmas Holiday, and no matter how you celebrate, that you are with friends and family.

Mr Paul Dixon
Head Teacher

Attendance

The attendance for November was 94.89% and particularly low in Year 5 at 92.54%, this is very concerning for us. November last year the attendance was 95.89%. We understand that covid cases impact on attendance, but a day here and a day there of absence also has a detrimental impact on how well children achieve academically and socially. If children are not in school it impacts on their friendships and subsequently their emotional well-being. Since September we have had lots of cases of Covid in upper school, these seem to have slowed down and children are back in school learning, following their period of isolation. Unfortunately, this has impacted on their attendance but for those families we are not monitoring them, unless there are other absences that cause concern. Usually, attendance at CJS is excellent and children thoroughly enjoy the incentives and rewards in place. However, we are significantly concerned over attendance and as part of an SLT meeting last week we have listed 19 children that will be very carefully monitored moving forward, I am sad to say that most of these children are in Year 6 – which is a very important year for them. We have had several attendance meetings so far, but after Christmas we will be instigating more, if families do not work with us and attendance improves, we will not hesitate but to refer to the Local Authority. We have no issue with doing home visits also, all of which is recorded and will be used as evidence if referrals are made.

On Monday 29th November Consett Academy was closed, and we had many children absent who we have identified as having siblings in the Academy off school that day.

[November attendance overview](#)

The November attendance results are in, as predicted VERY close between Year 3 and Year 6...

The November Year group attendance reward goes to Year 3, they were JUST in the lead though. Well done Year 3 your reward is cakes/cookies this Friday, 3rd December.

However, the November Class group attendance has put a spanner in the works and as you would presume one of the Year 3 classes would win, not the case! Well done Class 8, Miss Waters class, an excellent 97.47%. Their reward is a free non-uniform day on Friday, 3rd December. Better look next month Class 2, so close...

Year Group	% attendance	Unauthorised absences	Lates
3	96.30	15	25
4	94.12	4	16
5	92.60	17	23
6	96.27	10	13

[School Dinners](#)

We have around 100 children currently accessing school meals, almost half of the school. This is probably the highest number we have ever seen. There are still families who send their child in with packed lunch when they are eligible for free school meals. We understand that this may well be personal preference but it is also an added cost to you. Why not try them for a week or access the fun Friday meal? We are more than happy for more children to access school meals every week.

Our Christmas dinner is very popular, the closing date for ordering is today, 30th November, if you cannot see the order form in 'forms' you have already responded. We will be sending a confirmation app message to families this week confirming their order. So far, we have an additional 53 children.

[CJS App](#)

It is great to see so many of our families engaging with the school app. We have 222 children on roll in our school and the data shows that 211 children have primary carers that are regularly using the app (which means only 11 families have not engaged) and additional to this 219 of these families have active carers which means grandparents. This is amazing. I know events in school can be difficult to keep on top of, but everything is one place now and as the Academy use this app it means you will all be professional at navigating it if your child goes to that school. If anyone is struggling to use the app, please make an appointment with Mrs Raine.

[Household Support Grant](#)

The local authority has informed us that they have received Government funding through the 'Household Support Fund' to support vulnerable households with food and fuel during the winter months. In order to distribute this, we have been asked to send vouchers to families who are currently eligible for Free School Meals once again.

The vouchers are not holiday vouchers, they are to help families through the winter. Vouchers will be emailed out to families when we receive them, we have been informed that we will get ours on 7th December.

Families will receive a £60 voucher per child with FSM entitlement to provide support with household bills. Again, this is not a holiday payment so we have flexibility as to when we distribute the vouchers to families before Christmas, but as you know, I like to be organised so want them out to families ASAP. As the funding is available up to 31 March 2022, we will most likely be asked to provide further voucher support after Christmas and/or in the lead up to Easter. Once this is confirmed I will let you know.

I will be sharing these vouchers using the same email address as the summer term, if you have changed your email address it is very important that you inform me.

Mrs Raine

[Covid - Reminder](#)

Please ensure you keep your child off school and book PCR tests if they have one or more symptoms of covid. At the time of writing this newsletter we are aware of a new variant that has been detected and on the increase in the UK. There will no doubt be new guidance for schools issued soon.

[Year 6 trip to Robinwood – Monday 16th – Wednesday 18th May 2022](#)

Just a reminder that you can pay little and often from your child's Robinwood 2022 balance. The full amount must be paid by Friday 19th April 2022 to ensure your child can go.

[Salvation Army Toy Appeal](#)

We have recently been to the Salvation Army sorting Christmas presents for families in need. If you are still thinking of donating they are in desperate need for gifts for teenage boys...they literally have nothing. Even donations of selection boxes are in high demand. I know it's an expensive time of year for everyone but this was really upsetting.

[November Voluntary School Fund](#)

School fund can be sent in weekly and children can place this in the 'money spinner', alternatively there is an option on ParentPay. In November we received £170.50 which will mainly be used to subsidise the cost of the recent pantomime visit to school.

[After school club after Christmas until February half term](#)

We offer enrichment only after school clubs, this means that they are changed regularly and offered to different year groups each half term. They are not suitable for families who require regular childcare. These clubs can only operate at the discretion of staff members giving up their spare time at the end of the school day. Clubs after half term w/c 1st November:

Monday – After school Chess club till 4.30 p.m. for **Years 5 and 6** with Miss White. This club is limited to 10 spaces on a first come basis. The cost of the club is £5 per child which works out at £1 per week. This must be paid in full to secure your child's place.

Monday – After school band until 4.30 p.m. for existing members. Please pay Miss Waters £1.50 per week.

Monday – Eco – Club until 4.30 p.m. for **Years 3 and 4** with Mrs Wood and Miss Atkinson. This club is limited to 20 spaces on a first come basis. The cost of the club is £5 per child which works out at £1 per week. This must be paid in full to secure your child's place.

Tuesday – After school Karate with Ross Temple for existing members. The spring term after school sessions start on Tuesday 11th January and will run for 11 weeks. The grading will be during school afternoon on Tuesday 5th April.

Tuesday – After school cross-country with Mrs Raine, Miss Oselton and Mrs Hannant, for selected cross country team members. Children are back to school for collection at 4.15 p.m.

Tuesday – After school Crochet club for **Year 4** with Miss Thompson. This club is limited to 14 spaces. The cost of the club is £5 per child which works out at £1 per week. This must be paid in full to secure your child's place. This club will continue after the first half term and further booking details will be shared.

Thursday – After school Bootcamp sessions with Matt for **Year 5 Class 5**. Booking details to follow so please do not request a place until this is sent out to the full year group. This club is limited to 12 spaces on a first come basis. We are funding this club through our PE Budget so it is free for children. Year 5 Class 6 will be during the second half term booking will open nearer the time.

Friday – After school Dance Club with Miss Clarey for **Years 5 and 6**. This club is limited to 20 spaces. The cost of the club is £6 per child which works out at £1 per week. This must be paid in full to secure your child's place.

[Swimming](#)

Swimming for the spring term (after Christmas until Easter) will be as follows.

Year 4 will continue to swim for another term but they will change from a **Tuesday to a Wednesday afternoon**.

Year 5 will swim instead of Year 6 and their sessions will be on a Tuesday afternoon.

Year 4 have missed an entire year of swimming and would really benefit from these additional sessions. As Year 3 are a large year group we have made the decision to give them the entire Summer term (After Easter until the end of the school year). Therefore, only Year 3 will swim for the final term, over the two days, and this will be split over four sessions. All swimming sessions will continue to be held at Catchgate pool and no parents/carers are permitted to supervise.

[Our Christmas Eve 'Big Show' Plan...](#)

We are super excited for our Christmas production on Thursday. Like last year, the link will be shared on Christmas Eve. You will receive a link to the video via this app. The children have been working so hard, you are in for a real treat!

[Christmas Party Day](#)

We have arranged the Christmas party day for all children on Tuesday, 14th December. Children can come to school in party clothes but they will need suitable outdoor clothing and footwear for break time and lunchtime. Parties for the whole school will be all day with classes taking part in activities/games in the classroom and taking turns to use the school hall; the party will end at 3.30 p.m. as normal. There are NO after school clubs on party day.

We want to make every child have a special day over the festive period, and although many children will be blessed with celebrations galore, some children may not be so fortunate. With this in mind, we have booked DJ Paul Watson to provide each year group with a party to remember...

The company is going to spend the whole day in school and will entertain each year group in turn with games, music, props, prizes and more! The cost of this is £1 per child, which should cover some of the cost; the rest will be paid from our Private School Funds. This £1 is to be paid via ParentPay, if you cannot see the payment option then you have paid.

Children will have their normal meal (school dinner/packed lunch) at lunchtime and the party food at about 2.30 p.m. Could we please ask for donations for the party tea from parents as follows (to be brought in that morning or the day before if sealed).

Year 3 and Year 5 savoury items

Year 4 and Year 6 sweet items

Donations of food help to keep the costs of events for families to a minimum, this is already an expensive time of year.

[Morrisons its good grow](#)

Thank you for collecting and donating the Good to Grow points when shopping at Morrisons. We have now ordered lots of new gardening equipment for school.

Uniform reminder - we are still finding some children who are not in the correct uniform. Full uniform, regardless of PE days, must be worn. Please ensure children are warm when in school due to ventilated classrooms.

Key Dates and events for you to be aware of, please note that they are correct at time of print. Some dates may be subject to change. Please also refer to the calendar on the school app. We do have some sports events due but are waiting for final details.

Monday 29th November – It's CHRISTMAS! It is official as the tree is up in school. Thank you, Mr O'Dowd, for giving up your Saturday.

Monday 29th November – Final day to give online consent for the nasal flu vaccine.

Tuesday 30th November – Final day to order a Christmas lunch. This form is available in the 'forms' section of the app.

Tuesday 30th November – Final after school karate session for this term. January restart dates to follow.

Wednesday 1st December – Christmas show rehearsal day, children do not need their outfits today.

Thursday 2nd December – Christmas show recording. Please check the newsfeed of the app for what your child needs to come to school wearing today. If the weather allows, this will be filmed outside so please ensure children are warm. If you cannot see your class notification, it is because it has been added as a year group notification i.e. Miss McNeill's post is for the whole of Year 6.

Friday 3rd December – Class 8 (Miss Waters) free non-uniform day for November attendance. Year 3 will have the cakes/cookies.

Friday 3rd December – Flu immunisation team in school for children's nasal spray vaccine. The team are yet to state if this is a.m. or p.m. If you have not given consent your child will not receive it.

Monday 6th December – Police officers in school to do online safety assemblies.

Tuesday 7th December – Band coffee morning and Year 6 carol service 1 of 2, booking has closed, families who showed an interest have been contacted via the app. **PLEASE DO NOT TURN UP TO THIS IF YOU HAVE NOT BOOKED AND HAD YOUR PLACE CONFIRMED.**

Tuesday 7th December – Karate grading during the school day. Children taking part will need their karate suit. They will finish school at their normal school finish time.

Wednesday 8th December - Band coffee morning and Year 6 carol service 2 of 2, booking has closed, families who showed an interest have been contacted via the app. **PLEASE DO NOT TURN UP TO THIS IF YOU HAVE NOT BOOKED AND HAD YOUR PLACE CONFIRMED.**

Wednesday 8th December – Whole school Christmas dinner and jumper day. If your child is usually on school meals they will automatically have one. Payment is to be made on ParentPay under the 'school meals' option. Children can replace their school jumper/polo shirt with their festive one. All other uniform is required. Year 6 will still swim today. If your child has PE they need to bring their P.E. kits with them.

Friday 10th December – Children can come to school wearing their Christmas Jumper again for a £1 donation to 'Save the Children'. There will be an option for your £1 donation on ParentPay under 'Save the Children'. Children can replace their school jumper/polo shirt with their festive one. All other uniform is required. If your child has PE they need to bring their kits with them.

W/C Monday 13th December – THERE WILL BE NO SWIMMING FOR ANY YEAR GROUP THIS WEEK.

Tuesday 14th December – Christmas party day! There is a payment option for a £1 contribution to the entertainment we have booked for this day (on ParentPay) if you cannot find it then you have already paid. See the information in this newsletter regarding donations of food.

Thursday 16th December – The brass band will play to the whole school in a special concert. We will be remembering

the life of Mr Jackson today, who would have been leading the band in their rehearsals and shows at this time of year. We are asking all families to think of Mr Jackson and to donate to the fundraising page (this link will be re-shared on the app).

Friday 17th December – Please ensure ParentPay balances are paid up to date so Mrs R. can enjoy the last day of term!

Friday 17th December – School closes at the end of the school day for the Christmas holidays. Children can come to school in non-uniform for £1 fine paid on ParentPay under ‘non-uniform fines’.

Saturday 25th December – CHRISTMAS! Make memories...be merry...

Good bye Elf...for another year!



Wednesday 5th January 2022 – All children back to school today please, I am sure by this time you will be ready for their return! (Tuesday 4th is closed as this is a staff training day).

w/c 10th January – Swimming sessions recommence this week (not the first week back), please see important information in the content of this newsletter.

Friday 18th February – School will close at the end of the day for the February half term. This will be a non-uniform day and fines can be paid for on ParentPay under ‘non-uniform fines’.

Monday 28th February – School reopens for the second half of the spring term.