



Consett Junior School- October 2023 Newsletter

Hello there and welcome to our latest monthly Newsletter...

We are halfway through this half term; the hubbub of school life is as it should be...full of busy and excitement.

I am pleased to say that the majority of children have settled really well, one or two are still finding mornings a struggle, but we will get there.

As we move into October some of our sporting events have begun and it's always great to see the children's faces when they represent the school; on another sporting note, it was great to hear all about the first round of the Cross Country, the children did amazingly well.

We are always trying to ensure we meet the needs of all the children we have in school, so on occasion we need to either appoint or move staff around, in the next couple of weeks, we will welcome Mrs Pattison to our school, as one of our support staff - she is very experienced and will bring much to the role. One or two other members of our support team will be moving around, but I will let classes affected know via the school app.

Moving forward, it has been lovely to hear the new members of the school practising and I look forward to hearing them all play at our Christmas events, sorry to mention the C word, but we are now well into the 3rd week of practising carols...

It has been great meeting some new families and as well as old friends and I look forward to catching up with as many people as possible over the rest of this term.

As always if there is anything we as a school can help with, please do not hesitate to pop in, or catch me at the gate on a morning.

Best wishes,

Mr Dixon

Head Teacher

[September Attendance Overview and Rewards](#)

At the end of the first month the attendance statistics are in. The Year group with the most amazing attendance and a phenomenal start to the school year is YEAR 3!! They have smashed the Governments floor target even though they have the highest level on unauthorised absences and lates, we are looking forward to what they achieve in October and hope the late marks can be lower. As a treat for Year 3 on Friday 6th October there will be a special delivery of cakes, cookies and fruit.

Year Group	% Attendance	Unauthorised absences	Lates – this is the number of children late to lesson per year group. This disturbs the learning of all children in school on time.
3	96.4%	46 sessions - Unauthorised holidays have been the main factor.	19
4	95.1%	9 sessions	12
5	95.8%	18 sessions	7

6	95.3%	19 sessions	16
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The class with the best attendance was Class 5 – Mrs Taylor/Mr Meadows, they managed a staggering 97.1% - AWESOME! They can have a free non-uniform day on Friday 6th October.

Class Group	% Attendance
1	96.1%
2	96.6%
3	94.9%
4	95.3%
5	97.1%
6	94.4%
7	96.7%
8	94%

The whole school attendance for September was 95.64%, which is just slightly below the governments floor target of 96%. However, in September 2022 it was 95.62% so still an increase on last year.

If your child is absent from school for any reason you **MUST** inform the school. There have been times when children are absent, and **no** reason has been provided. By law, all children of compulsory school age must receive a suitable full-time education. For most families, this means registering their child at school. Therefore, all children who are registered at school must attend, if your child is not in school and you have not submitted a reason within a timely manner – you are breaking the law. The reasons children are absent and any times they are late are all recorded by us, and these are the things we will disclose should we need to refer a family to the attendance team at DCC. If children are unwell there are several ways you can inform the school office, as it is known that sometimes getting through on busy mornings can be difficult. You can ring 01207 504431, alternatively the school app has a means to message and record absences. You can also monitor your child’s attendance though the app therefore identifies good or poor attendance levels at any time of the year. Finally, there is also an option to email consettjunior@durhamlearning.net

If your child is poorly and their illness means they need to be absent for 48 hours, you must contact school on the first day of their absence and we will advise you if you need to ring again on the second day of absence. If your child's absences become frequent or pattern based, i.e., off regularly on Mondays or Fridays, then action will be taken to prove your child is off unwell. This may mean letters are requested from their GP, a home visit from the school or a visit from a DCC attendance team officer. You can be prosecuted if your child has unauthorised absences from school.

Please ensure you try to make medical appointments outside of school time, any made during the school day must be supported with a letter detailing the appointment. Although medical appointments are authorised, they do not qualify as an attendance mark.

As you are aware it is against the law to take holidays during term time, we do refer families to the LA (local authorities) for fixed penalty fines. Clear guidelines regarding the triggers for penalty notices can be found on our website or issued at your request. These procedures are strongly in place in all schools, and although our attendance is good overall, we must comply with legislation.

More details on attendance can be found here <https://www.consett-jun.durham.sch.uk/about-us/school-attendance/>

Mrs Raine – Attendance Champion

[Robinwood Residential Monday 20th – Wednesday 22nd May 2024](#)

Our Year 6 residential to Robinwood is all booked but there are still a few places available. The final date to pay the full remaining balance (originally £300) is Friday 26th April 2024. We cannot stress enough that this is the final date to pay, if balances are not cleared in full by that day, then your child will not be able to attend. Please ensure you pay off little and often to make this more manageable.

[School Dinners](#)

School dinners must be paid for using ParentPay, you can find a link to ParentPay via the app 'hub.' We will remind families who have arrears more than £10/£15 every Friday. If your child's school meals arrears start to exceed £40 - £50 we will remove the school meal option until the arrears are paid.

We are getting prepared for the Halloween Celebrations and have recently shared a 'spooky' themed menu on our app for the week we return after half term. As this is a themed week it is an opportunity for children on packed lunches to try school meals for one week only. Please complete this form before Friday 13th October if you would like your child to try school dinners for one week <https://forms.office.com/e/Ds9kZyaz9Y>

[Swimming Sessions - Important Update for Year's 5 \(Class 5 & 6\)](#)

Mr. Meadows' class will swim this half term **only**.

Mr. Moore's class will swim w/c 6th November 2023 on either Tuesday or a Thursday, families will be informed of their child's swimming day over the coming weeks.

Please ensure you make a note of your child's swimming day as they MUST come to school with their swimming costumes (no bikini) and a towel. Children not swimming due to illness will remain at school while their class swims.

[School Photographs Ordering](#)

The deadline date for orders to be returned to school is Thursday 26th October, any orders received in school after this date will be sent back home. Mark is really flexible and has said that if you miss the order deadline you can take them to his shop in Middle Street. Mark has also said that if you are not happy with the image you can make an appointment in his shop and he will take them again.

All payments go directly to Mark via school, we do not gain any commission from these photos as this is part of our agreement with him, he keeps costs low for families due to this. When making payments you need to return the proof to me, ensure the form is filled in completely and enclose the exact amount. I do not open the envelopes so unless you enclose a cheque or add your card details **you must enclose the exact amount.**

[Snack for morning break](#)

Children are allowed to bring in a healthy snack for their morning break, it is extremely popular, however, there have been some issues with the types of snack children are bringing in. Examples of the snacks that are allowed are fruit, vegetable sticks, cereal bars, a tub with cereal i.e., shreddie, wheetos; frubes. We do not allow crisps, chocolate, cakes, or sweets of any kind.

[Covid cases](#)

Just an update for families who are unsure of what to do if their child (or the adults have covid). As we learn to live with covid it can be confusing of what you can or cannot do. If you choose to test your child for covid and it is positive the advice for children is to stay at home for three days (from the positive test or when they were first unwell). If an adult or other family members in the home test positive and your child is well, they can still come to school. There is no obligation to test, it is deemed a respiratory illness and if the child is too unwell for school, they stay at home.

[Children in Need 2023](#)

The school council will be getting together over the next few weeks to discuss their fundraising plans for Children in Need – once they have reached a decision we will share this with families.

Harvest

As part of our Harvest celebrations this year, we will be collecting for Consett food bank. Food items need to be non-perishable and brand new and we will also be collecting toiletries and cleaning products. The food bank helps many people in Consett who are in genuine crisis and they rely on the kindness of donations to support them. Any donations are gratefully received and will be displayed in school reception. We will be collecting until Friday 20th October.

Salvation Army Toy Appeal

Every year we support the Salvation Army Toy Appeal and ask for donations of new and unused toys that are given to local families in financial difficulty at Christmas. We are yet to find out what is happening for collections this year but from experience this is a much-needed collection. We will keep you informed once we know more but feel free to send in donations now. If you need help this Christmas we can refer you so you receive additional gifts for your child, please contact us if you would like this help.

Flu Immunisation programme

The flu nasal immunisation team will be in school on Monday 2nd October, only children with consent will receive this immunisation.

Term dates

Below is a direct link to a list of all term dates and training days for 2023/24/25.

<https://www.consett-jun.durham.sch.uk/parents/school-holidays/>

School breaks up to end the first half of the autumn term at 3.25/3.30 p.m. on Thursday 26th October 2023.

School reopens for the second half of the autumn terms on Monday 6th November 2023.

School breaks up for Christmas on Tuesday 19th December 2023 and reopens on Thursday 4th January 2024.

Traffic, parking around school and the Staff car park

Now that our new families are well established with the drop off and collection of children, we want to ensure you are aware of the protocol around school. During the busy times we operate a one-way system around the school, often cars coming down Beech Dale Road are met with cars coming the opposite way, this can cause carnage! Please travel down Oakdale Road (from Ashdale) and loop round to go back up Beech Dale Road. Please be mindful of our residents and do not block or obstruct their driveways.

There are also families using our staff car park, we do lock these gates so parking there puts you at risk of being locked in. This facility is not a drop off/collection zone, it is for staff parking and deliveries only.

Dogs on the premises

Can we remind families that there are **strictly no dogs allowed on the yard**. There are signs up on the parent shelter and on the side of the school building. Please can you ensure other people collecting your child are aware of this. We have noticed several families bringing their dog onto the yard to collect their children.

Academy siblings collecting from school

If your child is collected by a sibling that does not go to this school (Academy) can you please ensure they behave in an acceptable manner and do not bring crowds of other Academy children with them.

Secondary Admissions Application Process for 2024

The application process for the Secondary Admissions 2024 Intake began on **Tuesday 5th September 2023**.

Parents can make their application for Secondary School online by visiting www.durham.gov.uk/schooladmissions and the School Admissions online application facility was available to parents from **Tuesday 5th September 2023**.

The Closing Date for Secondary School Applications is the 31st October 2023.

If parents do not wish to apply online they can complete a paper application form, and these are available on request from the School Admissions Team from **05th September 2023**.

These application forms can be requested by e-mail to schooladmissions@durham.gov.uk or by telephone from the School Admissions and Transport Team on 03000 265896.

Please note that if you have any year 6 pupils who live in another local authority but attend your school, the parents should contact their Home Local Authority (i.e. the authority to which they pay their council tax) to request an application form, even if the parent would like to apply for a Secondary School in County Durham.

Thank-you for your co-operation with this matter, it is much appreciated. If you have any questions relating to this please contact me via telephone on 03000 265893 or by e-mail to schooladmissions@durham.gov.uk

[Parent/Carer drop in session for Year 3 – Wednesday 18th October 2023](#)

We would like to Year 3 families into school to have a look at your child's books and their classroom. This is a chance to chat informally to your child's class teacher and to see how your child has settled. Your child is welcome to attend with you.

Please feel free to pop in between these times:

Year 3, Wednesday 18th October, from 3.25 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. (5.00 pm is the time the session will close and teachers leave).

As there is a club on in the hall until 4.30 p.m. access arrangements for the drop-in are as follows:

From 3.25 p.m. until 4.35 p.m. entrance through the yard and round to their class using their fire doors (this is where they come from when you collect them each night).

From 4.35 p.m. access is through the main reception door and head to the classrooms.

[September Voluntary School Fund](#)

Just a quick thank you to all families that have sent in school fund for September, we have received £85.66 in School Fund contributions so far. This is used for the benefit of all pupils at the school. Examples include; attendance rewards, dip in the box prizes, subsidising the pantomime, Christmas gifts for children and resources for themed days. Often, these things cannot be purchased through our school budget.

[Clubs' w/c 31st October](#)

All enrichment clubs for this half term will end on Thursday 26th October, except for band, cross country, crochet, rugby or karate. Details of new enrichment clubs and how to book will be shared via the app soon.

[Halloween Celebrations](#)

On Thursday 26th October we have an exciting day planned for our children, a day of spooky celebrations. We have hired party entertainer DJ Paul Watson to give each **year group** a Halloween party throughout the day. If this is not something children want to participate in then we can ensure they access a quieter area to enjoy alternative activities.

We are requesting a £2 per child contribution to the cost of the disco and a payment item has been set up on ParentPay. Children can come to school dressed in their 'spooky outfits', masks must not be worn on the yard or in class so please tell your child they are for the purpose of the party hour only.

There will be no change to the start and finish times of the school day.

If your child is in Class 5 and swimming on this day can you please ensure they do not wear face paint/hair colour and their costume is suitable for them to change independently at the baths.

[Dates for your Diary](#)

Monday 2nd October – Flu immunisation team in school – details to follow.

Thursday 5th October – Cross Country race at Leadgate Primary school, 4-5.00 p.m.

Friday 6th October – Class 5 (Mr Meadows) free non-uniform day for the best attendance.

w/c 9th October - D & T week, details to follow.

Thursday 12th October – Cross Country race at Leadgate Primary school, 4-5.00 p.m.

Friday 13th October – Last day for children on packed lunches to order meals for Halloween week

Wednesday 18th October – Parent/Carer drop in session for Year 3

Friday 19th October – Year 6 Height and Weights

Friday 20th October – Last day to send donations for Harvest to school

Monday 23rd October - Today we will have members of the fire brigade in school to deliver a fire safety assembly in school.

Tuesday 24th October – TAG rugby event for selected Year 5/6 children. Details yet to be shared with families.

Thursday 26th October - Halloween Party Day – £2 charge on ParentPay now.

Thursday 26th October – Final day to return proof photos if placing an order.

Thursday 26th October – School closes for half term at 3.25/3.30 p.m. Children can wear Halloween fancy dress or non-uniform for a £1 voluntary school council fine – Payment option on ParentPay to do this.

Friday 27th October – Staff training day

Tuesday 31st October – Last day to apply for your child's secondary school place.

w/c Monday 6th November – new half term enrichment clubs commence this week for families that have booked, had confirmation and paid for their child's place.

Monday 6th November – School reopens for the second half term at 7.45 a.m. for breakfast club.

Thursday 9th November – Year 4 Cross Country event for selected children.

Friday 10th November – Year 5 will go to the theatre at Hexham Forum to see Teenage Ninja Turtles. Mr Meadows will share details closer to the time and school will cover the cost of the film and coach.

Tuesday 14th November – M & M productions in school performing the pantomime 'Beauty and the Beast'. Details will follow but if your child does not like loud noises can you speak to Mrs Raine. School fund will cover the full cost of this pantomime so there is no cost to families.

Wednesday 15th November – Vicki Lydon from 'Smile' anti-bullying service will be in school to do an anti-bullying assembly and also a 'buddy' training session with our Year 6 buddies.

Tuesday 5th December – last after school karate session

Wednesday 6th December – Christmas Lunch Day (children can wear a festive jumper today!)

Thursday 7th December – Save the Children Xmas Jumper day (yes two days in a row), this is for charity and a £1 payment item will be assigned to you on ParentPay.

Tuesday 12th December – karate grading, as part of an after-school session till 4.30 p.m.

Wednesday 13th December – Christmas Party Day – details to follow, party food items requested.

Friday 15th December – Autumn term attendance celebrations, raffles and a 'treat' hour.

Friday 15th December – School interim reports out.

Tuesday 19th December - School closes for the Christmas holidays at 3.25/3.30 p.m. Children can come to school in non-uniform for a £1 school council fine – Payment option on ParentPay to do this.

Thursday 4th January - School reopens for the First half term at 7.45 a.m. for breakfast club.

The 2023 KS2 SATs will take place in the week commencing 13th May 2024. The tests will take place over four days.

There are more dates to add to October, November, and December but they are not known at the time of this Newsletter, this includes, sports events, Christmas etc. Once know they will be added to the app calendar and a newsfeed post applied.