



Consett Junior School - November 2026 Newsletter

Dear Families,

Welcome to our November newsletter.

There is lots to look forward to this half term, including our Christmas shows, the Toy Appeal, Children in Need, and a range of exciting trips, clubs and seasonal events. We are also pleased to share important reminders about ParentPay, uniform, school dinners, and upcoming key dates to help families plan ahead.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We hope you enjoy reading about all that is happening across school this month.

Attendance

Our whole-school attendance today is 94.7%. This represents 196 present marks out of 207 possible marks, considering 207 students and including all enrolment types. The Arbor national average year to date (YTD) for schools in our phase is 95.3%. Our Arbor national average YTD percentile is 95.3%, placing the school at the 42nd percentile.

In straightforward terms, attendance is currently slightly above the Arbor national average. However, every school day matters. A child attending school regularly is more likely to achieve positive outcomes, develop socially, and benefit from the support of friends and teachers. Durham County Council notes that 90% attendance over one full school year represents approximately four weeks of learning missed; across five years, this can amount to half a school year and is known as persistent absence.

Persistent absence

Our DfE whole-year persistent absence rate is 13.5%, compared with the Arbor national average YTD of 13.9%. This means that 28 out of 207 students have been absent for 10% or more of the year. Our Arbor national percentile is 46. This measure applies to pupils aged 5–15 inclusive at the start of the academic year on 31 August, and includes all enrolment types. A higher percentile indicates a better, lower persistent absence rate.

Parents and carers whose children have caused concern have been monitored. Where attendance difficulties arise, the school will discuss the circumstances with families and should agree a plan to improve attendance. Support may include help with family difficulties, bullying, serious problems, parenting contracts, and referrals to local services, including Help for Families – Your Virtual Best Start Family Hub, Mental Health Support for Children, Young People and Families, Connecting County Durham, SEND and the Local Offer, and Growing Healthy County Durham.

Attendance expectations

Children must receive education from the school term after their fifth birthday until the last Friday in June of the academic year in which they turn 16. Parents may educate their child at home or send them to school. If a child is enrolled and absent, the school will make contact; a council education welfare officer may contact families where suitable education is in question.

A child should miss school only when they are too ill to attend or when the school has granted advance permission. Headteachers may approve leave during term time only in exceptional circumstances, considered individually and applied for in advance. Holidays for leisure are not exceptional, and families should book them during school holidays.

If unauthorised absence continues, legal measures may include a Parenting Order, Education Supervision Order, School Attendance Order, fixed penalty notice, or prosecution. Under Durham's framework, a fixed penalty notice may be considered after 10 unauthorised sessions, equivalent to five days, within 10 school weeks. The first notice is £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days; a second notice within three years is £160 payable within 28 days. A third notice cannot be issued, and legal action may follow.

October Attendance Results

Well done to all pupils for their attendance in October.

Our winning year group was Year 4 with 97.1%, and they will receive sweet treats on Friday 6th November to celebrate their achievement. 🎉

Our winning class was Class 3 with 98.1%, who will enjoy a free non-uniform day on Friday 6th November. It was a very close race across the school, with just small margins between the top classes. We are looking forward to seeing if Class 2 can regain their winning spot in November. 🙌

Thank you for your continued support in helping children attend school regularly. Good attendance is important not only for learning, but for helping children grow into confident, successful individuals. 🧑

Year Group

Year Group	Present R/C: Marks (%)
Year Y4	97.1%
Year Y3	96.2%
Year Y5	95.4%
Year Y6	94.3%

Registration Group

Registration Form	Present R/C: Marks (%)
Class 3	98.1%
Class 1	96.2%
Class 2	96.2%
Class 4	95.9%
Class 6	95.7%
Class 7	95.3%
Class 5	95.0%
Class 8	93.3%

School Dinners and ParentPay

Our new autumn and winter school menu starts on 2 November. It offers tasty, nutritious meals every day, with a wide range of familiar and varied choices.

Main meal choices include:

- Cheese and tomato pizza
- Messy spaghetti
- Tomato pasta
- Sausage or veggie burgers
- Roast chicken
- Quorn roast
- Fish fingers
- Baked potatoes with a variety of toppings

Children can also choose fresh salad, vegetables, fruit, bread, yoghurt and water. Desserts include ice cream, flapjack and fruit.

The full menu is available in the Hub section of the app, so families can look through the choices and discuss lunchtime options together.

ParentPay is our school payment system and is used for school meals and breakfast club payments. This is where any arrears will appear. Accounts should always be kept in sufficient credit to cover the services your child uses, so there should not be any arrears on any account. At the time of publishing this information, there are 59 arrears for these services. Each Friday, arrears are reviewed and, if necessary, families are sent a message and email.

Please do not wait to receive a reminder before checking your child's account. We ask that you regularly monitor the balance, especially if you know your child uses these services. This should be a regular part of your routine.

Toy Appeal 2026: Sharing the Spirit of Giving

We are launching our Toy Appeal early in 2026. Last Christmas, the generosity of families meant that around 600 children and young people in the local area received presents on Christmas morning. Many of these children would otherwise have gone without.

Families can support the appeal by:

- Buying a gift and dropping it off at school
- Organising a coffee morning
- Hosting a Christmas jumper day at a workplace or community group
- Creating another fundraising idea

Gifts must be brand new and unopened. Gifts are collected for children aged 0 to 16 years.

Thank you to all our families for their continued support and for helping to bring generosity and joy to children and young people in our local area. Every gift goes to a child or young person who truly needs it.

Christmas Financial Support

If your family may be struggling financially at Christmas, please contact the school. We are committed to ensuring that children have as near to the same opportunities as other children and experience the same magical time.

Some families have previously been too proud to ask for help. Please do not feel that way. Families are asked to seek help before **Friday 13 November**.

Support can be requested by contacting school or by completing the provided form if you cannot telephone or speak to school. The school will then manage the support.

The form does not automatically collect names or email addresses unless families provide them:

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/cxKfNr4yQS>

The school has previously worked with the Salvation Army and families able to donate gifts. A similar plan is likely this year.

Families who are able to donate new toys or gifts should send them into school for collection. This provides a valuable way for families to support other children and young people during the Christmas period.

Voluntary School Fund

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to families for their generous contributions to the private school funds. The fund is voluntary and is not a requirement for families. Every contribution is appreciated, and no family should feel under pressure to contribute.

These contributions help provide additional resources and festive treats which enrich the school experience for all children. They support experiences such as:

- Christmas celebrations
- Pantomime shows
- Gifts
- Daily rewards
- Class incentives

In September, the school received £100.34 in contributions. We are especially grateful for the support received at this time of year and for the way it helps create additional opportunities and memorable experiences for children across the school.

Year 6 Robinwood Residential: May 2027

The Year 6 Robinwood residential will take place from Monday 17 to Wednesday 19 May 2027.

Final date to pay the remaining balance: Friday 23 April 2026

This is the last date to pay. If balances are not cleared in full by this date, children will regrettably not be able to attend. Where possible, families are encouraged to spread the cost of the residential in preparation for the final payment deadline.

BBC Children in Need 2026

Children in Need takes place on Friday 13 November 2026.

This year's theme is "Challenge yourself". Over the coming weeks, the school council will meet to decide how the school will raise funds. The fundraising approach is still being considered, and further details will follow.

There will also be a themed school meal on the day. We look forward to sharing more information when arrangements have been decided.

School Uniform

Please ensure that children wear the correct school uniform and that all items are clearly named. After the first half term, there has been an unprecedented increase in lost property, and many items are unlabelled.

Unnamed items are frequently not being returned after going home with children. Naming every item helps belongings to be identified and returned, supporting children and families with practical routines.

Please also note that some children are wearing football strips for PE. This is against school policy. PE kits must comply with the established guidelines on the school website in the School Uniform Policy.

Year 6 Robinwood Residential 2028

In January, we will send a general-interest form about a residential trip to Robinwood, Alston in 2028.

The trip is for current Year 5 pupils, who will be in Year 6 at the time. Families are encouraged to complete the form when it is shared. The responses will help the school confirm its booking with the centre. The school can typically book between 52 and 56 children, and the year group currently has 55 pupils.

Not every child enjoys this type of residential experience. Children who do not attend will take part in enjoyable activities at school. The trip takes place in a warmer month, so the cost will be higher. Final costs are not yet available, but families are asked to budget for approximately £360.

Autumn 2 Class Timetables

New timetables for Autumn 2 have recently been shared and are also available via:

- The Hub section of the app
- The class pages on the school website

Families can use the timetable as a helpful reference when supporting children to be prepared for the school week.

Christmas Shows: Tuesday 8 December 2026

We are proud to put on Christmas shows for families each year. This year, there will be two performances in one day for families with children in lower and upper school. This arrangement supports families with children across the school who may struggle with time off work.

Performance Information

The shows take place at Consett Academy on Tuesday 8 December 2026.

- Year 3 and Year 4: 10.00 to 11.00 am
- Year 5 and Year 6: 2.00 to 3.00 pm

Doors open at 9.30 am for the morning show and 1.30 pm for the afternoon show. Performances begin at 10.00 am

and 2.00 pm, and each show lasts approximately one hour.

Tickets and Forms

Tickets are on sale through ParentPay at £3 per ticket. There are two tickets allocated per child.

Additional ticket sales are likely to open on a first-come basis from Monday 23 November, subject to monitoring. The final day to purchase Christmas show tickets is Friday 4 December.

Families must:

1. Purchase tickets through ParentPay.
2. Complete the [Christmas Show Performances 2026 – Fill in form](#)
3. List the attendees for the tickets purchased.

One form is needed for two tickets. A further form is needed if additional tickets are purchased. The Academy requires attendee information for safeguarding and health and safety. Entry may be refused if the form is not completed, and any changes to named attendees must be reported to school.

Please do not complete the form without purchasing tickets. ParentPay payment is the receipt; physical tickets will not be issued. The register records seats allocated and purchased.

Arriving at the Theatre

The theatre must not be accessed through the main student entrance. Visitors should:

1. Enter through the Leisure Centre main door.
2. Walk past reception on the right.
3. Continue through the doors marked “Squash Courts”.

Please remain quiet, as members of the public will be participating in sports. Mrs Raine will sign visitors in before entry. The details of attendees will already have been provided.

Arrangements for Children

Morning-show children return to school for lunch and afternoon lessons. Afternoon-show children have lunch before leaving and bring their belongings with them to go home from the theatre. Consett Infant School has been asked to hold back children attending the afternoon show.

At the end of the afternoon show, children leave the stage by class with their belongings. Clubs and Infant School childcare continue. Children may leave with their families or return to school with staff. All adults exit through the Leisure Centre.

The arrangements do not affect usual school meals. Children without an attending adult return to school with class teachers for collection.

Safeguarding Reminder

Adults must not video or photograph performances. We encourage families to enjoy the show and to help make our younger children feel special as they perform for their families.

After-School Enrichment Clubs: Autumn 2

Families can view pre-booked club bookings in ParentPay by following these steps:

1. Open the home page.
2. Select the three lines at the top left.
3. Choose Payer Dashboard.
4. Select your child's name.
5. Choose Clubs.

All clubs will be visible, and booked clubs will be highlighted green.

Monday Clubs

- After School Christmas Book Club

- After School Band
- After Seasonal Crafts Club
- After School Darts Club

Tuesday Clubs

- After School Karate
- After School Seasonal Movie Club
- After School Jigsaw Club
- After School Just Dance Club

Wednesday Clubs

- After School Nerf Club
- After School Walk and Talk Club
- After School Bedazzling Club
- After School Riddles Club

Thursday Clubs

- After School Maths Activities Club
- After School Seasonal Movie Club
- After School Multi Skills Club

Friday Clubs

- After School Lego and iPad Club
- After School Sports Hall Athletics Club

The Autumn 2 enrichment clubs offers creative, physical, social, mathematical, technological and recreational opportunities.

Secondary School Applications: 2027 Intake

Applications for secondary school places for the 2027 intake began on 1 September 2026.

Applications can be made online at:

www.durham.gov.uk/schooladmissions

The closing date is 31 October 2026.

Families applying online should complete the application, click “submit” and check that they have received a generic email from the team.

Paper Applications

Parents who do not wish to apply online could request a paper application form from the School Admissions Team from 1 September 2026.

Forms can be requested by:

- Email: schooladmissions@durham.gov.uk
- Telephone: 03000 265896

Year 6 pupils who live in another local authority should have their parents contact their home local authority. This is the authority to which they pay council tax, even if they wish to apply for a secondary school in County Durham.

Robin Hood Pantomime Visit

On Tuesday 3 November, M and M Productions will visit the school during the morning to perform Jack and the Beanstalk.

The company has been used by the school for many years, and its performances impress and humour children and staff.

We bring the pantomime experience into school because the local pantomime is usually enjoyed as a family.

The school fund pays for the production so that no child is left out. Families who wish to donate can do so under "school fund" on ParentPay.

Term Dates

There have been no changes to the future term dates already shared with families.

A comprehensive copy is available on the website under "Parents-School Holidays" and in the "Info" section of the School App. A direct link is provided to term dates and training days for academic years 2026, 2027 and 2028.

Key Dates

- **Friday 23 October 2026:** School finishes for the first half of the Autumn term at 3.25 pm or 3.30 pm.
- **Monday 2 November 2026:** School reopens for the second half of the Autumn term.
- **Friday 27 November 2026:** Staff training day. School is closed for children.
- **Friday 18 December 2026:** Last day of term.
- **Monday 4 January 2027:** School resumes.

These dates support families with planning attendance, childcare and routines throughout the school year.

Christmas Card Competition

The local Member of Parliament, Liz Twist, is holding a Christmas card competition for schools in the area.

The winning design from all schools will be made into a Christmas card and used across the constituency and beyond. This is a wonderful opportunity for children to share their creativity with the wider community.

- Designs must be created in colour.
- Designs must be on A4 paper.
- Entries must be returned to school by Friday 27 November 2026.
- The child's first name, age, class and school must be clearly written on the back.

We look forward to receiving your entries.

Swimming: Autumn 2

Reminder of swimming arrangements for Autumn Term 2:

- Monday: Swimming remains with Class 7, taught by Mrs Foxley.
- Tuesday: Swimming moves to Miss Clarey's class.
- Swimming continues during the last lesson of the school day.
- Class 7 and Class 6 swim until Christmas.

Class 7 must continue for an additional half term to support pupils in meeting the expected swimming standard. Classes for Spring 1 will be shared nearer the time.

Dates for Your Diary

October and November

- **31 October:** Final day for Year 6 families to apply for a secondary school place for September 2027.
- **Monday 2 November:** School reopens for Autumn Term 2.
- **Monday 2 November:** Autumn 2 enrichment clubs begin.
- **Tuesday 3 November:** M and M Productions perform *Jack and the Beanstalk* during the morning.
- **Thursday 5 November:** Bonfire Night-themed meal.
- **Friday 6 November:** Attendance sweet treats for Year 4. Class 3 (Mrs Holden) free non uniform day.
- **Friday 13 November:** Children in Need; details to follow.

- **Monday 16 November:** Anti-Bullying Day; details to follow.
- **Thursday 19 November:** Year 5 planetarium visit to school; details to follow.
- **Friday 20 November:** Selected children across school attend a curling event; details to follow.
- **Monday 23 November:** Additional Christmas show tickets go on sale on ParentPay.
- **Wednesday 25 November:** Year 5 cinema visit to see *The Smurfs*; details to follow.
- **Friday 27 November:** School closed to children for a staff training day.
- **Friday 27 November:** Final day for Christmas Card entries. **Please hand in before 26/11/2026.**
- **Monday 30 November:** Something will be twinkling in the hall for the children today!

December

- **Tuesday 1 December:** Final karate lesson for the term. The karate grading during the after-school session.
- **Friday 4 December:** Final day to purchase Christmas show tickets.
- **Monday 7 December:** Christmas show dress rehearsal. Information about what children need to wear will be shared in early November.
- **Tuesday 8 December:** Christmas show day. Year 3 and Year 4 perform in the morning; Year 5 and Year 6 perform in the afternoon.
- **Tuesday 8 December:** Karate grading after school.
- **Wednesday 9 December:** Christmas dinner and Christmas jumper day; details to follow.
- **Thursday 10 December:** Save the Children Christmas jumper day; details to follow.
- **Friday 11 December:** Interim reports sent to families.
- **Monday 14 December:** Christmas sponsored fun run for OPAL; details to follow.
- **Wednesday 16 December:** Christmas party day. Party-food contributions are required.
- **Thursday 17 December:** Final enrichment club for the half term.
- **Thursday 17 December:** Autumn Term attendance celebration day.
- **Friday 18 December:** Last day of the Autumn term. Children may attend in non-uniform for a one-pound School Council fine, payable through ParentPay. No enrichment clubs.

January and February

- **Monday 4 January:** School reopens to all children. Breakfast Club starts at 7.45 am and does not need to be pre-booked.
- **Monday 4 January:** Spring 1 enrichment clubs begin.
- **Wednesday 6 January:** Selected year-group TAG rugby event; details to follow.
- **Friday 8 January:** Whole-school Boccia day; details to follow.
- **Wednesday 13 January:** Selected Year 4 children attend a team-building event.
- **Tuesday 19 January:** Selected year-group TAG rugby event; details to follow.
- **Tuesday 19 January:** Key Stage 2 swimming gala for selected children; details to follow.
- **Thursday 21 January:** Year 3 trip to the Oriental Museum; details to follow.
- **Monday 1 February:** Selected Year 3 children participate in a game's festival; details to follow.
- **Wednesday 3 February:** Selected Year 5 and Year 6 children participate in a TAG rugby event; details to follow.
- **Friday 5 February:** Selected Year 5 children participate in a dance festival; details to follow.
- **Friday 12 February:** Last day of the Spring 1 half term.
- **Monday 17 to Wednesday 19 May:** Year 6 children at Robinwood.

Future Statutory Key Stage 2 Tests

- **Monday 10 to Thursday 13 May 2027:** Statutory Key Stage 2 tests.
- **Monday 8 to Thursday 11 May 2028:** Statutory Key Stage 2 tests.