



Consett Junior School

April 2021 Newsletter

Dear Parents/Carers,

How strange it is to say that we have reached Easter, but have only been back to school 3 weeks! As we look forward to the Easter break and bank holidays with our families, it is very prudent to look back on a very difficult year for education and the country as a whole. I am sure we have all known someone who has been affected by COVID and how that impacts on the wider family and beyond. I am always gladdened by the fact that as a community we pull together and take care of one another through difficult times.

Our children have been making cards and pictures to share with local care homes and the vulnerable to let them know we are thinking of them, helping them keep their spirits up. Hopefully as we move towards the summer term and infection rates continue to drop we will, as a community and country move back towards some form of normality.

I am happy to report that the children have returned with smiles and excitement, in most cases they are very happy to be back...we likewise are happy to have them. We have focused on the children's well-being, ensuring any who need support get it in a timely manner.

We will be keeping our covid measures in place throughout the summer term and will of course follow Public Health England and Government guidelines. I thank everyone for following the measures we have in place, it has helped us greatly. Can I just remind everyone of a couple of things:

- Firstly, for family members collecting Year 3 and Year 4 children, can you please follow the one way system around our school, it keeps the process working well, and stops people bumping into each other trying to access/leave the pedestrian gate.
- Secondly, when collecting or dropping of children please can you refrain from driving to the end of the road, or into the staff car park; this is only permitted for families who have medical needs and who have permission.
- Thirdly, I am afraid we cannot allow dogs onto the school site, please do not bring your dog to collect the children - sorry.

I do hope everyone is able to enjoy the Easter break, hopefully we will have some better weather.

Please do take care and keep safe.

Mr Paul Dixon

Head Teacher

Attendance

The whole school attendance for March was 94.12%. We had almost 100% of children return on 8th March, which was amazing. We understand the anxieties families and children were faced with on hearing the announcement of the full reopening of schools, but please rest assured that our main priority is the safety of all children and staff, therefore covid risk assessments continue to be updated and followed, with maximum levels of cleaning in place. If you have concerns over children being in school during the current pandemic please contact us so we can support and reassure you as best you can.

Following the Government announcement of all schools reopening on 8th March, the expectation was clear in that all children must return to school full time. This therefore means that attendance will continue to be monitored and addressed as it previously has been and children are legally required to attend school. We have excellent communication with our families and the majority of parents/carers use the communications systems available (emails, texts, calls) in school to report on absences and late arrivals. If reasons are not provided for absences they are recorded as unauthorised, which could result in further action. If you are finding your child's attendance in school challenging, it is very important you contact us.

We encourage children to be equally involved in their attendance at school and have several monthly and termly incentives to encourage them. Obviously, if children are unwell they are unable to attend school, but as we have several opportunities throughout the year all children have a chance to receive an award. This has been a difficult year to implement incentives, but we hope to continue with these now we are open in full again.

School Dinners

Please ensure you follow policy when changing meal arrangements for your child, we require 2 weeks' notice, but this can sometimes be accommodated sooner if other children are also changing meal arrangements. If you do not inform the office your ParentPay account will be charged.

Due to risk assessments children will continue to eat in their classrooms, if they are on school meals they collect them from the kitchen and return to class.

Message from our cook

"Well, it's been a different few months for us all at dinner times but the children have been enjoying a lovely selection of lunches and desserts and also some treats from time to time, when we have had an occasion to celebrate. After the holidays we are hoping to do some fabulous 'taster' days which we think will be a great opportunity for all those who are currently on packed lunch to try our deliciously healthy school dinners. Here's a few photographs of the meals we serve so all our families can view what we provide"



Leavers Hoodies

Year 6 leavers hoodie payments are due this Friday, 26th March. If you opted to use Ford Castle balances we have done this and have a total of your remaining balance. If you have chosen to pay on ParentPay and have not yet

done so we have recently sent you a text message reminder. If you did not receive a text message reminder you have either paid or you had sufficient Ford Castle credit to cover the cost.

I know many families (and children) are wondering if and what will be arranged for them in celebrating their many years attendance at our school, given the current situation. Please rest assured, we are working in the background to ensure this will be a memorable end to their year. However, we need to follow the Governments road map very carefully. Once we can share these 'special' events, we will.

As usual, we will subsidise costs as best we can from school fund, but we will also need some contributions towards the costs of some of the events.

Comic Relief

Thank you to everyone who donated to Red Nose Day, in partnership with ParentPay there was £378.50 raised. ParentPay do not benefit from this platform and the full amount goes direct to the charity.

The fundraising page will not close until 26th March donate, please use this ParentPay link if you wish to donate:

<https://app.parentpay.com/ParentPayShop/Foc/Default.aspx?shopid=3215>

March Voluntary School Fund

We have received £62 via ParentPay for school fund for March. This will go towards activities and resources in school throughout the summer term.

Clubs

Unfortunately, we are still not ready to welcome back after school extra-curricular clubs. We will re-visit this for the September term.

COVID-19 Symptoms and Cases

In order to help us, please can we ask families to do the following over Easter:

If your child develops symptoms of Covid-19 within 48 hours from the last day they attended school you MUST contact us by emailing consettjunior@durhamlearning.net ASAP. We strongly advise you book their test at a test centre as the results from the test are returned quicker than postal tests i.e. they are in school today and have symptoms BEFORE 3.30 p.m. on Sunday.

If your child develops symptoms of Covid-19 after the 48 hours from the last day they attended school then you do not need to inform us. However, if their results show they are positive we would need to know as this could impact on their attendance when returning to school on Monday 12th April 2021, i.e. they develop symptoms AFTER 3.30 p.m. on the Sunday.

Please help us to act quickly so staff can also have some time off over the Easter holidays.

COVID-19 Winter Grant Scheme – Easter Term Vouchers

We have received confirmation that the free school meal vouchers will be provided for eligible families again to cover the two-week Easter holidays. Ecodes have been received and forwarded to the email address we hold on file.

Each email contains some information about the vouchers, an eco code link to redeem your voucher and an attached document with further help. The email will come from consettjunior@durhamlearning.net but it is a 'forwarded email' from 'vouchers@select-your-reward.co.uk'.

Secondary Admissions Confirmation

Parents/Cares of Year 6 children have recently been notified of their child's secondary school place. If you have not received confirmation or do not have a secondary school place, it is imperative you contact Durham School Admissions.

Administering Medicines in School

If children have been prescribed medicines that must be administered in school a form MUST be completed. This form can be requested from the office or can be accessed on our website. Failure to complete this form means we cannot administer medication at your request. All medication must be in clear packaging prescribed to your child. This will be checked on receipt.

Year 4 - The return of Forest School

Details are to follow on OurSchoolApp, but Year 4 will resume Forest School sessions after Easter. This will be timetabled on a block set of weeks rota, one class at a time, and you will be informed when this affects your child. To save carrying additional bags children will need to come to school dressed in their outdoor Forest School clothes. Please check the school app and texts messages.

Loaned Devices

If you loaned one of our devices during the school closure please can these be returned to school next week. If this applies to you and you feel more comfortable bringing this to reception than sending in with your child please ensure you wear a face mask.

All devices will be updated and wiped should we need to close a bubble and loan them out to other families. Text message reminders have been sent.

Dates for your Diary

We are waiting for year 6 transition dates from secondary feeder schools, once we have this information we will share with families.

Friday 26th March – Last day of term. Children can come to school in non-uniform for a £1 school fund fine, paid on ParentPay.

Friday 26th March – Last day for Year 6 leavers hoodies to be paid. Payment must be made on ParentPay, £16.50 for sizes up to 34” and £18.50 for ‘S’ and above

Monday 12th April – School reopens of the start of the Summer term.

Friday 30th April – Break up for May Day bank holiday (1 day). Full school uniform required today.

Tuesday 4th May – School reopens following the May Day bank holiday.

Thursday 27th May – School closes for the Summer half term. Please note that Friday 28th May we are closed for staff training. Children can come to school in non-uniform for a £1 school fund fine, paid on ParentPay.

Monday 7th June – School reopens of the second half of the Summer term