



Consett Junior School- May 2021 Newsletter

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to the May Newsletter, hopefully the new month will herald in some better weather. The majority of children have settled back into the rigours of school so well. They are working hard in class and we are looking forward to the summer term.

As I write this message, the staff have been busy planning summer term visits – the importance of these visits cannot be understated for the children, who like the rest of us have suffered greatly over the past year.

Over the next few weeks children across the school will be undertaking some assessments, this will allow us to have a snapshot of where children are in terms of English and Maths – allowing us to plan where we should be aiming our intervention programmes.

We have a current vacancy for a Parent Governor, Governors play an important role in the strategic direction of the school, they attend committee meetings such as finance and staffing, supporting myself and the staff in whole school matters. Meetings can take place through the school day and sometimes after school, so there is a time commitment involved. I should also say, as many ask, Governors do not have any impact on the day to day operation of the school – but remain strategic. If you think you have the time and wish to help support the school – please contact the school office before Thursday 27th May for further discussion.

Mr Paul Dixon

Head Teacher

Attendance

The whole school attendance for April was 95.39%. Our floor target for the whole school is above 96%, although this is only slightly below our target we are very concerned about some individual attendance of pupils in school. We appreciate this has been a year like no other, and it has been a very difficult one to focus on attendance. But now school has been open in full for a while we are noticing trends in some children's absences. This could mean we are noticing that they are absent on certain days more regularly or they are absent frequently with the same reasons provided.

We will post attendance summaries and information home to parents where we have found there is cause for concern, following this, meetings will be set up to try and support families in improving their children's attendance.

As children have missed so much time in school, we can only support them in 'catching up' if they attend full time. We have several interventions groups per class to support the children's education.

The attendance summary for April is below. Well done to Year 4 for the highest year group attendance for April, their treat is a giant cookie/muffin on Friday 7th May. Well done to class 4 (Miss Thompson and Mrs Taylor) for the highest-class attendance their treat is a non-uniform day on Friday 7th May.

Year Group	% attendance	Unauthorised absences (sessions)	Lates
<u>3</u>	<u>92.01</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>24</u>

4	96.74	13	7
5	96.39	12	10
6	95.24	2	2

We are very concerned by Year 3 attendance levels; can we remind families that attending school is a legal requirement and if children are not in school due to illness they must communicate this with school on the first day of absence.

School Dinners

Our new summer menu will be published on our website and app shortly. This will commence after the may half term. Our cook is keen to have more children on school dinners and will be arranging some taster days for the children to try new foods (we are aware of children with dietary needs). We will also send out a questionnaire to families to see if we can persuade more children to join our dinner line...

Can families not send in peanut items with their children's packed lunches, we have several children in school who have peanut allergies. This includes peanut butter in sandwiches.

Morning break 'healthy snacks'

Just to clarify, children are allowed to bring in a small healthy snack for morning break. However, we have noticed that some children are actually bringing in items that do not fall under this category. Children can bring in fruit, healthy cereal bars, or fruit type snacks (i.e. flakes). Not NUT products.

Updated Risk Assessment

Please see our website for the most recent Covid - 19 risk assessments <https://www.consett-jun.durham.sch.uk/parents/how-we-will-reopen-our-school-safely/parents-what-you-need-to-know/>

March Voluntary School Fund

We received £123 in school fund donations in April. This will help subsidise upcoming trips and treats for children in school as we near the end of the term. School fund can be paid using ParentPay or by children bringing coins into school and placing them in the 'money spinner'.

Year 6 Assessment Week

Year 6 assessment week will be the week beginning 17th May. These assessments are in place of the Statutory Attainment Tests which the children will not be taking this year. This week allows staff, children and parents to see the progress that the children have made this year as well as gaps in their learning which can then be taught and set as homework in the summer term. Attendance is very important for this week as the children will have to sit the assessments at a later date if they miss them.

Please reassure your child/ren that this week is nothing to worry about: we are all aware that the children have missed months' worth of education in school over the last two years. It is simply to gain an understanding of where we are in order to help us improve and to show off what we are good at.

The year 6 staff are very impressed with how hard the children are working and we have every faith that this week will just give them a chance to show off how much they have learnt.

COVID-19 guidance

Please ensure you are familiar with current Covid-19 guidance. As we move through the government's roadmap out of lockdown it is important you are aware of the changes. It is also important to follow the isolating guidance should you or anyone in your 'bubble' develop symptoms. As we move through this final term we need to remain safe and vigilant to keep each other safe in school <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

[Cycles and Scooters](#)

It is great to see children cycling and scootering to school, but we are a little concerned with how some children are not quite aware of the dangers of the road outside school - one or two children almost think the area is like the skate park.

If families could make children aware of the dangers of the road, being careful when crossing etc, we will speak with the children in school and explain the dangers.

Can you also speak to your children about using their scooters/bicycles on the school premises, children should dismount at the main gate and push them down to the store behind school.

We have recently published some useful links on our app and website to support parents in ensuring their child's access to the internet and social platforms are safe <https://www.consett-jun.durham.sch.uk/online-safety/>

[Breakfast Club Start Time](#)

Our breakfast club starts at 7.45 a.m., once again, there are an increasing number of children on the premises far too early. If your child does arrive before this time they cannot enter the building. It is very important families are aware of this as children arriving on their own are not supervised until 7.45 a.m.

[E-safety Sessions](#)

Cyber bullying and e safety sessions – Looking at online behaviour with safety tips with Vicki Lydon.

Many children now have mobile devices that they can use to access social media platforms. Although there is age restriction for these platforms, we are concerned with the number of children who are accessing them. It is the parents/carers responsibility to allow and monitor their safe use outside of school. Vicki will spend time in each class discussing the dangers of social media and educate our children on appropriate use.

[OurSchoolApp](#)

We have been using this App for almost four years now, it is a very good and efficient way of communicating with everyone, it is a very low cost to the school and free for families to download. The App and the school website are the main means of communication. Please download the App, I appreciate that daily 'news' and 'Calendar' notifications can be frustrating, but as we have previously informed you can disable these notifications (App-Settings-Notifications). Please remember, if you do disable notifications then it means you are responsible for opening the App to check for alerts on a daily basis. At this time of year this App is very important to follow.

[Forest School – Year 4](#)

Year 4 started Forest School on Wednesday 14th April 2021. Their sessions are carried out on a Wednesday afternoon within the school grounds. Class 3 (Mr. Meadows) are doing the first half of this summer term and Class 4 (Mrs Taylor/Miss Thompson) will do the second half of the term. However, all sessions will be run by Mr. Meadows.

Please access this link for more details <https://www.consett-jun.durham.sch.uk/forest-school-year-4/>

[ICT suite refurbishment](#)

Over the last year we have found that areas of the school have not be used as they previously were and we have managed to deliver the curriculum to children and operate in school in alternative ways. The main room we have not used has been the ICT suite. The PC's could not be used due to Covid and cleaning, to ensure we could still deliver ICT to children we purchased year group ipads and received additional laptops. We have made the decision to change the ICT suite into a more useable space and over half term this will be changed to our interventions/music room. We have always struggled with storage for the brass band instruments as well as places for small groups of children to practice. We have many children who require out of class interventions as well as a relaxing environment for therapy and counselling sessions.

The lower school changing rooms will become an open library, as this was also part of the existing ICT suite. We are very excited about the changes and feel it is a positive step for Consett Junior School.

Bringing Bags into School

Please can children NOT bring bags into school if they are not on packed lunch. As part of our changes to the safer opening of school we limited the things that could be brought into school. We do not have operational changing rooms so all bags and coats coming into school are stored on chairs and under tables, this can cause issues when maneuvering around the classroom. We feel it is very important to bring this to your attention as many children are actually bringing large, empty backpacks into school. If children continue to do this we will need to contact individual families.

Staffing

I am happy to announce that we have been able to make two teaching appointments for the new academic year. Miss Thompson who has been teaching in year 4, was successful in securing a full-time fixed term teaching position for September. Alongside Miss Thompson, we have also appointed Miss Clarey as a full-time fixed term teacher. Congratulations to them both.

Dates for your Diary

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

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.

Friday 7th May – Year 5 Adventure Sunderland Trip consent/medical forms to be returned to school.

Friday 7th May – Class 4 (Miss Thompson and Mrs Taylor) free non-uniform day for highest attendance in April.

w/c 10th May – May half term 'Covid Local Support Grant' vouchers will be emailed to those eligible this week.

Tuesday 11th May - Year 6 Esafety Session (pm).

Friday 14th May - Year 5 Esafety Session (pm).

w/c Monday 17th May – Year 6 Assessment Week

Tuesday 18th May - Year 4 Esafety Session (pm).

Thursday 20th May - Crazy Creatures (Year 4) - Crazy Creatures will be in school during the afternoon to work with Year 4. If the weather permits this session will be outdoors, otherwise they will be in the hall. If your child has any allergies can you please ensure we know and medication given or provided to school. If year 3 are siblings/children that stay back at school until 3.20 p.m. they will still go out with their teachers and remain with them until 3.20 p.m. They will not be in the hall on this day.

Friday 21st May - Year 3 Esafety Session (pm).

Wednesday 26th May – Last day to order a school packed lunch for Year 3 trip.

Thursday 27th May – Closing date for Parent Governor Applications.

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 for the second half of the Summer term. Full school uniform is required. On PE days children should continue to come in wearing PE kit. Forest school sessions change to Class 4 (year 4) from this week.

Tuesday 8th June - Last day to order a school packed lunch for Year 5 trip.

Wednesday 9th June – Year 3 trip to South Shields. The coach will leave at 9.30 a.m. prompt <https://www.consett-jun.durham.sch.uk/19500-2/> Children will be back for their usual finish time. There is no cost to families but children can bring in a maximum of £5 spending money (change preferred).

Friday 11th June - Payment of Year 6 Activities - Deadline to Pay. Payments due on ParentPay by Friday 11th June
<https://www.consett-jun.durham.sch.uk/payment-of-year-6-activities/>

Monday 14th June - Last day to order a school packed lunch for Year 4 trip.

Tuesday 15th June – Year 5 trip to Adventure Sunderland. The coach will leave school at 8.30 a.m. prompt
<https://www.consett-jun.durham.sch.uk/year-5-end-of-year-trip/> Children will not be back at their usual finish time, it will 3.50 /4.00 p.m. depending on traffic. We have requested a £5 contribution towards the cost of the coach, this is to be paid for using ParentPay under ‘Year 5 trip contribution’.

Friday 18th June - Last day to order a school packed lunch for Year 6 trip.

Monday 28th June – Year 4 trip to Washington Wetland Centre. The coach will leave at 9.00 a.m. prompt
<https://www.consett-jun.durham.sch.uk/year-4-end-of-year-trip/> Children will be back for their usual finish time. We have requested a £5 contribution towards the cost of the coach, this is to be paid for using ParentPay under ‘Year 4 trip contribution’.

Wednesday 30th June – End of year show rehearsal day (details to follow).

Thursday 1st July – End of year show – filming day (details to follow).

Friday 2nd July – End of Year 6 trip to...’destination reveal to follow’...coach will leave at 8.45 a.m. prompt and children will not be back at school until 6.30 p.m. We can confirm it is a 45-minute coach journey.

Friday 9th July – Year 6 SLEEPOVER! Details to follow.

Monday 12th July – Year 6 Party Day – all year 6 must be in school for 9.00 a.m. and will be off the school premises until 12 noon. The afternoon will be a ‘sweet’ surprise. Guess what? Reveal to follow...

Friday 16th June – Sadly, this is the last day.

Thursday 2nd September - School re-opens for the new academic year. Breakfast club starts at 7.45 a.m. No need to pre-book a place, payment is made via ParentPay. Wednesday 1st September is CLOSED to all pupils for staff training. Children in Years 4, 5 & 6 must return on the same school meal arrangement unless you have changed this with Mrs Raine. Failure to inform of a change will result in a charge on ParentPay.