



Consett Junior School

October 2021 Newsletter

Hi everyone,

It really is great to be back, we have managed to allow things to be back to normal as much as possible, assemblies with children, lunch times in the school hall, sporting clubs and of course the band - the early playing of Little Donkey is a particular favourite. However, we must all remain vigilant and follow the guidance set out by the Department for Education, we are trying our best to keep you up to date with the guidance for schools and although on occasion it may seem that we are a little insistent on asking for PCR tests, it is only to keep everyone safe.

As I mentioned, clubs and activities have started after school - please keep an eye out on our new app for all the new clubs for next half term - and of course the photographs that staff are sharing, I love looking at them all. I was thrilled to attend the first cross country competition, all the children were amazingly well behaved and did so well, thanks to all the parents and grandparents who came along to support the children.

We are having a big push on school sport this year, so it has been lovely to hear children taking part in class activities such as Tag rugby, Gymnastics and of course Swimming. We are part of the Derwentside School Sports Partnership, meaning we have many festivals and activities to attend throughout the year - our aim is for everyone to attend some type of festival over the next year.

Looking forward, toward the end of this half term and into next, we have some lovely things planned for the children, Halloween Party Days, Christmas Party days and hopefully some lovely Christmas coffee mornings, where our school band will be playing carols.

As always, if anyone has any worries, please do contact the school, in most cases we can help alleviate worries and concerns very quickly.

Take care,
Mr Paul Dixon

Head Teacher

[Attendance](#)

The whole school attendance for September was 94.57%, which is below the governments floor target of 96%. However, this is really no surprise. Recording absences for covid once a PCR test is positive is to use an 'I' code. This does impact on a child's attendance and as they must isolate for the full 10 days this will have a detrimental impact on their % attendance. As long as you provide copies of their test result we can identify that families are working with us. This is going to be the same situation in all school across the UK.

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 this school must attend, if your child is not in school and you have not submitted a reason within a timely manner – you are in fact 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, **please do not text 07537436638 anymore and remove this number from your contacts**, alternatively the school app has a means to message and record absences. You can also monitor your child's attendance though the app therefore identify 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 for fixed penalty fines. Very 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.

[September attendance overview](#)

Well done to Class 4, Miss Thompson's class for achieving the highest attendance in the first month of the school year. It has been a hard task for many due to illness, namely Covid, but by booking PCR tests and getting back to school when safe, it means that we can keep the children in school learning as much as we can. Class 4 achieved 95.22% and can have a free non-uniform this Friday, well done.

Year 5 achieved the best year group attendance for September (94.06%) and they will be rewarded with a giant muffin/cake, also on Friday.

Year 6 – please don't be disheartened, we know that the attendance is low due to covid isolation periods. Good luck for October.

Year Group	% attendance	Unauthorised absences	Lates
3	93.9	7	15
4	92.57	9	22
5	94.06	4	14
6	89.08	28	9

[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 in excess of £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 created a 'form' to allow you to order some spooky meals for your child for the last week before half term, place your order by Friday 8th October via the app.

You DO NOT need to complete this form if your child already accesses school meals. There is also no change to those children who access fun Friday meals, they will still access it as usual.

[CJS app](#)

It is brilliant to see so many families are using the CJS app. In order to get the full use out of the app you need to ensure the you download our bespoke CJS app from the Google Play or Apple Store (please note Weduc is the platform that created the app but CJS is the app). If you are only using it through Weduc's platform (only logging in through Weduc) then you will not always be able to send or receive in-app messages. If you are logging in through Weduc you need to start using our App from one of the two stores, your log-in details will be the same. Our app is our logo and when you open it our logo rotates until it opens all of its features. You can also access more settings in the app, and if need be, turn off some of the notifications you receive.

I have already found a few issues with the app and I have reported these, one main one appears to be incompatibility between the app and iPhone/iPad. Please can you let me know of any issues and screenshots are requested. The developers are happy to address these issues.

[Covid cases](#)

Just a reminder to families as cases of covid in our area are high. If your child has one or more symptom of covid we will request a PCR test **before** they can come to school. While you wait for PCR results children with symptoms must isolate. A LFT will not be accepted when symptoms are present; so please do not assume we will accept these as you will be requested to book a PCR and we will refuse children entry school without this. If you send your child to school without informing us of their PCR result then they will be asked to wait in the isolation room until we establish the result. Please ensure you app message or email these details, as we do have a record of children who we have requested/are having a PCR test. We are only following the government guidelines, we do not intend to be difficult.

[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. It is too soon to firm up finer details of the trip - we will be sorting this into the new year. Your ParentPay payment item is set so it reduces each time you pay - managing how soon you pay in full. The full amount must be paid by Friday 19th April 2022 to ensure your child can go.

[Halloween Celebrations](#)

On Friday 22nd October we have an exciting day planned for our children! Not only is it the last day of term but it is also 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 (you can access this link in the hub).

Children can come to school dressed in their Halloween costumes (masks are not permitted to be worn on the yard or in the party hour, so staff can identify them). There will be no change to the start and finish times of the school day.

[Harvest Celebrations – Supporting County Durham Foodbank](#)

County Durham Foodbank is asking schools to consider supporting this important local community-based project this harvest time. As we have supported them in the past we have chosen to do so again this year, and from learning how many families they have helped, it just identifies how much families depend on this service.

Every year they are grateful to receive many donations from schools and donors across the County. Last year County Durham Foodbank provided 6,399 food packages to 13,636 individuals. They are still helping people in genuine crisis rather than encouraging dependency. A large proportion of this food came from the harvest collections of schools and churches, each providing for the needs of this County.

County Durham foodbank only works with non-perishable food items (tinned and dried goods), which do not spoil or decay. This means that neither the foodbank nor the recipient has to worry about storing the food in a fridge or freezer,

and there is less likelihood of food going to waste. It also means that they can give each client a carefully designed food parcel that contains three days' worth of nutritionally-balanced food. They also take non-food items such as toiletries, cleaning and sanitary products, as these are just as essential to the clients who come to them.

Please can all items be brought into the school reception before Wednesday 20th October so we can transport them to the food bank before half term.

[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 past experience this is a much-needed collection. We will keep you informed once we know more.

[September Voluntary School Fund](#)

Just a quick thank you to all families that have sent in school fund for September, we have received £182 School Fund 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. We also have the money spinner in school for children who like to use this, alternatively families preferred option is ParentPay.

[Clubs w/c 1st November](#)

We offer enrichment only after school clubs, this means that they are changed regularly and offered to different year groups each time. They are not suitable for families who require regular childcare. Clubs to expect after half term w/c 1st November:

Monday – After school Chess club till 4.30 p.m. for Year 4 with Miss White. 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 10 spaces on a first come basis. The cost of the club is £8 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.

Tuesday – After school Karate with Ross Temple for existing members. The last session of this term is Tuesday 30th November. The grading will be held during the school afternoon of the 7th December.

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.

Wednesday – After school Multi Skills with Chris Shield for existing Year 5 members. This club ends on Wednesday 15th December (Christmas arrangements may mean the last session is cancelled).

Wednesday – After school 'relax and colour' club till 4.30 p.m. for Year 3 with Mrs Raine. This is a calming and quiet club for children who prefer the more chilled activities. This club is limited to 20 spaces on a first come basis. The cost of the club is £8 per child which works out at £1 per week. This must be paid in full to secure your child's place. In initial interest form has been app messaged to families to complete by Friday 1st October.

Thursday – After school Bootcamp sessions with Matt for Year 6. 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. If this club is successful it will be rolled out for other years groups in the new year. In initial interest form has been app messaged to families to complete by Friday 1st October.

Friday – After school Badminton club sessions with Mr Dixon for Year 6. 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 10 spaces on a first come basis. The cost of the club is £7 per child which works out at £1 per week. This must be paid in full to secure your child's place. This club will not run on the last day of term (17th December).

[Swimming](#)

Swimming for years 4 & 6 will continue until Christmas.

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

We have booked LW Film to record our Christmas performance again this year. Staff are currently deciding what they will do within their recorded time slot and should they need anything specific to wear on the day we will let you know. We aim to 'air' our production on Christmas Eve.

[Traffic](#)

I have received more concerns regarding inconsiderate parking near the school site, cars leaving the school car park at the end of the day and many other concerns around this topic. I have also sadly had a report of a grandparent being verbally challenged by a member of staff from One Point. All of this is a concern - the very last thing any of us want is a child being knocked over. If you have concerns would you please log it on the Durham County Council Website - Traffic concerns. I feel that the more of us who complain, may result in some form of change. You may have also noticed that the local neighbourhood police officers have been present a few times this week, if they have asked you to move your vehicle is simply highlights you are parked in an area that is prohibited. Parking on the corners on the yellow zig-zag lines is not allowed and is very dangerous for our children. The one-way system that we adopt during the busy drop off and collection times is also important for us all to follow – otherwise it does not work, as we are all witnessing. Let's all work together with this, we all have children in our school so the safety of the children is no.1 priority **NOT** who can get the closest to the school.

[Morrisons its good grow](#)

Help us get FREE gardening equipment for our school. To take part, join 'MyMorrisons' today and swipe each time you shop to collect Grow Tokens. One token for every £10 you spend between Monday 6th September and Sunday 24th October. On your first visit to 'MyMorrisons' you'll be asked to select the school you'd like to donate your Grow Tokens to, please choose Consett Junior School.

[Uniform reminder](#)

Our School Uniform

Our uniform is designed so that it is not financially a struggle to purchase. All items can be sourced from local supermarkets at very low prices. Girls Uniform Royal Blue Sweatshirt/Cardigan Grey or Black Skirt/Trousers Yellow Polo Shirt Blue/White Gingham Dress (optional summer only). Boys Uniform Royal Blue Sweatshirt Grey or Black Trousers Yellow Polo Shirt Black or Grey Shorts (optional summer only)

Other Uniform Information

Black shoes should be worn with school uniform (no white or coloured trainers except for PE). Appropriate footwear for school does not include high-heels or decorated shoes (sequins, beads or bows), which are not suitable for school use, for safety reasons. Loose fitting sandals are not allowed, as these are trip and slip hazards.

Make-up, jewellery, hair die, and nail varnish are not appropriate for school and we will contact you should your child come to school wearing them. The wearing of earrings is not encouraged in school, anything larger than a small stud earring would not be allowed. In addition, new guidelines have been issued to schools which say that any earrings should be removed for PE, including swimming, or covered securely by plasters or tape, this includes studs.

Long hair should be tied back (we are aware the many boys have long hair – this applies to them too) and coloured or shaved hair is not acceptable.

PE Kit

We have adapted our PE uniform policy in light of changes made during Covid times. It became noticeable how much curriculum time children were using to change – therefore we made the decision to allow children to come to school in PE kit on those days' children have the subject.

The following outlines what our PE kit is:

Bottoms: Dark (not obviously branded or patterned) shorts, leggings or joggers.

Top- plain white t-shirt or the white t-shirt with the school crest on.

Jumpers - only school jumpers or cardigans should now be worn. Not Hoodies, as there is too much confusion over the type and colour –if hoodie are worn these would be treated as coats and children would be asked to remove them in class.

Stud earrings should either be taken out or covered up with tape - no other jewellery should be worn

[Secondary Admissions Application Process for 2021](#)

Parents can make their application for Secondary School online by visiting www.durham.gov.uk/schooladmissions and the School Admissions online application facility will be available to parents from Monday the 6th of September 2021.

The Closing Date for Secondary School Applications is the 31st October 2021.

If parents do not wish to apply online they can complete a paper application form, and these are available to print from our website (same website address as above) from Monday the 6th September 2021.

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

Copies of the Parent's guide "Primary and Secondary School Admissions in County Durham 2022/2023" will also be available from our website or on request from Monday the 6th September 2021.

[M & M Productions – Jack and the Beanstalk](#)

On Friday 12th November M & M productions will be visiting our school during the morning to put on a spectacular performance of Jack and the Beanstalk. We have used this company for many years now and they never fail to impress or humour the children (and staff!). We choose to bring the 'oh no she isn't' experience to our school as we feel that the local pantomime is usually enjoyed as a family. We pay for the cost of this production from our school fund to ensure no child is left out - should you wish to make a donation please do so under 'school fund' on ParentPay.

This date has been changed to the one previously mentioned on our September Newsletter as we have now asked for two shows in one day, rather just one. We feel that only having Years 3/4 in one show and Year's 5/6 in the second show will ensure we maintain our contingency plan for potential covid breakouts as well as space in the hall.

If your child does not enjoy pantomimes or loud noises there will be a quiet classroom they can go into to enjoy other activities.

[Key Dates and events for you to be aware of, please note that they are correct at time of print. More will be added when arranged and some may be subject to change. Please also refer to the calendar on the school app.](#)

Thursday 7th October – Cross Country race at South Stanley Juniors. Runners are aware. We expect a return to school after the race for 5.15 p.m.

Friday 8th October – Photo proof orders due back (please enclose exact payment).

Friday 8th October – Final day to order the themed Halloween school meals for w/c 18th October. This must be done on the app under 'forms', if you cannot see an order form it has already been submitted.

Wednesday 13th October – Year 3 Stoneage Workshops in school.

Thursday 14th October – Cross Country race at Greenland's Primary School. Runners are aware. We expect a return to school for 5.15 p.m.

w/c 18th October – Halloween themed school meals week. If you have prebooked a packed lunch child onto this week

you will be notified prior to this date.

Wednesday 20th October – Final day to send in items for the foodbank.

Thursday 21st October – Interim school reports (and SEN support plans if applicable) to go home with children today. If you require a separate copy for separated families please let Mrs Raine know, unless of course she already provides this.

Friday 22nd October – Halloween celebrations during the school day. Children can come to school wearing their costumes and will participate in a Year group music and games session. The cost of this event is £2 and payable on ParentPay. Details of this event is on our school app.

Friday 22nd October – School closes for the end of this half term at 3.20/3.30 p.m.

Sunday 31st October – Closing date for secondary school admissions 2022.

Monday 1st November – School reopens for the start of the half term at 7.45 a.m. for children who attend breakfast club.

Friday 12th November – M & M Productions are in school during the morning to perform the pantomime 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. Year 3 & 4 will be in the first show and Year 5 & 6 in the second. The cost of the show will be paid for through our private school funds, but donations are welcome.

Monday 29th November – what will be twinkling and bright in the hall this morning?

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

Wednesday 1st December – Christmas show rehearsal day, details to follow.

Thursday 2nd December – Christmas show recording, details to follow.

Friday 3rd December – Flu immunisation team in school for children's nasal spray vaccine. The team are yet to firm up details and send us permission forms.

Tuesday 7th December – Band coffee morning and Year 6 carol service 1 of 2, details about booking a place will follow on the app.

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

Wednesday 8th December - Band coffee morning and Year 6 carol service 2 of 2, details about booking a place will follow on the app.

Tuesday 14 December – Christmas party day! There will soon be a payment option for a £1 contribution to the entertainment we have booked for this day (on ParentPay). After half term there will be more details in the 'notices' section of our app.

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.

Saturday 25th December – Not too sure what is happening today? I'm sure it will come to me for the next newsletter...

Wednesday 5th January – All children back to school today please, I am sure by this time you will be ready for their return!