



Consett Junior School- September 2021 Newsletter

Dear families,

Welcome to the first newsletter of the year.

Hopefully, your child has enjoyed their first few days and settled in well to their new class - for many children, the change of class or school is something to look forward to, for others it can be daunting. We work hard to ensure all our children enjoy the experience of our school - relationships are important to us and we always endeavour to work closely with families to make our time with your children a success.

Our aim this year is to ensure the children can settle quickly, enjoy their time, and achieve the success they deserve, this will be achieved due to their hard work, our working together and our excellent staff.

If parents/carers have any concerns or worries, we welcome you to share these with us, most things can be sorted quickly - I will always be available to speak with parents/carers. Likewise, if you are having difficulties and need some support, we will do our best to help, we will signpost families to the right support if needed.

Moving forward throughout the year, I look forward to welcoming you all into school, hopefully measures for schools will continue to ease and we are able to offer the things we offered in past years, such as Grandparent afternoons, special adult lunches etc. Of course, we still must be mindful of the presence of Covid and we will continue to keep you all up to date with any guidance that changes.

As always, I look forward to working with you all throughout the year and to catching up with you all.

Take care,

Mr Paul Dixon

Head Teacher

Drop-off and Collection Reminder

The gate leading to our main school yard will be opened for all children at 8.40 a.m. (a member of staff will be present at the gate to welcome children) all children NOT attending breakfast club can have access to this area, and staff from Breakfast Club will be supervising all children whilst on the yard. The bell for the start of the school day will ring at 8.55 a.m. and ALL children should be on the grounds ready to be brought into class to start their day of learning. Parents are not allowed onto the yard on a morning. If it is raining children will still come into the school grounds by the main yard gate and they will be asked to go into school via the yard entrance.

If your child is late (after 8.55 a.m.) and the gate to the yard is locked, then you must inform us and children must come to school via the main reception door. Children arriving after 9.20 a.m. will be marked as an unauthorised 'late' absence, which will impact on their % of attendance. Children who are late due to medical appointments must also come to the main door and a letter/email of proof must be provided.

The school day will end for Years 3 & 4 at 3.20 p.m. children will be brought onto the school yard by their teacher in their class group to be collected. Parent/Carers must queue from the main gate ready to walk onto the yard at 3.20 p.m. they will form and follow their queue, collect their child, and then continue to follow the queue to exit the grounds around the back of the school. This was a system we adopted during the pandemic and it works well to keep the

congestion of people and traffic low. If your child is in Year 4 and you are happy for them to walk out of the grounds to meet you elsewhere, then you must inform us about this.

The school day will end for Years 5 & 6 at 3.30 p.m. children will be allowed to leave the premises and exit school from the main path that runs adjacent to the nursery. If you have children in lower school this allows you time to collect them and wait for your oldest child. We will no longer keep siblings in the hall at the end of the day as there is only 10 minutes difference and the new system allows you time to wait.

There should be no reason for any child to leave school earlier than these times, unless they have a medical appointment and the letter is provided, so please do not request this as it unsettles the class and the children miss out on very valuable learning

Attendance

At Consett Junior School attendance has always been a focus for us and we strive to go above 96% attendance each month. For families new to our school, we wanted to emphasise this and the rewards we have in place for promoting excellent attendance. We have monthly class and year group treats; termly individual rewards as well as whole school year individual rewards. The children love these and respond well to them. It is also an excellent way of making the children aware of how important attendance at school is, not only for their education but for friendships.

Our drive on attendance is more important than ever as so many children have missed a significant amount of school. We need to ensure our children do not suffer anymore from the amount of school they have already missed. We will continue to offer the rewards as we previously did, where it is safe to do so.

There are several ways of monitoring attendance and there are also systems in place for monitoring patterns of absences, i.e., always a Friday or always the same type of illness. Whilst we are very aware that most cases of absence are genuine, there is a minority where this is not always the case. We have a legal duty to ensure that you bring your child to school each day. We have and will do house calls on families we are concerned about and we will involve all parents/carers who have parental responsibility should we have concerns. We are here to support you but most important of all, we want your child in school so they make progress and flourish.

Holidays in term times are not permitted and we do refer families who do hit the number of days absence for a FPN. More details on attendance can be found here <https://www.consett-jun.durham.sch.uk/about-us/school-attendance/>

Mr Dixon and Mrs Raine

Covid-19 Information for Families

This information has already been shared to families, however, it is very important that you understand what the changes mean for children in school. One point to bring to your attention is that if your child has one or more of the symptoms of Covid, either evident in school or if you ring school to inform us of this, we will request a negative PCR before they can return to school. LFT will not be accepted. Whilst we appreciate this is inconvenient, especially for working families, but we have guidance that we must also adhere to. We hope that by making this clear to our families it will not be a surprise when it is requested. PCR test results are usually returned with 24 hours and as long as no other family member has symptoms and have been double vaccinated, then only the child is to isolate. Apologies again, but this will be enforced.

<https://www.consett-jun.durham.sch.uk/covid-19-information-for-families-from-september/>

Contact Details

Following the return to school after such a prolonged period, your circumstances may have changed. You must ensure you have made us aware of any changes. It is vital we have the correct contact information on file for your child. This could include a change of address, contact numbers, your listed emergency contacts, or a separation of parents/change to children's living arrangements. If your child does not live with you and you require additional information posted/emailed to you, this can also be arranged i.e. school reports.

Appointments

Where possible can you ensure any medical appointments are made outside of the school day. We completely understand that some appointments can only be made during school time. Where this is the case can you ensure copies of appointments are provided.

School Dinners

School dinners are £2.15 per day and this must be paid on ParentPay, please try to keep your balances in credit. The current menus, which are likely to be in place until half term can be found here <https://www.consett-jun.durham.sch.uk/summer-menus-taylor-shaw-4/> School dinners are on offer for all children but you must inform Mrs Raine if you want your child to access them, likewise, if your child is changing to packed lunches, a two week notice period must be provided.

Children eat their meals in the school hall and there are no rules in place that children must sit together by meal arrangements. Lunchtimes are for the children to socialise and if this means children sitting where they are happy, then we very much promote this.

Voluntary School Fund

School fund is particularly important to us and what we can offer our children. Often school budgets are restricted, so those smaller treats and resources that we need in school, even subsidising the cost of trips, is paid for through the school fund. Christmas time and end of school year are times that this fund is heavily used. You can pay school fund on ParentPay or children can bring £1 into school and put it in the fun 'money spinner'. It is of course a voluntary fund and entirely your choice if you contribute. For things that require payment, i.e., a trip, we will inform you of this.

Robinwood Residential Monday 16th – Wednesday 18th May 2022

Our Year 6 residential to Robinwood is all booked and there are no places available, but we do have a waiting list. The final date to pay the full remaining balance (originally £240) is Friday 29th April, 2022. 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 Uniform for September 2021

We have stressed our expectation of wearing the correct uniform (including PE kit) for some time now. If children are not wearing the correct uniform, then we will send letters home and if necessary, ring parents/carers. We will be monitoring this over the next few weeks and will contact you should we need to, here is also a link to our uniform requirements <https://www.consett-jun.durham.sch.uk/parents/our-school-uniform/>

Please place orders online at <https://totstoteams.com/consett-junior-school> however, there is no expectation that you make your purchases from this shop, other high street stores sell our colours and some at a cheaper rate.

If your child has grown out of their current uniform, please can you consider donating this to the Willowburn Charity Shop in Consett, as they sell them for a very small amount.

OurSchoolApp and Weduc

Further to our previous update regarding migrating to a new app, I wanted to give families the opportunity to enable other users to have some access to their child's account.

One of the good features of our current app was that anyone could download it, therefore allowing extended family members or childminders to be informed of things happening in school i.e., coffee mornings, cancelled clubs etc - which is useful if parents/ carers are busy at work and may miss an alert (rest assured, important whole school messages are shared using ALL methods of communication).

Weduc also have this feature enabled. I can add others as 'guest' users which will let them open an account and see information relating a specific child. Sensitive information, such as parent/carer contact details, attendance reports,

absence reporting etc will not be made available, but the general news alerts, posts, photos, and calendar events that relate to that child will be visible.

If you are a family that would like a 'guest' user added to their child's account, can you please email me their full name and their email address to consettjunior@durhamlearning.net

I am hoping to completely migrate to this system by mid-September (it is a lot of work), but I will keep you informed of when I do. If you already have a weduc account, you will already be able to see our new page being prepared. Please do not delete this app until I inform you to do so, this ensures smooth communication throughout.

PLEASE NOTE – IF YOU DO NOT ACTIVATE YOUR WEDUC ACCOUNT WHEN THE LINK IS EMAILED TO YOU, YOU WILL MISS OUT ON VERY IMPORTANT INFORMATION.

[Picnic in the Park to Celebrate Mr. Jacksons Life](#)

Please join us for the first in a series of planned events to celebrate Mr. Jacksons life and music on September 5th at 2.30 p.m. in Consett and Blackhill Park. Bring along a picnic, enjoy the music and celebrate a life well lived. It is a ticket event but they are free and available as the poster describes or on the day from the park (poster in link below).

Just as a reminder, our goal is to raise enough money for a special bespoke seat to be placed in Blackhill Park, a place where he enjoyed spending time. We hope to go above and beyond in our fundraising so that we can also raise money for the Consett Salvation Army Band and Cancer Research. This is one of the first events of many throughout the academic year 21/22. Since starting this fundraising page on the 16th July 2021 after dedicating our end of year show to Mr. Jackson we have raised an amazing £1,345. Thank you all so very much.

<https://www.consett-jun.durham.sch.uk/in-celebration-of-david-jackson-2/>

<https://gofund.me/8df6bdf1>

[After School Clubs](#)

We do not offer 'childcare' based clubs, for this you would need to make other arrangements. We do offer some enrichment clubs and are thrilled to announce that they are coming back in force.

From Tuesday 7th September, families who opted to resume karate (this is now full so if you did not complete the form your child will not have a place), they need to ensure their child brings in their karate kit ready to change into at the end of the school day. This club is every Tuesday until 4.30 p.m. and the last session of a term is usually a grading. You will be sent a school text to remind you of this club starting on Tuesday if you have a place.

From Monday 13th September, brass band practice will start again. Miss Waters will notify the band members if this applies to them. Until this after school session has been developed again, there are no new members. Miss Waters will let you know when new members can join. Practice will end at 4.30 pm.

Multi-skills club - 30 Children in Year 5 have secured a place at this free club, and texts have been sent to them. This will start on Wednesday 8th September and run until Christmas (some days might be cancelled if there are xmas activities planned). It will be every Wednesday 3.30 p.m. till 4.30 p.m. On those days, if it is not their usual PE day, they must come to school wearing their P.E. kit, but this MUST be a school P.E. kit. These sessions will be indoors or outdoors depending on the weather.

Cross Country will restart from Tuesday 14th September. There will be an after-school club, known as the 'long route' on a Tuesday but this is for Year 6 children only. From Wednesday 15th September we will run on a Wednesday lunchtime with Year 5. We will offer two running sessions to year 5 before this date to see if they like it. We only have 20 spaces available so it will be a case of 10 runners chosen per year 5 class and then a waiting list started. Again, children can come to school wearing their school P.E. kit if this applies to them. Please watch out for more information on this.

We will have more clubs on offer after half term, please note they are open to specific year groups on a first come basis which is also determined by group size. Most clubs cost £1 per week.

Swimming Sessions - Important Update for Year's 4 & 6 ONLY

We have just been informed that we are able to restart our swimming sessions again, this is great news as swimming is a vital skill that all children really would benefit from being able to do, and with so much time missed we need to ensure we restart ASAP.

I am sure you are aware that Consett Swimming Pool is temporarily closed, as we have no date of reopening, we have been offered an alternative provision. Until our local pool re-opens our children will be swimming at Catchgate Swimming Pool. Unfortunately, NO spectators are allowed.

We will begin our swimming programme with Year 4 and Year 6. It is organised so that only one class swims at a time. The sessions will commence next week, Tuesday 7th and Wednesday 8th September.

Year 4 children will swim on a Tuesday afternoon. Class 4 - 1.05 p.m. to 1.50 p.m. Class 3 - 2.05 p.m. to 2.50 p.m. **This will replace their usual PE lesson on that day so Year 4 will need to come in wearing their full school uniform - an update has been added to your child's class page.**

Year 6 children will swim on a Wednesday afternoon. Class 7 - 1.05 p.m. to 1.50 p.m. Class 8 - 2.05 p.m. to 2.50 p.m. Year 6 must still come in wearing their PE kits on Wednesdays.

The coach will collect each class and take them to their session then return them to school straight afterwards, this means that the coach will collect Class 3 first at 12.45 p.m. and return them after their session to then collect Class 4. Then the same the following day for Year 6. The last class of children will be back in school for normal collection time.

We will ensure that all children in the school will have an opportunity to swim throughout the year.

Please ensure you make a note of your child's swimming day as they MUST come to school with their bathing costumes (no bikini's) and towel. This will not impact on Tuesday's Karate sessions. Also, mealtimes have been accommodated to allow them time to have their lunch.

Inhalers in School for Children with Asthma

Please ensure your child brings an inhaler into school if they have a doctor's diagnosis of Asthma. Children took their inhalers home at the end of term. Please check the expiry date and return one with them ASAP.

If your child needs an inhaler in school, it must be prescribed by their GP, therefore have their name on. Labels are usually on the box, if you have disposed of the box, you can put their name on the inhaler itself. You should also complete a school Asthma form, if you require this form, please speak to Mrs. Raine.

If your child is new to our school and you need support with this please ring.

School Photographs - Tuesday 14th September

Local photographer, Mark Wilkinson, will be in school on the morning of Tuesday 14th September to take 'individual' and 'siblings' photographs of all the children in school. If children have PE on this day, they must bring this in in a separate bag, therefore all children must be in their school uniform on this day.

In previous years this would have included siblings who do not attend our school, by means of an earlier session for family photographs prior to school starting. Unfortunately, due to Covid we are unable to offer these sessions this year. As an alternative for families who would like sibling/family photographs taken, Mark is happy to do this in his shop (Middle Street, Consett) by prior appointment. All proofs, whether taken in school or at his shop will be returned to Consett Junior School for ordering.

If you are a family where parents are separated and need two copies, please let Mrs. Raine know (this is only applicable to families that are new to our school)

Children will receive a proof order at a later date. All bulk orders can be made through school by a set deadline, alternatively, please make your order directly with the local shop (Middle Street).

Ordering details will follow after the 14th September.

Flu Immunisation programme

The flu nasal immunisation team will be in school in December, further information will follow, as well as a link/letter to give permission for your child to receive this immunisation. Although not painful, the nasal spray can be tickly and cause irritation, this can unsettle children. If you opt to give permission, can you also discuss the procedure with them prior to the day to reassure them. Without permission children WILL NOT receive this immunization.

Term dates

Currently there is no change to future term dates that have already been shared. A copy of all term dates can be found on the website 'Parents-School Holidays' or in the 'Info' section of the School App.

However, below is a direct link to a list of all term dates and training days for 2021/22/23.

<https://www.consett-jun.durham.sch.uk/term-date-and-training-days-2021-22-23/>

School breaks up to end the first half of the autumn term at 3.20/3.30 p.m. on Friday 22nd October 2021.

School reopens for the second half of the autumn terms on Monday 1st November 2021.

School breaks up for Christmas on Friday 17th December 2021 and reopens on Wednesday 5th January 2022 (*Monday 4th is a staff training day and school is closed to pupils).

Bringing Bags and fidget toys into School

Could we remind you that children should only be bringing packed lunches and water bottles in from home. No pencil cases or large bags with nothing in. Therefore, children on school meals should only have their water bottle, children with 'carry handle' packed lunches should not have large bags.

Apart from the fact we are trying to keep our school as clean as possible, these items are not necessary and are creating issues with regards to safety as well as space in classrooms.

Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 7th September – After school karate for existing members who completed the form. A text reminder will be sent to families with a place. Children need their karate kit and it ends at 4.30 p.m.

Tuesday 7th September – Year 4 swimming sessions commence

Wednesday 8th September – Year 5 multi-skills club. This club is now full and those who have secured a place have been informed. Please ensure they wear their SCHOOL PE kit on this day.

Wednesday 8th September – Year 6 swimming sessions commence

Monday 12th September – After school band for existing members, ending at 4.30 p.m.

Tuesday 14 September – All children must be in school uniform (bring PE bags in if applicable) for school photographs day. Children with siblings within the school will also have their photo taken individually and separately.

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

Monday 1st November – School reopens for the second half term at 7.45 a.m. for breakfast club.

Friday 3rd December – Flu immunisation team in school – details to follow.

Tuesday 16th December – M & M productions in school performing the pantomime 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. Details will follow but if your child does not like loud noises can you speak to Mrs Raine. School fund will subsidise the cost of this pantomime.

Watch out for Halloween and Christmas event dates coming soon. We love being ahead of the game and booking things in fast. We will give you as much notice as possible for these events.

Year 6 SATS week 2022 - Monday 9th May 2022 – Thursday 12th May 2022.