



Lanchester E. P. Primary School



Autumn Newsletter (1)

I would like to extend a very warm welcome back to school to all our children and parents and, particularly to those new families who have just started with us here at Lanchester E.P. School. I do hope that your child has quickly settled into life at our school and is very happy.

It has been so wonderful to see so many happy, confident and wonderful little people who have literally bounced back into school again this term. I do think that our children will never take school for granted again – who would ever have thought they would be so thrilled to be able to attend school!

It has certainly been a better start to the academic year than this time last year! However, we still have a number of children and staff who have tested positive since returning to school so we all still need to be cautious. Whilst numbers are still relatively small, we do have some cases across a number of different year groups. We will not routinely inform parents of any positive cases unless the numbers are large enough for us to have to move to our 'Outbreak Control Plan'.

Unfortunately, I am now isolating at home as I tested positive for Covid this week. I am continuing to try to work from home but may not be as swift in responding to emails so apologies in advance about this.

We have so much planned for the children this term – it is lovely being able to resume some more 'normal' activities. Please read the newsletter carefully and especially the diary dates on the back page as there are some important dates for you all.

Please do not forget that all our weekly letters (which go out every Friday) and half-termly newsletters can also be found on our website: <http://www.lanchesterep.durham.sch.uk> so you can access the information wherever you may be in the world (although I am sure that is not very far from the village at all at the moment!).

We do pride ourselves on our open and honest relationship with parents and I always appreciate your feedback. Please, never be afraid to drop me an email or phone me to talk anything through at all. I will always try to get back to you as quickly as possible. Occasionally, emails do drop off the bottom of the page though so please just be patient!

As always, please do not hesitate to speak to us if there is anything at all that we can ever do to help.

Jane Davis

Staff News



We are delighted to welcome Mrs Rachael Bowden to our office team. She started with us on 1st September and I am sure many of you will have spoken to her already on the telephone or when you have been into school. I know that she will be a great addition to our whole staff team and I am sure you will all get to know her well over the next few weeks and months.



Mr McLoughlin is on paternity leave until the October half-term holiday. His wife gave birth to a beautiful baby girl at the end of July and he is making the most of spending as much time as possible with his young family while he can. He will return to school on Monday 1st November when he will be catching up on a lot of paperwork before working in each of the classes throughout school.



Mrs Newby, one of our teaching assistants, also gave birth to a gorgeous little girl at the start of the summer holidays. She is currently on maternity leave, making the most of every minute with her daughter. She did call into school to see us all last week – much to the delight of all the children!

Staff Absences

We have already been hit with one or two staff members testing positive for Covid since the start of the term. Obviously, this is going to happen, however careful we all are, and it will inevitably mean a change of teacher for your child. However, if a teacher is going to be absent from work for any length of time, I will always communicate with you to let you know who will be teaching your child. We will always try to ensure there is some consistency in the teacher but it may not always be possible. We are still living in far from ideal circumstances I'm afraid.



LJG Holiday Clubs



Mr Graham will once again be running his fantastic holiday camp at school during the school holidays in October. He will be holding the holiday camp in school from Monday 25th October to Thursday 28th October. If you would like to book, please email: lewisgraham91@hotmail.co.uk or fill in this [online booking form](#). This is open for all children aged between 4 – 11 years old. You can book your child in for the full day (8am – 5pm) or half days (8am – 1pm or 1pm – 5pm).



Captain Chemistry



We have once again welcomed Captain Chemistry into school to work with our Y2 and Y5 children. Throughout the year he will be working with each year group on various Science topics with fun and engaging experiments and investigations. He is so lively and inspiring and really brings the children's learning alive.



School Walk for Years 2-6



We are delighted that we are able to take Years 2 – 6 on our annual school walk in Northumberland on Wednesday 29th September. I know they were disappointed to miss out in the summer term and just hope that we will be lucky with the weather! The children should come dressed appropriately for the day – comfortable footwear will be essential – and they can also bring buckets and spades too.

The buses will leave school as soon as possible after 9am and take us to the car park at Seahouses where there are toilets. We then all walk along the beach towards Bamburgh, stopping in the sand dunes to enjoy lunch, some time on the beach and a run around up and down the sand dunes. We then head to the car park where hopefully the ice cream van awaits us and where we can also make use of the toilets before heading back to school.

Parents are more than welcome to join us again for this popular trip – but we are asking you to make your own way there this year, rather than coming on the buses with us. If you want to join us as a volunteer to look after a group of children, please fill in [this online volunteer](#) form. If you don't want to take a group of children then you do not need to fill in the form – just turn up and we will see you there.



Sports News



After nearly two years without a game, the girls football team have made a fantastic start to the new season with victories in their opening two matches. The team, none of whom had ever played for the school before, played superbly in defeating Bishop Ian Ramsey, Medomsley 4-2 and Shotley Bridge 2-0 at Consett Football Club.

Training is held every Wednesday after school and is open to all girls in Years 5 and 6. It has been particularly pleasing to see the number of girls attending training, with many playing football for the first time.

The first week of football training showed that we have a wonderful group of Year 5 and 6 boys to choose from to represent the school football team; the attitude was outstanding! We had our first set of fixtures this week and while the boys did not get the results they deserved, they certainly did themselves and their school proud. I am sure, that with a bit more luck, the boys will have a really positive season.



Healthy Snacks



Whilst children in Early Years and KS1 do receive a free piece of fruit every day, there are occasions when they do not like what is provided and are feeling quite hungry in a morning. So, if you would like to provide your child with a healthy snack or piece of fruit in a morning, that is absolutely fine! Please do not put it in your child's packed lunch box though – keep it separate so we know it is for the morning snack rather than at lunchtime. Please also remember that we are nut free school. Thank you.

Reading Books Sale



As many of you will have realised, we have changed our approach to reading and are now using a very popular and successful scheme called Accelerated Reader. All books which are in this scheme have now been logged and are in our library for children to access. However, there are a number of books which do not form part of this scheme and we have lots of 'spare' books in school which we will no longer be using.

We plan to hold a Reading Book Sale on Friday 24th September in school where each class will be able to go down and buy any book they would like. These will be sold at 20p per book or children can buy a maximum of 5 books for £1. I am sure the children will thoroughly enjoy looking at all the books and trying to decide which one they want to keep!

Accelerated Reader Workshop



We are always very grateful for the wonderful support we receive from parents with your children's reading and as we have started a new reading scheme this year, we thought it would be useful to hold a workshop so that we can explain about it all in more detail.

On Thursday 30th September we will be holding Accelerated Workshops in school at 8.45am and 2.30pm in the Junior Hall. At these sessions, we will be explaining how the scheme works, how your children are assessed and how appropriate books are chosen. We look forward to seeing you there.

Reception 2022 Admissions



For children born between **1 September 2017 and 31 August 2018**, you need to complete an application, stating which primary school you would like your child to attend. You still need to apply even if you have an older child attending the same school, and **even if you attend Nursery at Lanchester EP you must still apply for a Reception place**. Each year we have a number of children who miss out on a place in our Reception because parents have forgotten to apply for a place. **The deadline for applications is midnight on Friday, 15 January 2022**. The offer of school places will be made on 19th April 2022.

Applications must be made via <http://www.durham.gov.uk/schooladmissions>.

Applying for a Secondary School place 2022



For children born between **1 September 2010 and 31 August 2011**, you need to complete an application, stating which secondary school you would like your child to attend. The application process opened on September 14th and you will have received a letter regarding this (sent to Year 6 parents via eSchools and also available on the school website).

The deadline for secondary school applications is midnight on Sunday 31 October 2021. Once again, it is very important to apply for a secondary school place by the deadline, as a late application greatly reduces your chances of getting a place at your preferred school.

Applications must be made via <http://www.durham.gov.uk/schooladmissions>.

If you are unable to apply online, please download the form from the website address above. Please note, we have been advised by Durham County Council that we cannot send in forms on behalf of parents.



Sounds Write Phonics Workshop



All Reception and Key Stage 1 staff have been out of school for 4 days training recently as we have started a new approach to teaching phonics in school. Over time, every single member of staff in school will be trained in this new method and it is hoped that it will have a big impact on phonics and spelling across school.

Again, we know many parents and carers like to support their children as much as possible with their phonics so are holding a parent workshop on Thursday 14th October at 8.45am and 2.30pm for any interested parents. These will both take place in the Junior Hall.

Erasmus+ Projects



We have been very fortunate to have been awarded hundreds of thousands of pounds of funding over the last 10 years to develop partnerships with many different European schools. This funding, from the British Council, has now come to an end due to Brexit.

However, we were successful in the last round of funding with two more projects being agreed. This means that for the current academic year, we have three Erasmus+ projects which we are working on with a grand total of 12 different European countries. These were all put on hold for the last academic year but visits are starting again this year, with staff attending the meetings initially, and children visiting later in the year.

'Learning Outdoors, Learning for Life' is in its final year and we are working with partner schools in Poland, Sweden, Denmark and Spain. Myself, Mr Innes, Mr Keeton and Mrs Moran will be visiting this school at the beginning of October when we will be seeing how Polish schools take learning outdoors, meeting with key staff from all the schools and prioritising work and activities for the rest of this academic year.

We also have a new project entitled 'Happy Life, Happy Lifestyle' starting this year with partner schools in Germany, Hungary and Spain. A visit to Germany will take place in November when staff will meet the new partners and discuss how each of our schools supports emotional well-being and healthy living.

The final project is entitled 'European Tunes Choir for Peer Bullying' and we have partnered with schools in Turkey, Italy, Portugal, Greece and Latvia. The first visit will be to Portugal just before half term and I think the first barrier to overcome will be that of language! Luckily for us, most partners do know some English which certainly helps us!

As the year progresses, more visits will be organised which will also include taking some of our older children as well. We also hope to be able to welcome some of our partners into our school later this academic year too. Exciting times!

Visit to Rajkot, India



We were thrilled to find out at the start of the summer holidays that our application to the Turing Scheme had been successful and we have been awarded over £36,000 to take a group of children to our partner school in Rajkot in India. This is, indeed, a trip of a lifetime for children and adults alike! We are working closely with the International Office for the Local Authority and also a wonderful, independent consultant, Veena Soni to organise this incredible opportunity.

We have a meeting for all Year 5 & 6 parents over Zoom at 6.30pm on Wednesday 29th September when we will be sharing more information about the planned visit in February; the travel, organisation, visits, safeguarding, visas and vaccines. (***)Please note the change of date and time for this meeting(***)

I have also met with a couple of other teachers who took their students out to Rajkot, just prior to lockdown in February 2020. It was fascinating to hear of their adventures and their experiences, as well as see a selection of photos and videos. I will be sharing some of these at the meeting with parents.

Obviously, travel is still just starting to get back to some kind of normal and I realise that parents and carers may have many questions. I also realise that a trip like this is not for some families at all. I hope that a meeting when we can share a draft itinerary and plans would be useful for you all to be able to make an educated decision about whether you would like to put your child's name forward for this visit or not. Please note the change of date & time – this will now take place on Wednesday 29th September at 6.30pm

Following the meeting, we will put out a form for parents and carers who would like to put their child's name forward for such a trip. We have funding to take 16 children. If we have more than 16 parents expressing an interest in the trip for their child, then names will be pulled out of a hat. The staff have already had to do that and I am delighted to say that Mr Innes, Mr McLoughlin, Mr Keeton, Miss Butler, Mrs Moran and myself will all be accompanying the children on a trip of a lifetime!

School Uniform



It is lovely to see the children looking so smart in their school uniforms. Thank you for adhering to our policy of black footwear and sensible hairstyles with no shaved hair or tramlines. We would also like to thank you for providing your children with the correct P.E. uniform – this too makes a huge difference! I would just like to remind parents of Year 5 & 6 children though that when they come to school in their PE uniform, they do still need to wear their normal school sweatshirt rather than a sports hoodie. Thank you.

Governing Body



All the members of the governing body are listed below. Our governors play a really important part in the life of our school and they can be contacted through school if you ever need to.

| | |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Mr Michael Knowles | Chairman – Co-opted Governor |
| Revd Lesley Sutherland | Vice Chair - Foundation Governor |
| Mrs Margaret Matthews | Foundation Governor |
| Mrs Fiona Wood OBE | Foundation Governor |
| Ms Suzanne Nagel | Co-opted Governor |
| Mrs Margaret Coates | Co-opted Governor |
| Mr Ossie Johnson | Local Authority Governor |
| Mr Ben Garside | Parent Governor |
| Ms Denice Atkinson | Parent Governor |
| Mr Jason Exley | Parent Governor |
| Mrs Sarah Blakeman | Parent Governor |
| Ms Naomi Hawke | Staff Representative |
| Mrs Jane Davis | Head Teacher |

Parking Issues



We all know how chaotic it is outside school at the start and end of the school day and I am sure we all empathise with the local residents who have to put up with a huge influx of cars at those times. It is really important that we respect the local residents in how and where we park.

However, this week, I have received no fewer than 7 emails of complaint from both parents and residents about irresponsible and dangerous parking. There appear to be some people who think it is acceptable to:

- park both on the bend outside school and on double yellow lines
- park on the footpath
- park on the grass verges
- mount the footpaths
- reverse onto footpaths
- double park
- be abusive to local residents when asked to move their car

If this kind of parking continues, there is going to be a really nasty accident and one of our children will end up being seriously hurt. I know that none of us wants that to happen.

Please use all the parking facilities we have available to us in the village:

- Social Club Car Park (free)
- Community Centre Car Park (£25 per annum charge)
- Kings Head Car Park (free)

There is sufficient car parking in the village as long as we are prepared to walk for a maximum of 6 minutes.

Labelling of Clothing



Please can you remember to label anything and everything that a child can remove from their bodies! We already have had a number of jumpers, cardigans, shoes, shorts etc left lying around school which we have tried to reunite with their owners. It really would be appreciated if you can remember to name all items of clothing and belongings. Thank you!



School Dinners



If your child would like to swap from either packed lunch to school meals or vice versa, we ask for two weeks' notice please. This is to ensure that all catering order timelines can be adhered to. Please email the school office with your request: school.office@lanchesterep.net Thank you for your understanding.

If you require to change a meal selection, then please note that we can only accept changes for future weeks. For example, if you know in Week 1 that your child does not like their choice, please look ahead at the choices made for any other week and day that a similar meal has been selected and advise the office accordingly. The future weeks can be adjusted but no changes can be made for the current dinner week, i.e. if we are in Week 1 and they want to swap a meal, this change will not be seen on their menu until Week 1 comes around again. Again, this is to ensure that the correct food is ordered in good time. Thank you.



Parents' Evenings



Our termly parents' evenings will be held during the last week of the half term and for our Nursery parents, we will be spreading these evenings out over the last two weeks of the half term. We hope to meet with parents in person and give you the opportunity to see your child's work but this will have to be confirmed nearer the time as it is dependent upon what happens in the next few weeks with Covid.



eSchools app



Our eSchools app is a great way of keeping up to date with what is going on in school. As soon as newsletters are published they are sent straight to the app. This enables you to know straight away our latest news and events. eSchools also contains some important information on the class pages about what your child will be learning.

We also offer parents evening appointments via this app. You will be able to see clearly what dates and times are available that suit you. When your child starts school at Lanchester E.P., all parents are issued with a username and password for eSchools which is all you need to get started. New Nursery parents should get their log in details today.

If at any point, you forget your username or password, please get in touch with the school office who can reissue the details. If you have any further questions, please just contact the school office.



Twitter



Our number of Twitter followers continues to grow rapidly (1,782) and our pupils receive some amazing learning experiences via this platform. In the past few years we have interacted with authors, athletes and even an astronaut! The response from parents to our school Twitter account has also been very positive and we urge you to follow us: [@lanchesterep](https://twitter.com/lanchesterep).

By positively using social media in school, pupils are learning how to post correctly and how not to share personal information online. With this in mind can we please request that you **DO NOT NAME CHILDREN** when making comments on our school Twitter account. No individual child should be identifiable from images posted online and so it is important that names are not associated with these images. We love receiving your comments and photographs online, but request that you use generic terms such as my child, my son, my daughter etc. when commenting about specific children.

I do think that our twitter feed has really helped to keep our community together during a really tough 18 months when we have been forced to be physically apart. I must admit, that whilst I have been at home isolating this week, it has kept me informed about what has been going on at school in my absence too! It also brings a smile to my face every time I see those wonderfully happy and enthusiastic little faces! I just hope it has the same effect on you all!



Water Bottles



Please remember to send your child with their school water bottle every day. We do continue to send the water bottles home to be cleaned and filled every day. But it is essential that these are brought back to school daily. If your child has lost or broken their water bottle, replacements can be purchased at a cost of £2 from school. However, if your child just forgets their water bottle, please do not worry – we always have cups we can give the children.



Blended Learning



Blended Learning is another new phrase which has now become part of our everyday vocabulary! As a school, we have to prepare for the possibility of children needing to self-isolate for up to 10 days if testing positive for Covid-19. In addition to this, we expect to have a number of children needing to isolate until they receive a test and their test results.

So, to try to ensure your child's education is as fluid and consistent as possible, this is our pledge to you:

- **For children isolating when waiting for a test.** There are a number of activities and websites on your child's home page on eSchools or Evidence Me for Early Years children. These can be completed during the first day of absence. Following this, please email the school office or your child's class teacher and they will email you with the work missed in school.
- **For children needing to self-isolate for 10 days.** Work will be uploaded to your child's eSchools page as it was during lockdown. If your child is too poorly to complete their work, just let us know.
- If your child has to isolate but does not have access to technology during the day, please let us know. We do have some chrome books we can loan out and we can also provide work packs and books if you prefer.
- If your child is absent from school as they are poorly and not well enough to attend school, then they are not well enough to complete work at home and work will not be set for them.

If you have any questions at all about any of this, please do not hesitate to ask!



COVID-19 Information



Advice to All Parents and Carers

We have a number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 within the school. NHS test and trace have been in contact with individuals who have been identified as a close contact to let them know if they are legally required to self-isolate, and to provide further advice.

How to stop coronavirus (COVID-19) spreading:

There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with coronavirus (COVID-19):

- get vaccinated – everyone aged 16 and over can [book COVID-19 vaccination appointments](#) now
- wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitiser regularly throughout the day
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- meet people outside and avoid crowded areas
- open doors and windows to let in fresh air if meeting people inside
- wear a face covering when it's hard to stay away from other people – particularly indoors or in crowded places
- participate in twice weekly LFD testing following national guidelines (recommended for 11 years and over). We encourage you to log your results here: <https://www.gov.uk/log-test-site-covid19-results>

Isolation

From 16th August 2021, children under 18 (or double-vaccinated adults) do not need to self-isolate or miss school if a member of their household or a contact, has Covid. Instead, they will need to book a PCR test but can continue coming to school until they get the test result, as long as they have no symptoms.

Communication with School

It continues to be important that if your child has to go for a PCR test, please inform the school office of this: school.office@lanchesterep.net and it is also essential that you let us know the result when you have this too. Although schools are no longer required to 'Track and Trace' we are still expected to have this information and may be contacted by Public Health to assist them. Thank you.

Questionnaire Results



At the end of every academic year, we send out a questionnaire for parents and carers so that we know what you think we are doing well and which areas you think we could improve upon. The results of the questionnaire are below. This year we had 157 responses which was just wonderful – thank you so much for taking the time to respond.

They are, once again, overwhelmingly positive which is very pleasing for us as we do work exceptionally hard to ensure the children in our care are both well cared for and educated, as well as trying to ensure that relationships with parents and carers are positive. We care passionately about the children in our care, wanting the very best for them and working tirelessly to do our very best. We have summarised some of your many comments – thank you for them all.

| <u>2021 Parent Questionnaire</u> | | <u>157 Responses</u> | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--------------|----------------------|--|------------|
| | | Stron gly Agree | Agree | Disagr ee | Strongl y Disagre e | N/A |
| 1. | My child likes coming to Lanchester E.P. School. | 141 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2. | Everyone is made to feel welcome at this school. | 144 | 12 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 3. | Teaching is good. | 137 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4. | My child is making good progress. | 111 | 44 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 5. | I am kept informed about my child's progress. | 90 | 64 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| 6. | Staff expect my child to work hard and do her/his best. | 110 | 46 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 7. | The school provides appropriate homework. | 68 | 67 | 3 | 0 | 19 |
| 8. | Parents are encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school. | 115 | 42 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 9. | I feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem. | 131 | 22 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| 10. | The school's website and Twitter feed is useful. | 126 | 27 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| 11. | The school is well led and managed. | 141 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 12. | The school achieves high standards of behaviour. | 114 | 41 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 13. | My child feels safe at this school. | 130 | 27 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 14. | The school's values and ethos have a positive impact on my child. | 122 | 34 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 15. | I would recommend this school to other parents. | 155 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 16. | I am happy with the work received during lockdown and remote learning. | 104 | 39 | 2 | 0 | 12 |
| 17. | I was happy with the home-school communication during the lockdown and when my child has moved to remote learning. | 110 | 35 | 2 | 1 | 9 |

Thank you all for your additional comments from the questionnaires. We had so many very positive comments which were so appreciated by all staff. However, we also really appreciated your suggestions as well and these have and continue to be considered. We have taken on board your requests about more notice for residentials – these are highlighted on the diary dates. We will also be sending out more regular progress reports this year too. We have summarised some of the questionnaire comments received as it is just impossible to share them all. However these are the key points raised:

What are we doing well?

- Creating a caring supportive community for all, and providing fun learning opportunities and adventures, leading to many happy memories for the children :)
- Everything! Putting the emotional wellbeing of the children above all else. Help and support offered during home learning. Quickly adapted to home learning situation. Staff know all children throughout the school. Amazing range of activities offered. Staff are approachable and supportive. Mrs Davis works tirelessly and with such dedication to ensure the best possible school experience for all children.
- Caring, responsive, approachable, down to earth
- I think the leadership and management of the school and the staff working remotely has been exceptional in this unprecedented past academic year!
- Making every child feel valued and part of the school and wider community. Children are seen as individuals and their strengths valued and encouraged.
- Kindness, inclusiveness, strong management and leadership, provides a loving, caring environment
- Everything. As a former lead inspector I think the school has a caring ethos which shines through all its work and is underpinned by the committed and inspirational leadership of the headteacher
- Excellent pastoral care from devoted, hard- working staff who go above and beyond to support children and their families. Wonderful extra-curricular opportunities e.g. visits, residential, clubs etc.
- It feels like the children have joined a huge family. Everyone is caring and your child is treated like an individual whose safety and well-being is crucial to the wellbeing of the whole school. The leadership is inspiring and motivating and makes us feel our child would not be safer or happier anywhere else.
- Excellent communication throughout a difficult year
- Always having fun things to look forward too
- Makes children feel valued.
- Keeping the spirits of our children alive during an awful time for all
- Encourages children's mental well-being
- A very inclusive, nurturing and caring school. Brilliant communication with parents
- Fantastic leadership, brilliant teachers and supportive community
- Most enthusiastic teachers. Safe and happy place for both of my children
- Amazing range of opportunities to enhance learning, talented and caring staff, great communication, sense of community.
- Makes my child feel valued, and shows her that academic achievement is great, but there is also much more to life like being a fully rounded person
- Leadership, communication, child centred ethos, wellbeing, parental inclusion, responsiveness, fun, activities, well rounded holistic approach, transparency and openness.

- The school has a strong sense of community and brings the whole village together. The extra curricula, trips and additional provision available for the children is exemplary. I really value that the school focuses on the wider development of the child, as I believe this shapes them to be better off in life, giving them confidence and appropriate life skill.
- Although Lanchester EP gives children a strong academic foundation, I believe its real strength is in producing well rounded individuals with a strong sense of self-worth, with respect and compassion towards others, and a positive attitude to life and work that will stand them in good stead for the rest of their lives.
- All the staff make go above and beyond to make school and fun and welcoming place to be. This year they have provided vital stability and reassurance despite the challenges.
- There is an excellent community spirit in the school. It really feels like the teachers care about my children and nurture them both educationally and pastorally. The efforts that the teachers go to, under the superb leadership of Mrs Davis, to make sure that the children get rich life experiences as well as teaching is brilliant

What do you think our school could do better?

- No written or online homework except for spellings and times tables at KS1. I feel that it's often given just to tick a box and it's always painful to do in our house! Reading, spellings and times tables are much more useful in my opinion.
- Wider range of subjects and topics within the academic curriculum, but appreciate that this may be limited by what statutory requirements as to what should be taught through the curriculum e.g. more history and culture from around the world
- Give parents more notice of trips and trip costs - aware this hasn't been possible this year but in future it would be great to know earlier so it is easier for families to plan their expenses.
- Progress reports throughout the year
- Just more homework
- Consider wider access to information on twitter for those who do not have this
- No homework – don't agree with children needing to work at home
- During lockdown and remote learning it would be better if the children had a full learning day online with their teachers as they would as if in school
- Open 52 weeks a year :)
- Additional support for those with low academic confidence

Any Other Comments?

- I think the school have dealt with the challenges of the pandemic amazingly, communicating regularly with families, being as supportive and encouraging as possible and amazingly resilient in continually thinking of new ways to support the children and minimise the impact of the pandemic on them. The school hasn't shied away from trying to run trips and organise fun activities for the children, when other schools have been more wary about this. The school is central in creating a sense of community beyond the school gates in our village. Thank you for all the incredible hard work and energy of the staff team in enabling this!
- I am so grateful for all the care, support, help this school has shown my child. My child has excelled and grown into a caring, responsible young person. I cannot take all the credit, school have been amazing and have most defiantly played a part in this. I have always seen children not only going into

school happy but also leaving school with big smiles on their faces and that just shows what an amazing place we send our children.

- Thank you for everything you have done to help us through this year. Hats off to an exceptional school community.
- Utterly dedicated, caring and compassionate team, leadership committed to the children and supporting parents. Commendable!!!!
- Just to reiterate my previous point. This is a well-run, caring school. Which seems to get the balance right between hard work and the experiences that will ultimately shape children into the adults they will become. I'm lucky to work with many schools professionally, I am luckier still for my daughter to attend this school. Fingers crossed for 2021-22. Have a restful summer.
- Will be very sad to no longer have a child at this fantastic school at the end of this week!
- Over the past 18 months of lockdown measures all the teachers have worked tirelessly to provide suitable work for the children. As a school they have gone above and beyond to maintain a sense of normality and allow children to make memories together again.
- The head teacher and staff at this school are top quality. Children are safe and happy here and are prepared well for when they move on
- Outstanding school and leadership team - all go above and beyond. Such a wonderful school community. Commendable!
- I feel my children's wellbeing is important to the school. I have had a couple of issues that needed help from the school, they were more than happy to help and make the relevant calls etc to accommodate my daughter.
- We are very pleased with the school and feel should we have any concerns we can speak to the staff easily.
- The school has a good atmosphere, my child enjoys attending this school and I have always enjoyed my interaction with school staff. All staff I have met have been very approachable, friendly and accommodating.

Pyjama Day & Big Brunch – Thursday 7th October



As you will have seen on our recent newsletter we are going to be having a Pyjama Day in school on Thursday 7th October to support an ex parent, Hayley Wilkinson in her Pyjama Appeal. Hayley is collecting pyjamas for children who are in hospital, often who have been taken in with no warning and so have nothing with them. As you will have read in our previous newsletter, Hayley has previously collected a huge number of pyjamas for both UHND and the RVI and this is a really great cause and something that any parents who have had little ones in hospital will be able to relate to. In order to encourage people to donate new, unworn pyjamas not only will we be having a pyjama day on 7th October, but the kitchen will also be preparing a 'breakfast themed lunch'. This is open to all children who attend school for a full day on Thursdays, whether they are on school meals or packed lunches. Please see the menu that will be sent out with this letter, with a link to [the online form](#) to book your child's meal choices for that day.



Harvest Festival



We are delighted to celebrate our Harvest Festival in church with Revd Lesley Sutherland. This will take place on Tuesday 5th October during the afternoon session. Sadly, this will be for children from Years 1-6 only this year. Many of our children have not actually been to church yet and the children will fill it on their own, without any parents being present. Early Years children will have their own Harvest celebration in school on the same afternoon.

This year, we are asking for donations of tinned foods or fresh fruit and vegetables which we will donate to the Food Bank. It would be wonderful if the children can bring them into school on Tuesday 5th October and take them along to church.



Early Years News



We are very excited that Nursery and Reception are once again able to mix in the EYFS Garden after such a long time apart. Our outdoor area is spacious with a mixture of soft surface, playground, grass and woodland. The opportunities for the children to work co-operatively and learn outdoors cannot be underestimated.

This year, the EYFS team plan to invest time and money into making the area more exciting and challenging for the children. We would love to add a play house and a castle to the area to enhance opportunities for dramatic play and the support development of the children's language and communication skills. To this end, the children will be bringing home a sponsored Autumn Treasure Hunt sheet. If you would like your child to participate, please help them to find items to stick to the sheet which match the descriptions. If any of your family and friends would like to sponsor them to find the objects, we would be very grateful indeed. All funds raised would go towards improving the outdoor learning environment.

There are other ways you could help us to improve our outdoor provision. If you have anything that we could make use of in play such as tubes, wheels (from old bikes/buggies/scooters etc), pipes, guttering, crates, sheets, carpet tiles, gravel, real bricks, buckets, paint brushes, plant pots, unwanted plants... we would be very grateful. If you know anyone who might be able to offer ideas to help us update our play area, or know of any possible funding opportunities, then we would also welcome your suggestions. Thank you so much!

Important Dates for 2021 - 2022

Year 2 Phonics Screening Check - November 2021

KS1 Statutory Assessment Tests - May 2022

KS2 Statutory Assessment Tests - Week Beginning Monday 9th May 2022

Year 1 & Year 2 Phonics Screening Check - Week Beginning Monday 6th June 2022

Year 4 Multiplication Test - Week Beginning Monday 6th & 13th June 2022

DIARY DATES

| | | |
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| Monday 20 th September 2021 | All Day | Pirate Ron with Year 2 |
| Tuesday 21 st September 2021 | Afternoon | Guitar Demo for Years 3&4 from Musicworks |
| Wednesday 22 nd September 2021 | Evening | Open Evening for Year 6 Families at Consett Academy |
| Wednesday 29 th September 2021 | All Day | School Walk for Years 2-6 at Bamburgh/Seahouses |
| Wednesday 29 th September 2021 | All Day | NUSTEM in Early Years |
| Wednesday 29 th September 2021 | 6.30pm | India Trip Meeting for Y5&6 Parents |
| Thursday 30 th September 2021 | 8.45am | Accelerated Reader Parent Workshop |
| Thursday 30 th September 2021 | 2.30pm | Accelerated Reader Parent Workshop |
| Thursday 30 th September 2021 | Afternoon | Keyboard Demo for Yr2-6 from Musicworks |
| Week Beg. Monday 4 th October 2021 | All Week | Erasmus+ Visit to Bialystock, Poland for staff |
| Tuesday 5 th October 2021 | Afternoon | Harvest Festival Celebrations |
| Thursday 7 th October 2021 | All Day | Pyjama Day and Breakfast-Themed School Dinner |
| Monday 11 th October 2021 | Overnight | Year 5 children at Cadbury World & overnight at Birchwood School, Tamworth |
| Tuesday 12 th October 2021 | 6.30pm | Year 5 return from National Space Centre |
| Wednesday 13 th October 2021 | 8.45am | Sounds Write Phonics Workshop for KS1 Parents |
| Wednesday 13 th October 2021 | 2.30pm | Sounds Write Phonics Workshop for KS1 Parents |
| Thursday 14 th October 2021 | 8.45am | Sounds Write Phonics Workshop for Reception Parents |
| Thursday 14 th October 2021 | 2.30pm | Sounds Write Phonics Workshop for Reception Parents |
| Week Beg. Monday 18 th October 2021 | All Week | Erasmus+ Visit to Batalha, Portugal for staff |
| Tuesday 19 th October 2021 | 3.30 – 6pm | Parents' Evening |
| Wednesday 20 th October 2021 | 3.30 – 6pm | Parents' Evening |
| Friday 22 nd October 2021 | All Day | Non-Uniform Day organised by Rota Kids to support Refugees in the North-East |
| Friday 22 nd October 2021 | | Break Up for October Half Term |
| | | |
| Monday 25 th – Thursday 28 th October 2021 | All Day | LJG Holiday Camp in School |
| | | |
| Tuesday 2 nd November 2021 | 8.30am | Children Return to School |
| Tuesday 2 nd November 2021 | All Day | French Teachers Visiting School |
| Wednesday 3 rd November 2021 | All Day | French Teachers Visiting School |
| Monday 8 th November 2021 | All Day | Captain Chemistry in School |
| Tuesday 9 th November 2021 | All Day | Captain Chemistry in School |
| Week Beg. Monday 15 th November 2021 | All Week | Erasmus+ Visit to Unna, Germany for staff |
| Wednesday 17 th November 2021 | All Day | School Photographs |
| Thursday 25 th November 2021 | All Day | Flu Nasal Sprays |
| Thursday 9 th December 2021 | All Day | Year 6 in Newcastle for Pizza Lunch and Theatre Royal Pantomime, Snow White & the 7 Dwarfs |
| Friday 17 th December 2021 | Morning | Christmas Service/Nativity in School for Children |
| Friday 17 th December 2021 | | School Closes for Christmas Break |
| Wednesday 5 th January 2022 | 8.30am | School Re-opens |

ADVANCE DATES for your DIARY

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| Saturday 15 th – 22 nd January 2022 | Ski Trip for Years 4 - 6 |
| Thursday & Friday 20 th & 21 st January 2022 | Bett Show at Excel Centre, London |
| Friday 28 th January 2022 | LearnEd Conference at Newcastle RaceCourse |
| Friday 11 th February – Saturday 18 th February 2022 | Visit to Panchshil School, Rajkot, India |
| Monday & Tuesday 28 th – 29 th March 2022 | Miss Jackson's Class Residential – Seahouses & Alnwick |
| Tuesday & Wednesday 29 th – 30 th March 2022 | Mr Keeton's Class Residential – Seahouses & Alnwick |
| Wednesday & Thursday 30 th -31 st March 2022 | Mr Stephenson's Class Residential - Birdoswald |
| Thursday & Friday 31 st March – 1 st April 2022 | Mrs Sant & Mrs Coyle's Class Residential - Birdoswald |
| | |
| November 2021 | Year 2 Phonics Screening Check |
| May 2022 | KS1 Statutory Tests for Year 2 |
| Week Beginning Monday 9 th May 2022 | KS2 Statutory Tests for Year 6 |
| Week Beginning Monday 6 th June 2022 | Year 1 & Year 2 Phonics Screening Check |
| Week Beginning Monday 6 th June 2022 | Year 4 Multiplication Check |

School Holidays - Academic Year 2021 - 2022

| Holiday | Closing Date | Date re-open for teaching purposes |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Summer Holiday | Friday 16 th July 2021 | Thursday 2 nd September 2021 |
| October Half Term | Friday 22 nd October 2021 | Tuesday 2 nd November 2021 |
| Christmas Holiday | Friday 17 th December 2021 | Wednesday 5 th January 2022 |
| February Half Term | Friday 18 th February 2022 | Monday 28 th February 2022 |
| Easter Holiday | Friday 8 th April 2022 | Monday 25 th April 2022 |
| May Day | Friday 29 th April 2022 | Tuesday 3 rd May 2022 |
| Summer Half Term | Thursday 26 th May 2022 | Wednesday 8th June 2022 |
| Summer Holiday | Thursday 21 st July 2022 | Monday 5 th September 2022 |