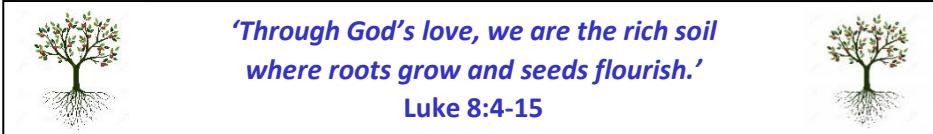




Lanchester E.P. (Cont.) Primary School & Nursery

A Caring Community Where All Can Flourish



Friday 9th January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you all enjoyed a lovely Christmas break and Happy New Year to you all! Let's hope this year is a happy and peaceful one for us all.

It has been so lovely to welcome the children back this year – they are a joy to be with. Their joy is catching and certainly helps to brighten up the cold, miserable January days! We have a lot happening this half term – please cast your eye over the Diary Dates to see what is going on in your child's year group.

Facebook

Many of you will recall us surveying parents and carers some time ago about our use of social media and asking for your opinions. We started our journey on Twitter over 12 years ago in September 2013 and it has always been very popular and well followed. During Covid, it was a lifeline for many of our families.

However, since Twitter has become 'X', there has been a significant change and deterioration with some of the content that appears on this platform. You told us that you would prefer us to use Facebook and that is what we are going to change to from this Monday.

Many of you will already follow our Facebook page, as it started off as our EYFS page but it is now our whole school Facebook page. If you don't follow us on Facebook yet, you can find our page by clicking [here](#) or by searching for 'Lanchester EP Primary School' on Facebook. All posts will also be automatically uploaded to Instagram too – we are: @lanchesterep on Instagram.

Class teachers will post regularly (2-3 times per week) and there will be regular updates and important photographs, communication and information shared via Facebook. We hope you follow us!

School Crossing Patrol

We have been informed by the Local Authority that while a new school crossing patrol has been appointed, their paperwork is still going through. Until that is finalised, there will be no crossing patrol on the road outside our school.

Parent Governor

I am delighted to inform you that we have a new parent governor. Mr Ross Guy, who has children in Year 2 and Year 5, met with the Co-Chairs at the end of last year to find out a little bit more about what the role entails. Please see the membership of our governing body below:

Co-Chairs: Mr Michael Knowles (Co-opted Governor) and

Mr Jason Exley (Co-opted Governor)

Vice Chairs: Revd Lesley Sutherland (Foundation Governor) and

Mrs Sarah Blakeman (Co-opted Governor)

Parent Governors: Dr Michael Bell, Mr Chris Grady, Mr Scott McNicholas and Mr Ross Guy

Co-opted Governor: Mr Ben Garside

Foundation Governors: Ms Rachel Dowdeswell, Vacancy

Local Authority Governor: Mr Ossie Johnson

Staff Governor: Ms Naomi Hawke

Applications for Reception 2026

Reception 2026 Intake Parents of pre-schoolers in Nursery, please remember that school places for Reception intake in September 2026 need to be applied for by midnight on 15th January 2026 – Thursday of this week. It is essential that places are applied for in time to ensure the school of your choice. Please note,

children will not automatically get a place in our school if they have been in the Nursery, so it is imperative you apply for a Reception place by clicking on this link: [Apply now for a primary school place - deadline 15 January 2026 - Durham County Council](#).

School Uniform

We do thank you for adhering to our school uniform rules and sending your children in appropriate uniform. I would just like to take this opportunity to remind you that when the children have PE days, PE Uniform is required to be worn. This is not a 'non-uniform' day or a 'dress down' day. PE Uniform is as important as the normal uniform worn for the rest of the week.

We are seeing an increased number of children wearing different coloured leggings, branded joggers or football club shorts. These are not part of our PE uniform which states 'plain black shorts or joggers'. Please ensure your children wear the correct PE uniform as well as required. Thank you for your support with this.

Earrings & Jewellery

Please note, our uniform policy states that, for health and safety reasons and the potential risk of loss, children are not to wear jewellery in school. The only jewellery pupils are allowed to wear are watches (**smart watches are NOT allowed – even if their data has been turned off**); one small pair of stud earrings; small religious adornment. PE safety guidelines also state that all jewellery should be removed for PE lessons and sporting activities.

Earrings can be taped for non-contact sport; however they must be removed for contact sports and swimming lessons. School staff cannot assist pupils to remove earrings but will support taping. If your child does have earrings in, please make sure you provide them with tape or plasters to cover their earrings, as we do not have an unending supply in school.

Lost Property

Lost property has been building steadily since last half term. Please make sure if your child has lost something that you check it before next Friday as after that it will be being sorted between the clothing bank and the Friends of Lanchester EP donated uniform store. Please also make sure that all your children's items are named - in biro on the label is a brilliant and cheap way of doing this - so that we have a chance of reuniting lost clothes with their owners.

Pre-loved Uniform from the Friends of the School

If you are looking for some free pre-loved uniform, the Friends of the School have a pre-loved uniform store. You can check what sizes and clothing types they have available via tinyurl.com/LanchesterEPUniform and then to request items, email friendsflanchesterep@gmail.com. This is a really brilliant resource which the Friends have organised, and is a great way to cut the costs of uniform.

Hair in School

We continue to have outbreaks of head lice in school and would like to remind you that the NHS advice is that children's hair should be checked weekly with a proper head lice comb. To prevent any spread of headlice, it is also recommended that long hair is tied back when in school.

India

It is hard to believe that this time next week, a group of 12 representatives from our school will be in Delhi, India for a trip of a lifetime. As always, it just seems to have come around so quickly! This really will be an incredible trip for all involved – it will be worth looking out for daily round ups on 'Facebook'. Our partner school are incredibly hospitable and are currently organising their reciprocal visit to us in June.

Mr McLoughlin, Mrs Knighton, Mrs O'Halloran and Mrs S Davis are the staff accompanying the children. Miss Owen will be teaching Mr McLoughlin's class during his absence. However, if any of his parents need to contact him about something urgent, please do so either through the school office (school.office@lanchesterep.net) or Mr Knighton (a.knighton@lanchesterep.net).

STEM Family Storytime in Nursery

Nursery children and parents are warmly invited to our first STEM Family Storytime in Nursery on **Thursday 29th January at 3:30**. STEM stands for **Science, Engineering, Technology and Mathematics**. A Family STEM

Story Time is an opportunity to introduce STEM careers, ideas and activities in a relaxed and enjoyable way. We will begin with a story which links with a STEM career and then we will have a short, fun activity for you to share with your child. At the end of the session, we will get together to share what we found out during our activity.

Book your place [here](#) by **Friday 23rd January** to allow us to prepare enough sets of activity resources for all attendees.

You are welcome to bring siblings along to this session if they are going to join in with you. Please note that some parts of the Nursery classroom will be closed to allow space for everyone to complete the STEM activity.

Help!

It is a little while since EYFS put out a call for donations, but this week we are asking if anyone has any old/unwanted calculators or phones, rolls of wallpaper or cards/envelopes? We would also like any washed small yoghurt pots if you could collect them and send them in. Thank you!

This Week's Big Question

This week's Big Question has been, 'What does Epiphany mean to you?' Please ask your child and let them tell you some interesting facts about Epiphany as well as discussing the big question.

Safeguarding

Keeping children safe from harm is our number one priority. We will always act upon any concerns individuals have, or any disclosures from children. However, if you have any concerns outside of school, or 03000 267979.

Attendance

Year Group	Current Week (%)	to Date (%)	Year Group	Current Week (%)	to Date (%)
Reception	93	93.9	Year 4	96.1	95.4
Year 1	97.3	95.5	Year 5	95.2	97.2
Year 2	97.8	97.4	Year 6	96.1	96.2
Year 3	96.9	96.3	Whole School	96.1%	96%

Diary Dates

Please check the new diary dates which will be sent out alongside this letter – there have been lots of additions and changes.

Amended 2026-27 Holiday Dates

The holiday dates for 2026-27 have been amended slightly from the ones that were sent out last half term. The revised dates are as follows:

Holiday	Last Day at School	Re-Open for Teaching Purposes
Autumn Term	-	Thursday 3 rd September 2026
Autumn Half Term	Friday 23 rd October 2026	Monday 2 nd November 2026
Staff Training Day	Friday 20 th November 2026	Tuesday 24 th November 2026
Christmas Holiday	Friday 18 th December 2026	Tuesday 5 th January 2027
Spring Half Term	Friday 12 th February 2027	Monday 22 nd February 2027
Easter Holiday	Thursday 25 th March 2027	Monday 12 th April 2027
May Day	Friday 30 th April 2027	Tuesday 4 th May 2027
Summer Half Term	Thursday 27 th May 2027	Monday 7 th June 2027
Summer Holiday	Wednesday 21 st July 2027	To be confirmed

Diary Dates for Next Week

Thursday 15th January 2026 – Reception at The Hancock Museum

Our Reception children will be very excited about their trip to The Hancock Museum on Thursday. All children need to come to school in their normal school uniform and with a packed lunch. They will return to school in time for the end of the school day.

Thursday 15th January 2026 – India Residential Departs

It is hard to believe that our residential to Delhi, India leaves on Thursday! We have some very excited children and staff. They are to meet at Newcastle Airport at 9.30am outside Starbucks. I know they will have an amazing time and come back with so much to share with everyone in school.

Thursday 15th January 2026 – Captain Chemistry with Year 4

We are looking forward to welcoming Captain Chemistry back to school. Year 4 will enjoy a session with some exciting experiments linked to their Science topic of Sound.

Thursday 15th January 2026 – Art Leaders at Lanchester Art Group

On Thursday morning, our Art Leaders will be visiting Lanchester Art Group at the Community Centre to meet the group members and talk to them about what they do. This is so exciting for our children to be able to link with adults who are also passionate about Art.

Thursday 15th January 2026 – Mini Police with Year 5

Year 5 will be continuing to work on the Mini Police Project on Thursday afternoon again when we welcome the Community Police into school.

Thursday 15th January 2026 – Girls’ Football Team at Consett FC: 3.45 – 5.00pm

The girls’ football team will be playing in their final league games on Thursday at Consett Football Club, which will be followed by a short presentation. They are currently 3rd in the league but facing teams who are currently below them in the table, and have yet to lose a game. All parents/carers of children involved will be contacted separately with more information.

Friday 16th January 2026 – Year 4 at Team Building Event at North Durham Academy

On Friday afternoon, Year 4 will go to North Durham Academy for a Team Building Event with the School Sports Partnership. They will have an early lunch and return in time for the end of the school day.

Friday 16th January 2026 – Captain Chemistry with Year 2

On Friday, it is the turn of Year 2 to work with Captain Chemistry and their Science topic of Electricity.

Positive Thinking

January is the first month of a 365 page book.

Write a good one.

As always, if there is anything at all you would like to discuss, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best Wishes,

Jane Davis

Mrs Jane Davis
(Head Teacher)