



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

A Caring Community Where All Can Flourish



*'Through God's love, we are the rich soil
where roots grow and seeds flourish.'*

Luke 8:4-15



Friday 6th September 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Well – what a few days it has been! It has been wonderful to welcome all our new starters in Reception and many other children across school starting for the first time. I do hope they have all been made to feel very welcome and enjoyed their time with us. Our ex Year 6 pupils have also been in our thoughts and prayers this week as they made their big step to secondary school. We do hope they are all relieved to have their first day behind them and wish them well for the next stage of their lives. It is always so lovely to see them looking so grown up in their new uniforms too!

I would also like to welcome our two new teachers to our team. Miss Jane Wood and Miss Rebecca Watt have been amazing this week and know that they have hit the ground running. I am sure they will soon get to know all their families quickly too.

School has felt so different this week to any other time in the holidays. When we come in to prepare and set up classrooms, the building is soulless but as soon as the happy, smiling and laughing children join us, it just feels full of character again. Every class has been a pleasure to go into and they have all settled so very well – long may that last! I hope you have all enjoyed a few quieter days with longer cups of coffee and a more relaxed way of life too!

It is just such a shame that we have had such a rocky start with the boiler in the kitchen. When the caretaker was in school last week, he discovered the issue and hoped it could be repaired but we were subsequently informed that it needs replaced. Unfortunately, this cannot happen overnight. We are still hopeful that a short-term solution can be found but really appreciate your patience whilst this is investigated. I am sure you will understand that when your boiler goes at home, it cannot be sorted immediately and we are in that very same position. However, I have spent most of the last three days on the phone to the local authority and am thankful that we are making some headway into getting this resolved. However, it does mean that it is necessary for us to ask you to provide your child with a packed lunch for Monday and Tuesday next week. Hopefully on Monday, we will know exactly what the timescales are looking like.

Packed Lunches

Whilst we appreciate you being able to provide your child with a packed lunch at such short notice, we do still have to adhere to our packed lunch policy (which is available on the website). This does state, in line with government guidance, that no sweets or chocolates are to be included in packed lunches. Please note this when providing packed lunches in future.

School Meal & Packed Lunch Choices MUST be made on Arbor.

It is essential that you make your child's meal choices on Arbor as soon as possible. Whilst it has been awful that we have not been able to provide meals this week, it has also been quite fortunate as we have a large number of children who have no meal choice recorded. Please make your choices for meals on Arbor (including if your child is having packed lunch), as the kitchen use these numbers when ordering and preparing meals – if your child has no menu choice to their name, then they will not be made a school meal. Likewise, if you don't choose packed lunch as your child's menu choice, then Arbor will record the meal type as 'unknown' and if you are in Nursery, or Year 3 – 6, you will be charged for a school meal. Unfortunately, it is not possible for the School Office to bulk update the school meal choices – we would have to log into every child's account separately, which with over 400 children in the school is very time consuming.

To make your child's choices please follow these instructions:

1. Log onto your account.
2. Choose the child that you want to make choices for.
3. From the Quick Actions bar choose Meals.
4. Choose Autumn Menu
5. Make your choices for each day. Please make sure when making a choice you click the box that says 'Pick for all future available dates'. If there is nothing on the menu they like, please choose 'Other' and they will be given the choice of a cheese or ham sandwich.

Please note your child cannot have a mixture of packed lunch and school meal – it has to be all or nothing. For children in Nursery who are not full time, please only choose a meal for the days when your child is in school.

Medication in School or Medical Conditions update - Important

If you have not already done so, you must fill in this [medical form](#) for your child if they have medication in school or any medical conditions we need to know about. This needs to be done by everybody who needs medication for this academic year - if you did a form for last academic year you still need to do this updated form. If your child doesn't have any medical needs you do not need to fill this in. Thank you.

Driveway to School

This road into school is used by vehicles at all times during the day but especially at the start and end of the school day and MUST NOT be used by pedestrians. We started using this during Covid but had restrictions in place but this cannot go on any longer. We have a lot of staff using it at different points throughout the day, delivery lorries are in and out, taxis drop off and collect children and our disabled parking bay is also located in that car park. Therefore, it is just not safe to be used by pedestrians.

I need to request to all parents that you must enter school through the pedestrian gate directly opposite the main doors please at all times of the day. Whilst you may think it is acceptable to use the drive for Breakfast Club and After School Club, these can be some of the busiest times for traffic coming in and out. Using the pedestrian gate will help us to keep you and your children safe. Thank you for your support with this.

Friends of the School

The Friends of Lanchester EP would like to welcome all our new parents and carers. We cannot wait to work with new members in bringing new events to the school. Please join our Facebook group to find out more: @Friends of Lanchester EP School

This week, the Friends have signed up to CASHPOT for Schools with ASDA who are pledging 0.5% of the value of your shop to Parent Helper Groups. To get involved please download or open your **ASDA Rewards App**, go to the main menu (3 dots) find 'Clubs' and select 'Lanchester Endowed Parochial Primary School' as your school of choice. Pledges will last until 30 November 2024.

Turing Funding

I am delighted to let you know that we have, once again, been successful in our application to The Turing Scheme. This will be the fourth consecutive year of securing the funding and we have been able to take some of our older children to Dubai, India, Montreal and Spain to experience both school life and the culture in these diverse cities and countries.

The money that we have secured is greatly reduced from previous years however which means we will have tricky decisions to make about the best use of the funding. In our original application we were hoping to visit all of the countries above as well as Malawi. Being realistic, we feel that we may only be able to travel to Dubai, India and Madrid. We are waiting to hear back from the Turing Scheme before we email Year 5 and Year 6 parents and carers to see who would be interested in attending any of these residential. However, due to compensation received for delayed flights to the trips to Dubai and Montreal last year, we will be able to take more children on the trips this year than anticipated.

PE Days

Please find listed below the PE days for each year group. Year 3 parents, please note that whilst your child's PE days are consecutive for this half term, their Thursday lesson is Gymnastics. This is simply because we have a Gymnastics Coach in for this half term and they dictate the day to us. After half term, their PE day will revert to a Wednesday but we will remind you nearer the time.

Reception	Wednesday	Friday
Year 1	Tuesday	Friday
Year 2	Monday	Thursday
Year 3	Thursday (Wednesday after half term)	Friday
Year 4 CA Class	Tuesday	Friday (Swimming)
Year 4 PT Class	Tuesday	Thursday
Year 5	Monday	Thursday
Year 6	Wednesday	Friday

No Balls in School

Please note that children are not permitted to bring their own footballs or basketballs into school. We have balls and pitches for each year group and only school balls are allowed on site. Thank you for reminding your children!

Reception Information

We have had a lovely first few days in Reception and the children have been absolutely fantastic – it's going to be a brilliant year.

Please send your child into school with some wellies that they can leave in school, as we try to be outside as much as possible in Reception. We will also be starting our weekly forest school sessions on Friday next week – we do provide waterproof puddle suits but your child will need to have their wellies in school.

We do have some spare clothes in school in case of accidents, however for those children who may need them more often it would be really helpful if you could send in a bag of spares.

Request for Balance Bikes & Helmets

In Reception this year we would love to make a bit more use of the area of yard outside the front of school and think it would be a great space for the children to practise using balance bikes to help with their gross and fine motor skills. If you have any balance bikes that you are getting rid of and no longer need, or any helmets of a suitable size then we would love it if we could have them.

Swimming Timetable

Please see the swimming timetable plan for this year. Swimming will take place on a Friday afternoon each week. This half term, Mr Adamson's Year 4 class will be swimming from 13th September to 11th October. Mr Taylor's Year 4 class will be swimming from 18th October until 22nd November. Children will need to bring their swimming kit to school on Friday mornings (swimming costume, towel, swimming hat).

Class	First Week Swimming	Last Week Swimming
4CA	13 th September 2024	11 th October
4PT	18 th October	22 nd November
6AS	29 th November	17 th January 2025
6AK	24 th January	21 st February
5SJ	7 th March	28 th March
5MS	4 th April	9 th May
3SC	16 th May	13 th June
3RW	20 th June	11 th July

Absences from School

Please remember to phone in or email the school to let us know if your child is not going to be in school, and make sure that you specify the reason for the absence. This should be done before registration if possible on the first day of absence. If you do not contact the school, school will get in touch with you to find out the reason for absence. If it is not possible to get in touch with you, or if you do not give a reason for your child's absence, this will automatically go down as an unauthorised absence.

From September 2024, the penalties for absence during term-time have changed – fixed penalty notices can now be issued to parents of children missing 10 school sessions, which is 5 school days, in a rolling ten-week period. The fixed penalty notice cost has also gone from £80.00 if paid within 21 days up to £160.00 if paid within 28 days of receiving the notice. Please remember that all leave of absences should be applied for prior to the leave of absence being taken as the head teacher is not allowed to authorise absence retrospectively, so any absences with no reason given will be unauthorised.

Nursery Attendance

Whilst Nursery attendance is not compulsory, it is imperative that if your child is in Nursery you inform the school if they are going to be absent, and the reason for absence. Thank you.

Applying for a Secondary School Place

Parents of children in Year 6 should have received an email this week regarding their application for a Secondary school place. Applications opened on 1st September and close on 31st October. It is imperative that you read the School Admissions online guidance for parents, which will help you to make your application. For the guidance, and to apply for a place, go to www.durham.gov.uk/schooladmissions. Please also see the table below for a list of local secondary school Open Evenings, to help you make the right choice for your child.

Secondary School Open Days for Year 5 & 6

Consett Academy	Monday 16 th September, 4.00 – 6.30pm
North Durham Academy	Thursday 19 th September, 4.00 – 6.00pm
St Bede's Catholic School	Thursday 26 th September, 5.30 – 7.30pm
Wolsingham School	Thursday 26 th September, 5.00 – 7.30pm

Applying for a Reception Place

If your child was born between 1st September 2020 and the 31st August 2021, you will need to start applying for a primary school place. Applications for Reception places close on 15th January 2025. Please note that even though your child attends our Nursery, you must still apply to the Local Authority for a place in Reception. To apply, please visit [Primary school places - Durham County Council](#).

Diary Dates

Tuesday 10th September - Meet the Teacher Sessions at 3.30pm or 4pm

On Tuesday after school, we are holding a Meet the Teacher Session when you will be able to meet your child's new teacher and teaching assistant, see the classroom environment and learn a little more about the routines of their week and what to expect during the year.

There will be a presentation from the class teacher at 3.30pm and 4pm and they will be able to answer any questions you may have following on from this. We look forward to seeing you there.

Saturday 28th September 10am – 12pm – Open Morning for Nursery and Reception

On Saturday 28th September between 10am and 12pm, we will be holding an Open Morning in our Early Years for prospective Nursery and Reception starters to come along and have a look at our environment and meet the staff. If your child will be school age next year, come along and have a look, or if your child is due to start Nursery soon, come and see what is on offer. We look forward to welcoming you all. Some of our Year 6 children will also be available to show you around and give you the honest truth about life in our school!

Next week we will have a list of diary dates for the year, as well as the results of the parent questionnaires and lots more information to share with you. It is really important that parents and carers take the time to read the weekly letters that will be emailed every Friday as they contain lots of important information for everyone.

Positive Thinking

*Life is like a book:
some chapters are sad,
some happy and some exciting.
But if you never turn the page,
You will never know what the next chapter holds.*

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)