

Ebchester Church of England Primary School

Shaw Lane, Ebchester, Consett, Co. Durham, DH8 0QB | Tel: 01207 560349

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been a real pleasure to welcome the pupils back to school this week. We have a lovely new group of Reception pupils who have settled into Ebchester School perfectly. We are also delighted to have opened the doors of our new nursery and, for the first time, to be welcoming three-year-olds into our school community. It has been wonderful to see these young children begin their journey with us, and we are delighted to welcome them and their families to our Ebchester family.

Please find below some information you might find useful for the start of the academic year. As always, if you have any queries about the information included in this newsletter, please get in touch.

Arbor App

Please ensure that you have downloaded the Arbor App and that you have notifications enabled to ensure that you do not miss any school messages. Invites to join Arbor will be sent to new parents this week. You can view the parent guide documentation online via the official portal link.

School Fund

We rely on donations to our school fund to subsidise school trips and resources for the pupils. Donations can be made via the Arbor app. Many thanks for your support.

Breakfast Club and After School Club

Unfortunately, we still have outstanding balances for wraparound care from the 2025/26 academic year. I would appreciate it if, moving forward, any fees accrued during the school week are paid by the Friday of that week. If payments are not made promptly, access to both clubs may be restricted.

Attendance

Attendance is an important priority in our school. Our school target is 97% attendance for all pupils—this equates to around 6 days of absence from school over the academic year.

Attendance Rate	Days Absent	Weeks Absent	Lessons Missed
97% (School Target)	6 Days	1 Week	20 Lessons
95%	9 Days	2 Weeks	40 Lessons
90%	19 Days	4 Weeks	80 Lessons
85%	29 Days	6 Weeks	120 Lessons
80%	38 Days	8 Weeks	160 Lessons
75%	48 Days	10 Weeks	200 Lessons

As many of you will know, holidays during term time are only granted under exceptional circumstances. During the academic year, any parent wishing to take their child out of school for a holiday must complete a holiday request form.

These forms can be collected from the school office or downloaded from the school website.

Uniform

You will find the school uniform list below. There is no need for the sweatshirt or cardigan to have the school logo. Please ensure that your child has the appropriate uniform and footwear on their return to school:

- Grey or black trousers, or a grey or black skirt
- White polo shirt
- Red sweatshirt or cardigan
- Black shoes

PE Kit

All pupils should have their PE kit in school, which includes: black shorts, a team t-shirt, and plimsolls or trainers. Please ensure that your child's PE kit is available in school from **Monday 7th September**, when PE sessions will recommence.

Staffing Update

Mrs Askell will remain on maternity leave until the start of November. In her place, Mrs Sweeny and Mrs Clasper will be teaching the Y1/2 class.

Holidays 2026/27

Please find attached the holiday dates for this academic year. The dates can also be found on the school website.

Library Books

We are bringing a renewed focus to our weekly school library visits, ensuring every pupil can choose a book to take home. Your child will select their own book on their class's set day: **Reception** on Mondays, **Years 3 and 4** on Tuesdays, **Years 1 and 2** on Thursdays, and **Years 5 and 6** on Fridays.

Because the children pick these books based entirely on what catches their eye, the text might not always match their exact reading level. Please feel free to share these books at home by reading them *with* your child or even reading aloud to them. We are fully committed to making these library visits a successful, regular part of the week to help every child develop a true love of reading!

Reading Bookmarks

Every pupil will shortly be issued a special reading bookmark designed to track their progress and celebrate their achievements. We welcome the inclusion of any reading material for this scheme, including school library books, assigned reading scheme books, or texts from home.

Each time a parent or carer signs the reading record to confirm a book has been shared, the pupil will receive a sticker at school. Once the bookmark is fully populated with stickers, it can be exchanged for a prize. We look forward to celebrating the reading achievements of our pupils as they work towards their rewards.

Friends of the School

Please find attached an information leaflet about the work our amazing "Friends of the School" team do. If you have any questions or just want to find out more, please contact Natalie Reay on 07398884069.

Peanut Allergy

Can I politely remind you that we have pupils in school with severe peanut allergies? Please do not send any food that contains, or may contain, peanuts in your child's packed lunch. Many thanks for your cooperation.

After-School Activity Clubs

Please find details below about the after-school activity clubs taking place this half term. You will be able to book your child's place via the Arbor app this week. Clubs will start the week beginning **Monday 7th September**.

Day	Reception and KS1 (Years 1 and 2)	KS2 (Years 3 to 6)
Monday	Gardening Club with Mrs Clasper and Claire (Cora's mum) (4:15pm finish)	—
Wednesday	Sports Club with Active Future (4:15pm finish)	Puzzle Club with Mr Carr
Thursday	—	Book Club with Miss Humble
Friday	—	Art Club with Mrs Gent

Milk

Cool Milk provide milk for our pupils. If you would like to register for this payable service, please visit the Cool Milk portal online. This service is free for pupils under the age of 5; all you need to do is register.

Messy Church

Messy Church is held after school one Monday each month. It usually includes creative time to explore a Biblical theme through getting messy; a celebration time involving a story, prayer, song, or games; and a snack. Messy Church is open to all pupils. The first session this year is on **Monday 14th September** and runs until 4:30pm. We look forward to seeing you there!

Y5/6 Swimming

Y5/6 pupils will start their swimming lessons on **Wednesday 9th September**. Please ensure your child has their swimming kit in school each Wednesday. Many thanks.

KS2 Reading Books

For the past few years, our KS2 pupils have chosen their reading books from a carefully selected list of fifteen high-quality texts for their year group. Each reading list includes a range of fiction and non-fiction genres, along with books chosen specifically to engage and inspire reluctant readers. The books can be read in any order, and our aim is for every child to read all ten books by the end of the academic year.

This approach has been very successful in promoting a love of reading and encouraging meaningful discussions about books. By reading the same high-quality texts, pupils are able to share recommendations, discuss their reading with friends, and develop their understanding of a wide range of authors, genres, and themes.

Reading regularly at home remains one of the most important ways that parents can support their child's learning. We ask that all KS2 pupils read at home as often as possible, ideally every day. Please take the time to sign your child's reading record each time they read. This enables us to monitor engagement, celebrate good reading habits, and provide support where needed.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us develop confident, enthusiastic readers.

Yours sincerely,
Mrs Rachel Clasper
Headteacher