



Eastlea health update for start of the new term 9/1/23



Dear Parents / Carers,

Happy New Year and welcome back to the start of the spring term at Eastlea. We are looking forward to seeing everyone back after the Christmas holidays, and welcoming our new starters in Nursery, but just wanted to provide an update on the latest health concerns which are hitting the headlines again.

In December, as with all schools, we were badly affected by the various 'winter' infections which were doing the rounds – including vomiting and diarrhoea, hand foot and mouth, viral and bacterial tonsillitis, high temperatures, coughs, colds, 'flu symptoms, Covid, strep throat and for a small number of children scarlet fever. We are also aware that some families were impacted by illness during the first weekend of the holiday and know of at least three further cases of scarlet fever which were diagnosed. Other children had to seek advice from hospital and in the last week of the holiday another child has been hospitalised for pneumonia.

Nationally we are also hearing of an increase in the number of people affected by 'flu, Covid and Strep A infections. The natural 'break' with schools being closed will have helped to reduce transmission. But with children now back in the classroom we need to continue to be vigilant and maintain the common-sense systems which have worked well for us in the past.

Can we therefore remind you that to keep everyone safe and limit the potential spread of infections:

- ***Pupils who are unwell should not come to school.*** Those affected by respiratory illnesses should stay off school until they have recovered. Those who have a fever/high temperature should not attend school until the fever has subsided – ***please do not just dose them up with 'calpol' and send them in!*** Those affected by scarlet fever should be excluded from school until 24 hours after their first dose of antibiotics. Those affected by diarrhoea or vomiting should stay off school until at least 48 hours after they last had diarrhoea or vomiting.
- ***Good hand hygiene must be encouraged.*** Handwashing is a highly effective way of preventing many infections from spreading. Pupils and staff are asked to frequently wash their hands particularly after using the toilet, after using a tissue to catch a cough or sneeze, and before eating. Hand sanitisers are also used on entry to the building in the morning and after break/lunchtimes.

Our experience of the infections and illness faced by Eastlea children/families in recent weeks is that a child may present with symptoms (and are off school) then they appear to recover and return to school, but then following this the child goes 'downhill' again and is unwell a second time. This makes it very difficult to manage. If you are worried about the possible symptoms of scarlet fever and what to look out for this link to an NHS site may be helpful:https://www.nenc-healthiertogether.nhs.uk/parents/carers/worried-your-child-unwell/scarlet-fever?fbclid=IwAR0eafqZmY1drvmtmcr8lqWP615PLg0TSQvZmn_Xjk4IOE1eCnie76XprfU

In the meantime, as we have said before, we ask for your continued support and vigilance in helping us to keep the Eastlea community safe by being alert for symptoms of illness, keeping your child at home if they are unwell, informing school of the reasons for absence and not attending school events yourselves if you have any signs of respiratory or other infections.

Thank you!

Miss E Beeston, Head Teacher