

Eastlea update - 5/6/20

Dear Parents/Carers,

Since our previous update we have welcomed back several more pupils to Eastlea and this has meant that although things are still far from 'normal' for the vast majority of Eastlea families, the 'going to school routines' for some children at least for some days of the week have been re-established. For me personally things have started to feel a little more like 'Eastlea' again - having a few more children in the classrooms and seeing the smiling faces of children coming through the gates dressed in our navy blue sweatshirts/cardigans has been a real tonic! So far we have welcomed back an additional 6 in Reception, 10 in Year 1 and 15 in Year 6 and there are more children due to start next week too.

New routines and systems...so far so good!

The challenges in bringing back more pupils on top of the numbers of vulnerable pupils and children of key workers we already had in school have been immense but your support has meant that things were not made more difficult than they needed to be. **THANK YOU!** There were so many new procedures to get used to and many staff have noted how well the children have responded to these, with the input from parents/carers clearly evident in the children's awareness of the need to social distance and their ready acceptance of the new hygiene rules, classroom set up, lunchtime routines etc.

Nursery update

Parents/carers of Nursery pupils received a separate update on Tuesday and as from next week we are starting the phased return of 24 pupils from this class. This will be another HUGE undertaking. We begin next week with the 'older' children who will be transitioning to Reception in September and then in the following week it will be the turn of the 'younger pupils'. On Tuesday 9th June we are also hosting short individual visits for Nursery pupils new to Eastlea which we feel are so important before they join one of the small groups who will be accessing sessions the week after. Good luck and a warm welcome to all our new starters who are planning to join us this term!

Taking on more pupils

As mentioned earlier, some parents have been in touch this week to ask about places for their children in either one of our Reception/Year 1/Year 6 groups or the key worker/vulnerable groups. We are always prepared to discuss with you the options around this and will do our best to accommodate requests but due to the limited number of desks we can fit into the rooms and the level of staffing required to support our ongoing provision it will not be possible to take everyone who requests a place. We fully understand that many parents are still concerned about the potential health risks of returning their child to school before the impact of some of the measures to ease the lockdown nationally/locally have been seen. Work for any children not in school will continue to be provided and we know that the home-schooling routines that you have established are working very well in many cases.

Looking further ahead

As I mentioned last week there is, as yet, no further news about the return of other class groups. I know this is frustrating for many children/families, but I'm afraid it is out of our hands. If and when this does happen it will need a major rethink of how we will staff and organise the groups at Eastlea but in the meantime our focus is to safely reintegrate the year groups we have been asked to welcome back so far and make sure that as far as we can everything is in place, as far as we are able, to **KEEP PUPILS AND STAFF SAFE** in school.

Your continued support with this is much appreciated and remember **if you or your child has any symptoms of the virus you must not come to school – please stay at home to self isolate and inform us immediately.**

Stay safe and well and help to protect each other by remaining cautious and following the social distancing and hygiene rules.

Yours sincerely, Miss E Beeston, Head Teacher

