



Dear Parents/Carers

### First 'usual' newsletter of the new school year



"Welcome back" as we start a new school year – especially if you are part of a 'new' family at Eastlea. Since March 2020 we have all faced such strange, anxious and uncertain times and it hardly seems possible that we are now back to a full school again – but it is GREAT that we are! Feedback following last week's full return has been very positive – with lots of smiles from both children and parents, and some very positive reports in the local media!

I know that you must have had some real concerns about how things would go but want to thank you for your support with getting your children back into school. We had every child in who was able to be here and I think this is fantastic!! I do hope that your child is settling in well in their new class and that you feel happy with how things are going.

### School uniform

Everyone looks so smart in their Eastlea school uniform and thank you for your patience with the ongoing delay in getting some of the orders allocated which is out of our hands. A PE kit is the other essential part of our school uniform and it is best to have these in school all week, so that they are available whenever required. If you have any queries about this, then please contact your child's teacher. **All uniform/PE kit needs to be clearly labelled with your child's name please.**

Thanks also for your support for our request to ensure that earrings are not worn in school. Almost every family ensured that any newly pierced ears were done at or before the start of the summer holiday. Please remember that your child is not allowed to wear earrings or any other jewellery in school. It is also important to ensure that your child's hair is tied back as this helps to avoid problems which can occur when hair is left loose.

### Arrival/Departure times

The arrangements in place for staggered start and finish times seem to be working well. It does feel 'busy' at arrival and collection times, but this is understandable and just reflects the fact that all the children are attending school which means we are starting to get back to something a bit more 'normal'.

There are a few things you can do to help ensure that things do not become too congested:

- **Please do not arrive on site too early** – be aware that staff will allow children in from **8.45am** (Y3/4/5/6/Nursery) or **9am** (Reception/Y1/Y2) and any changes to this are only to ease things for those families with siblings in different classes
- Please make sure **only one adult per family** comes onto the site to drop off/collect your child(ren)
- We are doing our best to accommodate children with siblings in different classes who have different arrival times but if this does not apply to you then do not send children ahead early as we do not have enough staff in each class before the designated start times. I know they are keen to be here, but please stand with your child (Nursery to Year 4) and wait for the staff to call them forward rather than letting children run ahead and straight in!
- We have tried to make sure there are additional '2m markers' where people are waiting to come in – please use all available lines so that the queues are manageable.
- Please try not to hang around and chat around the gates once you have collected your children – aim to head straight home to make space for other children/families who are coming in or out.
- **If you travel here by car, please be considerate and do not block the driveways of local residents when you park as this causes difficulties for them.**

### Bikes and scooters

We love to see the children coming to school on a bike or scooter and have storage racks at both sides of the building. It is very important that any bikes/scooters which are left on the school premises are locked in order to keep them secure. Helmets can be kept in school, and we would strongly urge all children who cycle to wear one to keep them safe. Please can we also remind you that children who come to/leave school on their bike or scooter should get off when they arrive on the school premises and wheel them to the storage racks. This is even more important this year as there are more people waiting to get in.

### Dogs at the gates

Please can I give my annual reminder about dogs at or around the school gates in the mornings and at the end of the school day. Dogs, even if they are on leads, can be intimidating to younger children (and some adults too) so we must insist that **no dogs are allowed on the school grounds/premises and also no dogs should be brought near to the school site for the safety of all concerned.**

### **‘Operation Encompass’ and ‘Operation Endeavour’ – annual reminder**

Eastlea continues to be part of initiatives promoted by Northumberland County Council together with Northumbria Police to support better communication between key agencies to promote the safeguarding of children.

As a result, following any domestic abuse incident being reported to the police, the Police will make contact with Children’s Social Care who will then communicate relevant and necessary information to nominated school staff. This will ensure that the school is made aware at the earliest possible opportunity and can subsequently provide support to children in a way that means they feel safe and listened to (Operation Encompass). The same procedure also happens if for any reason a child goes missing from home. As a result of better multi-agency communication, information about this will be shared with schools (Operation Endeavour).

Copies of letters which were sent to parents when these initiatives were launched can be found on the school website. If anyone requires more information then please contact me in school.

### **School Lunches – and payment**

Our youngest children in Nursery and Reception made a great start to getting their school lunches last week and it wasn’t just those classes which had new systems to get used to. We all did! However, everyone managed to follow our new procedures and we are really pleased to be able to offer cooked school lunches each day. Pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 can still take advantage of the FREE meals available for all children thanks to the government’s ‘Universal’ offer.

30 hour Nursery meals are charged at £2.00 per day and for children in the older classes, remember that paid meals remain at £2.30 per day (£11.50 per week). Children are asked to bring their dinner money to school in an envelope clearly marked with their name/class/amount and Mrs Bainbridge coordinates the payments and will be in touch if money is owed.

**If parents are in receipt of benefits and are entitled to ‘Free School Meals’**, even if your child is in Reception/Year 1/Year 2, it is important that these are applied for in the usual way so that parents can continue to access free meals for their child even if government policy changes and so they have the option to order free milk. At the same time Eastlea will also receive the pupil premium funding to which we are entitled.

### **Milk (Nursery up to Year 4 only)**

We will continue to organise the provision of milk for children from Nursery to Y4 and a separate letter outlining information about how much it will cost and how to order for your child will be sent out this week.

### **Clubs and activities**

All school activities and clubs need to have revised measures in place to ensure that new protocols are followed linked to risk assessments for Covid-19, but we are trying our best to maintain as many activities as we can at Eastlea. For sports clubs, we are therefore concentrating on skills rather than contact games and we will be limiting each club to two year groups. By keeping these clubs down to two year groups we can ensure that the coach leading the club can have children working in separate class groups and thereby allow the children to enjoy the sessions without mixing outside their year group bubble if at all possible.

This half term the following clubs are taking place – most starting this week:

<b>Before school</b>	<b>Lunchtime</b>	<b>After school</b>
Breakfast Club (7.30 – 8.45am <b>each day</b> ). This costs £2.50 per day.	KS2 Professional football coaching for Y4/Y5 on <b>Tuesdays</b>	Ball skills club for Y3/Y4 on <b>Tuesdays</b>
	Rugby Rocket Tots for Y1/Y2 on <b>Wednesdays</b>	Tennis club for Y5/Y6 on <b>Thursdays</b>
	Woodland Walk club for a different year group each week on <b>Wednesdays</b>	KS2 Singing Club on <b>Wednesdays</b> – arrangements for the continuation of this club need to be discussed further with Miss Smith – <i>further details will follow</i>
	Running Club for Y4, Y5, and Y6 on a rota basis on <b>Thursdays</b>	

N.B. We very much hope to be able to restart our **‘Owlets’ toddler group** this half term for pre-school children and their parents/carers/childminders on **Thursdays from 9am – 10.30am in the school hall**, but will let you know when the necessary risk assessments have been put in place to ensure that this runs safely.

## Events planned for this half term

We have had to look carefully at all the many things which are planned for the children and come up with creative approaches to maintaining as much as we can so that the pupils do not miss out on their exciting educational 'life' at Eastlea. There have obviously had to be some changes, so please bear with us – but here is an outline of some of the events/activities which we are trying to organise for the first half of the autumn term:

What's on	When and who?
Elections for 'Brainwaves'	w/b 7 <sup>th</sup> September – using video messages produced by the children (Reception to Year 6 pupils)
Pilates coaching in PE lessons	Weekly on Monday afternoons from 7 <sup>th</sup> September (Year 1, Year 5, Year 6)
Athletics coaching in PE lessons	Weekly on Tuesday afternoons from 8 <sup>th</sup> September (Year 3/Year 4)
Extended Computing specialist input led by Mrs Powells	Wednesday afternoons (Year 4)
Specialist French and music lessons led by Mme Taylor and Ms Smith	Wednesday afternoons (Year 5 and Year 6)
Cricket coaching in PE lessons	Weekly on Thursday afternoons from 10 <sup>th</sup> September (Year 5/Year 6)
Presentation of badges to Brainwaves	Friday 11 <sup>th</sup> September – via a school Zoom assembly
Little Movers 'active' sessions	Weekly on Friday mornings from 11 <sup>th</sup> September (Nursery/Reception)
Pilates coaching in PE lessons	Weekly on Friday afternoons from 11 <sup>th</sup> September (Year 2, Year 3, Year 4)
Celebration event for any who completed the summer reading challenge plus a socially distant 'Reading Picnic'	Friday 11 <sup>th</sup> September (those who took part in the summer holiday 'Silly Squad' library reading challenge)
Relaunch of our Times Tables Rockstars Challenge	w/b Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> September (Year 3, Year 4, Year 5, Year 6)
<b>Class Rocksteady music workshops</b>	Mornings of Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 16 <sup>th</sup> September in the school hall (one class at a time)
<b>Rocksteady class band sessions</b>	Weekly on Tuesday mornings from 22 <sup>nd</sup> September [more details will be sent in a letter after the workshops]
<b>Individual and family photographs</b> by H. Tempest	<b>Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September</b> (morning) [we very much hope that this can still go ahead - more details will be sent nearer the time]
<b>Launch of our Reading Challenge</b>	<b>Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September – for all pupils in school</b> [parents will not be able to attend this year – sorry – but we will still have a fun day planned for each class – more details will be sent nearer the time]
<u>Free</u> Bikeability training course	Week beginning Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> October (Year 5)
<b>School based 'harvest' activities</b>	<b>w/b 12<sup>th</sup> October in school</b> [more details will be sent nearer the time]
<b>Parent Appointments for all classes</b>	<b>w/b Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October</b> [more details about arrangements will be sent out later for parents/carers of all pupils]
<b>Golden Day</b>	<b>Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October</b> (all pupils who have followed our behaviour policy)
Pupils break up for the half term holiday	Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> October
<b>School closed for staff training day</b>	<b>Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October</b>
School reopens after the half term holiday	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> November

## Holidays

As you know, the usual national guidelines regarding school attendance are now back in place and this means that leave of absence for holidays taken during term time can only be granted by head teachers in exceptional circumstances. I realise that there is still a great deal of uncertainty about where holidays can be taken safely and a constantly changing picture linked to possible quarantine restrictions, but any family holidays/absence should wherever possible be taken during the designated school holidays. Having missed so much time in school last year this is probably more important than ever this school year.

If you do need to take your child out of school during term time it is vital that we know in advance when your child is not going to be in school so a leave of absence form should be completed at least two weeks before the intended absence in the usual way. These are available from the school office. **Failure to notify school will mean that holidays are automatically unauthorised.** There is space on the form to indicate why the absence may be deemed an 'exceptional circumstance' and each case will be considered individually.

We have been well supported by parents in recent years with our common sense approach to this situation and I hope we can still rely on your continued support with this matter.

**A reminder of the holiday dates for this school year is listed below for your reference:**

<b><u>HOLIDAY OR OCCASION OF CLOSURE</u></b>	<b><u>DATE ON WHICH SCHOOL WILL CLOSE</u></b>	<b><u>DATE ON WHICH SCHOOL WILL REASSEMBLE</u></b>
October Mid-Term 2020 <b>Staff training Day</b>	Thursday 22 October 2020 <b>FRIDAY 23 OCTOBER 2020</b>	Monday 2 November 2020
Christmas/New Year 2020/2021 <b>Staff training Day</b>	Friday 18 December 2020 <b>MONDAY 4 JANUARY 2021</b>	Tuesday 5 January 2021
Spring Mid-Term 2021	Friday 12 February 2021	Monday 22 February 2021
Easter 2021	Friday 26 March 2021	Monday 12 April 2021
<b>May Day</b>	<b>Monday 3 May 2021</b>	
Summer Mid-Term 2021	Friday 28 May 2021	Monday 7 June 2021
Summer 2021 <b>Staff training Day</b>	Friday 16 July 2021 <b>MONDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2021</b>	Tuesday 7 September 2021

## School Admissions for Year 7 and Reception (2021)

I know it seems a long way off, but if you have a child due to start Year 7 next September the admissions portal will be open in the next few days and applications need to be submitted straight away (the deadline is the end of October). **It is essential that you apply in good time so that a place is allocated at Cramlington Learning Village or another secondary school of your choice – you will receive confirmation about places on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021.** Any queries please contact the school office.

For parents of Nursery pupils who are due to start in Reception next September the admissions portal opens in November and closes on 15<sup>th</sup> January – *you will receive confirmation of places on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2021.*

## Three additional items which need to be returned to school please

As is always the case at the start of September, this is a 'bumper' newsletter with three other documents attached which need to be returned by everyone. Rocket points are on offer for your child for a prompt response!!

### 1. Medical information [for everyone]

If your child has a medical condition it is vital that you complete the attached medical information sheet – even if you feel that we 'already know' about the issue. So many changes can occur with medical information that you will appreciate that we need an annual update. ***Please also be aware that Eastlea has a policy in place of not having nuts/seeds in school for the benefit of any pupils on roll who have nut allergies.***

### 2. Permission for school visits/food tasting [for everyone]

- School visits are an important part of our broad and rich curriculum at Eastlea – and as you know we aim to go 'out and about' as much as possible, as well as taking part in sports events and making links with other schools etc. Although at the moment, we are more restricted with being able to go out on

visits we will be able to do this on a smaller scale, so to help to reduce the number of times we need you to complete permission slips we have attached the usual annual consent form which will be used to grant permission for all school visits for this school year for which no cost/voluntary contribution is required.

**If you grant permission for your child to take part in school visits we will continue to inform you when a visit is due to take place and provide you with the usual letter so that you know where your child is going, what they need and any special arrangements for the day – it will just remove the need for you to send a permission slip back to us.**

*[N.B. KS2 Residential visits: At the current time we are not permitted to take children away on residential visits, so the rearranged visit to Hawkhurst we had planned for the week before the October half term for our 'now' Year 6 class will not be able to happen. We have made provisional bookings for our new Year 5 to go to Hawkhurst just before Easter and for Year 6 to visit York in July – and are very much hoping that by then the regulations will have changed to allow these visits to happen – but information will follow when we know more. A separate letter with information about the return of deposits paid will be sent to Year 6 parents next week.]*

- There are also times when teachers provide opportunities for children to try different foods as part of their class work – for example in relation to their topic work. As always Eastlea follows the usual food hygiene requirements when doing work of this nature and will also have additional measures in place to make sure that any activities involving food tasting are 'Covid secure'. **If you give permission for your child to taste food as part of their school work this year, this will save the need for separate letters/permission slips during the year.** We will take notice of any allergies which you alert us to and be sensitive to requests if there are certain foods which you do not wish your child to taste for religious or cultural reasons. **If your child has a new diagnosis of a food allergy or medical condition during the year it is very important that you let us know.**

### **3. 'Consent for images and videos' (GDPR) [for everyone]**

We have updated our consent form linked to taking photographs/videos of children in school or for use in newspaper articles and on websites. **Following feedback from parents we are also seeking permission to use images of pupils on our school Facebook page** – this is something we have not done in the past but would like to start to do in the future. Pupils would not be named directly if their image was used – it would just refer to them in general terms, e.g. 'a Y2 Eastlea pupil' or 'Y6 children'. We are also thinking about setting up class Twitter pages as well.

We are required by law to have consent which complies with GDPR regulations. Please complete and return the attached permission slip to your child's class teacher. Until we receive your signed updated consent form, the permissions we you had in place in previous years will be followed. Thank you!

### **Reminders and updates about Covid-19 safety measures**

We very much hope that the new term continues safely for all concerned at Eastlea and are maintaining a strict programme of good hand and respiratory hygiene.

- **Sanitiser** – Most children have their own hand sanitiser in school which is really helpful and allows the 'hand cleaning' routines to be completed as regularly and quickly as possible. To support with this process we have installed additional hand sanitisers at each entry door. Please be aware that your child will be encouraged to use this if they do not have their own sanitiser. If there is an issue with this please alert your child's class teacher.
- **School office** – A screen has also been installed in the office and on occasion the main door will be left open to ensure adequate ventilation. Please can we ask that if you have to come in to the main entrance area that you only do so if there is no one else at the office hatch and that you do not walk straight into the foyer area without first speaking to a member of staff. Thank you.
- **Ordering a Covid-19 test** – Please remember that if you or your child have any symptoms of Covid-19 then it is important that you let us know straight away, self-isolate and get a test. From the recent experience of some Eastlea families, it would appear that the quickest way to get a test is to book a session at a testing centre and then results are sent out within a couple of days. It appears to be taking longer if home tests are ordered – as the test has to be dispatched to you, then administered and then returned before results can be processed and sent out.

Yours sincerely,

Miss E Beeston, Head Teacher