



Dear Parents/Carers

Eastlea School Visits

Thank you to everyone who signed and returned the permission form for school visits which was sent out last week. We are once again set for another busy year of providing exciting first hand educational experiences for the Eastlea pupils.

As we have a few class educational visits planned for the coming weeks I wanted to remind everyone about the timing and context of when we take the children 'out and about'. As outlined for the last couple of years, there are 4 main types of visits at Eastlea.

1. Class educational visits

Each year we aim to take the children from each class out on at least one class visit or have a visitor into school to enhance the work the children are doing in their curriculum work – e.g. context planning work, science etc. We recognise the importance of providing as many 'hands on' experiences as possible for the pupils and how much they gain from such occasions.

In order to make these possible we do need to ask for parents to support us with meeting the costs. As a school we subsidise the cost of transport/admission fees for each visit and therefore keep the request for contributions to an absolute minimum. If year groups plan several additional visits they undertake an 'enterprise' project to raise funds to support these ventures – e.g. film nights, bag packing, sponsored events etc.

2. Sporting competitions, curriculum workshops, author visits etc

We aim to involve as many pupils as possible in a wide range of sporting events or curriculum workshops. Many of your children will have taken part in sports competitions or festivals etc or attended poetry, meet the author, writing or maths workshops at other local schools. If something is arranged which we feel would benefit our children we ensure that this is supported. As far as possible we cover the cost for transport and the activities and as a result they are usually FREE to parents/carers.

3. Residential visits for Year 5 and Year 6

The residential visits which have run for many years at Eastlea continue to be a highlight of the year for many of our Year 5 and Year 6 pupils. Feedback from pupils and staff has proved that the opportunities provided at Hawkhurst and York are superb for the children. We recognise that the visits can be costly but our aim is that as many children as possible take part so we subsidise them as best we can. Last year for example we asked for £120 per child for the York visit – when in fact it cost the school £230 per child. I never want lack of finance to stop a child having such an experience. This is something that I personally feel very strongly about.

4. Golden day rewards for good behaviour

In addition to all the above we aim to provide either an in school or out of school 'treat' as a reward for pupils who successfully follow our behaviour policy each half term. Parents/carers have told us how well this system works and thanks to fundraising events such as the Christmas/summer fayres all of the transport costs and activities are FREE for all pupils. The most we may request is that the children are provided with a packed lunch/picnic to eat on the day if we are out of school!

Ofsted said that Eastlea was a good school in May 2012. In their report they recognised the value that was placed on providing an interesting curriculum for all pupils. Although the national curriculum has changed since then, we continue to arrange plenty of visits, our lessons remain as varied and exciting as possible and I know that our results in terms of both academic achievement and pupil progress continue to be the very best we can achieve.

We ask for your continued support with our wide range of school visits. Rest assured that we are continually striving to keep costs down and charge the absolute minimum for any visits out of school. The only real contributions we ask are for the class educational visits and the residential visits.

Educational visits will take place at different times during the year. We will invite parents/carers to see the work the children have done in the form of an 'open afternoon', something that proved to be very successful last year. Watch out for details of when your child's class will be involved – Year 3 will be first with a visit to the Hancock Museum as part of their Stone Age topic!

Yours sincerely,
Miss E Beeston, Head Teacher