

Eastlea update 15/1/21

Dear Parents / Carers,

Here we are again at the end of another 'long' week of lockdown. Although we have all 'been here before' in terms of reduced school access, restrictions to our everyday life etc, it somehow feels harder this time around – and I think it is proving tricky to adjust for everyone, especially families/children.

With this in mind, I want to commend the vast majority of Eastlea pupils/parents/carers who are doing a super job with the remote learning and getting into good routines of tackling the work set by staff. Daily Maths/English (or Phonics) tasks are being done from Seesaw/Tapestry, plus Rainbow challenge 'reading' across the school and plenty of TTRS, Numbots and Spelling Shed too... **THANK YOU!** It is lovely to see how everyone is uploading work they have done, sending messages to their teachers and working so hard to stay connected and 'keep up' with their learning.

Uploading videos and images

Can we remind you just to be careful when your child is uploading work/photos/videos that they remember that they are going to their teachers! Sometimes staff have seen more than they bargained for in some of the videos when other family members walk past the webcam...and we have even had pictures uploaded of children who are not yet dressed for the day!! Appropriate dress is requested please ...and a reminder to make sure that no one else is unwittingly filmed by your child before videos are posted!!



Well done!

I hope we brought smiles to some faces at the end of last week with our 'virtual' **light green certificates, 100% attendance awards and TTRS certificates.** Congratulations as well to those who received their **commendation letter** from school – we couldn't hand these out directly, so most had to be posted. If you got one then well done – there were only 3 per class for last term!

Pupils who still need to attend school – keeping numbers as low as possible

We know that almost every child would love to be in school each day and getting on with the usual exciting routine of Eastlea life. Rest assured, as soon as we are allowed to be open for all again, we will do so, but at the current time it is simply not deemed safe to have high numbers in school.

As a result we are trying to protect staff and those pupils who have to be here as much as we can and to do this we need to keep the numbers as low as possible. I am so grateful to the parents who are supporting with this.

Just to make it clear – the government advice is that if you can keep your child(ren) at home then you should do so. This means that, even if you are a key/critical worker, **sending pupils into school should only be done if you have no alternative on the days you are at work.** If there is someone who can look after your child at home then this would be the better option. We are doing our best to accommodate everyone who requires emergency childcare provision in school – but in our Nursery and Reception 'bubbles' especially, places are becoming limited and it may not be possible to have everyone in for every day that they ask for. We will do our best, but please bear with us.

Support during lockdown

As we go through this very difficult time, there **is** support available for families who are struggling – whether that is with remote learning, finances, food vouchers or in broader terms with mental health and wellbeing. See below for some more information about what is on offer...

• **Use of devices for remote learning**

Although the vast majority of pupils are now accessing remote/online learning successfully we have been made aware of a few problems faced by individuals who do not have appropriate devices. We are now in the position of having a small number of laptops which we can loan out to children in KS1 and KS2 who

have proved that they are trying to access Seesaw but are having problems due to their device. We will be in touch with these families to see what support we can offer.

- **Free School Meal vouchers**

There has been a lot in the media about this, but our aim is to continue to order Huggg vouchers for eligible Eastlea families during lockdown. Look out for the next one today! The system is working well so far and anyone whose child is in school has now made arrangements to choose either vouchers or free school lunches – thank you! If there are any issues with the vouchers then please contact me in school.

- **Food parcels**

As a school we can refer families for food parcels from the Cramlington Foodbank based at the Hope Centre. If anyone is in need of this kind of support, then please feel free to contact me in confidence and I will do my best to help.

- **Printing**

Renown Estate Agents are offering to print things which may be required for home learning. They ask you to let them know in advance (don't just turn up at the door!) This can be done by emailing: sales@renownestates.com

- **Mental health and wellbeing**

A while ago Public Health England produced guidance for parents and carers on [supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing](#). This includes key actions they can take to support their child or young person's mental health and wellbeing during the pandemic such as supporting safe ways to connect with friends. It also emphasises the importance of children continuing to remain fit and active and, wherever possible, having the 60 minutes of daily physical activity recommended by the Chief Medical Officers. This is certainly much harder in the winter weather, and we do try to signpost you to any Cramlington Sports Partnership/School Games activities you may like to try. Further advice and resources are also available from the [Association for Physical Education](#), [Youth Sport Trust](#) and [Sport England](#).

Blue Peter on YouTube

This week we have been informed that [Blue Peter on YouTube](#) has been launched at CBBC for entertainment outside of home-schooling hours now we're in lockdown. Blue Peter is the longest running children's TV show in the world and videos are being uploaded to it that are suitable for 5-11 year olds. There are world record breaking challenges, arts and crafts, environmental videos, cooking and baking how tos, inspirational films, gaming, celebrity appearances, dance routines and music performances. **They will also feature ways of getting a Blue Peter badge**, behind the scenes footage and extra content about the presenters Adam, Lindsey, Mwaksy, Richie and Henry the Blue Peter dog.



This might be a great way for you to enjoy some family entertainment – and to get involved you just need to subscribe to <https://www.youtube.com/bluepeter> - (it's completely free to subscribe!) and don't forget to watch the live programme on CBBC at 5.00pm every week, or on BBC iPlayer.

And finally...don't forget to submit your competition entry!!



Hopes or wishes for 2021, presented in any format need to be photographed and uploaded to class teachers via Tapestry/Seesaw please BY MONDAY 18TH JANUARY. Remember...for every entry received a £1 donation will be made to school funds by a Governor and there will be prize winners chosen from each class.

This is not as easy as it initially sounds, but as always we have been really pleased with what we have seen so far. Our aim is to do a display of all the entries ...so everyone can see theirs when they return to school!

Please continue to look after yourselves, follow the national guidelines, take care and stay safe!

Miss E Beeston, Head Teacher

