

Eastlea update 29/1/21

Dear Parents / Carers,

As the end of January approaches the statistics linked to Covid remain frightening and I want to thank you again for your support in keeping the home learning going and for protecting children/staff by only sending pupils into school if it is absolutely essential. I know that we are all hoping for some more positive news later in February which will signal a way out of the current lockdown as we move into the spring.

Update on school reopening

It came as no surprise on Wednesday to hear the Prime Minister announce that **it will not be possible to reopen schools immediately after February half term**. Realistically, this may have been what we were expecting him to say, but it remains difficult news to take and I know will have led to disappointment in many households.

When parliament reconvenes in the week beginning 22nd February it is my understanding that following analysis of the 'data', a route map out of lockdown will be discussed and that this will include looking at when it will be safe to start the process of reopening schools to all pupils. At the moment **the earliest possible date to start this process has been proposed as Monday 8th March** – but this depends on a number of factors. We know that a lot can happen before then so we have to stay positive, follow the rules and hope that the infection rates fall and the planned roll out of the vaccination programme is a success.

February half term (Monday 15th – Friday 19th February)

The DfE announced earlier this week that schools would close as normal over the February half term holiday. This is a sensible decision, especially in the light of the extended lockdown measure, as it means that everyone gets a break. **There will therefore be no provision for children of key workers or vulnerable families in w/b 15th February at Eastlea and no online learning set for the children.** I think parents/staff/pupils will certainly be in need of a holiday by then!

Eastlea staff Covid testing

As we mentioned last week, Lateral Flow Device Covid test kits have this week been distributed to all school based staff at Eastlea. This adds an extra level of protection for staff in school and means that even if an infection is brought into school and there are no symptoms apparent, we can be reassured that staff have not become infected. **If there is a need to close a class bubble for any children who are expecting to be in, we will let you know as soon as we can – this could be the evening before/or may be the morning itself and a message will be sent via Seesaw/Tapestry or text.** Please can we take this opportunity to remind you that if your child/anyone in your household shows any sign of symptoms then it is vital that you keep them at home, self-isolate and seek a test immediately. If your child has been in school then you must inform us and keep them off school pending the test outcome.

And finally... Countdown to Golden Day

If we had been in school today we would have been launching the countdown to our February Golden Day with the children (10 school days to go!!) We have discussed this as a staff team and want to go ahead with a 'virtual' Golden Day on Friday 12th

February. The theme will be **Chinese New Year** which for 2021 is the year of the ox! We will not be uploading any formal learning on that day, but instead will provide some suggestions for 'fun' activities which children/families can do at home (...and those in school can of course join in too!) More details will be shared next week, but we also hope to be able to incorporate some kind of virtual 'meet up' for children in each class to be able to see more of their friends before the half term break!



Please continue to look after yourselves, take care and stay safe!

Miss E Beeston, Head Teacher

