



# Covid Eastlea update

## 05/11/20



Today the new national 'lockdown' procedures started in England and **thankfully Eastlea, in common with all other schools, is still open for all pupils!** It was a big relief when the announcement was made that we would not be closing as it was recognised that schools are the best place for children to be in order to support their wellbieng and education as well as help working parents/carers.

As you know Eastlea has followed the government guidance every step of the way and ensured that we have implemented a range of protective measures to make everyone connected with the school as safe as possible. Last night, at the eleventh hour, further updated 'school specific' guidelines from the DfE were published. Unfortunately this has resulted in some changes which have to take place with immediate effect – so all I can do is apologise for the late notice and any inconvenience that this may cause. This letter is to clarify what these changes are and remind everyone of the key safety measures in place at Eastlea to make sure all pupils, parents/carers and staff are as well protected as possible.

### Face coverings/masks

The new guidance makes it clear that there is still no requirement for primary school age children to wear masks in or around school. For staff/adults this remains at the discretion of the school.

At Eastlea we would now like to ask that **parents/carers who are coming onto the school grounds to drop off or collect children from school wear a mask or face covering.** This is to protect us all. Although everyone has been hugely supportive of our arrival/departure arrangements there are times when it can still feel quite 'busy' and it is sometimes difficult to maintain appropriate social distancing even when we are outside. We would ask that if everyone on site is wearing a mask/facecovering (unless you are exempt from doing so) then this will help to make everyone safer. Staff who are greeting children/seeing them off the premises will also be expected to wear a face covering.

### Extra curricular clubs and activities

Throughout the whole pandemic and especially since Eastlea has been able to reopen for all pupils, we pride ourselves on still wanting to offer as broad a range of activities and experiences for the children as possible. This is something we all feel is hugely important.

It was with great disappointment that I read the new guidance last night to find that although PE/Sports coaching, music tuition and specialist input within lesson time could all continue, "all other out of school activities...should close for face-to face provision for the duration of the national restrictions".

**This means that for the next 4 weeks we are going to have to cancel all lunchtime/after school clubs run by external coaches for the children (multi-skills for Y1/Y2, lunchtime football for Y4/Y5, rugby rocket tots for Y1/Y2, singing club for Y4/Y5, badminton for Y6 and Grass Roots gymnastics for Y2/Y3/Y4/Y5).** A real shame!

Luckily **Breakfast Club can continue** as this is part of our wraparound child care provision so this will still be available for any families who need it for £2.50 per day per child.

Rest assured that all other class based activities will also continue and you will receive a letter early next week outlining what we have planned for this half term. This starts with our Remembrance Day fundraising for the Royal British Legion then continues with our Maths focus week starting on Monday and our 'Pennies for Pudsey' appeal next Friday – a letter will go out about this tomorrow!

### Visitors to the school

As before we are continuing to limit any visitors who are invited into school. Any visitors who do need to come into the building need to wear a mask/face covering and the new guidance says that parent/carer visits for new admissions have to be suspended. **This means that introductory visits for those parents who have a child due to start Nursery in January, which normally take place in November, will need to be delayed until December.**

### **Reminders of ongoing protective systems and procedures**

- Please make sure that when you arrive at school to drop off or collect your child you do not arrive too early. Standing around is difficult for pupils if they have to wait for long periods of time, so please come for **8.45am (Nursery/Y3/Y4/Y5/Y6) or 9am (Reception/Y1/Y2)** and **do not come any earlier** *[unless a separate arrangement has been made for families with multiple siblings]*.
- We must insist that only **ONE** adult accompanies your child to and from school. This limits the number of people who are congregating on site or at the gates and makes it safer for all concerned.
- Please stand on the **2m markers** while you are waiting for the gates to open – this means that social distancing regulations are observed.
- Windows and internal doors are open in school to allow for adequate ventilation and airflow. Please make sure your child wears their school jumper/cardigan in the cooler weather so they stay warm inside the building.
- Breaks and lunchtime will be outdoor wherever possible and children should have appropriate coats/hats/scarves/gloves and footwear. If children have **wellies** in school then they can make better use of the field if it is not too wet and muddy.
- PE sessions will be outdoors wherever possible for KS2 children – so warm **tracksuits** would be more suitable for lessons.
- Children should have their own **water bottle** with them each day. This reduces the number of times they need to leave their class base to access drinking water elsewhere and therefore helps to protect the integrity of the 'class bubbles'.

And of course remember... **if your child or anyone in your household exhibits COVID symptoms then do not attend school, inform us immediately and seek a test.** The systems we will follow if/when we get a positive test outcome for a child which would mean closing a class bubble and asking children/staff to self-isolate remain in place and you will be informed about this as soon as possible where required.

Your support throughout this whole situation has been fantastic and once again we ask for your help in following these new and existing procedures. No one wanted this new period of national lockdown, but if we follow the rules and stick to the guidelines we have to hope that the NHS can be protected, infection rates can start to reduce and we can start to head towards something like normality again as soon as possible.

Please take care, follow the guidelines and stay safe!

Miss E Beeston, Head Teacher

