



Dear Parents/Carers

First full 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 in Nursery, or other year groups across the school. By now you should know the name of your child’s class teacher and will have heard your child mentioning the other adults who are working with them in school. I hope your child is settling in well in their new class and that you feel happy with how things are going.

In September 1978, Eastlea opened its doors for the first time as one of the new ‘first schools’ in Cramlington. As we celebrate our 40th ‘birthday’ we are all aware how far we have come since those early days but our aim of providing the very best educational experience for the children in our care has not changed. Our dedicated team of staff and governors ensure that this remains our core purpose.

School uniform

Thank you for your support in ensuring that the children returned to school looking so smart in their school uniform. 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 see 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. Every family followed our advice and any newly pierced ears were done at 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.

Attendance/Time of arrival at school

The importance of good attendance and punctuality is always a high focus for us at Eastlea. The class attendance champions trophy and punctuality plaque will be awarded each week at the assembly on Friday morning and you will receive a letter if your child’s class wins the attendance trophy. Last year we had some issues with poor punctuality for some children/families and **our aim this year is to encourage everyone to arrive on time in school every morning.** Your support with getting the children here on time at the start of the day is much appreciated. Please remember that the school doors open at 8.50am and children are encouraged to arrive on site between 8.40-8.50am (not too early!!). Any child arriving after 9am must come in through the main entrance and will receive a late mark which is something we try very hard to avoid.

As you know if a child’s attendance falls below 90% this is classed as ‘persistent absence’ and is referred to the Education Welfare Officer. Parents will be alerted by letter at the end of each half term if attendance has fallen below or is getting close to this figure so that we can work together to improve the situation. Thanks to support from parents/carers we have very few children who are deemed persistent absentees.

Access doors and gates

For ease of ‘flow’ in the mornings we will be continuing to open the double doors at the Nursery/Y1/2/3/4 entrance which should make access easier. The gates leading towards both entrance doors are padlocked after 9am and before collection times for safety and the gate on the steps to the Kids Club access ramp near the Reception/Y5/Y6 entrance is a reminder that these are ‘out of bounds’ to our pupils. This year we will be allowing older children (Y5/6) into school from approx. 8.45am so that congestion is eased for the Reception pupils/families at their entrance door.

Bikes and scooters

We love to see the children coming to school on a bike or scooter and have added to the number of bike/scooter racks at the sides of the building over the summer. 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 school 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 bike racks. This is especially important on the path around the car park for Year 5/6 pupils.

Dogs at the gates – thank you

I am very grateful to everyone who understood and supported our aim of reducing the number of dogs at or around the school gates in the mornings and at the end of the school day. Dogs which are barking, 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.**

Access gates and school signage

We realise that having only one entrance gate it does make it difficult at times for clear access onto the school premises. We are looking into the possibility of having a second entrance gate, but this may take a while to actually be realised. I hope you have all noticed the hard work over the summer put in by Chris our caretaker, as well as other staff, to refresh the paintwork, provide additional seating etc. The new sign is thanks to the fundraising efforts in the summer term, coordinated by Mrs Lister, and we still have further plans for improving the environment in and around our school grounds which you will hear about over the coming months.

Parking, smoking and vaping!

- Last year we made real progress with asking for your support to keep the entrance gate/pathway clear of buggies and 'groups' so that people could more easily enter and leave the school premises. Our request to avoid inappropriate language during school pick ups and drop offs was also something which parents warmly supported. I'm sure you will agree that it is not something which we want our children to be faced with hearing at the start and end of the school day.
- **As you are also aware there can be no smoking in or around the school building/grounds.** For those who do smoke/vape I would be grateful if this could **only be done away when well away from the school site and not anywhere near the school gates** so that families who are entering either at the start or the end of the school day do not have to walk through a cloud of smoke when they arrive/leave from school. This is the issue which I receive most complaints about from parents/carers at school/Kids Club and so your continued support with this would also be greatly appreciated.
- For those who drive to school, please can I also take this opportunity to remind you again about the importance of parking carefully around the vicinity of the school and being courteous to other road users. It is important not to double park, block paths and driveways with cars or park on pavements as this can cause problems for local residents and other pedestrians, especially when it makes it very difficult for them to get past safely. Thank you.

Outdoor equipment in Early Years and storage containers

For the benefit of parents who are new to the school I offer my annual reminder to ask that you continue to help us with looking after our outdoor Early Years equipment by making sure that it is **not** used by younger children when you come to pick up children from other classes at the end of the school day. As we have mentioned before, we realise it is tempting for younger brothers and sisters to climb on the climbing 'castle'/slides etc or play on the bikes/tyres etc but we are not insured for them to use the resources and therefore this equipment is 'out of bounds' for all children (including school children) after 3pm and before school starts. Children should also not be accessing the storage containers on the yard as this is clearly a potential danger especially when unsupervised. Thank you for your support with this.

School Lunches

Our new Reception/30 hour Nursery children made a great start to managing the school lunch system last week and, as usually happens, by the end of the week they were really getting into the swing of things!! 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) and Mrs Clarke coordinates the collection of dinner money. Unfortunately, we are aware that some dinner money payments from the end of the last school year remain unpaid. **It is important that any money owed is paid as soon as possible.** If money is not paid for dinners then your child will be required to have a packed lunch until the money is received, so that additional debts are not incurred.

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 have the option to order free milk. At the same time Eastlea will also receive the pupil premium funding to which we are entitled.

The summer lunch menus remain the same for the first part of the autumn term. Copies are available for new parents if they wish to see the choices on offer – either from Mrs Atkinson in Reception class or the school office.

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...and five to be returned for Reception and for pupils new to Eastlea!) 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.

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. To help to reduce the number of times we need you to complete permission slips for every individual visit we have attached the 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.** Separate permission slips will still be required for residential visits and for class educational visits for which payment is required. Letters about these KS2 visits will be coming out soon so that the deposits can be collected in good time.
- 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 context planning/topic work. As always Eastlea follows the usual food hygiene requirements when doing work of this nature. **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. Computing and Internet agreement [for everyone]

We have just updated our computer and e-safety policy to combine the acceptable use and school 360 policies and streamline it with the new GDPR requirements and therefore we require everyone to read, sign and complete the new agreement.

4. Information sheet/contact form [for new pupils]

As always it is important at the beginning of the new school year to ensure that we have the correct and most up-to-date contact information for your child. **For all children new to Eastlea a copy of the information sheet is attached and we would request a speedy return of these documents.** The contact names/telephone numbers/address details from last year will continue to be used for current pupils. I cannot emphasise strongly enough how important it is for us to have accurate contact information, so **please make sure you inform us if there are any changes to the address/phone number/contact names which we currently have in school.** If the numbers we have are incorrect and we need to contact you in an emergency then this can cause added anxiety for your child as well as the staff trying to deal with the situation.

5. ‘Consent for images and videos’ (GDPR) [for new pupils]

This is a consent form linked to taking photographs/videos of children in school or for use in newspaper articles and on websites. We are required by law to have up-to-date consent which complies with the new GDPR regulations. Please complete and return the attached permission slip to your child’s class teacher. Consent forms for other pupils have been retained and we will follow the permissions you indicated last year unless you inform us otherwise. Thank you!

Events planned for this half term

Here is an outline showing the things which are already organised for the first half of the autumn term at Eastlea.

What’s on	When and who?
After school KS2 rugby club	Starts Monday 10 th September 3.15 – 4.15pm (Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6)
Lunchtime KS2 Professional Football coaching	Tuesday lunchtimes from 11 th September (Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6)
After school KS2 boxing club <i>This was hugely oversubscribed so we will be running this again later in the year!</i>	Starts Tuesday 11 th September 3.15 – 4.15pm (Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6)
Basketball coaching in PE lessons	Weekly on Thursday afternoons from 13 th September (Year 6)

What's on	When and who?
Lunchtime Rugby Rocket Tots club	Starts Wednesday 12 th September (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2)
KS1/KS2 Lunchtime Woodland Walk club	Wednesday lunchtimes from 12 th September (rota of class involvement)
Before school Street Dance club	Starts Thursday 13 th September from 8am (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2)
OWLETS TODDLER GROUP in the school hall	Restarts on Thursday mornings from 13 th September 9.00am – 10.30am
Lunchtime running club	Thursday lunchtimes from 13 th September (Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6)
Lunchtime drama club	Thursday lunchtimes for 6 sessions (Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6)
Lunchtime 'ballet' club	Thursday lunchtimes for 3 weeks – 13 th , 20 th , 27 th Sept (Year 1 and Year 2)
Library reading challenge presentation event at Cramlington Library	After school on Thursday 13 th September (any pupils who took part in the summer library challenge)
Presentation of badges to Brainwaves	Friday 14 th September – school vote the Friday before
Dance coaching in PE lessons	Continuing weekly on Friday afternoons (Year 3 and Year 5)
Reading 'Picnic'	Afternoon of Friday 14 th September (those who took part in the library reading challenge)
After school KS2 Dance club	Continuing on Fridays 3.15 – 4.15pm (Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6)
Specialist music and French lessons led by Ms Smith and Mme Taylor	Wednesday afternoons from 19 th September (Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6)
After school 'Eastlea Singing club'	Starts Wednesday 19 th September 3.15pm – 4.15pm (Years 3, 4, 5 and 6)
<i>Free</i> Bikeability training course	Week beginning Monday 24 th September (Year 5)
Individual and family photographs by H. Tempest	Wednesday 26th September (morning) [more details will be sent nearer the time]
M&M Theatre Group performance – "Secret Garden"	Afternoon of Thursday 27 th September (whole school)
Launch of our Ninja and Reading Challenges	Friday 28th September [more details will be sent nearer the time]
School based 'harvest' activities	Early October in school [more details will be sent nearer the time]
CLV Opening evening for Year 6 parents/pupils	Evening of Wednesday 3 rd October (Year 6 only – <i>more details will be sent via CLV</i>)
Autumn Term Full Governing Body meeting	Wednesday 10 th October 4pm
'Be safe' workshop led by David Burn	Thursday 11 th October – afternoon (Year 6)
Hoopstarz workshop	Friday 12th October – all day (whole school)
Assembly led by Revd Wullie	Monday 15 th October (whole school)
Parent Appointments for all classes	Monday 22nd October: 2.30 – 6.30pm [more details/appointment times will be sent out later for parents/carers of all pupils]
Fundraising Halloween Discos	After school on Tuesday 23rd October [more details will be sent nearer the time]
Fire Service 'bonfire night safety' talks	Wednesday 24 th October – all KS1 and KS2 classes
Governors Training session – all partnership schools (hosted at Eastlea)	Wednesday 24 th October (6.30pm) [more details to follow]
Golden Day	Thursday 25th October (all pupils who have followed our behaviour policy)

What's on	When and who?
Pupils break up for the half term holiday	Thursday 25 th October
School closed for staff training day	Friday 26th October
School reopens after the half term holiday	Monday 5 th November

Holidays

As you know, the national guidelines still mean that leave of absence for holidays taken during term time can only be granted by head teachers in exceptional circumstances. Family holidays/absence should therefore wherever possible be taken during the designated school holidays. If you 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 I can rely on your continued support with this matter.

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

<u>HOLIDAY OR OCCASION OF CLOSURE</u>	<u>DATE ON WHICH SCHOOL WILL CLOSE</u>	<u>DATE ON WHICH SCHOOL WILL REASSEMBLE</u>
October Mid-Term 2018 Staff training Day	Thursday 25 October 2018 FRIDAY 26 OCTOBER 2018	Monday 5 November 2018
Christmas/New Year 2018/2019 Staff training Day	Friday 21 December 2018 MONDAY 7 JANUARY 2019	Tuesday 8 January 2019
Spring Mid-Term 2019	Friday 15 February 2019	Monday 25 February 2019
Easter 2019 May Day	Friday 5 April 2019 Monday 6 May 2019	Tuesday 23 April 2019
Summer Mid-Term 2019	Friday 24 May 2019	Monday 3 June 2019
Summer 2019 Staff training Day	Friday 19 July 2019 MONDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2019	Tuesday 3 September 2019

School Admissions for Year 7 and Reception (2019)

If you have a child due to start Year 7 next September the admissions portal will be open tomorrow (12th September) and applications need to be submitted straight away (deadline is 31st October). **It is essential that you apply in good time so that a place is allocated at Cramlington Learning Village or the school of your choice – you will receive confirmation about places on 1st March 2019.** Any queries please contact the school office.

For parents of pupils due to start in Reception next September the admissions portal opens on 1st November and closes on 15th January – *you will receive confirmation of places on 16th April 2019.*

Yours sincerely,

Miss E Beeston, Head Teacher