



Eastway Primary School
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Headteacher: Mrs Emily Morris

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14th January 2021

School Closure January 2021
Headteacher Update

Dear Eastway Families,

Another busy week and lots of information to give you. It has been lovely chatting to you all again and seeing all the wonderful work that you been posting on Twitter, Facebook and sharing with us via Messenger and email. We are so proud of you all and amazed at the high standard of work that we are seeing. I am so glad that your children are continuing to follow the Eastway Code of Conduct- BE NICE, LEARN WELL, NEVER GIVE UP.

Free School Meals

Those families who are entitled to low income/benefits related free school meals or Early Years Pupil Premium have been provided with Food Packages to cover them for 8 days (Wednesday 6th- Friday 15th). We know how important it is to have food available to our children; we are also aware how difficult some families are finding it at this time. We understand the importance of providing food for our families and support the campaign to reduce food poverty in our community. You may have seen a lot of talk about food parcels in the media and I know that a few of you have expressed your dissatisfaction with the packages we have given to you. I must make a few things explicitly clear:



- We were instructed to provide lunches to children entitled to free school meals by the government in the form of food packages at this time.
- We were not given ANY additional funds to do so or prior warning that this would be happening.
- My staff have worked tirelessly sourcing fresh food items at short notice and put together over 200 packs and delivered them in the local community with substantial food in to provide a daily lunch for your child in line with the government recommendations, our own judgement and also gave you extras that we were able to purchase or source at last notice.
- Last time school closed at short notice, I personally purchased emergency food vouchers for all free school meal families on my own credit card. This was a significant amount of money and neither the school nor I have been in a financial position to do this again this time. I made the decision that as the school kitchen was open, we had available food sources and staff available, packages would be made and given to all those who needed them.
- We have remained open and still have our social supermarket in the family centre, we provide food for all of our families regardless of financial circumstances and always have and always will provide anything that our families need. I am insulted that some families have been so rude to our staff at this time and complained about the packages that have been provided.
- School receives £2.30 per child, per day to provide a lunch in school. This money covers the food given but also staffing, catering and kitchen and suppliers' overhead costs.
- The government's voucher scheme that was introduced during the first lockdown offering families a very generous £15 per child per week was never intended to continue and was there to support the most in need at a very difficult time. These supermarket vouchers were put in place to enable you to buy your own food and provide healthy lunches at home whilst your children would not get their free meal in school.

- We were informed yesterday that the government will reintroduce the nationwide voucher scheme and families entitled to low income benefits related free school meals will be issued with a supermarket voucher.

From Monday 18th January, we will be applying for these vouchers on behalf of all those entitled to them and you should receive them next week. School must have your up to date email and mobile phone number. Please note these are vouchers issued by central government and using their online portal. Demand for vouchers on Monday morning, when they open, will be overwhelming. We will get them out to you as soon as we can, so please be patient with staff.

I wholeheartedly thank my staff who have worked so hard to put these emergency food parcels together over the last 8 days to support you. I also thank the local companies who have given their time and money to ensure that we had enough fresh fruit and veg, milk, bread, eggs, butter and cheese in school, at such short notice. Many families have not taken food at this time and we have some left over, if you need anything please pop in to the Family Centre.

When children attend school ALL those from Reception to Year 2 will receive, a fully funded universal infant school meal and all free school meal children in Key Stage Two will also be given their lunch in school. When your child attends school, you will no longer be able to receive the supermarket vouchers. We currently have working families who are not entitled to the vouchers or meals in school, but who are really struggling financially due to loss of income, redundancies, furlough etc. It is my aim to support all families who need us at this time. Please let us help you and contact school directly if you need anything.

Places in School

School continues to remain closed for the majority of pupils. ONLY children with confirmed places should attend school. Please note that we are doing all that we can to minimise risk for our children, families and our own staff and their families whilst infection rates continue to rise, the threat of the virus heightens and we have a large amount of positive cases in our community. **We are urging families to only use in-school provision at this time if they have no other option.** Currently, we are not able to support families who have parents who are working from home at this time, have childcare available to them or are just struggling with remote learning. The national message remains clear, **Stay At Home** and this includes children and school staff. We all must play our part to reduce the risk and control this terrible virus. We are only able to offer places to those deemed as vulnerable (with named social worker or an education health care plan) or the children of critical workers on the days that they work. Sadly, we will not be increasing our numbers in school at this time. I know that this will disappoint those of you who have asked for support. There may be a possibility of providing some face to face support and we have a limited number of days free when your child could be invited in to access support with their education. I will be informing all families who have a confirmed place by Friday, only those children with confirmed places must attend school at this time. If you need any help or want to request a place in school, please email homelearning@eastway.wirral.sch.uk.

All our Eastway Explorers and Nursery children continue to be entitled to a place in school and it has been lovely to see them so happy in provision this week. However, we know and understand that parents may decide to keep their children at home and continue to access our remote learning provision with support from the Eastway Early Years Team. Please be assured, if this is your choice, we will continue to support you and your family as always. I want to reassure you that as your child is on roll if you choose to keep your child at home; your child's place at our nursery is guaranteed. If you would like your child to attend, please contact homelearning@eastway.wirral.sch.uk as soon as possible and no later than 5pm today so that I can plan staffing rotas ready for Monday.

Remote Learning and Support

Our remote learning is up and running. All daily learning and tasks are set on our school website under your child's class on remote learning, <https://eastway.eschools.co.uk/website/remote-learning/511526> This follows the timetable and routines that the children will be used to in school so they should be able to access it easily. Weekly quizzes will take place every Friday so that the teacher can assess what your children have learnt during the week.

Education is not optional at this time- learning must be completed daily the end of week quiz, whilst your children cannot attend school.

We know you love the teacher videos so we have made them available and they are all saved on our school YouTube Channel. If you do not subscribe, make sure you do.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/EastwayPrimary/playlists>.

The CGP books and paper packs should ONLY be used if you have difficulty accessing the internet or a suitable device. We have distributed a number of our own school iPads over the last two days and when the laptops arrive, we will be getting these out to everyone who has requested to loan one at this time.

Class teachers have set quizzes for you to complete with your child every Friday, so they can see what they have learnt during the week. These must be completed. All the quizzes are on the year group page of the school website, <https://eastway.eschools.co.uk/website/remote-learning/511526>.

Miss Coverdale has put together a video to help you,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gmWDZA20Kg8&feature=youtu.be>

Remember anyone can request a laptop or tablet to loan or request extra data. If you need any tech support, please use this link to fill in the request form.

<https://forms.gle/A1qec3DJwF7NuBUf8>. Mr Anderton will be on hand daily Monday to Friday to help with any technical difficulties so please email techsupport@eastway.wirral.sch.uk

All learning is available online but if you need any workbooks or stationery, we have some available for you to collect from the Family Centre. We also have a book swap trolley filled with library books, information books and levelled reading books, feel free to take books that you need for your child or bring back ones that you have finished with. I know that a few of you have mentioned that you prefer paper copies of the work set, it should not be necessary to print anything we send. However, if the lack of a printer is a barrier to learning for any of your children and you currently have no access to one, we have received an amazingly generous offer from our community. **Kodi Lucas Estate Agents** in Moreton are kindly offering to print any schoolwork for free and, to ensure we all remain safe, have even offered to drop off if need be. Another amazing example of our school community supporting each other. If you wish to take them up on this kind offer, you can email them at: info@kodilucas.com

Contact with School

It is vitally important that you remain in contact with school at this time. Teaching staff will call weekly to check on you and speak to your child. We need to make sure that they are engaging in the learning set for them. School remains responsible for safeguarding and the welfare of all pupils at this time as well as making sure that they are completing daily learning that has been set for them. We will be working closely with our school link social worker if we have concerns or cannot contact you, it may be necessary for myself or a member of the social care team to visit you at home to check on the children.

Below are our contact numbers and email addresses

School Office/ Family Centre- 0151 677 1235, .8.30 and till 3.30pm Monday to Friday

School Emergency/ Out of Hours mobile- 07342723209 for urgent or safeguarding concerns

techsupport@eastway.wirral.sch.uk to request a device (laptop or tablet) or data top up/ 4G sim card

schooloffice@eastway.wirral.sch.uk all general enquiries including free school meal vouchers

homelearning@eastway.wirral.sch.uk requests for places in school or reports of suspected or confirmed cases

For all remote learning, please contact your child's class teaching team using their own class email address e.g.

year1@eastway.wirral.sch.uk, reception@eastway.wirral.sch.uk, nursery@eastway.wirral.sch.uk

Stay safe

Mrs Morris and Team Eastway x