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18<sup>th</sup> June 2021

## HEADTEACHER UPDATE

Dear All Eastway Families,

Thank you so much for all your kind words and patience while we are again in this difficult position. Your support has been overwhelming and we really appreciate the confidence that you have shown in the school to provide a safe and happy place for your children, during these unprecedented times and showing respect for our team who have been under immense pressure over the last couple of weeks.

We have again taken the advice and guidance from Wirral Local Authority, Public Health Team, Health & Safety Advisors and the Department for Education, who have released further guidance today. Wirral, as part of the Liverpool City Region is among the areas to receive additional support to tackle a rapid rise in cases of the Delta variant of Covid-19.

Director of Public Health for Wirral, Julie Webster said:

“The last time our numbers were this high we were in a lockdown and cases of Covid-19 are continuing to rise at a worrying rate across Wirral.”

“So how can you play your part? It is really important that people get a symptom-free test twice a week, particularly if you are attending school or a workplace, because you can spread the virus without knowing. You should continue to get tested regularly even if you have had the vaccine, because while you have good protection, you could be spreading it to others who haven’t yet had their jab.

“The Delta variant is now the dominant variant and highly transmissible but we know the vaccine offers the best possible protection against becoming seriously ill. I would urge everyone who is eligible to get one as soon as possible, even if you have already had COVID-19. The biggest increase in infections is among the 20-39 age group and it is vital that you book your jab to make sure you are protecting yourself and your loved ones. It is also essential that you come back for your second jab. You wouldn’t go out half dressed and the approach to the vaccine is the same. You need two doses for maximum protection.”

“I cannot emphasise enough the importance of continuing to follow the guidance on hands, face, space and fresh air. Just because we can doesn’t mean we should and meeting people outside in the open air is still the best option to stay safe this summer. If we do this, along with testing and vaccinations, then we can slow the spread of the virus in our community and protect the NHS.”

“We must not drop our guard against COVID-19, it has not gone away. We must keep doing the right things to stop the spread and Keep Wirral Well.”

We will do all that we can to ensure minimum disruption for our children and make sure that their last 4 weeks in school are fun, enjoyable and most importantly, keep everyone in our school community safe and well. Most children will return to school on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021. Year 1 class will be isolating until Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> June and all other bubbles will be out of isolation and must return to school on Monday. Attendance in school is not optional at this time, we will be monitoring attendance closely and you should ensure that your children attends school every day.

### **Reporting Confirmed or Suspected Cases**

All our classes continue to operate in strict bubbles. Children and adults will not mix in school and this is to minimise contact, the risk of spreading the virus and ensure that a confirmed positive case will only effect one bubble to prevent unnecessary disruption.

1 in 3 people have no symptoms and are unknowingly spreading the virus. Our staff continue to test twice weekly and households are also encouraged to test regularly using the lateral flow test kits, to find out how to get these, visit: [www.wirral.gov.uk/mobiletesting](http://www.wirral.gov.uk/mobiletesting). Rapid testing using lateral flow devices (LFDs) at home are not recommended for primary pupils; they have proven to be inconclusive for small children, may be distressing and unnecessary. If you or anyone in your household have any COVID-19 symptoms or are unwell, self-isolate immediately and book a PCR test: <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/covid-19-testing/covid-19-testing-people-who-have-symptoms>. If we have a positive case in school, we are asking that ALL close contacts book a PCR test immediately. This is to help identify those who may be positive and help public health to track the spread of the virus. If you need support with this, please get in touch with us. If you need to report a suspected or confirmed case, please email [homelearning@eastway.wirral.sch.uk](mailto:homelearning@eastway.wirral.sch.uk).

### **Restrictions and Safety Measures**

We will continue with our strict preventative and control measures in school. No mixing of bubbles or staff in school, continuing testing, rigorous cleaning and hygiene procedures and stopping anything that would present a risk in school. Each child will have their own desk space, set of resources, and be encouraged to maintain social distance from all others. Each bubble will have their own allocated classroom space, designated outside areas, entrance and exits, toilets and cloakrooms. They will not bring anything from home in to their bubble or take anything home; this includes mobile phones and bags. Packed lunch can be brought in to school in a disposable bag. No items can be dropped off to school after your child has entered the building. We are reminding families- one adult at pick up and drop off, adhere to social distancing, wear a face covering, do not approach staff (all communication via telephone or email) and keep to the gate and time you have been given. Please do not stop to chat to staff or other families or cause obstruction. If you are, exempt from wearing a face covering we ask that you make alternative arrangements for pick up and drop off for your own and others safety at this time.

We will not be having any ad-hoc visitors in to school, this includes parents and carers, unless it is a prearranged meeting and the guidance is fully followed. Late children must report to the gate on Eastway or the Family Centre where they will wait with their parent/ carer until a member of staff from their bubble can collect them safely. Parent groups, Stay and Play, Friends of Eastway events and parent/ carer teacher meetings etc. will not go ahead. Our school canteen will not fully be open but will continue to provide a free hot meal or packed lunch for all infant classes (Reception to Year 2) and Free School Meal and Paid for lunches in Key Stage 2. There is a slimmed down menu in place that is available to view on our website.

We hope that you understand that all of these measures have been put in place to ensure the safety of all at Eastway. We are following the government guidance given to us via the Department for Education and working in unison with Public Health England, Wirral Local Authority and our Health and Safety advisors. Our staff are doing all that they can to ensure that school is a happy, safe, secure and familiar place for your child, I would ask that they are shown the courtesy and respect that they so rightly deserve at this time. Your cooperation and support of the school is needed, now more than ever. We will not tolerate abuse, confrontational or negative derogatory behaviour on our school site.

### **Extracurricular Clubs**

As much as we value the importance of children attending clubs after school to develop an area of interest or try something new, we are not able to offer this safely. No clubs will run now for the remainder of this term.

### **Early Risers Toast Club**

**Toast Club will be back up and running again from Monday 21<sup>st</sup> June.** This will only be available for limited numbers and must be prebooked and paid for in advance. We will not be able to take any ad-hoc places at this time. You can book a place on ParentPay, priority will be given to critical workers and this is a service that you must only use if you have no other option.

### **Swashbucklers After School Club**

**Swashbucklers will be available after school from Monday 21<sup>st</sup> June.** As with Toast Club, we will need to limit numbers attending and how this is managed in school so that children are not mixing with children outside their own family and children in different year groups. We will not be able to take any ad-hoc places at this time. You can book a place on ParentPay, priority will be given to critical workers and this is a service that you must only use if you have no other option for childcare.

### **Visits, Visitors and Transition Arrangements**

Where we can, we will ensure that all meetings are held virtually. Where face-to-face meetings must take place, a school visitor agreement and pre booking form must be completed. Essential visits to school will still take place in a COVID secure way so that children still receive the support and services that they are entitled to. All transition visits have been cancelled and will now take place virtually. If your child is in Year 6, secondary schools will be sending out further information on how this will work. We will make plans for those new to our school to visit us and children will have a visit to their new class and new teaching team in the last two weeks before the summer holidays. We will not be holding any school events like parents' evenings, summer fairs, leavers' assemblies, discos, prom, sports day or end of year trips. This is extremely upsetting for us all and so disappointing as we have waited so long for the restrictions to be lifted and the return to a more normal end to another challenging school year.

Please take extra precautions this weekend, if you have been asked to self-isolate, please do, if you or anyone in your household is unwell or had contact with a positive case in school or out of school, please book a PCR test immediately and remain at home until you receive the result. School will need to be informed of all positive results as soon as you receive them, using [homelearning@eastway.wirral.sch.uk](mailto:homelearning@eastway.wirral.sch.uk). I do not want to frighten our families but I think it is vitally important to keep you well informed, ensure that you are following all the guidance on keeping safe and that we do all that we can to protect everyone in our school community and Keep Wirral Well.

Our thoughts are with those members of our team who are still unwell at this time, those pupils or family members who have tested positive or been asked to isolate. This is a stark reminder to us that the threat of this virus is still very prevalent and regardless of the strict and rigorous measures that school have in place, we are all still very much at risk in our local area and across Wirral and the North West.

Take care and keep safe,

Kind regards,

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