

## PARENT UPDATE AND NEWSLETTER

Firstly, I would like to thank you all for your patience and understanding during these strange days. I am delighted to tell you that your children are an absolute credit to you - their smiling faces and obvious delight at being back at school is truly uplifting. So many things are going well. We, in school, are delighted.

### PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN SCHOOL

I think its fair to say that we were all a little less active during lockdown so part of our Recovery Curriculum here at EJS is to get our children active. We are not yet comfortable taking our children on our much loved "Mile A Day Community Walk" so instead we have initiated an afternoon playtime for children and included more physical activity during our school day. This also allows good ventilation in classrooms and allows the children in their class (bubble) to mix more freely as they are outside. Currently we are working carefully and outside with Jordan, our multi-skills coach and Chris our cricket coach. We are presntly finding a slot with Rob, our tennis coach and children are enjoying Wheelie Wednesdays. Everyone who needed one turned up with a helmet - which is fabulous and not having to change for PE is a joy. I hope that you as parents are finding that easier too. Remember - Lower School PE Kit to be worn on Mondays and Tuesdays and Upper School on Thursdays and Fridays. Everyone in full uniform on Wednesdays please.

### LUNCHTIMES

Lunchtimes are going really well and I am really pleased that we took this slowly as none of the children or staff have been overwhelmed. We now have staggered lunchtimes - Lower School have lunch together in the hall - separated into their three classes (bubbles) and this is then mirrored in Upper School. We now have our full range of hot meals available or your child can bring a packed lunch. Your child can now bring a water bottle and a healthy lunch/snack box to school in their school bag but these MUST be cleaned thoroughly at home every evening. Water and disposable cups are still available in every room. The cashless payment system is working well and hallelujah - we have finally got a FULL London refund. Thank goodness.

### START AND END TIMES

Start and end times are working well and the children are now really efficient at washing their hands in their designated sinks. Please make sure that EJS parents stay on the EJS side of the area outside school so that Our Lady and St Patrick's children and parents can get to their school easily too.

LOWER SCHOOL 9.00 -3.00 C3 THEN C1, THEN C2 - TO FIT IN WITH SINKS!

UPPER SCHOOL 9.15 - 3.15 C5, THEN C6, THEN C4 - TO FIT IN WITH SINKS!

**GUITAR** - Mr Curzon, our guitar teacher is currently working with C1 and then with a gifted group of Upper School guitarists on Friday afternoon. Each full class will get a half term of guitar lessons this year.

## BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

Oh dear - Head Teacher No No time - sorry! No singing, no shouting, no cheering and no cakes - individually wrapped sweets or cakes in another bag that birthday child hands round is ok, for example wrapped sweets like Celebrations or fun size Milky Way or a piece of fruit each etc. Can do silent celebrations, circle claps or speak "Happy Birthday Song."

## ASSEMBLIES

I am carrying out online TEAMS assemblies on Monday and Wednesday afternoons with the children and during that time we will be announcing the following celebrations on Mondays - WEEKLY MATHS VIPS - WEEKLY READING CHAMPION AND WEEKLY CLASS STAR OF THE WEEK. Look out for the photos on FACEBOOK but please give us time. We are really busy in school, all day, every day so staff can only upload photos as and when they have time.

## BREAKFAST CLUB/AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

During Lockdown we managed to acquire funding for an **EJS BEFORE SCHOOL CLUB** which will be **FREE TO ALL!** Children will be in the hall, in their designated classes/bubble area. Befor School Club will be run by EJS staff. Children will be able to have a snack breakfast and complete homework, play, socialise or chat with their class/bubble friends. This is a one yerar pilot but if successful, we hope to continue with this venture. Starting time 7.45 and hopefully starting after October half term. We are just in the final stages of negotiations and costings and will send you further details asap. Next on our list to sort out is After Schools Clubs - these will hopefully begin after half term

## HOMEWORK - YOUR CHILD NEEDS YOUR HELP!

There is no easy way to say this but our children, like all children in the country, have many learning gaps that need filled and we need your help and support to get your children back on track. Those who engaged with Lockdown Learning, as we warned, have far less gaps to fill and well done to parents for all those hours of home learning. It was worth it. We need you to support your child's learning through homework more than ever.

Homework will now be given out on **Monday** and needs to be completed by the following **Monday**

- **Spelling test** will be on Monday - the children will have their spellings to learn put on Seesaw and will have a full week to learn them
- **Reading** - four times a week at home - this is a major priority - we expect that your child reads online either by video or a voice recording four times a week onto Seesaw so we can check their individual reading and up their reading time to help gap fill. Most children are able to record themselves on a device and may only need help uploading onto Seesaw. We will also show the children how to do this - so to be honest - there should be no excuse why four reading sessions per week at home cannot be achieved. Parents not able to do this will receive a phone call from the child's teacher to find a way to make this achievable. Our children must read! This is vital for their education.

- **TT Rockstars** for Timestables- 20 mins per week - ability automatically set by programme
- **MATHS- CLIC** and **SAFE** assessments will take place on Fridays in school

### COMMUNICATIONS

During Lockdown we had to quickly find ways to communicate with you and I thank all of you who kept in touch. We now have had time to review our communication methods and want to streamline them. Part of our problem is that not all people have the same communication methods so we have no choice but to publish everything everywhere - Seesaw, email, T2P Text, FB and website. This can be confusing for you and for us and we worry that we miss messages. Due to our firewalls we cannot always access FB or FB Messenger in school so here is a list of communication lines.

#### **How you can contact school**

- If you need to discuss an office or absence matter or need a telephone conversation - leave a message on the school answer machine and we will call you back as soon as we can - apologies as we are still trying to work out how to change the answer machine message - the answer machine is checked every half hour
- Email school main office at [admin@ewanrigg.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:admin@ewanrigg.cumbria.sch.uk)
- To contact your child's teacher/adult - use Seesaw

#### **How school will contact you**

- Teachers/adults will contact you via Seesaw
- Whole school matters will be published in the Seesaw Announcement Section and emailed to you - these will also appear as links or photos on FB and website
- T2P Text may be used - you can reply to messages

### DO NOT

- Use FB to communicate with staff - we can miss messages and also cannot be expected to be answering messages in the evening or at weekends - we have families too
- Use FB for messages during the school day - we might not even see them - busy and wifi not perfect in some rooms firewalls can stop FB in school.
- Use FB Messenger to send messages to staff - this is not advised for staff as this is mixing personal messaging services with school messaging services and adults in schools should not be put in that position.
- I will be directing staff to only answer queries or comments that are detailed above as acceptable communication lines - Seesaw, email or a return phone call. I will be directing staff not to answer FB or FBM especially out of school hours.
- Please note - this includes me too!
- Thank you for your support regarding this matter - I'm sure you can understand.

**RECOVERY CURRICULUM**

All schools have been tasked with designing a Recovery Curriculum, a Catch Up Curriculum and a Remote Learning Programme to help children continue with their education.

**HERE AT EJS WE HAVE DECIDED THAT THESE ARE OUR CORE AIMS**

- To use your child's assessed starting point as the start point for your child's learning - even if this means that your child is initially out of year group expectations - we need to fill gaps and then move forwards
- To increase both physical and mental health
- To increase stamina, listening and concentration skills
- To increase positive learning skills
- To improve reading
- To improve vocabulary
- To improve numeracy
- To prioritise and focus on these core life skills first and once these are established then focus missed knowledge
- This may appear differently for different children in the same class (bubble) or year group as we are matching our teaching to your child's individual needs.

I am truly humbled by the trust that you and your children have shown us here at EJS since our return to full schooling in September. I am always conscious that you trust us with your most precious possessions - your children and I pledge that we here - all adults in school and governors- will work tirelessly to keep your children safe and learning. A big thank you to all of those adults in school, who, as I expected, have stepped up to this huge challenge with a strong sense of purpose and strength and a smile. Many thanks to you too - our families for your understanding and support as we try and blend together the various guidelines given to us, that are, at times, so restrictive. Whatever decisions we have to come to, please always be assured that they are made with the best of intentions for your children, who are always our primary concern.

Stay safe and well.  
Kindest Regards.  
Yvonne Craig  
Head Teacher EJS