



Diary Dates

	Entry and exit times Year 5 – 9:00am – 2:45pm Year 6 – 8:55am – 2:40pm Year 7 – 8:50am – 2:35pm Year 8 – 8:45am – 2:30pm
15/2/21	Half Term
3/5/21	Year 5 English Day
4/3/21	World Book Day

I am sure you join us in the relief we feel to be welcoming students back to school. Since the announcement on Monday we have been looking at the means in which we can return students to school. For year 5 and 6, the primary system is simple. Students are able to attend from the 8th of March, they will need to wear a mask if they are travelling to and from school on the bus and they will return to the bubble classes and classrooms for their lessons. We are following the secondary guidance for Year 7 and Year 8 which is more complicated as the guidance we have received stipulates –

‘Secondary schools should offer students testing at an on-site ATS from 8 March. **Testing and return of students can be phased during the first week to manage the number of students passing through the test site at any one time.** You should offer 3 tests, 3 to 5 days apart. You have the flexibility to consider how best to deliver testing on a phased basis from 8 March, depending on your circumstances and local arrangements.’

In planning how to organise and deliver this phased testing process we have been considering the following questions:

- 1) **Realistically, how many children are we able to test safely and calmly?** This week we have been trialling the testing with Year 7 and 8 students currently in school. Due to the significant and time consuming Government logging process, testing 10 students takes between 35 to 40 mins. We have concluded we are unable to test a whole year group in one day
- 2) **Should the children return to school and then be tested or do they need to complete their tests?** The Government is clear that prior to children returning to school we need to complete at least one test with them all.
- 3) **Can we put students in the classroom with their classmates to await their first test?** No. If we place students in the classroom and someone tests positive, we would have to send the class home to self-isolate for 10 days. We want to limit the risk of students having to self-isolate again as we feel this would be additionally damaging.

- 4) **We hope to co-ordinate our first tests with Freman College** so that wherever possible, if your child is asked to attend school for the test and return home, it will be on the same days any siblings being tested at Freman College.

How will we test students and return Year 7 and Year 8 to school?

Please see attached calendar

How to read if you have a child or children at Edwinstree and Freman?

If your child attends Edwinstree and has a sibling at Freman in Butler or Mills, their first test will be on Monday 8/3/21. If your child has a sibling in Hepworth or Moore, they will be tested on Tuesday 9/3/21. Please bring your Edwinstree child for testing as near to the time as allocated for your Freman sibling. Once your child has been tested they will be expected to return home until all first tests are completed.

Year 8: Year 8 students without a sibling at Freman College will have their first test on Friday 5/3/21, further details to follow, but please prepare for an adult in your bubble to support your child to attend the school for their test and return home.

Year 7: Year 7 students without a sibling at Freman College will have their first test on Wednesday 10/3/21, further details to follow, but please prepare for an adult in your bubble to support your child to attend the school for their test and return home.

When exactly will my child return to full school once the first test is over and how long do will they continue with online learning?

Year 5 and 6 return on Monday 8/3/21, **Year 8** return on Wednesday 10/3/21 once all Year 8 students have completed their first test. Year 7 return on Thursday 11/3/21 once all Y7 students have completed their first test. Students should continue with online learning until they return to school

Keyworkers continue to attend school as normal

What about the other two tests and why are you returning our children after one test and Freman are returning theirs after two?

The structure of our COVID day and the timetable of AM and PM sessions allows us to create very tight bubbles that really restrict students to their class, so in the event of a positive case only one class needs to self-isolate. We are also aware that the younger the student, the harder it is for them to distance learn and we are keen to support you and get them back to school asap.

How will the students receive their 2nd and 3rd test?

We will publish the testing timeline for the three tests next week, but second and third test will take place during school time.

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How do I return my consent form for testing?

We would appreciate receiving your consent forms in advance in order to speed up the lengthy administration process. The school office is open from 8:30pm – 4pm daily or you can email direct to : admin@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk Thank you.

What about if I don't give my consent?

Out of the significant number of students currently in school, only one parent has so far declined, but this is your choice. The staff are super caring and supportive of all children, the tests are screened so other students don't see what is happening. If a child reaches the screen and does not want to take the test, we would never force them. A few other children have refused at first, so we invited them to watch the process, which helped them feel more secure in taking the test.

I will be writing to all students next week to explain the process of their return and the testing procedure and will also send some information about reassuring videos for them to watch.

How can you help us to reduce the risk of returning to school with a positive case?

Please support us by continuing to follow to the published public guidance on self-isolation and family bubbles and help keep the school as COVID free as possible

How will the school be similar or different to before Christmas?

What is the same?

- Covid has not gone away and the number of cases are still extremely high. Public Health guidance requires us to continue to keep children in bubbles and as socially distanced as before. Therefore, we will continue to operate the **same timings of the day**, in order to stagger entrances and exits, and to reduce the most "at risk" times for social mixing, which are the breaks and lunch times. These will remain as 10 minutes and 25 minute slots.
- Students will remain in one class except for Science (at least one lesson in the lab), Art and Computing. Teachers will move to the students.
- Lessons will be in AM and PM sessions.
- The teachers will decide the seating plans that students will adhere to.
- Students don't need to bring equipment as we want to minimise the things that come in and out of school – they only need a water bottle, coat and a change of shoes.
- If they bring a mobile phone into school, they will need to store it in their resources bag and only use it as a learning tool.
- Uniform will remain with the same expectation as pre-Christmas

<http://edwinstree.herts.sch.uk/downloads/content/Uniform%20September%202020update.pdf>

- If a child or a teacher in the school gets a positive test, then any student who has been within a 2 metre distance of that person will have to self-isolate for 10 days. This will result in

the class having to self-isolate but not a whole year group. The teachers involved will also have to isolate. This means you still need a back-up child care plan for if and when we have to send students home to self-isolate.

- The more we are vigilant in school and at home in following the social distancing guidelines, the more we can lower the risk of students having to self-isolate.
- All bus students continue to be expected to wear masks on the bus and to segregate away from the Freman students on any bus. We will continue to walk students up to Freman to place them on the bus at the end of the day.

What is different?

- Some of the teaching staff have changed – Mrs Bailey will take on Miss Company's teaching and Mrs Brock replaces Mrs Van Wyk in Year 7 who moves to Freman College to cover maternity leave from the 8th March. She will also replace Mrs Kelly's teaching in Year 5. Mrs Barrett moves to Year 5 to teach Science and Ms Granville joins us as Science teacher for Year 6 and 7.
- Some changes to subjects have already been made in order to support students to experience the whole curriculum this year. Further changes will be made at Easter to enable students to experience a broad and balanced curriculum within the academic year. (This is not our ideal curriculum in any sense, but we know one of the biggest strengths for Edwinstree Middle school is the specialist teachers and classrooms which all students need to experience in a COVID safe way this year).
- Students in Year 7 and Year 8 are expected to wear masks in the classrooms and in corridors.
- Testing of Year 7 and 8 for a minimum of 3 tests in school and then home testing kits that they will be expected to test with and log twice a week. We are still awaiting the detail.
- The timetable is slightly different from the one operating before Christmas due to the changes above and we will publish this new timetable next week.

How do we support students return and manage their well-being?

Accompanying this newsletter is a well-being questionnaire and we would appreciate it if you would complete it with your child. We hope it will give us an overall picture of students' well-being to support us to manage their return. The questionnaire is available from today via this link which closes at 11am on Wednesday 2/3/21:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=BTrlzduqZ0-r9r2eTDmg8EC-9XP1151Olwl3yMnc4IVUNEtZMk9IOEs3WVhCREtNUNVBDR0Q3SThHUy4u>

Your child completed this questionnaire in September 2020, so it will give us a good indication of whether anxiety has increased and well-being

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declined. From our parent consultation we heard and recognised ourselves that this lock down has been harder. Please have the confidence to be open in completing this questionnaire. This is not to judge your parenting skills as all our well-being has suffered this year and last.

How will we prepare our most vulnerable and SEND students for the return?

All vulnerable and SEND students will be contacted by a member of the SEND, Learning Zone or teaching team, including the HOY. This is an opportunity for you to discuss any concerns you and your child may have about returning and decide together on an action plan to help reduce their anxieties.

What if my child is suddenly displaying signs of anxiety about returning?

If you have not yet alerted us to concerns about your child's well-being, perhaps the return has triggered anxiety that you have not seen before, please do contact us via your Head of Year via:

hoy5@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk

hoy6@edwinstree.jherts.sch.uk

hoy7@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk

hoy8@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk

Subject information:

World book day 4/3/21

We will be encouraging students to attend school dressed as their favourite book characters on to celebrate World Book Day Thursday 4th March. However, Mrs Tungatt and Miss Bailes would love to see the Year 5 students dressed up as their favourite book characters on **Wednesday 3rd March** for their English Day. Year 5 can wear their favourite book character outfits on both days.

If you are in or out of school on Thursday 4th March, please feel free to dress up to join in the fun to celebrate World Book Day! Send your pictures in to admin@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk and Miss Devonshire might feature you in the World Book Day CoWo on Friday.

You should have already received your digital token in the newsletter last week- if not, here they are again:

KS2 https://www.worldbookday.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/booktoken_PrimaryUK.pdf

KS3 https://www.worldbookday.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/booktoken_SecondaryUK.pdf
We look forward to seeing your costumes!

PSHE information

We will shortly be publishing our Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy to follow the Government's statutory guidance. It includes an overview of the PSHE and RSE curriculum as well as your rights to withdraw your children from these lessons. The new government policy makes Relationships Education compulsory in all primary-aged schools and Relationships and Sex Education is compulsory in all secondary-aged schools, as well as

making Health Education compulsory in all state-funded schools. Edwinstree will begin to follow the new Jigsaw scheme throughout our two key stages – this scheme fully meets the requirements of the new guidance.

Year 6 PSHE

Year 6 are now moving onto a new topic about Celebrating Difference. In their lesson this week they will explore some ideas of what being normal and different might mean. The lesson does touch on some sensitive issues and it is recommended that an adult overview their child whilst they are working at home on this lesson.

Year 7 and 8 PSHE

To give the KS3 team some extra time to prepare for students to return to school, over the next two weeks the home-based PSHE lessons will be using the Oak Academy online lessons. This week students will follow the Oak Academy online lessons about wellbeing and next week they will follow some lessons about Internet Safety. Links will be provided in Show My Homework in the usual way.

What additional information have we been asked to share with you?

Message from East Herts Constabulary

We now have a bespoke East Herts echo account for young people.

www.bit.ly/eherts-youth<<http://www.bit.ly/eherts-youth>>

The background to the concept came from a YC Herts survey of young people across the county. The survey highlighted that young people were in fear of crime, but didn't give any further detail about why and where this was happening. Following consultation with members of the Youth Strategy Group the following short survey and free text URL link has been created. The idea is that young people are asked why they might feel unsafe to better understand links between actual crime and perceived crime risk.

This ongoing feedback will support bespoke debrief work being undertaken with individual young people by youth services to understand networks and mapping. The more insights we achieve, the more we will better be able to understand geographic areas and risk factors that make our young people feel unsafe. We will then be able to inform partnership planning and allocation of resources into the right areas. Many thanks,
Chief Inspector Stuart Orton
East Hertfordshire
Hertfordshire Police.

Online Safety – How can I keep my child safe? From Herts CC

The BBC have been investigating 'omegle'- it is a video chat site that matches you to other users and the age limit is 18. There have been reports of very inappropriate material and under age use. Please be aware

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ThinkUKnow parent guide linked here: [omegle-parents-guide.pdf \(thinkuknow.co.uk\)](https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents-guide.pdf)

The BBC are looking for their next Bake off Star!

Do you have a talented baker at home? See the attached leaflet for more information
Junior Bake Off – best young bakers age 9 – 15 years
Closing date for applications Sunday 28th March 2021.

Accompanying this newsletter are the following attachments:

- Gavin Williamson's letter
- Consent form for Year 7 & Year 8 LTF testing.
- Bake off competition leaflet
- Timetable for Covid Testing Y7 & Y8

Jo Gant
Headteacher

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