




Edwinstree Middle School
A Voluntary Controlled Church of
England School

**NEWSLETTER for PARENTS &
CARERS**
Week Ending: 08/12/2023

Diary Dates: To support you to manage the Christmas season costs we have placed these in our calendar and we hope this helps.



School Day – 8:40am – 3:10pm	
13/12/23 	Christmas School Lunch cost £3.20 & Christmas jumper day.
15/12/23	Year 7 & 8 Christmas Service at St Peter's Church 11am to 1pm Non-school uniform for walkers and spare shoes required. <i>Bakers can you support with a snack dropped off at the office on the day?</i>
19/12/23	Year 5 & 6 Christmas Service at St Peter's Church 11am to 1pm Non- school uniform for walkers and spare shoes required. <i>Bakers can you support with a snack dropped off at the office on the day?</i>
20/12/23	End of Autumn Term 1:20pm
04/01/24	Start of Spring Term 08:40am
15/01/24	5A & 5C Academic review via SchoolCloud
22/01/24	5B & 5D Academic review via SchoolCloud
5-8/02/24	Year 6 Mock SATs
19-23/02/24	Half Term
26/02/24	6A & 6C Academic review via SchoolCloud
29/02/24	6B & 6D Academic review via SchoolCloud
18/03/24	Year 5 Foundation Evening in person
28/03/24	End of Spring Term 1:20pm
15/04/24	Start of Summer term 08:40am
22/04/24	Year 6 Foundation Evening in person
06/05/24	Bank Holiday
13-16/05/24	Year 6 SATs Week
20/05/24	Year 7 Foundation Evening in person
27-31/05/24	Half Term
17/06/24	Year 8 Foundation Evening in person
28/06/24	INSET Day
11/07/24	County Transition Day
19/07/24	End of Summer Term 1:20pm

Absence

If your child is going to be absent from school please inform us by emailing:

attendance@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk

Why is there a lot of Cover in the school at the moment and why was the Christmas concert cancelled?

We have seen a significant increase in ill health in our staff and students over the last two weeks, with many off with COVID like symptoms, or a severe stomach bug, please may we ask in the lead up to Christmas, if your child is showing signs of sickness, or flu/COVID like symptoms, you recognise this and do not send them into school until they are better. We are currently 7 members of staff down and if we reach 9 to 10 we have to begin to explore closing year groups as we run out of a capacity to staff the school. We continue like most schools to struggle to find enough supply teachers to fill our gaps, as many schools are now facing similar ill health and shortages, so the requests for supply staff are heavy.

while we will do everything to avoid this, please do have back up plans in place, if we reach this stage of ill health in our staff.

**Christmas Service's at St Peter's Church
15th & 19th of December Can you help?**

Calling all bakers... Can you help provide a snack for our student's return to school after the Christmas Service, or if you are like me, a quick trip to the supermarket for a cake or biscuits? If you are able to help, please would you bring your donations to the school office on the morning of the service, Year 7 and 8 is taking place on the 15th of December, and Year 5 and 6 on the 19th of December.

We are also keen to encourage you to help us with the walk to the service. If you are parent who is able to support with the walk to the service please email s.petty@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk. On the day of the walk students may wear non-school uniform and need to bring wellies or spare shoes if the weather is bad.

Last day of term

Students will be in normal lessons up until breaktime. There will be a slightly extended breaktime, with students then returning to their tutor rooms until lunchtime. The lunch break will be from 12.15pm until 1.00pm, at which point students will go back to their tutor rooms and wait to be dismissed at 1.20pm.

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Year 5 students from Layston First School

Year 5 students who went to Layston First School have been invited to attend the dress rehearsal of their Christmas play. This will be happening on Monday 11th December and will start at 9:30am and finish around 11:05am. Students will be accompanied by staff



Christmas School Dinner

Our Christmas School Dinner will take place on the 13th of December, and is available to book on SchoolGrid, **the deadline to book is 08.55am on 12th December.**



Edwinstree Christmas Jumper day takes place on the 13th of December, along with our school Christmas lunch day

Year 6 SATs Information Days

Thank you to all those parents who attended the SATs information days this week. It was really good to see you all there and we hope that you found it useful.

The PowerPoint presentation with the information covered is attached. There will be a further chance to attend an evening session after the Christmas break.

Are you able to support us with year 6 SATs? We are looking for parent helpers to support us during our Mock SATs week, 5th - 8th February 2024.

We are also looking for parents to support us during the official SATs week, 13th - 16th May 2024.

Duties would involve, supporting children by reading questions to them or prompting them and supporting the class teacher with any administrative tasks.

If you are able to support us on some or all of the days, please contact us by email at

a.earnshaw@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk

Afterschool Enrichment Clubs

It has been great to see so many students take part in extra-curricular activities this term. All clubs have now finished with the exception of Home Learning club on Monday, Maths Home Learning and Yoga on Wednesday, these clubs will continue for 1 more week.

New sign-up lists will be available after the Christmas holidays. All clubs will resume the week beginning Monday 15th January.

Gardening Club:

After the frosts this week, we have now closed our veggie patch until next year. We harvested the last of the carrots on Tuesday - what a fabulous bumper crop this year!

Year 5, (Dippy Divers), Year 6 (Pasta Salad and Chicken Pittas), Year 7 (Spaghetti Bolognese) and Year 8 (Stir Fry) have all be able to see the produce growing and used it where needed in our recipes. Our wonderful rhubarb crown has been tucked under its bin to keep it safe from further frosts. Our herb supply is still going strong and this will die back over the next few months and come back with gusto in the Spring.

Gardening Club will open up again after February half-term, once our beds have had time to become enriched with the nutrients of our peelings, veggie waste and leaf mulch. Thank you to everyone who contributed with donations this year.

Mrs van Wyk



Who will be supporting the school while our SENCO Ms Campany takes maternity leave?

We have appointed an temporary experienced SENCO Rachel Thornewill to support the school from January for one day a week, while our SENCO Ms Campany begins her maternity. Rachel is an experienced primary SENCO who currently works 4 days a week at Richard Whittington Primary School in Bishop's Stortford.

From April our Autism Lead Mrs Carter returns from maternity and will continue to support in this role. Rachel will focus on ensuring the provision for EHCP's are taking place, exploring higher needs funding for our most vulnerable and referrals for external services.

Is this enough cover for the term?

The SEND team has changed dramatically this year with the new structures of the Hub, Sunrise room and Pupil Power support so that we now have a number of Middle Leaders supporting the traditional role of SENCO. What we struggle most with is the significant demand on referrals to external agencies and support for EHCP production and reviews, Rachel will support this.

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Social Media alert for year 7 – please check

We have been notified that a large number of students have their location settings switched on in Snapchat. Following the County Lines guidance and training that KS3 took part in last year, it was strongly recommended by the police that students switch this feature off so that it reduces the chances of becoming a target. Could we ask you to check your child's app with them and ensure that their location settings are off, if they are using Snapchat.

Christmas Concert

We were deeply saddened to announce that we were unable to continue with the Christmas Music Concert on Thursday evening for Edwinstree and Anstey students, due to staff illness.

We will commit to ensuring that we host a music event in the Spring term, as we know the students are so looking forward to sharing their music talents with you all.



Edwinstree School Association

Thank you to all the pupils and parents who supported the ESA market stall at Buntingford's late night shopping event.

Without your donations of Chocolate, Christmas Jumpers and the gifts made by the Textile club last summer we would not have raised £281.26. A special well done to the pupils and parents who gave up their evening and braved the frosty weather to run the stall.

We had planned on selling the remaining Christmas jumpers and gifts at the Christmas concert, which sadly could not happen due to staff sickness, so these items are available on our on line shop [Products | Edwinstree School Association \(sumupstore.com\)](https://www.sumupstore.com).

We had 52 Christmas jumpers donated to the shop swap and on the 30th of November, 20 jumpers were chosen to spend Christmas in a new home. A further 9 jumpers were snapped up at the Christmas Market. We plan to make this an annual event, so please hold onto your Christmas jumpers and tops and join our swap shop next November in a bid to reduce, reuse and recycle clothing.

If you would like to help decide what the money raised should be spent on, please get in touch with the ESA at EdwinstreeSchoolAssociation@outlook.com



Space Hertfordshire Spring term Workshops

All our Spring Term free online workshops are now available to book. No formal diagnosis is necessary.

Our workshops are hugely popular and for good reason. Parents and carers who attend our workshops report the following long-term impact:

- 98% better understand their child's neurodiverse condition
- 90% have improved family relationships
- 98% actively use the tools and strategies discussed at home
- 98% are more empowered to advocate for their child at their school/setting

The majority of the workshops and courses are funded by Hertfordshire County Council's Targeted Parenting Fund.

Places are limited. Book here:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/cc/training-courses-and-workshops-5469>



The Hertfordshire Neurodiversity Support Hub.

We are delighted to be writing to let you know about the launch of The Hertfordshire Neurodiversity Support Hub. Following a pilot phase, we are excited to be able to roll this out across Hertfordshire thanks to funding from both Herts County Council (HCC) and the NHS. The Hub has initially been funded until the end of March 25 and ADD-Vance have been commissioned to run the Hub, which is open Monday - Friday 9am-1pm.

The Hub is staffed by experts, who can answer any questions to do with Neurodiversity, however big or small, or just be a listening ear. Please note, no diagnosis is required to access the support and the helpline is open to parents, carers and professionals.

The Hub can be contacted by phone on 01727 833963, with an answerphone facility for out of hours or by email at supporthub@add-vance.org. Attached is a flyer with details about the hub.

Mrs J Gant – Headteacher
admin@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk

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