

Edwinstree Middle School
A Voluntary Controlled Church of
England School



**NEWSLETTER for PARENTS &
CARERS**

Week Ending: 22/03/2024

Edwinstree Term dates:

<https://www.edwinstree.herts.sch.uk/school/term-dates.aspx>

Homework Week: A

Diary Dates:

School Day – 8:40am – 3:10pm	
26/03/24	Year 5 & 8 MIND Wellbeing sessions
27/03/24	KS2 & KS3 Easter Service at Edwinstree. Year 6 SATs Parents Information Evening. 5-5.30pm.
28/03/24	End of Spring Term 1:20pm.
15/04/24	Start of Summer term 08:40am.
16/04/24	Cultural Food Day – Change to School Lunch menu
22/04/24	Year 6 Foundation Evening in person.
23/04/24	Year 5 Whipsnade Zoo trip.
26/04/24	Year 8 Thorpe Park trip.
06/05/24	Bank Holiday.
13-16/05/24	Year 6 SATs Week.
20/05/24	Year 7 Foundation Evening in person.
21/05/24	Year 8 Shakespeare’s Globe trip (details to follow).
23/05/24	Cambridge University Careers talk – Day in the life of a university Student Year 7 & 8 (details to follow).
27-31/05/24	Half Term.
17/06/24	Year 8 Foundation Evening in person.
12/06/24	Year 7 Shakespeare’s Globe trip (details to follow).
8/06/24	INSET Day.
11/07/24	County Transition Day.
16/07/24	Visit from Bishop of St Albans.
17/07/24	Year 5 Queens Park trip (details to follow).
19/07/24	End of Summer Term 1:20pm.
02/09/24	INSET DAY.
03/09/24	Year 5 Induction Day.
04/09/24	Autumn Term Begins Years 6-8.
16-18/09/24	Year 7 Residential – Essex Outdoors Bradwell.
28/10/24 – 01/11/24	Half Term.
06/12/24	Occasional Day.
20/12/24	End of Autumn Term 1:20pm.

Will the school be open on Monday?

A huge thank you for your patience and perseverance in supporting the school while emergency work went into clearing the foul water from site and securing new drains for our main block of student toilets. We are now secure for students to return, with toilets functioning and a sewer system that is new and clear and able to transport waste to the main sewage pipe. During the Summer holidays the refurbishment of the students’ toilets will take place as planned.

What questions were asked during this week?

A couple of parents wrote in to challenge why we made the decision not to host live lessons? The answers are as follows:

We had a few emails and phone calls from families concerned that their child was having to go to a grandparent, neighbour, or into work with them and would not be able to access the online work. By setting work that could be completed at family’s convenience, this allowed them flexibility and reduced the stress. Had the works gone into next week, we were checking that all staff had working cameras and microphones and were able to move to live lessons.

Wednesday we were 9 teaching staff down with 6 medium term absences and 3 short term. Supply staff are not contracted for live lessons, and I am just investigating whether this is something we can secure for the future. We learnt through COVID that asking a teacher to host a Live lesson to a year group, is challenging and results in minimal learning.

Our registers for previous offers of Live learning have shown us that it is very rare to receive 50% of the class attending a session and often it is far less. We are hoping not to experience this again, but we believe, this is evidence that getting a child to an unexpected timetabled live lesson, with such short notice is challenging for many families.

One parent suggested using the empty classrooms at Buntingford First School. We hadn’t thought of this, and I have approached the Head, who has kindly confirmed that potentially we could use these for a year group, subject to her Trust agreeing

What changes are there to clubs next week?

Please note that all afterschool clubs finished this week with the exception of 2 taking place next week:

- Maths Home Learning - Wednesday 27th
- Film Makers Club - Wednesday 27th

At the start of next term there will be a two-week window to sign up for new clubs before they start on Monday 29th April, more info to follow.

*As a Christian school we recognise the unique and wonderful in everyone.
As a community we support one another to flourish and live life in all its fullness.*

PE Kits next week

On days that students have PE we are asking them to come into school wearing their kit. This will help teachers covering PE lessons. We would like to continue this plan until the end of term and in the first week of the new term. Thank you.

Please remember Students will need to bring additional shoes if they have Food and Nutrition, Wood Tech, or Science as they are not allowed to enter the classrooms with material trainers for safety reasons.

Year 5 & 6 MIND Wellbeing sessions

Edwinstree are very lucky to have secured a speaker from MIND, the mental health charity, to talk to our youngest and eldest year groups on Tuesday 26th March. The schedule is shown below. The year 5 session will be modified and will be shortened to make this appropriate for their age.

We are aware that the level of anxiety in the community as well as some of our students is on the increase, and this session will add to the PSHE curriculum by further covering these topics. Even if it is not directly relevant to your child, it may help them to help others that they know. The session firstly teaches young people how to recognise emotions such as anxiety, worry and feeling low and then some tools to help with these.

If you would like to find out more about MIND in Hertfordshire, here is the link: www.mindinmidherts.org.uk

What is happening with the Easter services that were planned?

These will be held in school on Wednesday, led by Reverend Kirsty Wainwright and Mr Rowlands.

The Y6 and Y7 service will be at 9.20am and the Y5 and Y8 service at 10.20am.

Students will go to their normal lessons and then be brought down by their class teacher (who will stay with their class) at 9.15am or 10.15am, depending on which service they are attending.

Food and Nutrition

Year 7 - please remember to bring in 2 medium carrots and one medium onion to your lessons this week.

Just a H&S reminder about your nails, shoes and hair - please see SatchelOne. It is very important that we all follow the rules so that there are no injuries. I have also updated the end date of the home learning on SatchelOne. I look forward to being back in the kitchen with everyone next week. Mrs van Wyk

What happens on the last day of term?

Students will have normal lessons period 1 and 2. Period 3 they will watch the Edwinstree has got talent videos. There will be an early lunch and students will be dismissed at 1.20pm.

What about Edwinstrees Got Talent?

We will be offering students the chance to record their performance in school next week. These will be collated and showed to the school on the last day of term, staff and students will vote for their favourite performances on Thursday. Good luck to the students involved. If they would prefer to perform at home and send in a video, please send to admin@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk

Rescheduled Year 6 SATs Evening - 27th March 2024

5.00 - 5:30pm

We will be hosting a SATs evening for parents on Wednesday 27th March, to impart information regarding the Year 6 SATs in May.

The evening will include information about what to expect during the upcoming SATs week and how you can best support your child through the process.

The information provided will be very similar to that given during the daytime meetings in the autumn term.

We look forward to seeing you next week.

Please indicate your attendance by completing the form using the link.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=BTrlzduqZ0-r9r2eTDmg8F8RSwokmeRDhMnaAtKJ1V1UM1dKS0JEQzIxTTc1WDJXMkYwSE5OM01YNC4u>

Parents will be offered the chance to stay at the end of the talk to hear what we have been doing and plan to do to support.

Educational Visit payment deadlines

Y8 Thorpe Park - Friday 12th April 2024

Y5 Whipsnade - Friday 12th April 2024

Y7 Residential Deposit - Friday 26th April 2024 (current Y6)

If the cost of this visit will cause you financial difficulty, please email the office on admin@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk.

If you are a parent or family member who is willing to attend either the Thorpe Park or the Whipsnade trip, we would very much appreciate your help. By attending, you reduce the number of teachers we have to take and reduce the cover the children left at school experience. If you are willing to attend and support us, please email admni@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk The costs are incurred by the school, it is your calm presence that is required.

Year 8 RE

Post Easter Year 8 will begin a unit on capital punishment.

They will consider arguments for and against, religious responses and develop their own viewpoints. This will all be presented in an age-appropriate manner and with due care.

If you have any questions, queries or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me on hoy5@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk.

Mrs Kelly- Head of RE

*As a Christian school we recognise the unique and wonderful in everyone.
As a community we support one another to flourish and live life in all its fullness.*

Who are the new staff for the new term?

We say goodbye and thank you to Mrs Thornewill who has covered the SENCO lead for this term. Mrs Carter returns to the SEND team and will be supporting Mrs Gant to take the lead on SEND enquiries and EHCP's. Please continue to use the SENCO email for all enquiries senco@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk

We say Goodbye and thank you to Mrs Nash who has worked in the school office for 4½ years and wish her a very happy retirement, we also give a warm welcome to Mrs House who will replace her. We also say Goodbye and thank you to Mrs Gordon one of our LSA's and wish her well in her new school.

What's happening with staff off with medium- or long-term ill health?

We are experiencing a high level of staff with medium to long term illness, which has resulted in a number of supply teachers. We have been working hard to remedy the situation when a member of staff is due to be absent for a considerable period of time. Solutions post Easter are as followed:

- We have secured a strong and experienced teacher Miss Nichols to lead the classes for Mrs Hayes, and she will be here for the rest of the year. Mrs Mayne our Deputy for Teaching and Learning has been working with her this term to ensure that the schemes of work are being followed, and for year 6, support is in place for their progress towards the SATs.
- Miss Bull's maternity cover is Mrs Mayne who will be with the Year 6 classes until the end of the year.
- Year 7 English classes will be taken by Mrs Russell who is secondary trained former Head of English.
- Mr McCarthy is planning to return post Easter.
- Ms Sanders is hoping to return post Easter – in the meantime we have secured a science teacher to cover.
- Mr Meekins is currently still very poorly, currently Mr Rowlands my Deputy and former Head of Music is managing the cover lessons to support students to continue with their learning.

What about the start of the new term?

We will look forward to seeing your child on the 15th of April. Please prepare them for a normal school day – just a reminder they can come in PE kit on the days they have it for the first week back.

School Dinners

Please find attached our summer menu for school dinners. The cost of a dinner will increase from £3.20 to £3.35 from 1st April. Please log on to www.schoolgrid.co.uk to book your child's dinners.

Caribbean Themed Menu – Tuesday 16th April - Revised date due to school closure

Our Dynamic Diversity student group have been working closely with our canteen to look at offering a diverse menu at least 3 times a year. This has come about as our Diversity days have seen students grow in interest and confidence with food from around the world.

Unfortunately, this change will cancel out any existing bookings for that day. Please log on to www.schoolgrid.co.uk to ensure your child's dinner is rebooked.



Mental Health Support Teams
Parent Workshops

Year 6 SATs – Parent Exam Stress Workshop at Edwinstree
The parent exam stress workshop will be at 9.00am on 19th April. The Mental Health Support Team will be coming in to talk to parents about how to support their child throughout the sats and answer any questions.

Year 6 SATs – Student Exam Stress Workshop assembly
Pupil exam stress workshop will be on Friday 26th April Pupils will be given strategies to help prepare them for the sats.

Parent Sleep Workshop
3rd May at 9am
Flyer attached.

If you would like to attend the parent workshops, please email a.harris@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk to book your place.

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

*As a Christian school we recognise the unique and wonderful in everyone.
As a community we support one another to flourish and live life in all its fullness.*