



**Edwinstree Middle School**  
A Voluntary Controlled Church of England School  
**NEWSLETTER for PARENTS & CARERS**  
**Week Ending: 27/01/2023**

**Diary Dates**

School Day – 8:40am – 3:05pm	
30/01-02/02/23	Mock SATs Week
13-17/02/23	Half Term
08/03/23	Rescheduled Year 8 Geography visit to London
30/03/23	Year 8 Foundation Subject Parents Evening in person 5-7pm
03-14/04/23	Easter Break
17/04/23	Summer Term Begins
27/04/23	Year 5 Foundation Subject Parents Evening in person 5-7pm
01/05/23	Bank Holiday
08/05/23	Additional Bank Holiday - Coronation of King Charles III)
09-12/05/23	Year 6 SATs
18/05/23	Year 7 Foundation Subject Parents Evening in person 5-7pm
29/05-02/06/23	Half Term
29/06/23	Year 6 Foundation Subject Parents Evening in person 5-7pm
13/07/23	County Transition Day
21/07/23	End of Summer Term

**What is the latest information on the Teachers strikes?**

The strike days for this area are scheduled for:

- 1st February
- 1st March
- 15th March
- 16th March

This week we have mapped out teachers who we believe to be striking and who are not. Please remember this is not an easy task, as employees are not required to tell their employers whether they intend to strike or not, although Head teachers are able to ask. We have been sent a list of the members of the NEU union, and we are clear we have significant numbers of staff in this Union.

As well as this difficulty, we are unable to simply solve the problem of missing staff by asking our employees to cover lessons, as we can ask but staff are not be compelled to do this.

My Deputy's and I have read our own Union advice which like the Government advice, steers us that we should be looking at safety first in all the decisions we make and that we should be mindful not to undermine the strike's purpose.

We have therefore followed the following principles in making the decision to close the school to Year 5,7 and 8.

- Being mindful not to undermine the strikes principles i.e. not placing a member of staff in a cover position.
- Ensuring that we safeguard any students in school with familiar staff and regulated numbers of staff to student ratios.
- Facilitating current planned events such as the year 6 mock SATs.
- Protecting exam groups above all else where possible.
- Providing Live lessons for Year 5,6 and 7. Links can be found on SMHW for those students at home, whose teachers are not striking.

Currently we plan to have Year 6 in school where they will continue with their mock SATs, and be taught by their teachers who are not striking and/ or be supervised to complete distance learning and reading during the time where their teacher is not available.

**Is there any risk to year 6 not being in?**

If our teachers choose to picket at the entrance to the school, those teachers not striking will have a choice to make about whether they cross the picket. So please continue to have a back-up plan.

**If my child has free school meals what happens?**

We will prepare packed lunches for those students who have free school meals and you will be able to collect these lunches from 12pm onwards.

To avoid waste we would really appreciate it if you emailed [admin@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk) by Wednesday morning 9,00am if you wish to take up this offer.

**Will this be the same for all the other strikes?**

We are unclear, as striking affects pay and like our community many of our teachers are struggling to make ends meet, please be prepared to keep your child at home. We will continue to prioritise using the principles mentioned above. We have secured an outside speaker group for March the 1<sup>st</sup> which with SLT support may mean we can bring another year group in, and we would prioritise year 5 – but please don't assume this

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is possible. We will therefore take each day of the strike as a separate planning exercise.

### **What happens if my child is at home for the day?**

We will ask your child to log into SMHW at the start of the day to see what teachers are available for lessons. Any teacher that is not striking, will be providing a live link to TEAMS where they will talk to students about the work for today and model what is expected. They will then send them off to complete the work but remain in contact to answer questions. They will touch base and regroup with the class half way through the lessons to check that all are on track.

### **What about if my child logs on and there is no teacher in that period?**

This will happen, and I am sorry but we would undermine the strike if we published the timetable of when and where this will happen. We also don't have the full picture, so we could be inaccurate which is why they should use SMHW app on the day to look to see who of their teachers is there. Where there is no teacher we have not provided cover work. However, we would steer you to our website where you can find the distance learning for each subject

<https://www.edwinstree.herts.sch.uk/learning/distance-learning.aspx>

This learning has been there all year, and is designed to match the schemes of work in lesson. You are able to direct your child onto this work so that they can choose other revision pieces that they can't remember and/or new information that they are interested in. Please note in order to not undermine the strike this work will not be marked, but it will support their learning.

### **What about vulnerable and key workers?**

With expected numbers of teachers striking we do not have a facility for significant numbers of vulnerable and or key workers children. Next week Ms Marler will be phoning our most vulnerable to discuss support. If you are a key worker that has no capacity what so ever to support your child during the closure – please email Ms Marler [admin@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk) and we will look to see if we can support, but this support is extremely limited. We may still say we can't support but we will try. Please only ask if you really have no other option.

Please note, if you do require support it will involve your child working on distance learning in the computer suite. Not covered lessons.

### **Year 6 Mock SATs**

Next week we plan to carry out Mock SATs week for year 6. We are going ahead with this despite the planned industrial action on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup>, as we feel it's important for year 6 pupils to experience the week, ahead of the official SATs in May.

Due to the King's Coronation the SATs in May have changed from Monday - Thursday, to Tuesday-Friday. We plan to mimic this next week. The dates therefore will be as follows:

Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March: GPS (Grammar, punctuation and spelling)

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February: Reading

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> February: Maths Paper 1 Arithmetic and Maths Paper 2 Reasoning

Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> February: Maths Paper 2 Reasoning

Year 6 pupils need to arrive in school at 8:30pm and go straight to the hall where they will be provided with a small snack and a drink.

Please ensure that your child has plenty of rest the night before and goes to bed at a reasonable time

### **Support with year 6 SATs**

If you are a parent that has agreed to support us in the Year 6 SATs we value this support and thank you.

We are still looking for parents/carers/ family members to support us during the official SATs week, now confirmed as 9th - 12th May 2023. Duties would involve, supporting students by reading questions to them or prompting them and supporting the class teacher with any administrative needs. We will train you in advance. 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](mailto:a.earnshaw@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk)

### **English Revision for SATs**

As I mentioned to some parents in the English consultations, I am looking to run a club on a Thursday after school (4pm finish) to help Year 6 students revise for their SATs. It will be mainly grammar and punctuation running up to SATs and then writing after the exams to support their writing assessment. I will plan to revise what we are doing in class using games to make it a bit more fun! If your child would like to attend please sign them up using the Microsoft Form link below so we can gauge numbers. Thank you, Miss Bull

<https://forms.office.com/e/0z27xQXb7h>

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**Advance notice of the end of term fund raising event.** Our students have requested raising funds for Cancer Research at the end of term. We will be asking for a donation of £1. If you are one of the amazing bakers in our community, or like me not but happy to contribute a shop bought cake, we would welcome support on the last Friday of term – to hold a bake sale to contribute funds to this cause. Thank you for any support you can offer.

**Can you help us with the mud?**

We would like to ask if you are able to provide a pair of slippers or spare shoes in order to help us protect the school against the mud. If students can begin to bring these in from next week we would appreciate it. They will be stored in tutor groups.

**Academic Consultations**

Thank you to all those parents that attended the parents evening, if you had technical difficulties, Ms Marler will be coordinating a new appointment time with you, hopefully before the end of term. Please make sure you email her on [admin@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk) to alert her that you need this.

In next week's newsletter there will be a survey to complete about these evenings. It is important to find out what has worked and if there is anything we could do to improve. Science consultation evenings will be rescheduled once our team are recovered from illness, which is likely to mean we offer this programme in the Summer term. However, if you do have a worry or concern about Science please don't hesitate to contact us.

Foundation parent evenings start this term and are in person: Dates are below:

<b>Foundation Evenings</b>		
<b>In-person evenings – 5pm to 7pm</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Subjects</b>
<b>Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Y8	French, History, Geography, Computing, Technology, Art, Music, PE, RE
<b>Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> April</b>	Y5	Science, French, Humanities, Computing, Technology, Art, Music, PE, RE
<b>Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May</b>	Y7	French, History, Geography, Computing, Technology, Art, Music, PE, RE
<b>Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Y6	Science, French, Humanities, Computing, Technology, Art, Music, PE, RE

**Herts Catering Limited/ SchoolGrid price increase**

We have received notification from Herts Catering Limited (HCL) that with effect from 1st April 2023 the cost of a school meal will increase from £2.80 to £3.15 daily. This increase will be implemented on SchoolGrid on the return to school after the Easter Holidays 2023.

If your child has a school dinner then please ensure that their dinners are booked prior to the return to school and that the dinner account remains in credit.

[Home - SchoolGrid](#)

[Guide for parents - Hertfordshire Catering Limited | Hertfordshire Catering Services \(hcl.co.uk\)](#)



**The Island that Rocks Auditions**

Following on from the success of Pirates of the Curry Bean, I am pleased to announce that we are putting on another school production called "The Island that Rocks". Two estranged teens become shipwrecked on a secret island, and begin a fun new existence with its trailblazing surfing inhabitants. Their season of shared adventures will change their lives, and their respective worlds.

From Steve Titford (Shakespeare Rocks) comes an exciting and forward-thinking musical for all. Bursting with wit and contemporary style, "The Island That Rocks" encourages young people to get active, have fun and explore a sustainable future, with songs guaranteed to have everyone singing and dancing!

Auditions will be held on:  
 30th Jan 3.15pm-4.15pm (KS2 Acting & KS3 Singing)  
 31st Jan 3.15pm-4.15pm (KS3 Acting)  
 6th Feb 3.15pm-4.15pm (KS2 Singing)

All cast members will be expected to sing as part of an ensemble and attend all rehearsals they are called for.

Please complete the permission sheet using this link: <https://forms.office.com/e/R1rA9Fi4f4>  
 The casting will be completed before half term and rehearsal schedules will be published after this.

Mrs Brock, Mrs Bright and Mr Meekins

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### **Edwinstree School Association**

The ESA fundraising focus this year is to provide an outdoor classroom. Thank you to all of you who shopped at the Co-op last year and raised £4700. This is a great start to the fund! However, our goal is to raise between £10000-£12000 so that we can build a really special space that the children can use during lessons, at break & lunchtime as well as a huddle space for visiting sports teams. Have you got any wonderful ideas to help us raise this money? Do you have any skills we could tap into? Could the company you work for help with corporate funding?

Our next meeting is on Monday 6th February at 6.30pm, venue TBC. If you would like to join us please email

[EdwinstreeSchoolAssociation@outlook.com](mailto:EdwinstreeSchoolAssociation@outlook.com)

If you are unable to attend but could help in any way please get in touch.

Our first fundraising activity is planned for KS2 children over February half term details to be announced next week (but start saving your 20p's).

Please find attached the ESA newsletter.

### **Home to School Transport Consultation**

Hertfordshire County Council is consulting on its home-school transport policies. We are seeking feedback from schools, parents and other stakeholders.

The proposals include:

- A policy to clarify the role of passenger assistants on contracted transport
- An amended policy for transport for 19-25 year olds
- Amending the charging structure for 16-18 year olds
- Removing the 16+ railcard

We are also seeking views of:

- Personal Travel Budgets
- Transport for those on Part-Time Timetables
- Spare seats on vehicles to special schools in Hertfordshire

Full details and an online response form are available at

[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/transportconsultation](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/transportconsultation)

The consultation will run between 24 January and 26 March 2023.

### **Nightingale Cleaning-Supervisor Vacancy**

Nightingale Cleaning urgently require a supervisor to join their team at Edwinstree School. Experience is preferred but not essential. 2-3 hours per day, 5 days per week - £12 per hour. Please contact Sharon on 07793 251716 or email a CV to [s.woodley@nightingalecleaning.com](mailto:s.woodley@nightingalecleaning.com)

Best Wishes

**Mrs J Gant - Headteacher**

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