



**Diary Dates**

	New 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
<b>9/11/20</b>	<b>5D &amp; 7B – Non uniform day Reward</b>
<b>10/11/20</b>	<b>Y6 NHS Lancaster Model</b>
<b>26/11/20</b>	<b>Flu Immunisation catch up to be rescheduled</b>
<b>26/11/20</b>	<b>Inset Day – School closed</b>
<b>27/11/20</b>	<b>Inset Day – School closed</b>
<b>4/12/20</b>	<b>Occasional Day</b>
<b>14/12/20</b>	<b>Christingle</b>
<b>18/12/20</b>	<b>End of Term</b>

**How will the new lock down restrictions impact on schools?**

As the country locks down for four weeks, we will be making the following adjustments to our current COVID practice:

**Parental visits:** Reception will remain a place for all parents to contact and visit, but I would like to remind you to follow the social distance guidelines, with only one visitor in reception at a time. Wherever possible, contact with parents and carers will be limited to phone calls or TEAM’s meetings, [HCC’s recommended safe online communication] If an 'in person' meeting is necessary, we would like these to take place via Microsoft Teams. Staff will need your email address to schedule and invite you to a meeting. Please see the attached guidance for further Teams support.

**What about external visitors like the Peripatetic teachers?**

We are currently seeking advice as to whether these lessons can continue in school, but they will continue until we are advised otherwise.

**Who will be asked to wear masks in school?**

**The wearing of masks:** According to the latest Government guidance, it is clear that schools with Year 7 and Year 8 students must wear masks. This is a little ambiguous for a middle school, does this mean that Year 6 and Year 5 who are with Year 7 and Year 8 should wear a mask too? We have decided that we are better to act on this as a whole community and would therefore, ask that you provide your child with a mask for school. We will implement this to all

year groups on Monday. Vulnerable or SEND students may be exempt.

Implementing the wearing of masks will be delivered with compassion. Nobody will be “told off” if they forget their mask and or don’t have one on Monday. The AM sessions will explain how to wear them and explain again why we are doing this. However, if your child is concerned and or anxious by the thought of a mask, please provide them with one, but kindly email the Admin Team on [admin@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk) or the Learning Zone team [learningzone@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk](mailto:learningzone@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk) so we can provide support. Nobody will be forcing children, we are compassionate and these are unusual times. We expect implementation to take at least a week, but we want to get started on Monday 9/11/20.

**The wearing of masks on buses:** The private bus drivers have been asking all children, including Year 5 and Year 6, to wear a mask wherever possible. We have been supporting the drivers by escorting students onto the buses and encouraging the use of masks. We will continue to do this.

**Staff morale and anxiety:** While we wholeheartedly support the desire to educate your child and children in our community, we are left with an overwhelming concern that we are being asked to continue working, with no additional PPE and or testing. This is not to raise sympathy, as we know the NHS has worked marvels, but it has certainly increased anxiety among staff. We are very lucky to work with such a caring and compassionate community and would ask that you continue to be mindful of their wellbeing as they continue to work during these challenging times.

**What was our School Improvement Plan focusing on last half term and how successful have we been?**

Last half term we focused our SIP on helping students to re-engage with their learning and improve their wellbeing. Over the course of the half term, students had an additional curriculum based around the Educational Psychologists guidance on ‘*how to grow from difficult times*’ (trauma). The school looked at developing a sense of safety, control, connectedness, calm and hope. In Collective Worship we explored the theme of compassion and supported students to develop their own self compassion, compassion for others and the community as a whole.

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### **How successful were we?**

This is hard to tell as we have no constant (an example of what it would have been like if we did nothing) However, we do know the majority of students and staff now have a language to talk about their anxiety and concerns and you may have heard of 'stress buckets', ants in their head etc! We have provided an environment that has sought to encourage sharing worries rather than hiding them. Your children are also compassionate in their actions and consideration of each other, as we ask them to operate in a school where they have only 25 minutes of outside play in a day. The remainder of the time is with 31 students in one classroom, with no movement break, sat at one desk. They are coping astonishingly well. This is not a year of childhood any of us would have wished for them and yet they are in school and want to learn.

### **Below is the summary of our School Improvement Plan**

- 1) To identify the full extent of the damage COVID has caused to students' learning and the impact on their curriculum, to re-map the students' curriculum journey to ensure they are prepared for the Y9 curriculum by the time they leave us and that any 'catch up' is embedded into our curriculum plans.
- 2) To find methods of formative feedback that support students to make individual progress, whilst adhering to all the COVID restrictions. We cannot get close to the students, and this is one of the main ways that we observe and spot errors and correct or model what to do. This is a new way of teaching that we are all finding frustrating, so we need to find new ways of identifying common misconceptions and tweaking them quickly.
- 3) To develop a series of swift and effective interventions that support students who are not making expected progress to move forward. These range from trauma and emotional support based work, literacy and numeracy and basic independent on line learning and homework support. We are currently recruiting additional LSAs to support us with this programme of interventions.

### **When will you assess students' progress?**

In reviewing students' learning last half term, we saw their confidence grow and their ability to take on new learning, and retain that learning improve. However, we felt that it was too soon to assess students at the end of the half term as

normal, as their pace and capacity for learning was only just returning. We now believe the majority of students are back to learning well in the classroom and at the pace they were maintaining prior to COVID. We are looking to push forward hard with this learning in November and at the end of the month, complete full assessments. We will then be able to assess the damage that COVID has caused and the gaps in learning. We can then review how we plan and deliver a curriculum that supports students to catch up.

### **When are you proposing to find the time to review and plan for this curriculum change?**

In order to assess and then take the time the staff need to plan effectively for the remainder of the year and beyond, I am proposing two Inset Days. The purpose of these days is for staff to work in subject teams to create the new curriculum maps and plans that address the gaps in students' learning. **The Inset days will be held on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

### **Aren't you limited to a set number of Inset Days?**

I am not proposing to take more Inset Days but to change the dates. Autumn term began two days earlier than planned, we will use these two days as replacement Inset and it is crucial we take these days for staff to plan the new curriculum.

### **Will work be provided?**

While this is not the normal process for Inset Days, we will be providing enrichment activities around students' learning to support the two days at home.

### **What about the Occasional day?**

This remains on the 4<sup>th</sup> December in line with Freman College.

### **What is distance Learning and Home learning and why are they important?**

As part of the plan to push forward, we are now reintroducing foundation subject homework to KS3 and below is the timetable of what subjects will set homework on a weekly basis.

### **This term, homework will be set in the following subjects.**

All students should be reading for a minimum of 20 minutes 5 times a week.

**Year 5 and Year 6 Subjects:** English and Maths

**Year 7 Subjects:** English, Maths, Science, History and French

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**Year 8 Subjects:** English, Maths, Science, Geography and French

Homework will be set via Show My Homework. If you have any difficulties in accessing the online platform, please email

[r.heywood@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk](mailto:r.heywood@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk)

Alongside the homework that is being set, we are supplying distance learning under “classwork” on the SMHW app, this is work that tracks alongside what is being completed in class, so that if your child has to self-isolate at any time, they are able to keep up to date and on track with their peers. Our Admin Team will support those who are not yet able to access this learning. Distance learning can be submitted by students back to the teacher in order for them to provide feedback and or assess.

### **Year 6 - Lancaster Model**

Further to the Parentmail sent out on the 7<sup>th</sup> September, the school nursing team will be visiting on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November to carry out the Lancaster Model questionnaire. The questionnaire will be completed by your child in school and asks about several aspects of your child’s life that impact on their health such as lifestyle and emotional wellbeing. The following day students who have been flagged with a small concern will meet with a member of the nursing team to discuss further. Please contact the school office if you do not wish your child to take part.

### **As well as driving learning forward is there any plans to have fun and celebrate Christmas?**

Absolutely! We think that the Church of England vision for our school that ‘*supports each individual to flourish and challenges us to live life in all its fullness*’ requires us to work hard to find opportunities for fun, in these strange times. In order to support a sense of control, we listened to their student voice and they have requested the following:

A Christmas Jumper Day, an opportunity for competition, Christingle, carol services, the world’s largest chocolate calendar, and a Fullness Day. We will be creating a calendar of events for December and will keep you updated

### **Christingle**

Despite not being able to meet as a school, we will be holding a virtual Christingle for Year 5 and Year 6 on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December. This will take place after school, but students will be provided with the resources they need to take part. Whilst the service itself will be streamed

live, the songs will be recorded for people to sing along with at home.

We will also be holding our normal end of year Christmas service but, again, this will be held virtually and in a similar way to how we currently run our Collective Worship. Instead of singing our usual Christmas carols, we will be learning how to sign them during Friday hymns in Advent. Further information about both events to follow.

### **Something silly but fun to begin with**

We kick off the competition by introducing the Golden Broom Award for the KS2 and KS3 class with the cleanest rooms! Each key stage will have one class per week nominated for the award. They will be rewarded with a non-uniform day. This week, two classes who gained a non-uniform day on Monday 9/11/20 are **5D and 7B**

### **How are we supporting the wellbeing of our students at the start of term?**

Students continue their wellbeing curriculum with morning sessions that are focusing on creating a sense of connection. We are currently looking at opportunities to team students from different year groups remotely. Students and staff are missing seeing young and older children working together. More about this in the next couple of weeks.

### **What is our COWO value this half term?**

We are exploring the value of ‘hope’, why it is important, what it means and how we can maintain this value. As part of Collective Worship we will be using a Fullness Day to raise funds for the Buntingford food bank which is looking to create Christmas hampers for the growing number of vulnerable families in the area. We know from past experience, that helping others is something the students really enjoy and this supports their ideas of developing hope and that we can all make a difference. Again more information in the next couple of weeks.

### **PE Footwear**

As we begin the second half of the Autumn term, cross country forms part of our curriculum. However as the field becoming increasingly muddy, the PE department would like all students to bring in a pair of studded boots if possible. These can be left in classrooms or brought in and home again when your child has a timetabled PE session.

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**What information has Herts CC asked us to pass onto you that may help in these difficult times:**

**Citizens Advice Community information:**

With the new lockdown restrictions coming into play on Thursday 5/11/20 Citizens Advice East Herts would like to remind you that they are available to help with free and confidential advice for anyone living in East Herts. They can also provide foodbank vouchers and referrals to other support agencies. Please see the attached leaflet for more information

HertsHelp [www.hertshelp.net](http://www.hertshelp.net) is a network of community organisations in Hertfordshire working together. They are there to listen and help you find independent support, guidance and the information you need to get the best out of life. If you need any additional help with free school meals please email [info@hertshelp.net](mailto:info@hertshelp.net)  
Telephone: 03001234040  
Monday-Fri 8am-8pm  
Saturday Sunday 10am-6pm

**Jo Gant**

**Headteacher**

Citizens Advice  
Microsoft Teams Guidance  
Timetable

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