

June 2020

Dear Parent or Guardian

I am writing to update you on our plans to transition your child to Edwinstree Middle School during these very unusual times.

How can you ensure that we communicate effectively with you from the outset?

Thank you to the significant majority of parents who have returned the necessary forms in order that we can begin to process your child's information. If you have not returned this information, don't worry, but please make sure this information gets to us in the next week. However, if you have lost the forms or don't think you received the pack, please contact the School Office on 01763-271446 or email admin@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk.

The forms we require you to return are:

- Data Collection Sheet
- Medical Form
- Consent for Images
- Ethnic Background
- Swimming Ability Form
- Online Safety Agreement
- Instrumental Request Form

How will we liaise with your child's current school regarding key information about your child's learning and welfare?

All first and primary schools have now been contacted so that we can collect what we call, the hard and soft data. The hard data we collect is information on your child's progress and attainment. This year we have asked schools to give us the last, most accurate check on your child's progress and we are aware this is likely to be before the lockdown was implemented. Your child's school will provide the last moderated data set and the time that it was collected, and this will be the February or March data set.

The soft data we collect are the conversations that take place between the school and the Head of Year, Mrs Kelly and or the SENCO, who are leading the transition programme. This will provide a richer and deeper look at your child's needs, personality, likes and dislikes and will also give us with an insight into their learning. This year we will be asking schools to send us your child's last English and Maths book as we have been unable to visit and see their learning in action. Should you feel there is more information you would like to share about your child and their current needs, please email: admin@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk

Will my child get a chance to visit the school prior to September?

I am deeply sorry, but this will not be possible this side of the Summer Term. Due to the stringent social distancing rules and the fact that we are still so unclear as to what September will look like for any of our students, I fear if we were to run a July Taster Day, it would fall short of all our expectations. We have, therefore, made the decision to return to school slightly earlier than previously planned in order to give your child two days of induction prior to the start of term. Staff will now return on the 2nd September 2020 for an Inset Training Day, and the new Year 5 will be given two induction days on Thursday 3rd and Friday 4th September to settle into the school. We hope this will provide us all with quality time to get to know the students and to introduce them to Edwinstree and we will look forward to meeting your child at the entrance gate on Wednesday 3rd September at 8:40am and sadly not before.

How will my child and I be given the opportunity to find out about the school and to manage their anxieties?

The school is currently creating a video and PowerPoint presentation to send to your child's school in order to help familiarise them with their new surroundings, their new tutor groups, the different subjects on offer, the different years, houses, our 'Christian Values' and what it means to be part of a Church of England school. The PowerPoint will include a welcome from the Head, their Head of Year, and Tutors, former Year 5 students and our Year 8 Leaders, who will be able to give them an insight into the school and learning at Edwinstree. This presentation will also be available on our website, so students can download and play it as many times as they need to. Accompanying this video will be a booklet to help answer their questions. Our partner schools are kindly sourcing us with all the questions your children are keen to have answered, so it is meaningful and reassuring, whilst sparking an element of excitement at starting their new middle school.

How can I find out more about Edwinstree as a parent or carer?

Our Transition Evening was planned for Thursday 9th July 2020. Whilst we will not be inviting parents in to hear our talk the opportunity to field questions, we will be hosting two online meetings at 5pm and 6pm to allow parents time to meet and familiarise themselves with us and find out how we will support your child. In early July we will send all parents an invitation to the online meetings, providing an opportunity for you to send us questions you would like answered at the meeting. Please be aware that on 17th September we will be hosting a 'Meet the Tutor' evening, giving you additional time to get to know your child's tutor, to have a look at their initial work and discuss how they have settled into life at Edwinstree.

How do I go about purchasing uniform?

Due to Covid-19, our school uniform rules will be relaxed, allowing parents to purchase uniform from a local supermarket of their choice, supporting a significant reduction in the cost of our basic school uniform. Therefore, from September 2020 our uniform will consist of the following:

- Navy blue V neck jumper
- White polo shirt
- Black or grey trousers or skirt.
- Black shoes that cover the feet to avoid damage from hazardous substances in technology and science
- Black shorts for PE
- White polo shirt for PE (in addition to the one for the school day)
- Black tracksuit bottoms
- Black or grey hoodie for outside sporting activities
- Trainers - inexpensive brands
- Football boots for football and hockey (both boys and girls)
- Mouth guard

Please note: All year groups will move to this uniform for the first term, with a review at half term.

How do I apply for free school meals?

In these challenging times, we are finding more and more parents eligible for Free School Meals. We would like to remind you that in applying for access to this service, the school is also given additional funding to help your child with their learning. If you are eligible, we encourage you to visit www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals where you will find information on how to apply.

What if I have additional questions?

Don't worry, despite the Coronavirus, our school is warm and welcoming and we always encourage parents to let us know if they have any concern or worry. Our best form of communication is email, as very few teachers have access to a phone during the school day. School Office opening hours are 8:30am – 4pm daily. Please email either of the following and we will endeavour to get back to you within 24 hours:

Transition enquiries	admin@edwintree.herts.sch.uk
Head of Year	hoy5@edwintree.herts.sch.uk

Please remember, no query is too small, please ask as we are clear that a successful and content student is one where school and parents are working together to support. As your child begins the next stage of their educational journey, we look forward to welcoming them to the Edwintree community.

Yours sincerely



Jo Gant
Headteacher