



22nd September 2020

Dear Parent Carer

Now that we have been back for a couple of weeks I thought I would write to give our parents a brief update on how things are progressing in the new school year at Eastbrook.

It is certainly a very different experience this year, but we have made a really fantastic start and I genuinely believe that we have the students, the staff and the systems to enable us to continue going from strength to strength.

Working in bubbles is proving to be very productive. Although it is hard work for the teachers who are having to quickly move around the school to get to their classes, they are all telling me very positive things about the students. We have noticed greatly improved attitudes to learning, excellent standards of behaviour and very high levels of focus in the classrooms. It is clear to me that all of our students are really pleased to be back in school and able to return to some form of normality – they know that there is no time to waste after lockdown! Interestingly, the students themselves are also reporting to me how much they appreciate the new systems we have put in place ... some even say they prefer it!

I mentioned in my previous letter about one or two additional rules we have implemented and thought I would touch on them here. You will be aware that we have removed sweets, crisps, biscuits, etc from our menu and have also told students not to bring them into school. I firmly believe that this new approach is one of the key factors in the improved focus and attitudes I described above; all parents at some point will have experienced the effect they can have on their children! Again, most of our students are very happy with the new rule, are willingly complying and can see the benefits.

We have also insisted that students leave the area straight away when they are dismissed from school and do not use the local amenities. This is simply a matter of public health. After going to such lengths during the day to keep students safe by keeping them in their bubbles, it would be negligent of us to then allow them to congregate in the local area in large groups. All parents will understand the risks to everyone's health and safety this would cause and again, I am grateful to our wonderful students who have done exactly as we have asked them each evening and understand why we have done it.

From 21st September we are asking everyone in the school community to wear masks in indoor communal areas like the corridors. This is no cause for alarm ... we are acting on the advice of the Barking and Dagenham Public Health Department to implement an additional recommendation to ensure the whole school community is as safe as it can possibly be. Obviously we will honour requests for exemption but I would ask everyone to consider whether this is necessary as masks will only be worn for very short periods of time as students move through the building. I would like to thank all of our students and parents in advance for their cooperation in this matter.

In conclusion, I want to welcome everyone back to the new school year and wish everyone well in the coming weeks and months

Yours faithfully

P Frith
Headteacher