



Dear Parents/Carers

Today is the 'half way' point of this school year – which means that time is once again flying by! As the children break up for half term here are a few updates and reminders before we return for the second half of the academic year.

### Golden day feedback

The vast majority of the pupils earned the right to attend our fantastic Golden Day yesterday and thanks to the 'Happy Puzzle Company' everyone had a great time! The children looked super in their 'number' outfits and I know the workshops and activities were well received by children from Nursery to Year 6.

Feedback from the large number of parents/families who attended the 'Happy Puzzle' workshop after school was also very positive. Support for such events is not something we take for granted and the fact that we had so many families who wanted to come in and take part is something that we were delighted about.

Look out for the photos on our website – great fun was had by all!!

### Rainbow Reading Challenge

Our rainbow reading challenge is being very well supported. We have more children than ever who have reached their bronze award – with the current total running at 165!! Many are nearing their silver award...and if your child reads in the half term holiday then this counts as a 'rung' of the ladder and we hope to reward our first silver winners in the week beginning 3<sup>rd</sup> March!

### Parent Governor

Following my request in a previous letter I am pleased to inform everyone that we have a new parent governor at Eastlea. **Mrs Rebecca Carroll** (parent of Joseph in Year 5) has volunteered to take on this important role and will join the Full Governing Body at the next meeting in March.

### School Games and Sports update

We have been actively taking part in a wide range of sporting events this half term with coaches coming into school, clubs for children in different age groups as well as festivals and regional school games competitions. Thanks to the many parents who have encouraged their children to take part in the lunchtime football or running clubs, before school street dance club, tennis/rugby/gymnastics coaching sessions and the Year 5/Year 6 multi-skills academy selection event all of which have taken place this half term

In particular I also wanted to mention:

- **Year 4 racket sports festival** – we received very positive feedback as to the team work, attitude and behaviour of our Year 4 class. This was also followed up by an introduction to 'squash' which took place this week in school.
- **Year 3/Year 4 gymnastics competition** in which one of our Year 4 pupils was the highest achiever across the whole of the Cramlington and Seaton valley area – winning 2 'perfect scores' and being awarded with two medals! **Well done to Jaimie Millican!!**
- **Sports Council** – we now have 2 representatives from each class from Year 1 to Year 6 who will be working with Mrs Merryweather to help to coordinate our sports clubs, PE equipment and sports based events.



### Attendance and punctuality

The 'winter' season of sickness bugs, headaches, coughs and colds has affected our attendance this term. However, the coveted attendance trophy and punctuality plaque have continued to be awarded each week. Our overall half term class winners won't be announced until after the holiday but the weekly winners for the first five weeks of 2014 are listed below:

<b>Attendance</b> (One winner per week)	<b>Punctuality</b> (often shared by 2 classes each week)
Year 1 – once	Year 1 – 3 times
Year 2 – once	Year 2 – twice
Year 3 – once	Year 4 – once
Year 5 – twice	Year 5 – once
	Year 6 – once

## **Sainsbury's Active Kids Vouchers**

Sainsbury's are once again running their Active Kids vouchers scheme. Thank you to those who have already sent vouchers into school. Any more would be gratefully received – there is a collection box in the library. Our Sports Council will then be able to take the opportunity to look through the Active Kids Catalogue and exchange the vouchers for some new playground games/sports equipment or cooking utensils/recipes!

## **Bikes and scooters**

I'm sorry to have to report that we seem to have a problem emerging in terms of bikes going missing from the school premises. One was stolen a while ago from outside the front of the school – the police were informed but although we had a description of the culprit the bike was never found. More recently two bikes have gone missing – both were in the bike racks provided but were left unlocked. Once again the police are aware of the situation and are increasing their patrols but it is not pleasant to think that someone is coming onto our property and stealing items belonging to children. If anyone has any information then please let staff or the police know.

The police crime prevention team have advised that bikes or scooters without locks should not be brought to school so **please can we insist that any bikes and scooters brought to Eastlea are LOCKED securely to the bike racks provided so that no more instances like this can occur.**

## **Parent Mail – text updates for parents**

Following the parental questionnaire which we asked you to complete in the autumn term, one of the issues raised was whether a facility for 'text message' alerts could be provided for parents/carers. We have looked into this service previously but were not impressed by what was on offer. However, I am pleased to say that 'Parent Mail' now have what seems a workable service and we have subscribed to this for a year as a trial measure starting after half term.

In practise this will mean that we have the facility to send out a text message 'alert' to the primary mobile contacts for each family/child to inform everyone quickly of important information. We do not intend to use this service for daily or weekly reminders, but will do so for unscheduled or one-off events, e.g. if we are ever in the position again to have to close Eastlea due to bad weather, or as a reminder on the day of our parent appointments, or to let families know if a school visit is delayed, or a residential visit has arrived safely etc.

**Parent Mail will make use of the contacts we have held on our school system so it is vital that if you change a mobile number that you inform us immediately to that we have the most up-to-date numbers available.**

There will be no facility to reply to the text service and there will be no charge for this for parents. We hope that this will improve even further our communication with parents/carers and would welcome your feedback on the new system when it is operational.

## **Advance notice...some important dates for your diary**

We will be sending out information of what is planned for next half term after the holiday, but wanted you to be aware in advance of some dates to put in your diary:

- **Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March** – Eastlea will be celebrating **World Book Day** with children asked to come to school dressed up as a character from a book. The £1 'fine' which will be requested for this event will go towards our library funds.
- **Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March** – we are planning an afternoon of 'Family Maths Fun' for pupils from Reception to Year 6 when you will be invited to join your children in their classrooms to see what they get up to in Maths.
- **Friday 21<sup>st</sup> March** – we will be supporting the national 'Sports Relief' charity event - more details will follow after half term.
- **Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> April** – Parents appointments will take place from 2.30 – 6.30pm for parents/carers of pupils from Reception to Year 6 (with lunchtime appointments that week for Nursery parents/carers)

Enjoy the half term holiday and we look forward to seeing everyone back in school on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February.

Yours sincerely

*E Beeston*

Miss E Beeston,  
Head Teacher