

Emmbrook Junior School Newsletter

Friday 5th March 2021

In this Edition:

- Message from Mr Usher
- Message from The Chair of Governors
- Times Tables Rock Stars
- Racial Equality
- Online Safety
- Bedtime Stories
- The Masked Reader
- Ofsted Parent View
- Conqueror Challenge
- Lateral Flow Tests
- Uniform



Letters this week:

- The Willows
- Conqueror Challenge Update 13
- Hot Packed Lunch Menu
- Update from Mr Usher 2 March
- School Gates
- Rapid Testing
- Virtual Events via Wokingham Libraries
- Rapid Flow Testing Updated Guidance

Message from Mr Usher



It's been a busy couple of weeks here at Emmbrook Junior School as we plan for the return of all pupils to face to face learning from Monday the 8th of March. Our current risk assessment can be found on our website with details about the enhanced controls we will have in place. This document, like all the previous incarnations, is not set in stone nor does it cover every possible eventuality. **We will continue to assess the situation and adapt or abandon our controls as necessity dictates.** I have been contacted by some parents who are concerned about the social impact of limiting children to class bubbles and I felt it important to let you know that we will be moving back to year group bubbles as soon as we feel it is appropriate to do so. Currently, **we hope to be able to revert to the previous year group bubble arrangements after the Easter break** (or sooner if it's deemed appropriate) and as soon as possible after that move to a model that more resembles the normal running of the school. However, **this will only happen if it's supported by the evidence and government guidance.**

The good news is that the national vaccine roll-out is continuing as scheduled and some members of staff, who met the criteria for vaccination, have had the jab. [Along with this, staff continue with twice weekly testing which is now available to your families as well.](#) This means that we have a far greater chance of identifying asymptomatic cases of the virus and greatly reduce the chances of transmission.

I know that the majority of our children walk to school and that some families need to arrive by car. **Please be considerate of our neighbours when parking in the local area** while dropping off or picking up your children. In the past, we have received complaints about some of our parents & carers parking in a way that impacts local residents. It is very important for the school that we maintain a positive relationship with the local community and we need your support to do this.

The most important thing is that **we are really looking forward to having the children back** with us in school. I would like to reiterate sentiments shared earlier this week. These children are not a lost generation, they have been successful and learned a range of new skills while developing others. There are challenges for parents, staff and the children but **everyone has shown the Emmbrook Junior School value of being 'Adaptable' and I hope that we will all continue to be 'Courageous' as we embrace the opportunities ahead.**

Have a fantastic weekend and we look forward to seeing everyone on Monday.



Message from The Chair of Governors

Dear Parents and Carers,

It gives me great pleasure to be able to welcome everybody back to school next week!

The children will be returning to a school that is as prepared as it can be to ensure this virus is kept at bay. **The team have spent endless hours discussing and developing the return-to-school plans** using a risk-based approach that reduces anxieties in staff and the transmission of the virus. Other schools in the area have been consulted for best practice, discussions have been held with the Infant school and the governors have performed a stringent review of the risk assessment, which **means we are confident we have reduced the risk of transmission as much as is possible in our school**. I understand some will wonder why we have moved to the class bubble; I know Mr Usher has explained but I wanted to reiterate that we are not in the same position as we were in September when we had year group bubbles. The vaccine program is going amazingly well across the country but has not yet reached all of our school team; add to this that the number of cases and deaths remains significantly higher than in September 2020 and that in early 2021 Covid impacted many of our staff, highlighting we are not immune. It can and will spread through our school given the chance and therefore we believe we should remain cautious in our reopening plans. We are committed to ensure the risk assessment is reviewed regularly and **our aim is to expand the bubbles when the numbers indicate this is sensible**.

On a different note, I am pleased to inform you that Mr Usher and the team have been working hard on a few different initiatives that will be introduced before the end of term. Look out for a new library book system and please visit the [Amazon Wish List](#), if you would like to contribute some books that the school would love to introduce. More information on the new reading scheme will follow in the next couple of weeks. The governors have also been working hard on collating your feedback on where the school should be in 3 years. We hope to share a revised strategy for your musings by the end of term.

With very best wishes for a well overdue return to school.

Sam Dowse
Chair of Governors

Times Tables Rock Stars

Times Tables Rock Stars is a carefully sequenced programme of daily times tables practice.

Each week concentrates on a different times table, with a recommended consolidation week for rehearsing the tables that have recently been practised every third week or so.



This format has very successfully boosted times tables recall speed for hundreds of thousands of pupils over the last 8 years in over 16,000 schools - both primary and secondary - worldwide.

We will return to weekly certificates once everyone is able to be back at school – don't forget you too have the chance to win a certificate. **Keep practising!**

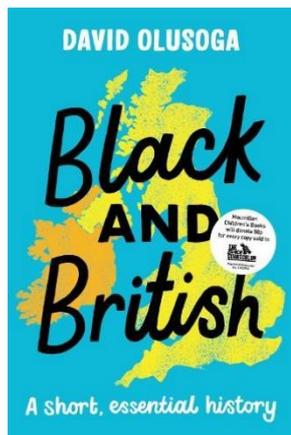
Each week will be looking for the top earners and most correct answers from each year group.

You can login in to Times Tables Rock Stars here:

<https://play.ttrockstars.com/auth/school/student/15813>



Racial Equity



I have been reading **Black & British - A short, essential History** which is an introduction to Black British history for readers of 12+ by award-winning historian and broadcaster David Olusoga. Not only is it very accessible (being for younger readers than me) in terms of the language but also through the way in which David brings the history to life by telling the individual stories of black people. It has challenged some of my assumptions and giving me some facts with which to challenge prejudices in others.

When did Africans first come to Britain?

Who are the well-dressed black children in Georgian paintings?

Why did the American Civil War disrupt the Industrial Revolution?

These and many other questions are answered in this essential introduction to 1800 years of the Black British history: from the Roman Africans who guarded Hadrian's Wall right up to the present day.

This book is a fantastic source of information not just on Black history but on British history in general. I thoroughly recommend giving it a read.

Online Safety

Unsafe communication – Knowing different strategies for staying safe when communicating with others, especially people they do not know/have never met is very important for keeping safe online. Children should understand that communicating safely online and protecting your privacy and data is important regardless of who you are communicating with. It is worth talking about ways of identifying indicators or risk and unsafe communications and discussing the risks associated with giving out addresses, phone numbers or email addresses to people you do not know or arranging to meet someone you have not met before.

Helping children to develop strategies to confidently say “no” to both friends and strangers online is a very important tool in helping them to be safe online.

To find out about the latest apps, games and social media sites your children may be interested in or already accessing go to: <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/>

Bedtime Stories

Some staff have uploaded the next chapter of their bedtime stories – **don't worry the rest are on the way**. We hope you're enjoying listening.



[You can find the links to staff reading bedtime stories in Teams - Bedtime Stories](#)

Here's one of our Year 6 children enjoying the sunshine and some feline company while reading outside.

Where do you enjoy reading?

In the garden, your reading den, in the bath?

Don't forget to send us your reading pictures...

The Masked Reader



For World Book Day some of our staff are taking part in Emmbrook Junior's Masked Reader. The PowerPoint with the video of each Masked Reader can be found in Teams as are some other ideas for World Book Day, such as taking a 'Shelfie'. We'd love to see yours.

There is a PDF with the link for submitting your guesses for The Masked Reader and you can also submit your guesses via the link below:

[EJS – Masked Reader](#)

Ofsted Parent View

In advance of any possible visit from Ofsted in the coming year, it would be useful if parents could give their feelings about the school via Parent View. Parent View gives you the chance to tell Ofsted what you think about your child's school, from the quality of teaching to dealing with poor behaviour.

<https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/>

The survey can be completed at any time; you don't have to wait until the school is being inspected. **We only ask that if you do have any issues you raise them with us first so that we have a chance to address them.**



Conqueror Challenge

So far to date the children and staff have completed 9450.2km in 21 weeks! This is an amazing effort and we are over $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way through.

We have currently raised £1717.00 via the JustGiving page and cash donations. Thank you to all those who have already donated, we are putting donations towards our next big project, which is the Reading Summerhouse. There are some pictures below for you to see an example of what we are looking to get installed. If you wish to donate anything that you can then please visit our Fundraising page: https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/emmbrook-junior-school?utm_term=JnQyJaX2R

It has truly been an incredible sight to see so many children keeping active and really looking to challenge themselves. The encouragement from the parents to go with their children on various walks and bike rides, as well as help donating, has been nothing short of inspiring, especially given the current situation with the pandemic.

We are super excited for all the children to return on March the 8th and being able to get outside in the warm weather to do our PE sessions. **Remember to stay active and keep safe and we will see you all soon.**



<https://emmbrookjuniorschool.co.uk/>



Follow us on Twitter @Emmbrook_Junior

Rapid Lateral Flow Testing

Members of households, childcare or support bubbles of school staff and pupils can access rapid lateral flow tests.

From 1 March 2021, if you're a member of a household, childcare bubble or support bubble of staff or a pupil you can get a twice-weekly test:

- through your employer if they offer testing to employees
- [at a local test site](#)
- [by collecting a home test kit from a test site](#)
- [by ordering a home test kit online](#)

Please note that these tests should not be used if someone is displaying symptoms of Covid-19. If someone in your household is showing symptoms please book a [PCR test](#).

Uniform

As mentioned in last week's newsletter **we will be expecting children to wear the usual school uniform**, with additional layers if necessary. Year 5 and Year 6 need to wear their PE kits to school on those days they are doing PE (as advised by their teachers), this includes wearing trainers on those days.

We are also aware that many children will have grown out of school shoes and uniforms during lockdown without any opportunity for you to replace them. While we obviously expect children to wear the correct uniform and shoes where possible we do understand that some families have not been able to purchase these items. Over the coming weeks **we will do our best to flexible regarding shoes and uniform** on the understanding once we are in a position to purchase the correct shoes etc. that everyone does so. In the interests of clarity, **if your children have appropriate school shoes they should continue to wear them**, even if some of their peers do not.

At Emmbrook Junior School we are:

