



NEWSLETTER

Friday 27th November 2020

Dear Parents /Carers,

Reverse Advent Calendar

A huge thanks to those of you who have supported the Reverse Advent Calendar already since its launch just over a week ago. We have been overwhelmed again by the quantity of donations.

Since its launch, we have received...

- 151 bottles of fizzy drink;
- 176 packets of breakfast cereal;
- 157 tins of fruit;
- 122 tins of custard;
- 115 packets of rice;
- 71 packets of toilet roll (which amounted to 417 individual rolls);
- 119 tins of meat;
- 104 tins of potatoes.

By supporting the Downham Foodbank, this is one of those rare charitable events where you can be assured that the items you are donating are really going to be used to support those who you may pass in the street every day. A true support to the community at not only a difficult time of year for many, but also during a difficult period of time.

Monday 30 th November	Mince Pies/Xmas Pudding	Any brand
Tuesday 1 st December	Deodorant/Toothpaste	Roll-on/spray, Mens/Womens, any brand
Wednesday 2 nd December	Sponge scouring pads	Any brand or multipack size
Thursday 3 rd December	Tea/Coffee/Sugar	Any brand
Friday 4 th December	Chocolate Bars	Any brand/variety (not containing nuts)
Monday 7 th December	Tinned tomatoes	Any brand
Tuesday 8 th December	Crisps	Any brand/flavour or multipack size
Wednesday 9 th December	Fruit juice	Any brand/flavour
Thursday 10 th December	Packet Cake Mix	Any brand/variety
Friday 11 th December	Long Life Milk	Any brand/carton size
Monday 14 th December	Jam or Marmalade	Any brand/flavour
Tuesday 15 th December	Mini Cheddars	Any variety
Wednesday 16 th December	Christmas Crackers	Any size box

Items can be placed in the yellow containers that can be found beside the black gate, outside the 'i' Building and at the end of the path, where it meets the KS2 playground. Thank you for your continued support.

We are also supporting the 'No child goes hungry at Christmas' campaign run by the Swan Youth Project – a flyer with more details can be found towards the end of this Newsletter

Changes to Christmas Arrangements

Although Christmas isn't cancelled at Hillcrest, it will feel very different for both the staff and children this year as we work around the various restrictions to our normal activities.

For a school that loves celebrating the festive period well, the new arrangements for this year don't sit comfortably with us. However, all aspects of life are very different for everybody at present and although unusual, we will make Christmas as special for the children as we can.

First, to the things that won't be happening this year...

Please DO NOT send your child in with cards for their friends. Just as we no longer give out birthday sweets due to the possibility of cross-contamination between households, we will not be allowing children to send cards home to their friends. If there are other ways that families feel they can send cards to friends and the other families are happy to accept these, despite the risks that are posed, then this is up to them to arrange between each other. Class teachers will NOT act as a point for distributing cards, even if the risk posed may be minimal, so please do not send your children in with them.

For the same reason, the school Christmas post box will NOT be operating this year.

As you have probably already guessed, there will be no Christmas Nativity or Church Service this year because of the need to keep children in their protective bubbles, the fact that costume changes pose their own health risks and also ensure that we are not inviting lots of other adults onto site.

There will also be no Christmas disco and the children will have to wait until Christmas Eve for Santa to visit their home as he won't be dropping by Hillcrest this year.

Now onto what we will be able to do for the children...

Christmas Dinner Day will still go ahead with some alterations. Each class will still be distanced from one another in order to protect the 'bubbles.' However, the children will be given longer to eat than they normally get on a typical day. Christmas music will be played in both the Main Hall and the Blue Hall where dinners are served. Both staff and children will be wearing their Christmas jumpers. Both halls will have a large Christmas tree to add to that festive feel and their teacher and teaching assistant will help to serve them their dinner.

Each class has been rehearsing a Christmas song with a mix of traditional hymns and Christmas pop songs amongst the play list. Once perfected, the children will be filmed singing outside in a Covid-friendly environment as we also have restrictions placed on us in regards to indoor singing. A compilation of all of the Christmas songs from across the 18 classes will then be played to the children on Thursday 17th December in place of being able to get together in the same hall for a service.

The, now traditional, Twelve Days of Christmas assembly – a highlight of the final day of term – will be taking place by Zoom with some special guests performing all of the actions for the children!

And of course, the annual Reverse Advent Calendar, now in its third year, continues to contribute a huge amount to the local community.

Ofsted Visit

Ofsted inspectors held a remote meeting with Mr Try and Mrs White on 12th November as part of their programme of Autumn Term visits to assess the provision offered to pupils upon their return after lockdown.

Routine Ofsted inspections have been temporarily suspended since schools went into lockdown in March and will not be resuming until January 2021 at the earliest. However, in place of these, their inspectors have been carrying out these visits which do not end in a judgement on the school but instead, clarify a list of actions that the school has taken to try and return the children to some kind of normal.

Mr Try and Mrs White were quizzed by two inspectors for almost 5 hours on a variety of aspects of school life including looking at the curriculum, attendance and the impact of the lockdown on children's mental health and wellbeing.

The final report will be published on the Ofsted website from early December. However, in advance of that publication, we are allowed to share the final report with all of our parents. You will find this enclosed on the final three pages of this Newsletter.

It was an extremely positive meeting and the inspectors were incredibly complimentary about what we had put in place, including the Remote Learning offer.

Countryfile Ramble

A huge thank you to those who have sent in money that was raised following the children's participation in the Countryfile Ramble.

This year the funds are being split evenly between Children In Need and the Friends of Hillcrest.

With the 'first' deadline for money ending today, we don't yet have a final total for you but hope to be able to share one in the next edition of the Newsletter. We did say that we would continue to accept money through until **Friday 4th December** to allow for those families who have been unable to see friends or relatives during this latest lockdown period. Therefore, we would be delighted to receive any additional funds raised through until 4th December.

Remote Learning

A reminder that all children who are absent from school due to the rules on self-isolation, should still be accessing learning every day. Parents have access to a weekly plan for Remote Learning for their child with every year group team posting a different plan via the school website and on the Google Classroom for their class.

Any child who is absent from school because they are self-isolating, either because they themselves are awaiting a test result or because another member of the household is awaiting a test result, can now switch on their Google Classroom or visit the school website and access work appropriate for their age group.

We would like to thank all of the teachers for their efforts in making this happen as this has been planned for and provided in addition to planning their usual lessons for those children who are in school.

Christmas Dinner Day – Wednesday 16th December

Despite the current climate and very different organisation of our school dinners due to social distancing, we are still looking forward to making the children's Christmas Dinner as enjoyable as always.

If you haven't already booked your child's Christmas Dinner for Wednesday 16th December, please do so as soon as possible via WisePay. There is an advert towards the rear of the Newsletter that tells you what the menu for the day is.

Children will be allowed to come to school on Christmas Dinner Day in non-school uniform although we would ask that everyone wears a Christmas jumper to help with the festive feel.

We would also encourage those parents of children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 who are ALL entitled to a Universal Infant FREE School Meal, to take up the option of booking one through WisePay even though no payment is necessary.

All Christmas meals should be booked via WisePay by Friday 4th December.

The SRB Continues to Move Forward



Although the unusual circumstances in which everyone has found themselves recently has also led to a delay in the construction of the SRB, it hasn't stopped it.

We are excitedly moving forwards with preparations for the new single-storey, two-classroom building with the builders expected to move onto site in February 2021 with completion during the Summer holidays.

The new Learning & Cognition Specialist Resource Base should then open to pupils in September 2021.

Help Us to Keep the School Safe

Although more and more local cases of Covid-19 have been reported around Downham in recent weeks, we are still pleased to say that there has been no confirmed case of the virus amongst Hillcrest staff or pupils to date.

Please help us to keep Hillcrest virus-free, especially at a time when locally, it is clearly in circulation. It is vitally important that parents closely follow the NHS guidelines for isolating themselves and their children when a case is suspected.

If a member of your household demonstrates any of the well-advertised symptoms of Covid-19, then ALL of the household members, including the children, should self-isolate until the member of the house with symptoms has received a 'negative' test result.

We do not want to see children in school when a member of their household is sitting at home waiting for a test result. If that test proves to be 'positive' then that child has been circulating with staff and pupils having been exposed to the virus, putting others at risk.

Whilst the majority of people taking tests are receiving negative results, in order to keep everyone absolutely safe, we MUST err on the side of caution and we MUST have confidence that parents are following these guidelines.

DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL IF...

- *...they display a temperature of 37.6 degrees or higher;*
- *...they have a persistent cough (regardless of whether you believe this to be caused by something else);*
- *---they complain of a sudden and extreme loss of taste or smell.*

In the event that they are displaying these symptoms, you MUST get your child tested as they will NOT be accepted back into school until a NEGATIVE Covid-19 test has been received and their symptoms have subsided.

If your child develops any of these symptoms whilst at school, we will isolate them and then ask you to come and collect them.

Applying for Free School Meals – don't miss out on the Christmas Food Voucher Scheme

Although parents of children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to a Free School Meal for their child as part of the government's Universal Infant Free School Meal provision, during lockdown these families were not automatically entitled to a free school meal.

However, those families who qualified for Free School Meals because they met one or more of the criteria laid out below, did receive a government food voucher worth £15 per child per week which could be spent at the any of the major supermarkets.

It is more important than ever that those families who have been entitled in the past but never claimed, or who have fallen into the categories below more recently because of the uncertain jobs market, take the opportunity to register for Free School Meals as the Local Authority are planning to roll out a Christmas Food Voucher Scheme. Unlike the voucher scheme that operated during the first lockdown, this scheme will be managed centrally by Norfolk County Council rather than by the individual schools. However, they will be taking the Free School Meals data from our registers, hence the reason for signing up if you haven't already, so that you don't miss out.

If you feel you meet any of the criteria below, we would encourage you to register for Free School Meals with Norfolk County Council.

Your child may be able to get free school meals if you claim any of the following:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

If you think you may qualify for Free School Meals, please register with Norfolk County Council via the following website (please note that this is a new website address and different from the one promoted in previous editions of the Newsletter)...

www.norfolk.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools/school-meals-and-milk

School Reports

All children will be sent home with their Post Lockdown School Report on Thursday 17th December.

The conversation that you will have had with your child's class teacher over the phone during the Parent's Consultation Evening will have given you a sense of how well they have settled back in.

The report that you will receive on the 17th December will continue that conversation about their wellbeing along with providing you with the first real sense of their academic attainment since their return from lockdown.

Early warning...SCHOOL CLOSURE

We would like to remind you that Hillcrest Primary School will be closed for the Christmas and New Year holidays between **Monday 21st December 2020 and Friday 1st January 2021 (inclusive)**. School reopens at the usual time on Monday 4th January 2021. Therefore, the children's last day this term will be Friday 18th December.

NEXT NEWSLETTER IS OUT ON FRIDAY 18th DECEMBER

The logo for 'Norse' is positioned at the top center of the page. It features the word 'Norse' in a white, sans-serif font with a subtle shadow effect. The background of the entire page is a winter scene with a blue sky, white snow, and falling snowflakes. At the top, there are illustrations of reindeer pulling a sleigh and holly leaves with red berries. The main title 'Christmas Lunch' is written in a large, red, cursive font with a white outline, set against a white, cloud-like background. Below the title is a wooden signpost with a white board containing the menu details. The signpost is decorated with holly leaves and berries. At the bottom of the page, there are illustrations of a snowman, a girl in a red hat and earmuffs holding a blue gift, and a boy in a green hat holding a red gift. In the background, there are snow-covered trees and a small house.

Christmas Lunch

December 2020 Traditional Christmas Lunch

Roast Chicken with Stuffing and Chipolata Sausage

(v) Vegetable Plait

**Roast Potatoes
Yorkshire Pudding
Garden Peas
Carrots
and Gravy**

Chocolate 'Christmas Pudding' Krispie Cake



*No child goes hungry
at Christmas*

**Food parcels available 18th and 23rd
December**

We can support you!

Have you been furloughed?

Have you lost your job?

Have your work hours been cut?

Do you need help to feed your child over the holiday?

If you have answered YES, please get in touch.

Get in touch

Email OR Phone

office@eternitydownham.co.uk

anna@swanyouthproject.org

Anna - 01366 386259 Alex - 01366 384474

Or find us on Facebook [Downham Market No Child Goes Hungry Scheme](#)



Swan Youth Project



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24 November 2020

Matthew Try
Headteacher
Downham Market, Hillcrest Primary School
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Dear Mr Try

Ofsted remote visit to Downham Market, Hillcrest Primary School

Following my remote visit with Stefanie Lipinski-Barltrop, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 12 November 2020, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the visit's findings. Thank you for the time you made available to discuss your actions since September 2020, when the government expected all schools to open fully to all pupils.

This visit was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended) and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for visiting schools while routine inspections are temporarily suspended. Following changes to government guidance and the imposition of COVID-19 (coronavirus) lockdown restrictions, we made this visit remotely to reduce pressure on the school.

Ofsted's visits to schools during the autumn term are not inspections. We are not giving graded judgements. We did not undertake the usual range of inspection activities and were unable to check other sources of evidence, such as visits to lessons or looking at pupils' work. The content of this letter gives an overview of our discussions about what has happened in your school this term.

During the visit, we spoke to you and the assistant headteacher, who are also the designated safeguarding leader and the special educational needs coordinator respectively. We did not speak to pupils.

Context

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's education system is managing the return to full education for pupils, following an extended break in formal schooling due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In undertaking this focused work, HMI are visiting a broad range of schools. HMI will visit a sample of:

- approximately 1,200 schools across all Ofsted grades (outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate)
- maintained schools, academies and free schools, special schools and centres of alternative provision, including those in cities, and coastal, town or rural communities.

The information from this visit will feed into Ofsted's national reporting so that the insights can be shared with the government and the education sector. We did not find any significant concerns during the visit. In such a case, an inspection report would be published on our website and available to parents and carers.

We did not consider your response to COVID-19 during the spring and summer terms 2020, when the school was not open to all pupils.

From this visit, inspectors noted that:

- At the time of the visit, no class 'bubbles' had needed to isolate so far this term. A small number of pupils have worked from home while waiting for COVID-19 test results.
- Pupils are currently following a 'recovery' curriculum. Before the school reopened in September 2020, staff highlighted key content that pupils had not fully covered in the previous year, across all subjects. Teachers used this information to draw up their recovery curriculum plans. All the usual subjects are covered, but staff adapt these according to pupils' needs. Leaders plan for pupils to return to their usual curriculum by the summer term 2021.
- Staff initially focused on pupils' well-being. Additional time was allocated to pupils' personal, social and health education and religious education. Staff wanted pupils to feel safe and to help them overcome any anxieties they might have on their return to school.
- Discussions, questioning, quizzes and tests are used to establish gaps in pupils' learning.

- Staff have focused on pupils' reading. Younger pupils have regressed in their use of phonics. Older pupils have become less fluent readers. Staff provide additional opportunities for pupils to practise reading throughout each day.
- The quality of pupils' handwriting, the content of their writing and their writing stamina have deteriorated. Staff plan specific activities to help pupils regain these skills.
- In mathematics, pupils have retained a good recall of number facts and times tables. Staff are focusing more on the content linked to shape, space and statistics and on pupils' problem-solving skills.
- Since September 2020, staff have focused more on helping pupils to catch up in English, mathematics and science. There has been an increasing emphasis on science during the latter part of this term. Other subjects, such as history and geography, have had reduced curriculum time.
- For remote learning, the work that pupils will complete each week is posted in advance on the school's website. Paper packs can be made available if required, and the work is the same as that completed by other pupils in class. Any pupil who is unable to attend school for reasons related to COVID-19 has access to this work from their first day of absence.

Thank you again for contributing to this important national work. The views and experiences you have shared will help to inform future policy.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Norfolk. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

John Randall
Her Majesty's Inspector