

Learning delivered with

Text Linked Curriculum



Hillcrest Primary School

TLC

Hillcrest Primary School

Headteacher: Mr Matthew Try

Hillcrest Downham Market

Norfolk

PE38 9ND

Telephone: 01366 388191

E-mail: office@hillcrest.norfolk.sch.uk

Fax: 01366 384286

5th February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

SCHOOL CLOSURE 2021 UPDATE 7: STAFF COVID TESTING UNDERWAY

Lateral Flow Tests

All Hillcrest staff members who are working on site as part of the team providing the Emergency Childcare Provision, are now being tested for Covid twice per week.

Although not 100% accurate, the Lateral Flow Tests which are typically carried out on a Monday and Thursday morning (although days may vary slightly depending upon exactly when the staff are covering in school), provide the staff reassurances that their colleagues are likely not to be infectious on those particular days and similarly, gives the parents those same reassurances that no member of staff on site should be carrying the virus.

This testing will continue when the school reopens in full at some point over the next few weeks.

Will the School Reopen on 8th March?

As things stand, the clearest information that we have is the government's intention to open schools more widely from Monday 8th March. We understand that a final decision on this will be made around 22nd February.

The next question is what the wider opening will look like. At one point, the government were insisting that when the time comes, that schools would reopen to all pupils. However, the language on this had softened a little over the past couple of weeks, with suggestions that they may be considering the partial reopening of schools to some year groups, as they did back in June when Years R, 1 & 6 returned before the other pupils.

The background noise on this point appears to change day by day and therefore, until we hear any more we continue to plan for some kind of reopening of the school on 8th March.

Learning delivered with

Text Linked Curriculum



Hillcrest Primary School

TLC

Headteacher: Mr Matthew Try

Hillcrest Primary School Hillcrest Downham Market Norfolk PE38 9ND

Telephone: 01366 388191

E-mail: office@hillcrest.norfolk.sch.uk

Fax: 01366 384286

Social Distancing to Remain

All the expectations are that, should we open on 8th March, the social distancing measures and other restrictions that had been in place throughout the Autumn Term, will remain.

We will return to staggered start and finish times. However, depending upon whether we reopen fully or reopen partially to some year groups, this may change your child's start time for school from what it had been since September. Until we hear more about the government's plan for schools, we cannot confirm any definite start or finish times.

The one-way system around school will also remain in place. If only some year groups return, then the front gates by the car park will be the only entrance and exit point. However, if we reopen to the whole school then the Civray gate would also be opened. The gate leading out onto Sandringham Drive will remain closed until social distancing measures are no longer required.

Proud to Have Remained Open

We are delighted to have remained open to as many Key Worker and Vulnerable pupils as we have throughout the past few weeks. Indeed, since September we managed to keep the number of Covid incidents down to one Year 6 class missing one day of their schooling (although they still received remote learning) following a positive case late in the term. This is a pretty impressive feat considering we are a school of over 500 pupils.

Although the positive Covid case with a staff member early on during this latest school closure period threatened to have a massive impact on our Emergency Childcare Provision, with 9 members of staff impacted at the time, we are pleased that we kept the closure of that service down to just the one day.

We are confident that the safety measures in place at the school are as good as they can be and they have helped prevent a much wider spread of the virus over recent weeks. Therefore, when the time comes for all of the children to return, hopefully parents will be reassured that they are sending their children back to the safest possible environment.

Learning delivered with

Text Linked Curriculum



Hillcrest Primary School

TLC

Headteacher: Mr Matthew Try
Hillcrest Primary School Hillcrest Downham Market Norfolk PE38 9ND
Telephone: 01366 388191 **E-mail:** office@hillcrest.norfolk.sch.uk **Fax:** 01366 384286

No Screen Days – Friday 12th February and Monday 1st March

We are conscious that the current system of working is heavily dependent on the use of screens and demands a lot on the children’s eyes, not to mention the demands of devices in the home which often have to be shared.

We are going to be trialling something on two days over the next few weeks which has been adopted by some other schools to break up the monotony of the Google Classroom.

On Friday 12th February and Monday 1st March, there will be no activities posted on Google Classroom or constant interaction between the teacher and child on those days. Instead, prior to both days, each teacher will set a series of practical activities that can be undertaken without the need for technology. The Google Classroom will remain available for the children to access throughout both days and therefore, the children will still be able to upload evidence of the fun they have been having with these activities. The teacher will work their way through the photos and comments at the end of the day, but they won’t be activities that the children will need immediate feedback from their teacher for.

Don’t Forget to Inform School if Your Child Tests Positive for Covid

Even though most of the Hillcrest pupils are not in school at the moment, we still need to be informed if any of our pupils test positive for Covid during the school closure period.

Therefore, if any Hillcrest pupil, whether they are attending as part of the Emergency Childcare Provision or not, come down with symptoms and then test positive, please let the school know via office@hillcrest.norfolk.sch.uk or on 01366 388191.

We still have a duty to gauge the spread of the virus amongst our pupil population even though they may not be at school.

Learning delivered with

Text Linked Curriculum



Hillcrest Primary School

TLC

Headteacher: Mr Matthew Try
Hillcrest Primary School Hillcrest Downham Market Norfolk PE38 9ND
Telephone: 01366 388191 **E-mail:** office@hillcrest.norfolk.sch.uk **Fax:** 01366 384286

Remote Education Audit

Our Senior Leadership Team recently carried out an audit of the remote learning that we provide through Google Classroom, following a set of criteria mapped out by the Department for Education.

This audit showed that the provision that Hillcrest is offering through Google Classroom and the recorded teaching videos is in line with the expectations that the government have for remote learning at this present time. Although we fared well against the DfE's audit document, the process did give us an opportunity to reflect on the processes that we have been through to get to where we are now and what future developments to our online learning could be put in place should schools ever find themselves in this position again.

Staff gathered after the first lockdown to consider improvements to the remote learning provision with several areas identified for change. These have been embedded in the Google Classroom provision that you are experiencing at present. We have also continued to tinker and adjust our provision throughout this latest lockdown to improve what we offer and how we deliver it. However, there will be no further significant changes to what we provide at this present time with possibly just three school weeks left until the end of this current closure period.

The Remote Education Audit has been shared with the Governing Body who approved the measures that have been taken at the latest Governing Body Meeting.

Winter Weather School Closures

The weather forecast is of particular concern, or joy depending on how you feel about snow, over the weekend with heavy snow forecast on Sunday.

If the travel conditions make it difficult for the staff to get into school or the school site is considered too dangerous, we may have to close the school completely, including to those attending the Emergency Childcare Provision.

We will send out a text and an email as early as possible on the day if we are required to close the school. A message will also be posted on the school website.

Learning delivered with

Text Linked Curriculum



Hillcrest Primary School

TLC

Headteacher: Mr Matthew Try
Hillcrest Primary School Hillcrest Downham Market Norfolk PE38 9ND
Telephone: 01366 388191 **E-mail:** office@hillcrest.norfolk.sch.uk **Fax:** 01366 384286

DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO THE EMERGENCY CHILDCARE PROVISION 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.

And Finally...Thank You

We continue to be incredibly grateful for the support of the parents during this tricky time. We cannot emphasise enough how much the staff just want to go back to supporting the children as normal, face-to-face, and understand that it must be an equally difficult time for many parents at home balancing home-schooling and work commitments.

It looks as if there is a light at the end of the tunnel and that not only might the children be back at the beginning of March, but by the middle of the Summer Term and with the vaccination programme continuing to go from strength to strength, we may even be able to ease up on the current level of restrictions around the school site.

Stay safe.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Try