

Learning delivered with

Text Linked Curriculum



Hillcrest Primary School

TLC

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3rd March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

SCHOOL CLOSURE 2021 UPDATE 10: LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ALL NEXT WEEK

Where our attentions will be focused when we return...

Both lockdowns have resulted in around 26 weeks of disrupted learning. For most pupils it isn't 'lost' learning, just 'disrupted' as the majority of children have continued to submit work throughout both school closure periods. Parents have worked tirelessly to support their children with their remote learning and it is thanks to those efforts that the majority of children will return on March 8th much better placed to resume 'normal' face-to-face learning.

For a minority of our pupils it HAS been 26 'lost' weeks of learning with some concern over the levels of interaction between the children and their teachers over that time. A number of families have been followed up and supported where it is possible to do so. However, the fact remains that some children will return to school next week in a far worse position than when they left.

Some of the data that we shared with you in a previous edition of these updates, and which the staff have been analysing, suggests that English has been the harder subject to get children to complete at home. It has been particularly difficult to get them to complete it to the standard that they would normally produce in school. However, far more Maths activities have been completed and handed in to a good standard suggesting that the children will be returning to school next week with sound Maths skills.

Therefore, staff will be prioritising English over any other subject when we return with more English lessons taught compared to normal times. Developing confidence and attainment in English will be made up from several different strands of learning including 'independent writing.' Teachers will be working hard to build up the children's stamina with writing again. This process has already been tried and tested during the Autumn Term with the staff doing a fantastic job of reviving that love for writing and increasing the amount of writing the children could complete in any given period of time. By the end of the Autumn Term, independent writing skills across the school were at the levels we should have been

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expecting again. However, this latest lockdown is likely to have impacted on that stamina again.

Handwriting skills will be another focus of attention, especially where the children appear to have fallen back with the control over their written work after a lengthy spell completing work on a computer.

Regular reading is obviously always immensely important, hence the reason why we shared the Reading Stars Reading Planet tool with families towards the start of this latest lockdown. Now firmly in place, we will continue to use this online resource to support the children with their reading as well as using the many new physical reading books that we had purchased for the school prior to lockdown.

Finally, 'Active English' is something that we will be using more and more of during afternoon sessions when the children are often more tired and find it difficult to concentrate on a focused task. This will include opportunities for internalised storytelling, drama, role play and hot-seating activities where the children are encouraged to use their verbal English skills and build their confidence with the spoken word.

Aside from English our two other key priorities upon our return are Science and Physical Education. Science was a priority upon our return in September and remains so. We are keen to give children their regular entitlement to physical education when we return after a lengthy spell where they may not have had many opportunities to be too active. The children will also be taking part in the Daily Mile on days when they do not have a formal PE lesson.

All other subjects, including Maths will obviously continue to be taught. However, the priorities will initially be different, especially during the three weeks leading up to Easter.

The New Role for Google Classrooms

Going forwards Google Classrooms will now be used as a tool for issuing homework. With some subjects featuring less in the timetable over the next few weeks as subjects like English, Science and PE take priority, those subjects the children are experiencing less of during the week will be identified for homework tasks that are issued via Google Classroom. This will ensure that full coverage of the curriculum is offered, even if elements of it are approached through homework rather than directly taught in the classroom. Naturally, homework will not be issued that the children don't have the skills or knowledge to be able to tackle.

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Monitoring the Children's Wellbeing

PSHE will continue to be a tool through which the wellbeing of the children emerging from this lengthy period of lockdown can be monitored.

The children will be given direct opportunities in class to address any concerns or fears they have as part of twice weekly sessions on a Monday and Friday. However, the children will be made aware of the procedures in place to help them feel comfortable and confident to share any pressing worries at any point during the week with a trusted adult in school.

Comic Relief Day – Friday 19th March

One of the first fundraising activities that we will engage in after we return from lockdown will be Comic Relief Day on Friday 19th March.

This will be a non-school uniform day and are asking for the children to come dressed as a Superhero. There have obviously been lots of new heroes emerging throughout this pandemic as the nation has celebrated its heroes in the health service. Therefore, if anyone would like to come to school on that day dressed as a surgeon, doctor or nurse then they are more than welcome. However, the children are also welcome to come dressed as one of their favourite superheroes from the movies or comics such as Spiderman, Batman, Superman and others.

In return for attending school in non-school uniform we are asking for a £1 donation to be made via WisePay for Comic Relief.

Celebrating the Wonderful Work Produced During Lockdown

This week, the staff have been transforming the Blue Hall displays by celebrating the wonderful array of work that has been produced during this latest lockdown.

Some of the best pieces of work that each class has produced throughout the past 9 weeks have been put on display for all to see.

There have been some truly exceptional pieces of work produced at home this term and we didn't want to miss the opportunity of celebrating these.

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School Dinners

Norse resume serving hot school dinners on site from Monday 8th March and therefore we would encourage parents to make sure they have booked their children's meals in the usual way via WisePay before Sunday so that they don't miss out next week.

Uniform and PE Kit

A reminder that once school reopens on 8th March, the expectation is that all children will attend school in the normal school uniform. Those children who have been part of the Key Worker provision have got used to coming to school in non-school uniform, but from next week that will stop.

Class teachers should also be reminding all parents about the days on which their children will be having PE lessons. Just as we did throughout the Autumn Term, the expectation is that the children come to school dressed ready for PE on those days.

Outdoor Learning Week

Just as we did when we returned from the first lockdown in September, we will be utilising the wealth of outdoor facilities that we have within easy reach, to get the children out of the four walls of the classroom and undertake some learning in the great outdoors.

Outdoor learning is good for both the general mental health of all and is a way of escaping from the fears of Covid.

A wide range of subjects will be taught during the week making use of Hillcrest's Forest School, woodland area, school field, amphitheatre and sensory garden.

Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils will have their Outdoor Learning Week during the week beginning 3rd May whilst the Key Stage 2 event will take place during the week beginning 10th May.

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Start and Finish Times

For the remaining three weeks of the Spring Term, up until the Easter break, the children will start and finish school at the same staggered times that they had got used to during the Autumn Term.

As it has been some time since all of the children were at school, we have posted the start and finish times for each class below...

Class	Start of Day	End of Day
Suns	8.45am	3.20pm
Asteroids	9.00am	3.35pm
Titan	9.00am	3.35pm
Meteors	9.15am	3.50pm
Tethys	9.00am	3.35pm
Planets	9.15am	3.50pm
Nebulas	8.15am	2.50pm
Mercury	8.30am	3.05pm
Comets	8.45am	3.20pm
Mars	9.30am	4.05pm
Saturn	9.15am	3.50pm
Proteus	9.00am	3.35pm
Jupiter	9.00am	3.35pm
Europa	9.15am	3.50pm
Venus	9.30am	4.05pm
Pluto	8.15am	2.50pm
Neptune	8.30am	3.05pm
Earth	8.45am	3.20pm

Face Masks to be Worn on Site

All adults coming on to the school site or high school aged children picking siblings up, should wear face masks. This has been in effect for all Key Worker families since returning in January and will now apply to all families upon our return on the 8th March.

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School Reports

With all of the school closures and time lost over the past year, the usual system of reporting the children's progress to parents has been thrown out of the window.

We had already changed the normal reporting process which would have seen the first official written report of the year going out near February half-term by bringing that first official report forward to December 2020. This gave parents the first formal indication of their child's academic attainment since February 2020 when the last Mid-Year Report went home just prior to the first lockdown.

Our intention was to follow the Autumn Term report up with a Spring Term report towards the end of March so that parents could see the level of progress that had been made during the course of the term, even if the Autumn Term report had indicated that the children had fallen significantly behind as a result of the first lockdown.

However, the latest school closure period has further complicated matters. Even if the children return in full on 8th March it will not be possible to accurately report a current level for them with the inconsistencies that online learning creates between pupils along with the fact that the work completed online will not necessarily truly reflect their full potential and the standard of work that they may have produced with all of the resources and staff time available to hand at school.

Therefore, the next official report that parents will receive will come after the Easter break and will be a largely forward looking report. The report will share the results of baseline testing that will have taken place after 8th March and provide an analysis of what the children need to work on as their priorities for the term.

This will then be backed up in the usual way with the far more comprehensive Year-End report in July.

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Parent Consultation Evening

As part of our reorganisation of School Reports and Parent Consultation Evenings following the first lockdown, we had already informed parents that there would be no Parent Consultation Evenings taking place this term as there normally would be at this time of year.

The next Parent Consultation Evenings will take place in the fortnight leading up to the May half-term. They are likely to be telephone meetings again unless the social distancing requirements placed upon us all have been completely removed by then.

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.

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.

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And Finally...

Here we go again! Another new start and hopefully the last time that we will have to send home a School Closure Update with the vaccination programme the key to ensuring we all get back to life as normal.

For the time being however, we will still have the restrictions in place until at least Easter at which point they will be reviewed along with the virus situation locally and nationally. We still hope that we can ease some, even if not all, of the current restrictions after the Easter break.

Thank you again for your continued support and the many messages of goodwill that the staff have received over the past few weeks. We look forward to seeing you all next week.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Try