



NEWSLETTER

Friday 30th April 2020

Dear Parents /Carers,

SCHOOL CLOSED

Hillcrest Primary School will be closed on Monday 3rd May for the May Day Bank Holiday. It will reopen at the NEW staggered times (see below for further information) on Tuesday 4th May

NEW Staggered Start Times from Tuesday 4th May

A reminder following our announcement last Friday that we will be moving to Year Group Bubbles from Tuesday 4th May which means a change in start and finish times for most children from next week. In case you did not see the letter that went out last week, we have published the table of start and finish times below for your reference.

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

Attendance Expectations

Despite the change in start times for most children, the expectation for attendance remains that the child starts school at the time highlighted in the table above for their specific class.

Children arriving late will be marked in the register 'late' as they have always been or they can be marked 'absent' if they arrive after the register has closed. Frequent 'late' marks or unauthorised absences will continue to trigger the usual warning notices and, potentially, fines if the child's attendance falls below an acceptable level.

It has been some time since we have had to remind parents about not taking term-time holidays. However, now that holidays may be back on some people's radars it is worth mentioning that the school does NOT authorise any absence for holidays during term-time.

Parking

Parking continues to be an issue at the start and end of the school day despite the fact that different classes are operating at different times.

This would suggest that parking-related issues may well increase after next week's reduction in the number of staggered starts and increase further still in September when we hopefully return to a single start time for all pupils. There are several concerns in relation to parking which are outlined below...

- **Idling** – we have received reports of vehicles that are left with their engine running for some time whilst parked. As these cars are often parked alongside routes down which many children are walked to school, it would be considerate if drivers could turn their engines off so that the children, who are much smaller than the adults around them and therefore closer to the car exhausts, are not exposed to car fumes;
- **Dropping off at the front gate** – it is NEVER acceptable to park your car across the front entrance to the school car park, even for the shortest of times. The car park entrance needs to remain accessible at all times and it is also a dangerous place at which to drop children off and let them out of your car;
- **Considerate Parking** – Please ensure that if you are parked opposite another car, there is enough room for large vehicles to pass through the gap and continue their journey along the road. Most worryingly, a paramedic reported being unable to get their ambulance to an emergency call-out because they got stuck amongst the traffic immediately outside the school and a second ambulance had to be called. The roads around the school need to remain open to all vehicles throughout the school drop-off and pick-up times;
- **Considerate of our neighbours** – please continue to ensure that you do not block neighbours driveways, even for the shortest of times. There have been some notable disagreements over this in the past few years and it is never acceptable for residents to be verbally abused when approaching you about blocking their driveway. Equally, the residents should not get verbally aggressive either;
- **Double-Yellow Lines** – at some point soon, possibly during the course of the Summer holidays, the local authority will be marking double yellow lines down Hillcrest, Hogarth Road and Sandringham Drive, making them streets where NO PARKING can take place during the drop-off and pick-up times. As a school, we have huge reservations about this and voiced our concerns when the proposal was first made some years ago. This is not a decision that we came to or were involved in making. However, the realities are that, possibly from as soon as September 2021, there should be no parking in the roads immediately outside the school, other than Civray Avenue. In order to avoid traffic chaos in the new school year it is essential that parents start to consider now whether a journey to school by car is necessary or whether by changing the morning routine, the children can be walked to school instead.

Social Distancing Measures and Mask-Wearing Remain

Once we move to Year Group Bubbles from next week and with more adults on site, it becomes even more important that the one-way system remains in place and that adults actively seek to continue to maintain their distance from each other. As a result, the Sandringham Drive access to the school will remain closed until we no longer need to operate the one-way system. This is likely to be until the end of the school year.

We will also continue to ask that parents wear face masks whilst on site until the guidance on face masks changes at a national level.

Parent Consultation Evenings

With the social distancing restrictions still in place for the time being, we will once again be holding the forthcoming Parent Consultation Evenings over the phone, as we did on the last occasion.

Each phone conversation will last a maximum of 10 minutes and slots can be booked via WisePay from this point.

As the continuous phone conversations were quite draining on the staff, we have spread the meetings over three rather than two days and limited the time on each evening from 4pm – 6pm.

The dates are as follows...

Reception Classes: Thursday 6th May, Monday 17th May & Wednesday 26th May

Year 1 Classes: Thursday 6th May, Monday 17th May & Wednesday 26th May

Year 2 Classes: Wednesday 5th May, Thursday 13th May & Tuesday 25th May

Year 3 Classes: Tuesday 27th April, Tuesday 18th May & Thursday 27th May

Year 4 Classes: Wednesday 28th April, Monday 10th May & Wednesday 19th May

Year 5 Classes: Thursday 29th April, Tuesday 11th May & Thursday 20th May

Year 6 Classes: Tuesday 4th May, Wednesday 12th May & Monday 24th May

Lateral Flow Tests for Home

At the time the government made Lateral Flow Devices available to all families of primary school pupils, the advice as to how widely these should be used was not clear.

However, the advice now is that you should NOT be testing children under the age of 11 using the Lateral Flow Devices and that children under the age of 11 should ONLY be tested when displaying symptoms by booking them in for a PCR test.

The Lateral Flow Devices are not effective in picking up the virus in asymptomatic younger children which is why they shouldn't be used.

However, by testing other family members in the same household who are over the age of 11, you are providing yourselves, and the school, with some reassurance that your child has not come into contact with the virus and therefore, have no need to isolate.

Tests can be ordered via the following website <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>

Outdoor Learning Week

Once again, Hillcrest pupils will be making full use of their fantastic outdoor facilities to engage in some learning over the next couple of weeks.

Following on from the success of a similar week last September, Outdoor Learning Week (which runs during the week beginning 3rd May for Reception and Key Stage 1 and the week beginning 10th May for those in Key Stage 2) sees the teachers covering as many curriculum subject areas as possible using the school's outdoor environment for inspiration.

The staff have the woodland area, Forest School, Sensory Garden, amphitheatre and school field from which to choose to base themselves at different points during the day.

Sports Days

We are planning to hold a more traditional Sports Day for the children at the end of term after last year's attempt at a socially-distanced Sports Day for those pupils who were in school at the time.

However, even if the conditions in relation to the virus have improved so much that other venues are accepting crowds of people, because of the amount of our school field that has been turned into a construction site, it will not be possible to have parents at this year's Sports Days.

SRB Development

Cocksedge continue to work hard on getting our new Specialist Resource Base up and running for September. We are incredibly pleased by the speed with which the construction company are working. This week has seen the roof starting to take shape on the new building.

We have new staff in school who are already planning what the provision will look like in the SRB. Mark King joins us as the Key Stage 2 Lead Teacher and Zoe Taylor joins us as the Higher Level Teaching Assistant for the SRB. They are both excellent additions to the Hillcrest family.

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.

Early warning...SCHOOL CLOSURE

We would like to remind you that Hillcrest Primary School will be closed for the half-term holidays between **Monday 31st May and Friday 4th June (inclusive)**. School reopens on Monday 7th June 2021.

NEXT NEWSLETTER IS OUT ON FRIDAY 28th MAY 2021