

Learning delivered with



Hillcrest Primary School

TLC

Text Linked Curriculum

NEWSLETTER

Friday 8th September 2023

WELCOME BACK

All of the staff have been delighted to welcome the children back to Hillcrest after their Summer break and are looking forward to a settled and purposeful start to the new school year. It has been great for staff to catch up with so many parents too.

Dear Parents /Carers,

Welcome and Congratulations

We are delighted to welcome two new members of staff to the Hillcrest team this year.

Mrs Oram is sharing the responsibility of class teacher for Suns with Mrs Tempestini. However, Mrs Oram has also been taken on as the new EYFS Lead and joins our Management Team as a result.

We also welcome Mr Try, the new teacher of Mercury Class in Year 3. We hope that both Mrs Oram and Mr Try quickly settle in to Hillcrest life and look forward to working with them both.

Over the course of the 6-week Summer break, we have also had two members of staff get married with both returning using their married names. Pluto class teacher, Mrs Williams has returned as Mrs Parlett whilst Saturn class teacher, Miss Benefer has returned as Mrs Whittaker. We are delighted to hear about their exciting Summer break and wish them well for their futures.

Change to Communication Books

From the start of this year the 'BLUE BOOK' is NO LONGER known as a 'Communication Book.'

Instead, the 'BLUE BOOK' that the children move between home and school will be called the 'LET'S READ BOOK.' This is so that the emphasis of the Blue Book can be on encouraging the children to read at both home and school. Research shows that reading is the one thing that children can do above all else to help improve their life chances. By improving their reading age and ability, they will find that they develop faster across many other curriculum subjects.

It is with this research in mind that we will be driving hard towards encouraging the children to read more at home and would like to ask for the parents support in achieving this. The 'Let's Read Book' will help focus the communication between home and school on reading.

This change does mean that we would like parents to move towards using email as the main form of communication for contacting your child's class teacher. Please email your child's class teacher for any of the following reasons...

- Concerns about your child's wellbeing or learning;
- Issues from home that may affect your child's behaviour at school;
- Changes to your child's 'Going Home' arrangements.

As always, if the concern about your child's education or wellbeing requires more than an email exchange, then the class teacher will arrange a time to call you or see you face-to-face.

We therefore ask that parents no longer use the 'Let's Read Book' to share concerns about your child's wellbeing or learning and move towards email to share such information. The same applies to changes in your child's collection arrangements at the end of the day.

Email addresses are available on our website.

Meet the Teacher Evenings

At the start of each school year we give parents the opportunity to meet the staff within their child's year group, who give a presentation about the curriculum that will be taught and the ways in which home and school can work together to help get the best from the children.

It also provides an opportunity for parents to ask those burning questions that they may have at the start of the year.

Each session starts at 5pm and lasts around 30 minutes. However, these sessions are aimed at the adults and not the children. Therefore, if you have alternative childcare options, it would be preferable if the children didn't attend. As always, we would rather as many parents attended as possible and if childcare is an issue for you at this time, we would rather you came even if it means the children coming along too.

On **Tuesday 19th September**, there are sessions at 5pm for parents of children in Years 1, 3 & 5.

On **Wednesday 20th September**, there are sessions at 5pm for parents of children in Years 2, 4 & 6.

On **Thursday 21st September**, there is a session at 5pm for parents of our new Reception pupils.

Little Wandle Presentation to Parents

Little Wandle is our Synthetic Phonics programme that we use across EYFS and Key Stage 1. It also provides some support for those pupils further up the school who are need of additional phonics intervention.

On **Wednesday 13th September**, there are two opportunities to learn about the programme for the parents of our new Reception intake along with any parents of children in Years 1 or 2 who may be unfamiliar with Little Wandle. Both sessions are a repeat of each other and therefore, parents only need to attend one time slot. The sessions will be held in the Purple Hall at Hillcrest at 3pm and 5pm and last for around 30 minutes.

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at those events.

Drop-In Mornings

We will continue with our monthly drop-in mornings which give parents an opportunity to visit their child's class between 8.45 and 8.55am to see the work that they have been taking part in. The next three sessions take place on...

Wednesday 27th September

Wednesday 18th October

Wednesday 6th December

Pro-Kick Charitable Fundraiser

During the Autumn Term each year we hold a massive fundraiser. This alternates between the Countryfile Ramble and The Pro-Kick Football Challenge.

This year, we will be hosting the Pro-Kick Football Challenge, delivered by a former professional footballer.

They bring a giant inflatable goal along with them along with a device that reads the speed of each child's kick.

There are prizes on offer for the fastest kicks in each class along with our usual prizes to the biggest fundraisers within each year group.

60% of the funds raised go to the Sports Connections Foundation. The SCF support events across the UK and the globe which seek to inspire children through the medium of sport, really seeking to change lives for the good. The other 40% of the funds raised come back into the school through the Friends of Hillcrest and help them to provide the children with new resources and opportunities in the months and years ahead.

The fundraiser will be held on **18th and 19th October** with further information and sponsorship forms coming out in the next few weeks.

An Environmentally Friendly Hillcrest

Over the course of the 6-week break, things haven't stood still at Hillcrest.

A lot of work has taken place, overseen by our Site Manager, Mr Dunne, to improve the environmental position of the school.

The original part of the school in which Reception, Years 1, 2 & 3 are taught has lagged behind the rest of the school that has grown around it with the 'I' Building and SRB being designed with energy efficiency in mind.

During the Summer, the oldest part of the school (which opened in 1980), has received a facelift with new double-glazed windows throughout and improved LED lighting. The combination of improved heat retention during the winter months and improved lighting throughout the building should help to significantly reduce the school's regular energy bills.

The work has been carried out largely thanks to funding from Norfolk County Council along with a contribution from the main school budget.

Uniform and PE Kit

The children have returned to school extremely smart and kitted out in the appropriate uniform. Thank you to all those parents who have supported their children with new uniform over the course of the summer holidays.

In case there is anyone who is unsure about our expectations for uniform, please see the information below...

Winter

Pale blue polo shirt
Maroon sweatshirt*/cardigan*
Black/Grey trousers
Grey skirt (knee-length), pinafore dress (knee-length), black, grey or navy tights
Flat black/ navy shoes with dark socks

Summer

Pale blue polo shirt
Grey skirt (knee-length)/red checked dress (knee-length) with white tights/ or grey trousers/shorts
Flat black/ brown/ navy shoes with dark socks
Flat sandals with white socks

We encourage parents to purchase a branded Hillcrest jumper, and coloured PE shirt, from the school, via Wise Pay. However, with cost of living difficulties at the fore of our minds, non-branded alternatives in the school colours are available from other retailers. Please note that ear-rings should be small round studs only. No bracelets, necklaces or false nails should be worn for safety reasons.

On PE days, pupils should come to school dressed in their PE uniform. This includes the branded Hillcrest house coloured PE shirt (non-branded alternatives in the school colours are available from other retailers); plain black shorts or plain dark joggers/sweatshirt and trainers. Earrings should be removed from pupils' ears (or taped over with medical tape if unable to be removed). Trainers are to be worn (football boots are not permitted).

On Swimming days, pupils should either wear a plain one-piece swimming costume (two piece costumes are not to be worn) or swimming shorts (must be above the knee). For safety reasons, colourful swimming hats (cloth or silicone) must be worn. There is no expectation that these items are branded. Earrings must not be worn.

Attendance Matters

We will once again begin to set monthly targets for attendance of each class in the next edition of the school newsletter.

Attendance has never been more of a hot topic with schools still looking to recover to absence levels that would have been typical pre-pandemic.

The pandemic made people reconsider their priorities when we could once again move freely and then the cost of living crisis piled even more pressure on as families sought cheaper holidays.

All families should have received the updated legal advice earlier this week which we are obliged to adopt. Absolutely NO term-time holidays will be authorised and any pupils with at least 9 unauthorised sessions (which amounts to 4.5 days) within a 6-week period will meet the criteria for legal intervention.

The children need to be in school, more now than ever and we look forward to receiving your support in ensuring their regular attendance at school.

Applying for Free School Meals – INFORMATION FOR NEW RECEPTION PARENTS & THOSE WITH CHILDREN IN YEARS 1 & 2

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.

Although the amount has varied along the way, those food vouchers are still available to the parent of children in receipt of Free School Meals. At present, and carrying on for the foreseeable future, to assist with the cost of living, families will receive a £15 food voucher monthly for each child you have in school.

Now is the time to apply if you want to start receiving these £15 food vouchers monthly as early as possible. Those parents applying in time will also be entitled to a £45 voucher per child in December which will come in hugely handy over the Christmas period.

If you feel you meet any of the criteria below, we would encourage you to register for Free School Meals with Norfolk County Council so that you don't miss out on the monthly food vouchers. Even if you have tried before and not been successful, your financial circumstances may have changed significantly in recent months due to the existing cost of living crisis.

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...

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools/school-meals-and-milk>

JOB VACANCY @ Hillcrest Primary School

Midday Supervisor

Due to the progression of staff to other positions within the school, we are looking for a motivated, energetic and organised individual to become part of our Midday Supervisor team.

The position will be Monday to Friday lunchtimes 1.25 hours per day (6.25 hours per week) term time only.

Rate of pay is £10.59 an hour.

Applications are invited from people who...

- Will enjoy working with children
- Are keen to play with children and support them
 - Reliable and punctual
 - Have a sense of humour
 - Flexible to last minute changes

Duties include supervision of a specific class outside on the playground and within a classroom ensuring that lunchtimes are an enjoyable and safe experience for all the children.

If you are interested in joining our team please email office@hillcrest.norfolk.sch.uk

The closing date for this opportunity is Friday 22nd September

NEXT NEWSLETTER IS OUT ON FRIDAY 29th SEPTEMBER 2023