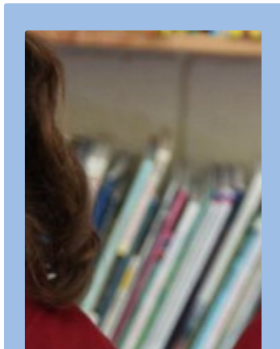


2025/26



HILLCREST PRIMARY SCHOOL

Prospectus

Headteacher
Mr Matthew Try

Growing together, achieving together



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Hillcrest Primary School, Downham Market



office@hillcrest.norfolk.sch.uk



01366 388 191



Headteacher's Welcome

Welcome to **Hilcrest Primary School**. Our aim is to provide your child with an education for life, and to make it a rewarding and enjoyable experience.

We are proud to say that Hillcrest is a progressive and innovative school which has a strong emphasis on high standards and creativity across the curriculum.

Our vision is that every person who enters our school feels a buzz and thrill about learning. Children, Teachers, Teaching Assistants, Office Staff, Parents, Governors and the wider community recognise that it centres on everyone learning, co-operating, playing and developing together. We want our learners to be successful, confident and responsible contributors to society through creativity in all areas of the curriculum.

The chosen mission statement 'growing together, achieving together' encapsulates the aim to nurture all those who join our school, to produce successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens who can work together.

We have supportive and dedicated staff who, through establishing a positive attitude and code of conduct, will enable your child to become a valued member of society. This works best when home and school work together in partnership.

The facilities and opportunities we can offer you and your child are excellent. We intend to maintain our traditions, excellent behaviour and high standards to ensure that Hillcrest remains a happy and successful school.



"We welcome you to join in with every aspect of school life at Hillcrest."

Matthew Try
Headteacher



Our Values

At Hillcrest, we are:

- Safe & Valued
- Independent Thinkers
- Active Learners
- Listeners & Communicators
- Polite & Courteous



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Our Vision

We aim for us all, as learners, to:

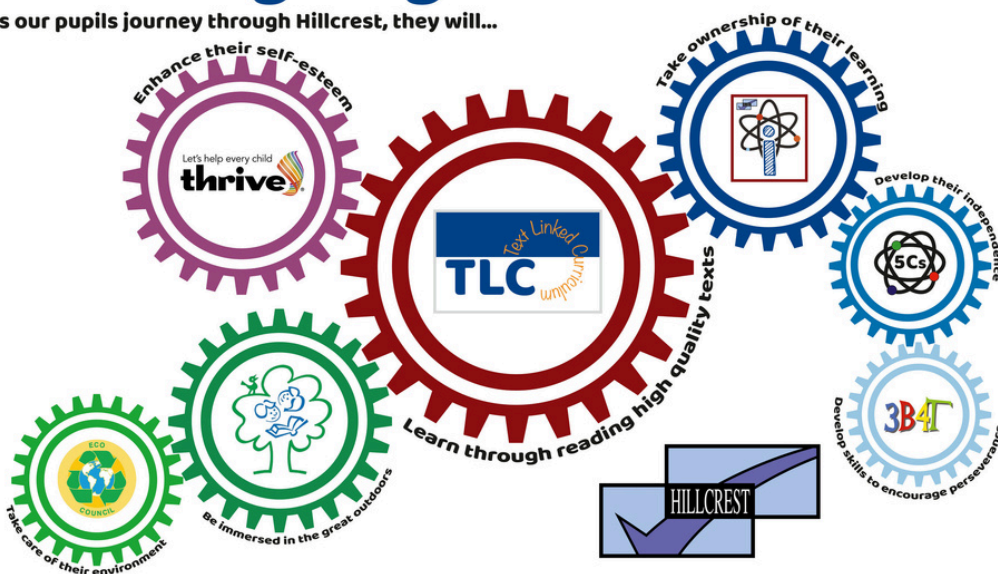
- Feel safe and valued as part of a caring community that celebrates success.
- Feel validated and confident in expressing their views and emotions.
- Understand and respect diversity.
- Develop a sense of self-esteem: be well-balanced and healthy individuals.
- Experience and actively participate in a relevant, enjoyable curriculum that evolves to meet the needs of all.
- Develop a curious mind and ask questions.
- Be independent thinkers / learners who are able to seek solutions in creatively, co-ordinated and co-operative ways.
- Be able to listen and communicate responses showing consideration to others.
- Be polite and courteous when communicating.
- Be proactive in our responsibilities towards the community, society, the environment and economy, linking 'real life' with our learning.

Our Mission Statement

At Hillcrest, we nurture a love of reading to empower the children to unlock the full wonders of the curriculum, supporting them to unleash their creativity and champion their independence, helping them to achieve their full potential.

Growing Together...

As our pupils journey through Hillcrest, they will...



...Achieving Together



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Our History

Constructed in 1980, to serve the ever expanding town of Downham Market, Hillcrest Primary School was once surrounded by open fields. Now, the town has grown up around our site, making Hillcrest truly a part of the community that it serves.

Since our beginnings in 1980, the school has been led by just three Headteachers, demonstrating the dedication that our staff give to the Hillcrest community.

We are a large primary school in West Norfolk situated on the outskirts of the busy market town of Downham Market. Although near to the edge of the Fens, Downham has established and well supported rail links to London and Peterborough, via Ely, opening exciting opportunities to explore different cultures and environments quite easily.

Our Grounds

Although very much part of our local community, Hillcrest benefits from an abundance of space; space to learn and space to play.

Our grounds are extensive and surrounded by mature trees, reinforcing our dedication to outdoor learning in our various "Forest Zones" around the site.

Our large field allows us to provide excellent sporting experiences, with the school hosting the annual local schools for joint sporting events.

Our Facilities

- Main Building (lower school)
- i Building (upper school)
- Specialist Resource Base
- Three school libraries
- Unworry Room
- Large sports hall
- Expansive sports field
- Daily Mile track
- Video recording studio
- Computer suite
- Multiple laptop & tablet trolleys
- Food Technology kitchen
- Forest Area & Sensory Garden
- D.T. & Music Rooms
- Pond & Wildlife Area
- Outdoor Classroom & Amphitheatre
- "The Hillcrest Hut"



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Our Designated Safeguarding Leads



Mr Try Headteacher & DSL



Mr Martin Deputy Head & Alternate DSL



Mrs White Assistant Head, SENDCo & Alternate DSL



Mrs Muskett Senior Teacher & Alternate DSL



Mrs Wardle Senior Teacher & Alternate DSL



Miss Hancox Senior Teacher & Alternate DSL



Miss Stretton SRB Teacher & Alternate DSL



Mrs Rayner Thrive Practitioner & Alternate DSL



"I feel that Hillcrest Primary school is very safe place for my children to learn and grow and they are cared for really well. Any concerns I ever had about my children, school always been really supportive and handled it effectively and professionally. Can't ask for better school for children!" - Current Year 5 parent



Visit the [Safeguarding page](#) on our website

Our Safeguarding

Safeguarding is our top priority at Hillcrest.

The safeguarding of our pupils, families and staff forms the core of everything we do.

We believe in 3 core principles, each building on the one before:

1. Keeping everyone **SAFE**
2. Helping everyone to be **HAPPY** and **REGULATED**
3. Helping everyone to **LEARN** and **PROGRESS**

Hillcrest's Safeguarding Culture is central to all we do.

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) are deployed across the school site, ensuring that each of our buildings has a safeguarding expert on hand to help with any issues.

Three members of the Safeguarding Team are non-teaching, meaning that they can be there, at any time, when our children need them.

All staff receive yearly safeguarding training, based upon the most recent Keeping Children Safe in Education document and the Prevent initiative, in the form of the Norfolk Core Package (provided by Norfolk County Council).

In addition to this, staff receive safeguarding updates throughout the year, refreshing their knowledge of various safeguarding matters.

At Hillcrest, Safeguarding is EVERYONE'S responsibility.



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Our Curriculum

Hillcrest's bespoke Text Linked Curriculum (TLC) is very precious to us!

Our dedicated staff team has spent many, many hours creating and developing a **truly inspirational and bespoke curriculum with reading at its heart.**

To promote this love of reading, our curriculum bases each learning experience around key quality texts that are carefully chosen, with activities designed to make links between concepts, enabling learners to *maximise* and reach their potential.

We are very proud of our curriculum and we believe that it is one that:

- Instils a love of reading
- Is rewarding to teach
- Is fun to learn
- Provides an exciting and creative experience
- Produces a learning environment that resounds and echoes with learning
- Encourages independent thought
- Meets the needs and interests of all learners
- Enthuses pupils and parents alike
- Encourages a cross-curricular approach
- Encourages the creation of displays that embody the learning journey
- Enables pupils to make excellent progress because they are supported and cared for individually and their opinions are valued.



[Visit the Curriculum pages on our website](#)

Our Learning

A visit to Hillcrest might send you back in time to the Viking era, finding out **How to Train Your Dragon!**

It might whisk you even further to prehistoric times, where you might learn that **Dinosaurs Love Underpants** or spend some time with your **Wolf Brother!**

You may find yourself somewhere very peculiar indeed, spending time with **Cinderella**, or going on an adventure with the **Iron Man!**

You may travel to faraway lands, finding yourself in **Kensuke's Kingdom!**

Wherever the learning takes you, you will find teachers who love teaching and children who love learning!

We believe that reading is the key to learning! The gift of reading allows all knowledge to be sought and it opens the mind up to a world of infinite possibilities, where anything is possible and learning is limitless!



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Our Independence 5Cs



COMMUNICATE

Listen; Language; Respect; Collaborate



CONFIDENT

Resilience; Making Choices; Reflect; Self-Belief



COORDINATED

Focus; Time; Organise; End Goal



CURIOUS

Explore; Ask Questions; Observe; Open-Minded



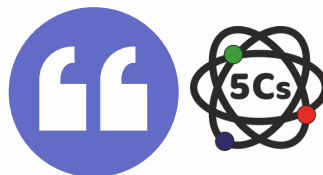
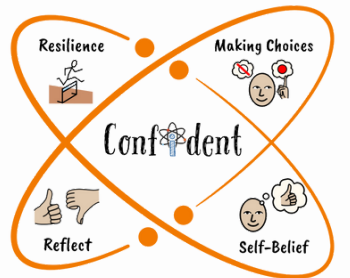
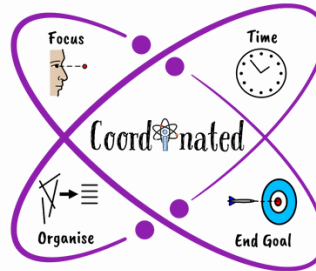
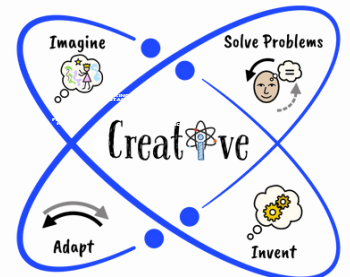
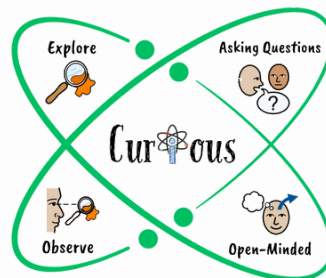
CREATIVE

Imagine; Solve Problems; Adapt; Invent

Our Independence Curriculum

Our 5Cs of Independent Learning is central to our educational philosophy.

Hillcrest has created the 5Cs of Independent Learning. Each "C" is a different skill, which contributes to becoming a successful independent learner! The skills are broken down into different areas, to help children understand what each "C" means.



Visit the [Independent Learning page on our website](#)

"The 5Cs help me with my learning and I love collecting the stickers!" - Erin, Year 4



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HILLCREST FOREST

Our Outdoor Learning Goals

The Outdoor Learning ethos fits perfectly with Hillcrest's 5C principles of independence: creative, communicate, coordinated, curious and confident.

Forest School is a unique outdoor learning experience, which inspires children through positive outdoor experiences.

At Hillcrest, we want our children to curiously explore and have fun in the natural environment, whilst confidently managing risks, collaborating with their peers, creatively solving problems and initiating their own learning.

- To enable young children to be independent and self-motivated
- To allow children to develop gross and fine motor skills in a natural environment
- To encourage children to be co-operative and to collaborate with each other
- To allow children to take risks within a controlled environment
- To encourage creativity through problem-solving activities
- To build self-esteem and self-confidence
- To increase competence
- To promote environmental awareness and encourage sustainability
- To prepare children for life-long learning



[Visit the Outdoor Learning page on our website](#)

Our Outdoor Learning Curriculum

The Forest School and Outdoor Learning ethos fits perfectly with Hillcrest's 5C principles of independence: creative, communicate, coordinated, curious and confident.

Forest School is a unique outdoor learning experience, which inspires children through positive outdoor experiences. At Hillcrest, we want our children to curiously explore and have fun in the natural environment, whilst confidently managing risks, collaborating with their peers, creatively solving problems and initiating their own learning.

Our Outdoor Learning curriculum sees each class enjoy at least one lesson a week in the great outdoors.



"I think it's a fantastic idea, and extremely well organised. It's fun, great exercise where they're learning different life skills, but still actively working towards the classroom education. My child is always excited for forest school and it definitely enhances his learning."
- EYFS Parent



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Our Pastoral Care



"Overall, we think that nothing at school needs improving right now and we feel happy, safe and proud to be Hillcrest pupils. We are happy that the outdoor learning areas are being improved already because this makes us feel heard." - Jupiter Class, Year 5

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDERS

If you have any concerns about your own mental health, or the mental health of others, WE ARE HERE FOR YOU!



KINITA O'DEA
CLASS TEACHER
KWEBBODEA@hillcrest.norfolk.sch.uk



MICHELLE EASTER
RECEPTIONIST
MEASTER@hillcrest.norfolk.sch.uk

OUR MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDERS CAN OFFER YOU:

- An **in-depth understanding** of mental health and the factors that can affect wellbeing.
- **Practical skills** to spot the triggers and signs of mental health issues.
- **Reassurance and support** for a person in distress.
- **Non-judgemental** listening.
- Knowledge to help someone recover their health by guiding them to **further support** - whether that's self-help resources, through their employer, the NHS, or a mix of these.



NANCY WHITE
SENDCO/ASSISTANT HEAD
SENDCO@hillcrest.norfolk.sch.uk



ANGELA PASSEMORE
TEACHING ASSISTANT
APASMORE@hillcrest.norfolk.sch.uk



Pastoral care is another priority at Hillcrest. The wellbeing and personal development of our pupils, families and staff is paramount to everything we do here at Hillcrest.

o Thrive Practitioner

At Hillcrest, we have our very own Thrive Practitioner, Mrs Rayner, who is based in our Unworry Room. Mrs Rayner meets with lots of different pupils to help them to thrive!

o United Against Bullying

Hillcrest is dedicated to stamping out bullying in all forms. The school's Anti-Bullying Policy heavily involved the pupils in its creation. The school has been awarded the Anti-Bullying Alliance's BRONZE award!

o Active Bystanders

Hillcrest has joined Norfolk County Council, in conjunction with the Crime Commissioner's Office, to deliver the Bystander Intervention Programme. The aim of the programme is to train and upskill children and young people to become active bystanders who can safely intervene to prevent incidents of sexual harassment. Schools and colleges throughout Norfolk have enrolled in the programme since its formation and the feedback from them is very positive.

o Help for LGBT Students & Families

Hillcrest is a community that values each and every individual. Pupils, staff and families who identify as LGBT+ are safe and valued here!

o School Council

Each week, our School Council Representatives (democratically voted for at the beginning of each school year in Class Elections) lead their class through a meeting where a question has been posed to them.



[Visit the Personal Development page on our website](#)



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Our Early Years Foundation Stage

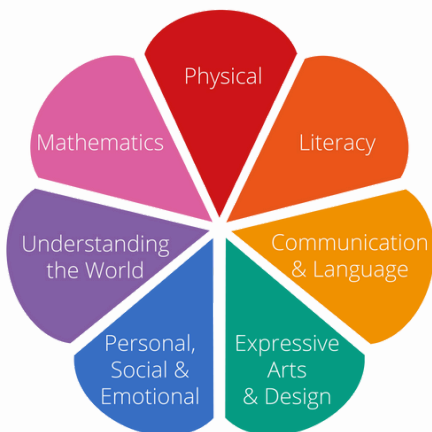
Hillcrest has a dedicated Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) unit.

We value each and every one of our children as an individual right from the start of their journey at Hillcrest Primary School and our kind, caring staff ensure they have a smooth transition from preschool/ nursery, including visits to preschools and a home visit.

In EYFS we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Our children are nurtured in a secure environment, whilst being allowed to explore, enquire and develop their learning both inside and outside the classroom.

The 7 areas of learning in the EYFS

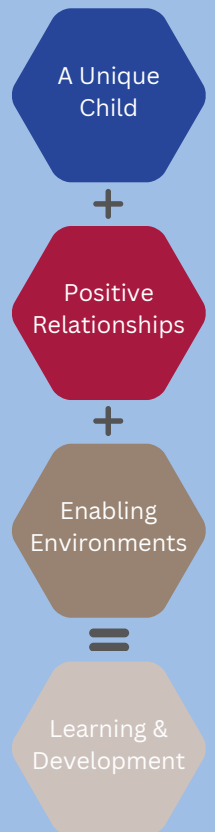
Carefully planned play opportunities are created to stimulate children's learning. A child centred approach to learning is adapted as we believe that children learn best when they are interested and engaged; therefore we aim to take into account children's individual and current interests, and will adapt our environment accordingly.



 [Visit the EYFS page on our website](#)

Our EYFS Learning

- We ensure every child is a **'Unique child'**, developing all children to be confident and resilient with high self-esteem.
- We pride ourselves on our **'Positive Relationships'**, enabling all children to be strong and independent through caring and secure relationships with our staff
- We endeavour to create **'Enabling Environments'** which offer relevant and stimulating learning resources.
- We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and we support and extend all children's **'Learning and Development'** opportunities.



"All staff have been amazing in the support they have given my child in his first year of Reception."
- EYFS Parent

"My child's confidence & ability in reading has grown tremendously since starting Little Wandle and we now both enjoy reading together."
- EYFS Parent



Our EYFS Approach






“Play is essential for children’s development building confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults” - Birth to 5 Matters

At Hillcrest we hope by developing secure and supportive relationships with our pupils. This enables them to develop the skills and confidence to become more self-reliant, and have an inner strength that leads children to be confident resilient learners.

Our EYFS staff endeavour to:

- Plan and provide **engaging learning and play experiences**.
- Take pupils on **school visits and excursions to support them to build and develop their resilience** to confront uncertainty.
- By supporting and teaching them to **solve problems and so become independent learners**.
- Encouraging pupils to **take some risks within their play and daily routines**, so that they can learn to **develop their own problem-solving skills**.
- Through this the pupils learn to **bounce back from daily challenges and adversity**.

Resilient pupils are more likely to:

- 1** Become confident and able to explore the world around them. 
- 2** Ask questions and be curious, brave and inquisitive. 
- 3** To find out how things work and why and to follow their own interests. 
- 4** Become deeply involved as they make connections with their previous learning and build on this in new ways so that their understanding deepens. 
- 5** Know their limits and push themselves to step outside of their comfort zone. Enabling them to reach their long-term goals and ambitions. 



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Our Early Years Foundation Stage Goals

In the EYFS at Hillcrest, we aim for all of our pupils to become...

Confident Communicators

who feel safe, can listen carefully in different situations, ask relevant questions and use new vocabulary to explain their feelings.



Sentence Superstars

who can hold a pencil effectively; are keen writers; can write letters that are formed correctly; write words and simple sentences that can be read by others and enjoy the writing process.



Fantastic Friends

who can be kind, caring & helpful; show empathy and respect to others; work & play co-operatively whilst considering others' ideas and feelings.



Independent Individuals

who can set simple goals and persevere to achieve them; select resources; manage their own personal needs; regulate their emotions and know how to stay fit and healthy.



Amazing Athletes

who can show strength, balance and co-ordination when playing; move confidently and safely in a variety of ways, using a range of equipment.



Brilliant Bookworms

who have a love for reading; uses new vocabulary to talk about what they have read or has been read to them; read words and simple sentences, using their phonics knowledge.



Masters of Maths

who are passionate about numbers; have a deep understanding of numbers to 10; recognise patterns; can subitise; can compare quantities and can recall number bonds to 10 and beyond.



Exceptional Explorers

who are eager to take part in outdoor learning; shows curiosity about the world around them, including the local area, whilst understanding similarities and differences through their exploration.



Dynamic Designers

who can choose and safely use the resources they need to make their creations; can talk about the processes and begin to plan and evaluate their creations verbally.



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"Having the children visit our residents brings a breath of fresh air. We see residents light up when their visitors arrive. I think the children get a lot out of helping them too." - local care home Administrator

- **Befriending the Elderly**
Different year groups have the opportunity to visit local care homes to build some inter-generational links. The residents thoroughly enjoy reading with the children, playing games with them as well as telling stories of times gone by. This year, we will continue making links with the new Carrstone House Care Home.
- **Supporting Charities**
Hillcrest pupils often express a desire to help those less fortunate than themselves. Hillcrest gives to the Downham Market Foodbank each year through our Reverse Advent initiative. Recently, the school raised over £2,000 to offer support to those affected by the Syria-Turkey earthquake.
- **Eco Council**
Each year, children democratically elect representatives from their class to join the Hillcrest Eco Council, who champion environmental causes at the school.
- **School Council**
In addition to the Eco Council, elections are held for School Council representatives from each class. The elected children run half-termly meetings, where a question is posed to the entire school for the children to discuss and vote upon.
- **5Cs Champions**
A pupil from each class is nominated by their teacher to become the 5C Champion! This pupil encourages, praises and motivates their peers to embody the 5Cs just as they do! They proudly wear brightly coloured lanyard to advertise that they champion the 5Cs!

Our Opportunities

Hillcrest is very much part of our community. Pupils get involved in a variety of events and activities at Hillcrest; in Downham Market and beyond!

- **The Hillcrest Choir**
Our choir is renowned in the area for putting on professional and heart-felt performances. The choir perform annually at the Downham Christmas lights switch-on ceremony, as well as performing for residents at the various care homes in the town.
- **Extra-curricular Clubs**
Hillcrest has a very dedicated staff team. Many of them give up their time to run afterschool (or lunchtime) clubs for the children to enjoy. We also have some outside groups - like ECB Cricket - run specialist clubs after school.
- **Pupil-initiated Clubs**
In addition to clubs started by adults, our pupils in Years 4, 5 & 6 are encouraged to create clubs that interest them; supervised by staff members, of course!



"We love being able to run a club at lunchtime! We come up with an idea, find an adult to help, then get going. I have learnt so much being a club leader" - Elsie, Year 5



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Our School Day

8.45AM DOORS OPEN

We welcome children into the school, through their classroom door, with a "good morning" from 8.45am, with a window of 10 minutes to allow for different parental routines.



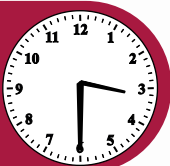
8.55AM REGISTRATION

At 8.55am, the doors are secured, and the attendance register is taken, marking the start of the compulsory school day. This happens promptly as part of our rigorous safeguarding routines. Now, the pupils get down to learning!



3.30PM HOME TIME!

Staff and pupils wish each other well and they head home for a well deserved rest!



[Visit the School Day page on our website](#)

[Visit the Uniform page on our website](#)

Our Classes

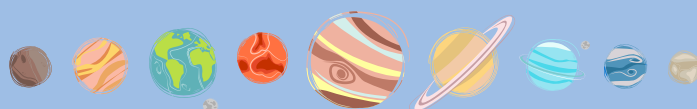
The learning ethos here at Hillcrest is all about aiming high; reaching our potential.

Embodying this ethos, our classes were named after celestial bodies in the night sky.

Our **Early Years Foundation classes** are: Suns and Moons.

Our **Key Stage 1 classes** are: Meteors, Nebulas, Comets and Planets.

Our **Key Stage 2 classes** are: Pluto, Mercury, Mars, Saturn, Jupiter, Venus, Earth and Neptune.



Our Uniform

Our pupils are extremely proud of their school and their uniform. Pupils are to be dressed smartly, adhering to our uniform expectations.

We expect pupils to have long hair tied back and any ear rings are to be simple, round metal studs. False nails are not permitted.

In the summertime, some pupils wear summer dresses or shorts.



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"Parents are very positive about the provision for their children" - OFSTED Report 2023

- Hillcrest Primary School continues to be a **GOOD SCHOOL**;
- Hillcrest is a **"happy, nurturing and welcoming school"**;
- **"Pupils learn effectively and make good progress"**;
- Our pupils learn to be **"well-mannered and kind"** and **"do not tolerate unkindness and will politely remind their peers if their behaviour is not considered 'the Hillcrest way'"**;
- Hillcrest pupils are **"thoughtful, and express their views with maturity and respect"**;
- Hillcrest pupils **"learn how to be Creative, Curious, Confident, Coordinated and Communicative"**;
- Hillcrest pupils are **"knowledgeable about bullying and clear that it is not tolerated at their school"**;
- Hillcrest pupils **"trust staff to help pupils"** if bullying does occur;
- Hillcrest has **"a bespoke curriculum with reading at its heart"**;
- Hillcrest teachers use **"well-chosen learning activities based on high-quality texts to support their teaching"**;
- Hillcrest's SENDCO **"provides clear guidance and support for all staff"**;
- Hillcrest staff are "proud to work at the school";
- Hillcrest families are "very positive about the provision for their children";

Our OFSTED Report

- Hillcrest's leaders **"prioritise pupils' wider development"**, helping pupils to **"develop their identity and self-esteem as active, confident members of their community"**;
- **"Positive behaviour is learned and practiced from Reception onwards"**;
- Hillcrest leaders have **"created an ethos where pupils study hard and approach learning with determination and concentration"**;
- Hillcrest pupils **"like their teachers and respond well to high expectations of behaviour and learning"**;
- Hillcrest leaders **"ensure that pupils' best interests are at the centre of their decisions"**;
- Hillcrest governors **"play a keen role in supporting leaders to fulfil their roles"**;
- Hillcrest staff are **"well-trained [in safeguarding] and know the signs of when a pupil is at risk of harm"** and they **"respond quickly when concerns arise"**;
- Hillcrest pupils are **"confident that they can speak with adults at school when concerned about their safety and well-being"**.



"Hillcrest Primary School is a happy, nurturing and welcoming school. Pupils learn effectively and make good progress" - OFSTED Report 2023



2025/26



**WE LOOK
FORWARD
TO
WELCOMING
YOUR
FAMILY TO
HILLCREST
PRIMARY
SCHOOL**



Appointments to view the school can be made via the School Office.

Norfolk County Council deals directly with all of our school admissions. Parents should contact the local authority to find out about admission and appeal arrangements. By following Norfolk County Council's directives, the school is compliant with the School Admissions Code and the School Admission Appeals Code.

Telephone: 0344 800 8020

Website: <https://www.admissionsonline.norfolk.gov.uk/enrol/>

Growing together, achieving together



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Hillcrest Primary School
is dedicated to the
commitment of the
staff and Governors to
promote equality and to
fulfil our
responsibilities under
the Equalities Duty. This
involves tackling the
barriers which could
lead to unequal
outcomes so that there
is equality of access and
the diversity within the
school community is
celebrated and valued.



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