

Hillesley

PRIMARY SCHOOL



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Term 1 – Newsletter 3

Dear Parents,

We have been blessed with wonderful warm weather and sunshine this past week and the children have been able to get outside several times a day for play and activities. Our Reception children have done fantastically well settling in this week – well done to them and to our Reception parents!

The teachers continue to carry out assessments in core subjects with “catch-up” and revision work going on. The children are coping well, being quite positive and getting used to new rules and regimes. Unfortunately we cannot hold parents’ evenings in the foreseeable future and we are told we cannot hold open day or evening events. You will receive an update about your child’s assessment and progress shortly after half term. This will most likely be via email and phone call but I will send out more details nearer the time. If you know of any families who would’ve attended an open day event and could be thinking of sending their children to the school, please can you pass on the message to call or email the school for a prospectus and to visit the school website?

The current situation with the rising infection rate is obviously concerning and although our area remains one of the least affected in England, there have been Covid positive cases in some schools in Gloucestershire so the local authority have asked all Head Teachers to continue to encourage everyone to be vigilant and keep up the good work with social distancing and extra hygiene measures.

You will already have received a Covid-19 Quick Reference Guide to help you make the difficult decisions about whether or not to send your child to school if they appear unwell. Already we have experienced, as many other schools have, parents wondering what to do and asking for advice when their child is displaying cold like symptoms and feeling under the weather. Please look at the guidance and err on the side of caution. We do not want the children to miss school of course, but that must be balanced with the need to keep our local community safe and infection free. We will always try to follow guidance and apply common sense judgements.

See below another helpful indicators table;

Symptoms	Coronavirus	Cold	Flu
Fever – above 37.5c	common	rare	common
Fatigue	sometimes	sometimes	common
Cough	common	mild	common
Sneezing	no	common	no
Aches and pains	sometimes	common	common
Runny or stuffy nose	rare but slightly more prevalent in children	common	sometimes
Sore throat	sometimes	common	sometimes
Diarrhoea	rare but slightly more prevalent in children	no	sometimes
Headaches	sometimes	rare	common
Shortness of breath	sometimes	no	no
Loss of taste and smell	sudden	sometimes	rare

I am also being told to advise parents to make use of the I I I website as the phone I I I system has been overwhelmed at times.

If your child or any member of your household is displaying Covid symptoms, please let us know as soon as possible. If this is during a weekend please make use of my home landline 01454 260372 and if there is no answer, please leave a recorded message.

We are of course aware of the national situation with testing and appreciate that tests could be difficult to secure.

If any member of the school community has to go for a test we are only obliged to inform everyone if the test results are positive. The person or persons who have tested positive will not be named by the school and all appropriate measures will be carried out following advice from DfE/PHE and the government.

As we have to limit the number of people allowed access into the school building we cannot sadly make use of parent volunteers in the classrooms. When we run occasional visits to the allotment and Forest School for KS2, as these are outside activities, teaching staff might ask for volunteers but the numbers will be limited to the minimum for safety. We will only have one regular visitor to school this term and that will be the PE coach. However the coach will not be permitted in the classrooms and will wait for the children outside. With these restrictions in mind we cannot organise school trips at the moment because if a school trip was to take place we have to still operate the Bubbles system for both pupils and staff, making trips practically impossible to arrange.

Despite all the restrictions the children continue to respond well to school and in order to maintain and encourage their positive behaviour we have been trying to come up with new ways to reward and encourage them. We cannot run our usual "team/house points" approach due to the bubble restrictions so we have come up with a short-term rewards system of "monkey points" in KS2 and small prizes that the children would enjoy whilst keeping the financial costs as low as possible. In the KS2 classrooms the points are recorded and when a child has a monkey at the top of the tree they will be awarded a choice of small toy items. KS1 are running a similar system with "superhero" points. These systems are temporary and we are open to suggestions from the parents to alternatives. Any prizes and rewards need to be on an individual basis and be easily administered in school within time, cost and Covid restrictions.

Thank you all for adhering to the staggered arrivals and pickups at the beginning and end of the school day. As we are now all getting used to the queuing system I might not be outside every morning to call you to the door so please watch for the person in front to walk down the exit steps and as they do, you know it will be your turn to approach the entrance door. The point of these staggered arrivals and departures is to limit the number of people at the front of the school at any one time. Could I also remind you that stopping for a chat with other parents on the road, on your way to and from the school, can slow down the process and lead to delay in the classes getting started in the mornings. The time is very valuable as we are trying our best to get the lessons underway and carry out ongoing catch-up assessments/work. All the children should be in class by 9.15.

My goodness, it seems like I am giving updates to guidance and rules on such a frequent basis and I apologise for appearing rather bossy! However I am sure that you realise that the intentions are always to provide the best for the children in terms of both safety and learning.

Regards,

J.Pedley

Growing Together in Learning and Life