

# Hillesley

## PRIMARY SCHOOL



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Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Newsletter 4

Dear Parents,

We are now half way through the first half term of this new (and rather different) school year. The children have been busy with their lessons and this week the KS2 children have been doing some more test and assessment activities so that the teachers can pinpoint, as accurately as possible, where each individual is with their work. Once we have identified the “gaps” we might group children to run some extra catch up. This could be individually, in small groups or in a class group. During the afternoon sessions the children in KS2 are all taking part in regular guided reading sessions with me and they also have two sessions of independent reading when they might also read to the teacher. Please try to read with your child regularly at home. In my long experience as a primary school teacher I have found that the single most important way that parents can support their child’s learning at home is to help them with reading. I remember well the battles I had with my own children about reading regularly! They would much rather be climbing trees and running around outside so we had to make regular (bargained, compromised and bribed!) times to do some reading! The battles pay off eventually, so keep it going!

Reminder – home reading books are to be changed on Wednesdays for KS2 and Mondays for KS1. Please put a few comments in your child’s reading record as this is valuable feedback for both your child and the teachers. In KS1 the children read individually to an adult twice weekly and also read in small groups. It is vitally important that the children read at home as often as possible. KS1 children are also being very carefully assessed but the teaching staff are trying to keep this as “low-key” as possible and fit it into usual class activities.

KS1 have been enjoying their Friday trips to the Forest School site and this week some KS2 children had a chance to get up there too. They certainly enjoyed the experience and we hope to keep up these periodic visits.

Clearly the Covid restrictions are going to be with us for some time to come so getting outside is very important indeed.

Work will hopefully begin on the re-furbishing of the Friendship Garden in the near future. Artificial surfacing and a large canopy will be laid/erected to the front side of the KS1 class, whilst the back area will remain garden, eventually needing a tidy and new turf. Huge thanks to the FOHS who are helping fund this project.

Arrival at school – As you are now all brilliant at using the queueing system, can I remind you to be aware of watching for your turn to come up to the entrance door. If there is nobody ahead of you, please go up to the door and if you are waiting in the queue, keep an eye on those ahead of you and move up when they leave. I have been coming out every day to call you up, however, I sometimes need to take phone calls or join online meetings so cannot always be there. So if there is no adult to call you up please monitor your place in the queue and be ready to come up to the entrance door. Thank you and you have all helped enormously so far by sticking to the system. At the end of the day a member of staff will be outside or at the entrance door, to send your child out once you reach the front of the queue.

Other correspondence – as far as possible we will send all letters and correspondence by email but there might be occasional times when we have to send hard copy. We will ensure that the paperwork is placed in envelopes.

This week we are sending home an envelope containing information about the flu immunisation programme. This will take place at school on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November. All the details of how to give consent for your child to receive their immunisation (by nasal spray) are in the letter. Consent should be given via the online platform where possible, unless your child is asthmatic, in which case please complete and return a paper form to school. Your child will not receive the immunisation unless you have given consent, so please do – this year it is even more important that children are protected.

Colder and wetter weather – as we now entering into the autumn, please make sure your child brings a suitable coat to school. This coat will mostly remain on the back of your child's chair during lesson times so if possible, keep very bulky coats for mid-winter and for now send in appropriate, waterproof jackets.

Online learning platform – in case there is a need for a local or national lockdown; or the school has to close if confirmed covid cases arise in the school population; or your child has to stay in self-isolation if they or a family member become ill, the teachers will send work home. We will make use of the class emails but we are also in the process of setting up a G-Suite (Google Classroom) learning platform. This is being set up by a government commissioned, specialist IT company in conjunction with our usual IT provider. Due to circumstances beyond our control, we have been unable to set this up previously, due to inadequate internet speed and facility. Hopefully this will be set up and ready to use in the next few weeks. We will keep you informed.

I need to know if your child has access to a computer, laptop or tablet at home. A phone is not enough to facilitate any school work. I also need to know if you have difficulty with your internet connections. Please complete the question slip attached with this letter and return to school, preferably via email.

Regards

J Pedley