

Hillesley

PRIMARY SCHOOL



Headteacher Mrs Jayne Pedley B Ed(Hons)
01453 843551
admin@hillesley.gloucs.sch.uk
www.hillesleyprimary.com

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Term 1 Newsletter 2

Dear Parents,

The children have all settled well and we are getting into a routine with lessons and activities.

Reading Books – we have come up with a way of sending the reading books home that will hopefully work and maintain Covid safety measures.

Key Stage 2 – the children will select two books, one to keep and read in school and another to bring home and keep at home until finished. Return the book in the children's bags on Wednesdays when they will be put in the "book quarantine box" (something I thought I would never use in a classroom) for 72 hours, sprayed with anti-viral cleaner and put back on the shelves. Please note that we can only change books on Wednesdays.

Key Stage 1 – a similar regime but books will go home and be changed every Monday.

We are waiting for a delivery of new reading record books and when they arrive, your child will be given one to bring home with their reading book for you to record reading at home. The teachers will see your comments when these reading records come into school on changing book days, Monday KSI or Wednesday KS2.

Curriculum - After much deliberation and an initial settling in period we have devised a timetable and format for assessing carefully where the children are in key areas of learning. The teachers will carry out ongoing assessments and mini, incidental tests that will just appear to be part of the lessons to the children. Later in the term we may use more standardised tests formats. We will also test reading and spelling ages. There is catch up work being done in both key stages and hence some of the usual activities might not take place during this first term. We will make sure that all the children are pushed and challenged appropriately, whilst consolidating learning gaps in key subjects and skills. You may have seen news reports about extra government funding for catch up and tuition however these funds are not yet available to schools and so we are planning and putting staffing and strategies in place without the funding and hoping it follows soon.

Health and well-being - The children are getting used to the changes that we have had to implement and when I asked the older children today how they are finding it, they were all very positive. Children are so much more adaptable than adults! I must say though that the staff and you parents have also adapted and adhered to the requirements well too. Thank you.

I continue to receive regular updates from the local authorities and the DfE. There are of course, very recent changes to the guidance due to the rate of infection increasing again. If your child or anyone in your household feels unwell, please proceed with caution and keep your child (and siblings) at home, book a Covid test then let us know as soon as you receive the results. If the test is negative your child (and siblings) can come back to school; if your child or another member of the household tests positive then you must keep your child at home and inform us so we can contact PHE and instigate track and trace procedures. If you try to book a test online and are not having success the advice is to keep trying as new testing slots are being made available throughout the day.

Gloucestershire CC give daily updates on their Twitter feed about drive through mobile testing. You can book a place at orlo.uk/book_test_2tneX or call 119.

In the event of local lockdown the government is implementing a four tier approach for schools;

Tier 1 – schools will remain open as normal

Tier 2 – implementation of a rota system for secondary aged students to limit number of pupils on site at any one time

Tier 3 – primary and child care settings continue to open, secondary schools limit attendance to vulnerable and key workers' children only

Tier 4 – close all settings and limit attendance to only vulnerable and key workers' children

It is possible that different tiers might be in operation at the same time, in various places within Gloucestershire.

Other events - Planning any trips and special events is very difficult at the moment but I am pleased to say that we have organised Forest School sessions for all the children this term. Key Stage 1 will have a Forest School session once a week on Friday afternoons and Key Stage 2 children will get to go twice this term.

The dates for these afternoon sessions for Key Stage 2 are;

Monday 21st September Year 3/4

Monday 28th September Year 5/6

Thursday 8th October Year 3/4

Thursday 15th October Year 5/6

For KS2, on the relevant dates for their year group, please send your child into school in their Forest School clothes (long trousers or leggings, warm tops, long sleeved T-shirt according to weather etc), not their uniform. The clothes worn to Forest School will get wet/muddy. Your child will also need to bring a change of footwear – ideally wellies (and appropriate socks if needed) and a waterproof coat in their bags. If they have waterproof trousers at home they would be useful to bring but there is no need to get them especially.

KS1 children should bring their Forest School clothes with them in a bag every Friday.

Reminders – Please remember that your child should not be bringing any unessential items into school. Also a reminder that jewellery is not allowed to be worn in school with the exception of small, stud earrings for pierced ears.

Class 1 children will receive fruit for snack time but Class 2 children need to bring in their own easy to open snack for morning break times.

If home and financial circumstances have changed in these difficult times, it is possible to apply for free school meals.

To see if you qualify and to apply please go to the Gloucestershire Free School Meals portal

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/school-transport-and-free-school-meals/apply-for-free-school-meals/>

If a child qualifies for free school meals the school could also receive extra funding through Pupil Premium and this money helps provide extra support and resources in school.

I would also like to remind the parents of Reception children to make sure they have registered for Universal Infant Free School Meals on the GCC free school meals portal. All children in years Reception, 1 and 2 qualify for these free meals.

Thank you all for your good-humour and support during this first full week back at school.

Regards, J. Pedley

Growing Together in Learning and Life