

Hillesley

PRIMARY SCHOOL



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Friday 20th November Newsletter 3

Dear Parents,

As we approach the end of the third week of this term I can share some good news – I have been away from school this week unwell and took a covid test, due to displaying some symptoms that could be associated with the virus, but I am delighted to tell you that the result is negative so I clearly had a regular winter bug including both cold-like symptoms and a tummy bug! Even though it has not be the best fun this week I am very happy that it was just a regular bug and now that I am feeling much better and I have a negative test, I am back at school! I have been working from home – the wonders of modern technology! Thanks goes to Mrs Cooper, Mr Whitbread and Miss Scudamore who have all done a grand job of covering my classroom work this past week, whilst Mrs Iddon has dealt with the incoming in the school office!

This experience did make me think though and I have to say that the added stress of getting tested and then waiting for the results does not lend itself to quicker recovery from illness! However, I feel that if there is any suspicion of covid, getting a test is absolutely the right thing to do and I would encourage all of us to be mindful of this as we carry on through the winter months and possibly face more of the common winter bugs!

More parent/teacher consultations have now taken place and I hope you have found the process useful?

Please feel free to send any thoughts and feed back to us via e mail. The next parent/teacher consultations usually happen in the spring and we might be in a different situation by then.

The children continue to enjoy their trips to Forest School and their other regular lessons. Catch up work continues too. Thanks to Rev David Russell and Mrs Hardwick, we were able to take part in a zoom worship with Rangeworthy School last week for Remembrance and we hope we can repeat this type of contact for Advent worship.

On Monday afternoon, November 30th, weather permitting, year 5 and 6 will go to the allotment with Rachel Preece and Miss Scudamore. This is a one-off session to do some tidy up and planting work. So please could you send your child in dressed ready for the great outdoors, with a change of footwear and waterproof coat, just as you do on Forest School days? Year 5 and 6 will also have their turns at Forest School on Thursdays Nov 26th and Dec 3rd – so lots of extra outdoor activities for them coming up! I extend my thanks to Rachel and Hannah for continuing to make these sessions possible. Please remember to make your Forest School contributions on ParentPay if you can (£10 per child, all year groups) so we can continue to provide resources for these sessions.

During the next few weeks Mrs King will be carrying out the phonics screening tests with those children who should have done this last summer. This will be the current Year 2 pupils who should have taken this test in the summer term whilst in Year 1. If you want any further information I am sure Mrs King would be happy to respond to any emailed questions about this. This is nothing for the children or parents to worry about as Mrs King is skilled in helping the children feel at ease and they are used to doing this type of phonics work in class.

In recent weeks there have been several “stranger danger” incidents in the Stroud area that have been reported to the police. Our Schoolbeat officer, PC Mark Weedon, has sent us a message saying “Please be assured that all reports are treated seriously and investigated to ascertain whether any crimes have taken place and if any potential suspects can be identified. At present there is no evidence to substantiate a crime of (attempt) abduction”. PC Weedon also asks that any incidents are first reported to the police before they are posted to social media. He reminds us to help keep the children and young people in our district safe by reinforcing the following;

“Students should, if they can, walk with one other person when walking to school or home. Ensure they remain in well-lit and busier areas, avoiding short-cuts through quieter roads or paths. When walking, try to avoid having their mobile phones out on view and be aware of their surroundings; not wearing headphones. If a student feels they are being followed then do not engage with that person but go to an area where there are more people. The message of “Yell, Run and Tell” can also be used; Yell – scream or shout for help; Run – to a place of safety if possible; Tell – tell someone straight away.”

All of these messages are also reinforced in school PHSE lessons about Stranger Danger. It is a good idea to chat to your child and ask them what they know about this. The lessons covered in school are always done in a way as to not alarm a child but to raise their awareness. Fortunately, where we live, incidents are few but the recently reported incidents are within our wider locality so it is a good idea to reinforce these messages with the children, particularly at this time of year with the darker evenings.

As the weather may be getting colder soon, it is a good time to remind you of the procedure in the event of emergency closure due to snow or other adverse weather this winter. If we are unable to open the school a closure notice will be posted on the Gloucestershire County Council School Closures website <https://closures.gloucestershire.gov.uk/> and a post will also be put on the FOHS Parents Group WhatsApp.

Closures can also be checked on the GCC Twitter feed @Glos_schools and announcements will be made on Radio Gloucestershire.

If there is no power/internet school staff will contact you by telephone to inform you of closure. We will no longer be operating the telephone cascade system, as in most cases in recent years parents were already aware about closure via WhatsApp or GCC website by the time they were called.

Reminders –

Please note that we do not allow the children to bring in their own hand sanitisers. I can assure you that the children regularly wash their hands and use the school-provided hand sanitiser, supervised by classroom staff for safety and cleanliness. If a child has their own sanitiser in school it becomes much more difficult for staff to monitor usage. Other children are also curious and will ask to see, touch or use a child’s personal hand sanitiser and this is not a good idea whilst we are diligently trying to limit sharing items. Please make sure your child leaves their own hand sanitisers at home.

A general reminder about bringing items into school – the staff are working tirelessly to keep the classroom and school spaces infection free and as safe as possible but this can be undermined by children bringing in items from home. Please check your child’s bag before they come to school and help them make sure they only have the minimum required for the day’s events and lessons. No toys, stationery, key rings, books, lip balm, additional, unnecessary head wear, jewellery or other such items should be brought in or worn to school. If your child has a specific medical requirement or other, vital well-being need, you must inform the office, preferably by email; this includes any medication, creams etc which will be stored in the school office or in the separated classroom boxes for such items. This might seem rather stringent but when one child starts bringing in such objects, many more will follow that example! Then staff end up with many objects that could add to the difficulties of keeping us covid free.

Forest School and allotment – y5/6 Thursday Nov 26th; Monday Nov 30th; Thursday Dec 3rd

PE continues every Friday with the last session this term being Friday 11th Dec

KS2 Home reading books to be returned and changed every Wednesday as needed.

Please see a separate information sheet about ordering a Christmas lunch for your child for our festive lunch day on Wednesday 16th December.

Thank you in anticipation of your ongoing support.

J Pedley

Growing Together in Learning and Life