

# Hillesley

## PRIMARY SCHOOL



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

9<sup>th</sup> December 2020      Newsletter 5

Dear Parents,

This will be the last full newsletter before we break up for Christmas and for 2020. This has been an interesting and difficult time for us all and I am grateful that we have escaped relatively unscathed here in Hillesley. I know of many schools and several families who have now been touched with the dire consequences and tragic deaths caused by this horrible virus. I wake daily hoping that we do not experience such circumstances first hand and with renewed determination to keep the school and our local community Covid free. It is with this mind-set that I ask you all to keep on following the tedious but necessary guidance. If you have even the slightest suspicion that your child or someone in your household is unwell, please be over cautious and keep your child home. If your child has a cold I would urge you to keep them home for a few days. This week, as you know, we had to close the Class 1 bubble due to staff feeling unwell and getting cover proving impossible. Thankfully Mrs King has a heavy cold and her test result was negative but we could be faced with this situation again if staff members have to stay away from school. The school staff are not able to just feel unwell and focus on getting better as they now also have the extra burden of worrying about infecting others, having to get tested and providing online learning. Remarkably we have kept a very positive atmosphere going and we have done many things, often small but significant changes, to usual practices, that I believe have helped us keep going through these very fraught and worrying times. It is tiring and tiresome for us all but as a community we have done so well that it would be foolish to let up now by becoming a little complacent and forgetful in the run up to Christmas. A very good friend of mine, working at the “sharp end” at Southmead Hospital, is constantly despairing of the behaviour she sees around her and she frequently states that if people saw what she has seen daily over the past few weeks, they would think and behave quite differently. I do not wish to sound pessimistic as it is not my usual, default position and I am much heartened by the vaccine and the now very real pathway out of all this, so I apologise, but I see it as my duty to urge everybody to still proceed with caution, follow the rules, think of others and remain focussed on the “enemy” that this virus is to us all.

During the last week of term we will be doing our best to have some fun, celebrating Christmas within our bubbles. This afternoon Rev Russell and Mrs Hardwick are providing a zoom Advent and Christingle Worship. PE will go ahead on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> and the last Forest School session for KS1 of the year happens on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> too. We will wear our Christmas jumpers to school, over our PE kits. Remember KS1 are being asked to wear their Christmas jumper and a warm PE kit as part of their Forest School clothes this week, bringing in just a change of footwear, waterproof coat/trousers, hat and gloves to Forest School this time. (If it is very cold, add an extra layer).

Next week remember we have several events and this is a final reminder for;

- Santa gifts to be placed in the boxes in the school entrance lobby by Friday 11<sup>th</sup> Dec or Monday 14<sup>th</sup> morning at the very latest.
- Monday 14<sup>th</sup> is also our termly “Big Write” and the teachers have posted the planning information for you to do on the G Suite platform so please login if you have not done so yet.
- Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> – the children can come to school dressed in a Nativity costume of their choice.
- Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Lunch in our bubbles
- Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> – Bubble Christmas parties and DVD afternoon
- Friday 18<sup>th</sup> – school closes at noon

The children will not be able to share cards and gifts amongst their friends in school this year. We often send cards to thank people who have helped the school in various ways but this year they will receive an email or verbal thanks instead. Anything that has to be brought in or taken home from school will be “quarantined” for the appropriate time before being handled but we would strongly recommend enthusiastic hand-washing too!

FOHS and Village events – The FOHS have worked hard to source and erect the Big Tree of Hopes and Wishes so please engage with that by coming to see it and add your own hopes and wishes. The donations’ box has been placed next to the tree and please adhere to social distancing rules and refrain from gathering, when you visit. The FOHS and Hannah Druett, our Forest Schools leader, have asked me to tell everyone about the Nativity scene that is being put up at the Forest Schools’ location. This scene will be ready for viewing from the afternoon of Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December and then on throughout the Christmas break. Again they would love all villagers and community members to visit and view the Nativity but ask that this is done within family bubbles and it is not meant to encourage larger gatherings.

The children and staff have worked incredibly hard over the past 16 weeks since coming back in September. It has been a school time like none I have known previously in my many years of teaching. I have had experiences of difficult and tragic events during my career but although those were difficult times they do not compare with the present, possibly because of the longer-term nature of the current situation. The changes we have all had to make have permeated through many aspects of our school, work and home lives and I commend us all for the efforts we have made in the face of this adversity.

The new school year starts on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January and I hope to see you all then as we move hopefully into calmer waters ahead!

On behalf of all the staff and governors I wish you all a happy, healthy and peaceful Christmas.

Yours sincerely

J Pedley

Head Teacher