**Hill Top CE Primary School and Nursery**

Newsletter – 1st July 2020

Dear Parents

**Welcoming more children back**

It has been lovely this week to see more children back enjoying time with their friends and their teachers and we felt that making this attempt / offer for a wider opening was as important for us (in terms of a rehearsal for us as to what things might look like in September – we are still awaiting guidance) as well as the children – many of whom haven’t stepped into our building since March. It wasn’t without its challenges as even as we were planning for this, new guidance on what we could and couldn’t do was being sent out to us.

It has been, by a country mile, the most challenging few months of our teaching careers for all of our staff, and we recognise that sometimes, because of the constant changes to guidelines, we have had to change plans sometimes very late in the day – we apologise if this has caused any undue angst and worry for you, but we do promise you that we have been trying to do our best under extremely challenging circumstances.

**Staying Safe**

As the government continue to reopen our country following the Covid-19 pandemic, it remains clear that this is going to be a long, long process. We urge you to keep yourselves and your loved ones safe and adhere to all the rules, recommendations and regulations linked to staying alert, safe and social distancing.

**Staff leaving us**

This time of year is always a sad time as invariably staff will move on – this year is no exception. I guess what makes it even harder this year, is the fact that we cannot give them any significant send off – but we hope to plan something in the next school year to celebrate their time here at Hill Top.

**Mrs. Colman** will be leaving us this school year – she is retiring from teaching and planning to spend more time with her family and once restrictions are lifted, holidaying no doubt. Sharren has been at Hill Top for over 20 years now and has been instrumental in a whole host of our developments – she was initially employed to set up and establish our new Nursery but since then has worked in Years 2, 3, 4 and 5 and has become a key member of the Senior Management Team at Hill Top and for the last seven years my (she might say long-suffering!) Deputy Head. Clearly she knows Hill Top and our families inside out and she is going to be incredibly missed. She has never been afraid to roll her sleeves up and ‘get on with it’ and has always showed a passion for getting things right for our children. We wish her a long, happy and well deserved retirement – we know she will be back to say proper goodbyes to those of you who won’t get a chance to see her before the Summer.

**Mrs. Ng** is also leaving Hill Top this summer to spend more time with her family. Sally has also been part of the Hill Top team for 20 years and although in recent years she has only worked a day a week supporting the delivery of Science across Key Stage 2, she too has played an important role in Hill Top’s development over the years. She is a popular member of our team and has been instrumental in ensuring that our Science provision was always of a high standard. We wish her all the very best.

**Mrs Ward** – one of our Teaching Assistants is finally fulfilling her dream of a move to the East coast this Summer. Joeanne and her family have been involved with Hill Top for again around 20 years - initially as a parental volunteer but for the last ten years and more as an absolutely valued and professional member of our SEN Support Team. Her patience and commitment to the children she has nurtured and cared for has been of the highest standard. She will leave a big hole when she leaves this Summer. We hope and trust that she will not be a stranger to Hill Top once she has moved.

**Mrs Johnston** – Debbie left her role as Parental Involvement Worker last year – and has since been delivering a very stimulating and thorough French curriculum to our Key Stage 2 children which she will no longer be doing next year. She most definitely will not be a stranger to Hill Top (we will not allow it). We know that she and Mr Johnston (her ‘Rob’) are passionate about continuing to support any grounds development work here at Hill Top (you will often see them pottering around our grounds on even the bleakest of Bank Holidays!) and we hope to get her in to continue to support any art projects we are doing. We hope she enjoys this extra freedom!

**Mrs Lupton** – one of our longest serving members of our support team, Kim has worked in recent years in Upper Key Stage 2 where she has supported staff in ensuring our children leave Hill Top with the absolute best results they could possibly achieve. She has been a big part of the Year 6 France team over the years as well as being a very popular member of staff who is a trustworthy and kind friend to many. She retires to spend more time with her family especially her increasing band of grand-children, most of whom have or will attend Hill Top. She will be difficult to replace and she leaves with our love and thanks.

**Mrs Gill** – Sarah has been with us less than a year as a Year 6 SEN Support Assistant but quickly settled into her role and became a strong team member as part of our Hive provision. She leaves us to start her training to become a fully-fledged teacher at Bradford College – we wish her the very best of luck – it is a natural step for her and we are sure she will make a great asset to the teaching profession.

**An update on Mrs Poppleton**

As some of you are aware, Jo (Mrs ‘Pop’ to our children) from our school office, suffered a cardiac arrest in November 2019. This was a heartbreaking time for her family, friends and colleagues here at Hill Top. After spending two incredibly difficult weeks in ICU she was transferred to Ward 6 of the Bradford Royal Infirmary. After 7 months of rehabilitation and recovery (which included a Covid-19 recovery), Jo has finally returned home with good speech and memory, but unfortunately in a wheelchair. Her next challenge in life is to walk again and start to enjoy some form of normality, once again.

Jo's twitter video on the day of leaving hospital was a joyous, emotional and celebratory event:

<https://twitter.com/ward6strokeunit/status/1275068422737428480?s=09>

Neil, her husband has set up a Justgiving / Crowdfunding page to ensure Jo gets the right kind of support and resources that she needs so her recovery continues. We recognise that these are difficult times for many of our families, but if you can help in any small way, we urge you to do so. Jo remains genuinely loved by all here at Hill Top and we want the absolute best for her as she continues on her recovery journey.

Here is where you can support:

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/jopop>

We will of course be finding other ways of supporting Jo and the NHS Team on Ward 6 at the BRI as a whole school just as soon as we are all back to some kind of normal timetable and schedule.

**Transition Plans**

Clearly transition work / days has been compromised significantly because of the pandemic. We have put a plan together to ensure as many of our children as possible will be get an opportunity to spend some time with their new class teacher before the summer during the final week. It is a complicated plan, but we hope it will work:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **If your child is currently in:** | **If they are currently attending school as part of a learning bubble** | **If they are currently attending school as part of a Key Worker Bubble** | **If they are not currently attending school** |
| Reception | They will spend Monday and Tuesday in the Y1 classroom  (9am – 3.15pm, Bottom gate entrance) | They will spend Thursday and Friday in the Y1 classroom.  (9am – 3.15pm, Bottom gate entrance) | We hope to be able to offer up to 15 places for children to attend school on Thursday and Friday in the Y1 classroom.  (9am – 3.15pm, Bottom gate entrance) |
| Year 1 | They will spend Monday and Tuesday in the Y2 classroom  (9.15am – 3.30pm, Bottom gate entrance) | They will spend Thursday and Friday in the Y2 classroom.  (9.15am – 3.30pm, Bottom gate entrance) | We hope to be able to offer up to 15 places for children to attend school on Thursday and Friday in the Y2 classroom.  (9.15am – 3.30pm, Bottom gate entrance) |
| Year 2 | They will spend Monday and Tuesday with Y3 staff  (9.00am – 3.15pm, Side gate entrance) | They will spend Thursday and Friday with Y3 staff.  (9.00am – 3.15pm, Side gate entrance) | We hope to be able to offer up to 15 places for children to attend school on Thursday and Friday with Y3 staff.  (9.15am – 3.30pm, Bottom gate entrance) |
| Year 3 | They will spend Monday and Tuesday in the Y4 classroom  (8.45am – 3.00pm, Side gate entrance) | They will spend Thursday and Friday in the Y4 classroom.  (8.45am – 3.00pm, Side gate entrance) | We hope to be able to offer up to 15 places for children to attend school on Thursday and Friday in the Y4 classroom.  (8.45am – 3.00pm, Side gate entrance) |
| Year 4 | They will spend Monday and Tuesday in the Y5 classroom  (9.15am – 3.30pm, Top gate entrance) | They will spend Thursday and Friday in the Y5 classroom.  (9.15am – 3.30pm, Top gate entrance) | We hope to be able to offer up to 15 places for children to attend school on Thursday and Friday in the Y5 classroom.  (9.15am – 3.30pm, Top gate entrance) |
| Year 5 | They will spend Monday and Tuesday in the Y6 classroom  (8.40am – 2.55pm, Top gate entrance) | They will spend Thursday and Friday in the Y6 classroom.  (8.40am – 2.55pm, Top gate entrance) | We hope to be able to offer up to 15 places for children to attend school on Thursday and Friday in the Y6 classroom.  (8.40am – 2.55pm, Top gate entrance) |
| Year 6 | We are hoping to plan an opportunity for a farewell in two bubbles – on the Wednesday morning and afternoon of the last week – more details to follow. | | |

**Teachers for Next Year**

Our teachers and support staff for next year are as follows:

Nursery – Mrs. Binns and Mrs. Brotherhead

Reception – Miss Fuller, Miss Wallace and Miss Hewson

Year 1 – Mrs. McKee and Mrs. Morris

Year 2 – Mrs. Balaam, Mrs. Bleazard, Miss Dawson and Miss Tailford

Year 3 – Mrs. Ball (our new Deputy Head), Mrs. Allanson, Mrs. Wroot and Mrs. Beautiman

Year 4 – Miss Parsons and Mrs DeKlerk.

Year 5 – Miss Padgett and Mrs. Bacakoglu

Year 6 – Mr. Middleton, Mrs. Elliott, Mrs. Davison, and Miss Robinson

**Nursery Places – we can now offer 30 hours!**

****Great news for our Nursery, is that we are now in a position to offer 30 hours for those families who qualify (check if you qualify [here](https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMI_Li626_Z4AIVgx-tBh07mQoxEAAYASAAEgKVh_D_BwE)) or want 30 hours. We are now in the process of making telephone calls and sending offer letters out to all parents and families who may be wanting either one of our new 30 hour places or a (part time) morning or afternoon place at our Nursery from September. We are often left with disappointed families who thought their children were on our list – if you are in any doubt whether or not a child is on our internal list, please speak with our office. Can you please spread the word to any families who might not currently have children at Hill Top, but may be wanting a Nursery place from September 2020 to contact our school office ([office@hilltop.bradford.sch.uk](mailto:office@hilltop.bradford.sch.uk) or 01274 678386) with their child’s details.

**Lunch Time Supervisors**

We are looking to appoint some new lunch time supervisors to support our lunch time team – a number of positions may be available from September 2020 or very soon thereafter – with a range of hours, but the successful candidate(s) will be expected to work every day over the lunch time period.

You will be joining a hardworking and professional team of teachers and support staff to oversee the dining area and playground areas of our school over the lunch time period.

The people we are looking for must have:

* A calm, positive and confident manner
* Good organisational skills and be self motivated
* A desire to work with children
* The ability to communicate with children effectively
* A good sense of humour

Visits to the school are warmly welcomed and should be made by prior arrangement with our Business Manager, Pam Cryer [pam.cryer@hilltop.bradford.sch.uk](mailto:pam.cryer@hilltop.bradford.sch.uk) from whom application forms and further details are available and to whom completed application forms should be sent.

**Free School Meals and Shopping Vouchers**



We currently send home weekly shopping vouchers for those families who are entitled to Free School Meals (FSM). Please note that this is different from those children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 who are entitled to the Universal Free School Meal (UFSM) offer.

We know that during this unprecedented time, many more of our families may have become entitled to FSM (including those children in R, Y1 and Y2 who already get them under the UFSM offer), but in order to be entitled to receive vouchers from school, we urge you to apply for the FSM option.

The eligibility criteria to apply for FSM includes those of you who are currently entitled to:

* Universal Credit, provided you have an annual net earned income not exceeding £7,400, (£616.57 per month)
* Income Support
* Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
* Income related Employment and Support Allowance
* Support under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
* Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit Child
* Tax Credit without Working Tax Credit and an annual household income of less than £16,190
* Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

If you fall into one of these categories, **please, please, please**, we urge you to follow the link below:

<https://bradford.gov.uk/benefits/applying-for-benefits/free-school-meals/>

…it is a straightforward form to complete, and **this means we can add you to our list of families to whom weekly shopping vouchers are being sent.**

If you need any help or have any questions about this scheme, please do contact us.

As an added incentive to you all, any new children who are now added to our Free School Meals list, will be given a free Hill Top winter coat, in the Autumn term, with the Hill Top logo on that retail for £25. Please see the office for more details. These coats are also available to purchase for all children from The Uniform Shop in Bradford.

Please note that children on free school meals are not identified in any way shape or form in school and are known in the most part by our office staff only.

**Emailing Shopping Vouchers**

We will continue to email out the Shopping Vouchers, including over the Summer Holidays, which should arrive each Monday to Hill Top families. If for whatever reason you have not received them, please contact school and we will try our best to chase up for you.

**Christian Values**

Thank you to you all who contributed to the Christian Values questionnaire – the top 12 really came as no surprise and these will become our focus for the next two years. The top 12 were: Friendship, Compassion, Peace, Truthfulness, Courage, Responsibility, Thankfulness, Hope, Community, Forgiveness, Generosity and Perseverance / Endurance.

We will begin with a focus on Thankfulness when we return to school in September.

**Support and Help**

We really do hope you are not finding this time too difficult. If there is anything more we can do for you, or anything that is being sent home that you are not sure about please ask or call and we will do our very best to help. There is a Senior Leader in school every day – and we are happy to answer any questions you might have. We can help and want to help. In the meantime, look out for newsletters, texts and tweets as a way of keeping in touch and of course look out for your daily emails from class teachers.

**After School Care Club in The Lodge and Breakfast Club**

We will update you just as soon as we know what the guidelines might be about schools offering wrap around care in the form of Breakfast Club and The Lodge in September.

MC900445730[1]**School Uniform**

School does not stock school uniform, book bags or pump bags. Instead you can order these on line at [www.myclothing.com](http://www.myclothing.com) and just enter our school name or postcode BD12 0TL. Please ensure you order these in plenty of time for the start of the new term, and can we remind the parents of our Year 4 children that as they move into Year 5, the colour of their sweatshirt and polo jumper reverse.

**Hill Top CE Primary School Lottery**

One of our supporters continues to win a cash prize each week. At the moment these cash prizes are small. We would love to get more supporters and increase the prize fund! Please see the details below of how to sign up and be in with a chance of winning. Your weekly ticket purchase will mean that Hill Top receives funds which will be used to improve our school grounds. We would love to build a canopy over the Reception Class playground, continue to improve the small, outdoor space to the rear of Y1 and also add some resources to the upper playground. We can’t do it without your support, so please sign up and encourage friends and family to do the same.

To start supporting, visit: [www.yourschoollottery.co.uk](http://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk)

Search for: Hill Top

Supporters must be 16 years of age or older.

**Extra vigilance please**

Can we ask your support in being extra vigilant of our school premises over the summer holidays as it is this time of year where we become especially vulnerable to people accessing our school site when school is closed. We do have CCTV - both external and internal and we have a security firm who visit the school site several times over night. We ask if you do see anyone on our school site who you think shouldn’t be there, you report it to a member of our school staff or you can call 101 and report the fact that there are trespassers on the school site. 999 would be the number to call if you felt that an emergency response was required.

**A personal thanks**

MC900105218[1]I’m not quite sure where this year went – it doesn’t seem two minutes since we started back in September. It has been without doubt challenging but I’ve always had the support of an incredibly hard working team here at school – the teachers, governors, nursery nurses, support staff, admin staff, PFA, cleaning staff and lunchtime and kitchen staff – who give their time willingly, enthusiastically and endlessly to ensure that our children, your children, get the best possible opportunities here at Hill Top. An enormous thanks to each and every one of them…for all they do.

Thank you too to you the parents – your involvement, commitment and support (even in the darkest of days) in your desire to move our school forward is very much appreciated.

**What next?**

MCPE07677_0000[1]

Next year promises to be exciting, but to be honest, I would just be happy with ‘normal’; plans include:

* Development of Reading across school
* Exploring ways in which we can support the Mental Health and Well Being of the whole Hill Top community
* Programmes centred on ensuring y/our children are not disadvantaged long term by the long school closure we have had this year.
* Continuing to develop Collective Worship and RE across school

More details will follow in the new school year.

**I hope you all have a safe, restful and sun filled summer. We hope to return to school on Thursday 3rd September.**

Des Martin, Head Teacher