

Hill Top CE Primary School and Nursery

Newsletter - 8th January 2020

Dear Parents



Happy New Year!

I know this is already the second newsletter of the year, but can I reiterate a heartfelt welcome back and a very happy and hopeful new year! I can't even begin to tell you the pressures all of us in school are facing at the moment - (I know many of you too are facing similar, significant pressures) and we are still trying to find out what is the best way forward for all our children, parents and staff. Mistakes will be made and rectified, but I promise you that we will do our very best to ensure we are meeting all our children's needs as much as we can, given the constraints and ever changing (and in some cases non-existent) guidelines. Effective learning, safety for everyone and being mindful of well-being is our key aim during this time.

This term's Christian value is....Perseverance



This term, through our Collective Worship and other work we do in school, we will be focusing on the value of Perseverance. The Christian Values Award will be given to those children who have demonstrated aspects of this value during the course of the school week - irrespective of whether they are working from home or in school.

Internet Safety Training for Parents

We are aware that many of our children will have access to new technology following the Christmas holidays, and I'm sure you are aware of the dangers associated with some of the sites, games and apps that your children may be accessing.



We are offering a free course for parents linked to keeping your children safe whilst using the internet and how to ensure all your child's privacy settings on all sites they use are as tight as they can be.

The course is a one hour training session on Thursday 11th February - from 2pm, via zoom. We urge you to put this date in your diaries as time and time again, we hear of children, both here at school and in the wider world, who are put in vulnerable and scary situations as a result of unsafe internet use.

Dates for you diaries

A few dates to add to your diaries:

Thurs 11th Feb	Parents Internet Safety Training
Wed 10th Mar	Parents Consultation Afternoon / Evening
Thurs 11th Mar	Parents Consultation Afternoon / Evening
Fri 26th Mar	Family Easter Egg Hunt from 1pm (restrictions dependant)



Dinner Money

Our lunch menus are now on line - all children now have access to the full cooked menu. A reminder that those of you who wish to take up school dinners the prices are £1.90 per day or £9.50 per week. All dinner monies are now paid for via Parent Pay.

Our kitchen staff work really hard to produce cooked school dinners of the highest standards and in line with the governments Healthy Eating agenda. I can thoroughly recommend them!

Our kitchen staff are planning some special themed days to promote our school lunches over the next few months:

Wednesday 20th January - an Australian themed Lunch

Friday 12th February - a Valentine themed lunch

Wednesday 17th March - an Irish themed lunch (St. Patrick's Day)

Friday 26th March - an Easter themed lunch

In order for dinner money debt not to be allowed to mount up, we will recommend the sandwich option if debts equate to more than two weeks' worth of dinners.



Milk Money

If you want your child to have milk this term, please log on to www.schoolmilkuk.co.uk All children in Nursery and children under the age of 5 in Reception are entitled to free school milk as are all children who are receiving Free School Meals via the Income Support / Family Tax Credits route.

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 continue to improve our outdoor space 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

Search for: Hill Top

Supporters must be 16 years of age or older.

Breakfast Club and After School Care Lodge



During these uncertain times, we will still be offering Breakfast Club and After School Care Provision. Please book in the usual way via Parent Pay.

School Times



School will open for all Critical Worker / Vulnerable children at 9am (Nursery is 8.30am) and close at 3pm. This slight temporary adjustment means that we can manage the staffing more effectively - we are aiming to keep all the children as safe as possible by keeping them in their year group bubbles.

Drop off and pick up will be at the gates you are currently using to come in. Please ensure you and your children do not stand waiting with any other families - **you will**

be challenged. Social distancing and face coverings are vital with the new variant of Covid.

On Line Learning



For the most part, class teachers will be using a range of methods to support home learning. There will be videos to which you are directed, videos made by the teachers, websites that you are directed to, worksheets that will be forwarded to you and live teaching for some classes. I will not hide from the fact that this remains a struggle for

everyone - teachers are being expected to be in two places at once (supporting both home and school learning) whilst ensuring safety, covering lunch hours, attending meetings - I promise you that we are doing our best and I remain very proud of the efforts they are putting in. Of course, we could do better and it might be easy to find faults with our provision - but we will continue to act upon your suggestions, adapt our approaches and ensure all our children are engaging with work, being monitored and appropriately challenged as much as we possibly can.

Teachers will be accessible on Class Dojo from 9am to 12 noon, and from 1pm - 3.15pm most days. Please use this forum to submit work, ask questions, request feedback etc. On Wednesday afternoons, many of the teachers will be using this time for planning and preparation and attending staff meetings, so availability via Class Dojo will be limited.

Lap Tops and Sim Cards



Significant numbers of you are struggling with online learning because of lack of devices. We are doing our best to roll out as many spare lap tops that we have in school to support those families and we are expecting a new order of laptops to arrive early next week. These are for loan only and we expect children to use them only for home learning - filters and monitoring will be in place. If you haven't already let school know, please contact school if you would like to be considered for one. We

also have a free supply of 90 day SIM Cards that can be used for up to 30GB of data download. Again please contact school if you require one.

Work Packs

Significant numbers of you are also now requesting work packs to support the on line learning we are offering. Please look out on Class Dojo for when these will be distributed - but our plans in the first instance will be to make these available at the top school gates on **Mondays**. A member of staff will be at the gates to hand the pack over to you. Please ensure you and your children do not stand waiting with any other families - **you will be challenged**. Social distancing and face coverings are vital with this new variant of Covid.



Packs will be available at these times:

Nursery	9.30am
Reception	9.40am
Year 1	9.50am
Year 2	10.00am
Year 3	10.10am
Year 4	10.20am
Year 5	10.30am
Year 6	10.50am

If you have children in more than one class, we will be able to pass work packs out for your children at the gates at the time you pick up for the younger sibling. These staggered times ensure safety and manageability at the gates.

Children accessing school



School is only open for children of Critical Workers and Vulnerable Children for now. Even if you fall into this category, please consider very carefully whether you have any other options for your children. Of course, we have thorough risk assessments in place, but the message is clear from our government - **Stay Home, Protect the NHS and Save**

Lives. If you fall into the Critical Worker category (and more and more of you seem to be), during these dark times we urge you to only use our school setting when absolutely needed - we will ask you regularly at the gates what days / times you will be need to access school so if you know your shift patterns / days off in advance that will help us enormously with our planning and staffing.

Free School Meals

Children who are entitled to free school meals are also entitled to received food packages which Hill Top staff will be delivering from Mondays. I know some of you who fall into this category have already completed the questionnaire (sent via text message) to let school know - if you are yet to do so, please let us know by Monday (11th) morning at the very latest.



School Uniform

Please ensure your children wear layers as well as school uniform whilst in school.

Des Martin
Head Teacher