

Hillcrest School

Winter Newsletter 2018

Thank you all for your support and encouragement since September. As you can see from the newsletter we have been very busy! Having worked hard all term, the children will be ready for a break and the opportunity to recharge their batteries.

This term our Caretaker Mark has transformed our Library into the most amazing space in school. Please save the date of the 25th January as this will be our official opening day.

I would like to thank the students and teachers for their dedication and hard work this year. It is a pleasure and a privilege to lead this wonderful school.

I hope that all the parents and carers, pupils and staff have a wonderful Christmas holiday, and wish you a very happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year. I look forward to seeing our fantastic young people on Monday 7th January 2019.

It was great to see so many of you at our Christmas Fair. We raised a huge **£308.16!**

Best wishes

Andrea Mead
Head teacher

6th Form

What a great term we have had in 6th Form. It all started with a visit to the Careers Fair at Metro Arena where we explored different options for our future. We travelled on the bus which helped us with our independent travel skills. We also went to a Careers Fair at Woodhorn Colliery where we met the gold medal Paralympian, Stephen Miller. He was inspirational.

We have enjoyed making our own lunches and shopping for them at Aldi. Hot dogs and noodles are a firm favourite!

We organised and ran a coffee afternoon for Macmillan and managed to raise £350 in total. It was great working as a team to organise the event as part of our ASDAN.

Our café and maintenance groups are doing really well with our salads becoming popular with the staff. We also run a tuck shop on a Thursday for students.

We love being in 6th Form and are excited for what is to come in 2019!



Coastal schools—Class NB

A new opportunity for Form NB arose this half term with the introduction of Coastal schools. New adventures in outdoor learning has included understanding changes in elements, cooking outside using a firebox, creating sculptures from natural materials and teamwork to achieve individual challenges.



Scavenger hunting



Shelter building



Using a see-saw made from natural materials



Team games



Cooking on the Fire pit

Class LD

We have enjoyed working together to produce the fantastic display for Remembrance Day. Everyone learned so much about the 100 years Centenary.



Class SK

What a busy term! Since September we have all got to know each other really well and as well as learning lots we have had lots of fun together. Our days out have included learning about the Northumberland coastline at Blyth beach and St Mary's Lighthouse, and visiting Beamish to learn about what life was like in the past. Our trip to Wallington Hall was brilliant and gave us the opportunity to see some of Northumberland's stunning countryside - as well as have fun in the parks! We are looking forward to sharing many more experiences in the New Year.

Merry Christmas to you all!



Class DM

This term we have been doing lots of arts and crafts! We decided that for the Christmas Fair we would like to make something very special, salt dough ornaments and sock snowmen. We are hoping to sell lots of them because they took a lot of hard work to make. Look how great they look!



Class RA

We have embarked on a City and Guilds Qualification in Horticulture this half term, which will continue until the end of this academic year. We are working with John Wallace, a tutor from Kirkley Hall College. The students' horticultural project is to improve the garden at the bungalow at Hillcrest. The students began by designing and researching what they would like the garden to look like and what they would like to see in it. They came up with some amazing and creative ideas. The students work on the project every Thursday morning no matter what the weather! They have scheduled visits to Kirkley Hall where they are assessed on various Horticultural skills. They have already completed their first one which was bulb planting. We are all really excited to see the finished project by the end of the summer term and celebrate the success of the students' hard work and commitment.



Class HS

We have had an extremely busy term enjoying various different projects. Most recently they have been recycling plastic milk bottles as part of their STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths) project. Students researched and designed the structure before cleaning, constructing and assembling the bottles to make an igloo. Everyone worked together on the project to re-invent the chill area in the classroom.



Class SF

We have had a fun term learning all about World War 2. We have made model Spitfires, Lego models of Dunkirk, trenches models and learnt interesting facts about rationing. We now know so much!

In Thrive we have discovered that we love water beads and water play. We have enjoyed taking part in team building activities and playing with our friends.

We are also getting so much better at using Makaton and understanding it. This week we have ended the term by making Christingles and taking part in an assembly all about the Christian celebration.

We look forward to the next term and lots of new exciting active learning opportunities.



Class SW

This term we have been working on our ASDAN award for which we had the option to choose History or Geography. Our History group looked at riots, gay rights and women getting the vote. Our Geography group looked at popular holiday destinations, local seaside holiday destinations and the countries of Europe.

We made the class decision to study Performing Arts for the skills section of our Duke of Edinburgh award. We studied the elements of a play and each chose a role, which included actors, light and sound, props, wardrobe and set design. We finished the project by filming our class production of our 'Northern' version of Romeo and Juliet.

"The lessons involved loads of teamwork and were fun to take part in. The final result of the recorded play was amazing."

We ended our Duke of Edinburgh award with a class visit to Northern Stage to watch 'A Christmas Carol'. "This gave us an example of how a professional play works. It was really cool to see."

We are looking forward to see what our new choices in ASDAN and Duke of Edinburgh bring in the New Year.

Class JP

We have had a great term full of fun and learning. We have enjoyed getting to know each other, especially through playing games. Here are some of our highlights:

"Beating Mrs Gale at cards" – Nathan

"The Halloween party, playing games like piñata" - Peter

"The birthday party because it was good. I won Pin the Tail on the Donkey" - Lewis

"I like Pong, that's easy" – Nicky

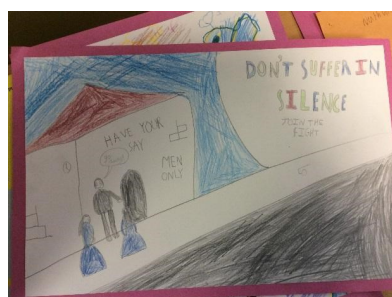
"Starting my new class" – Harry

"Helping Mr Bainbridge design the new library" – Cameron

"Getting to know the new students and supporting them in settling in the class" – Mrs Green

"I have loved getting to know the brilliant students in our class. I enjoyed learning about important people in British history; like Alan Turing and the Suffragettes" – Mrs Patterson

"Celebrating the end of year at Sambuca's" – Miss Noble



The Intervention Team

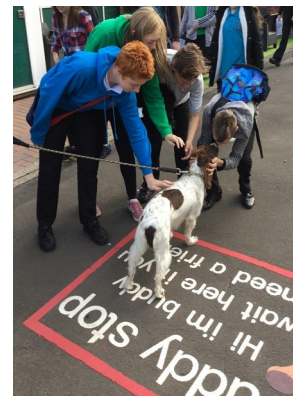
The Intervention Team added a new member to the team, Miss Scott, an Autistic specialist to work with pupils to help within the classroom and in 1:1 sessions.

This term we had two Families Gatherings welcoming families in to see what the Intervention Team do as part of the Hillcrest team. It also allowed parents to speak with other parents and find out about using visuals, Zones of Regulation, Lego Therapy alongside input from Occupational Therapy. Resources were made and sent out to families who thought that these would be of benefit to home. More information will follow about the next Families Gathering.

Morag is still a vital part of our Intervention Team and is working with students in school. Students enjoy spending time with Morag on a Friday and has been an important part of helping students regulate. She has been a great addition to the team and we look forward to more students getting to spend time with her next term.

Choir

Christmas started early for the choir, back in October in fact! They have met weekly to practise a mix of Christmas carols and popular songs which they have selected. All of their hard work will be on show at their performance on Thursday 20th December at St Nicholas' church. It promises to be a very festive start to the Christmas holidays and a lovely celebration of the students' efforts throughout this half term. Key Stage 3 met together to celebrate Christmas at our Christingle service. Every class contributed to the celebration and enjoyed sharing their home made Christingles.





A Message from the Governing Body

The students at Hillcrest this year have worked extremely hard in their school work and we have seen great progress throughout our governor visits in 2018. The improvements around the school have been vast, from additional learning spaces to accommodate this year's growth in student population to our new and outstanding School Library, this is an outstanding reading and learning space so please do ask to see it when you are in visiting the school.

This year we have carried out a very successful Parent/Carer Governor election and welcomed an additional two new community governors to our board. We are now at full strength and we very much look forward to providing Hillcrest with challenge and support over the coming year to ensure that every student and young person at Hillcrest are making progress and have the very best educational provision and school life experience. We strive for excellence and the staff at Hillcrest mirror this aspiration on a daily basis both in their positive attitude and professional regard. It is a privilege to be a school governor and to serve the young people of Hillcrest is an honour. We very much look forward to 2019 and hope, with your help, to see our student attendance continue to increase and achieve our aim of having a full quota of students attending Hillcrest every day.

The school governors wish all families a wonderful festive season and a very happy and successful New Year.

Joyce Reid

Important Notice:

Training day is now 29th April instead of the 25th February 2019.

Term starts on the 7th January 2019.

