



The Hillcrest News

Summer 2022 Edition

Head Teacher's Update:

I would like to start by thanking all of our amazing families for supporting us this year, in what I think has been the most challenging year of Covid so far. We have been hit by several periods of not having enough staff to safely open all of school and had to close some classes at various points of the year. This is the LAST thing I ever want to do and the decision was never taken lightly as I know it impacts home. The kind words of support we received over the year, really mean the world to staff here.

As you can see from the rest of the newsletter, amazing things happen at Hillcrest every day. It has been a pleasure to see lots of our young people grow and flourish over the year. None of this could have been achieved without the support you have given us.

Goodbye

This term we say goodbye to some staff who are leaving teaching. Mrs Farnie, Miss Burt, Mrs Walton, Mrs Burn who are leaving to work outside education or in alternate provision and Mrs Ambrose is also leaving us as it was the end of her contract. We wish them well in their new jobs.

Welcome

We welcome two very experienced teachers from out of county special schools. Mr Brady from a school in Essex, Mrs Mead from a school in Sunderland and Mrs Lynch who is an experienced teacher from a mainstream school in Newcastle. We also welcome back Mrs Bishop after almost a year on maternity.

We have had some positive feedback over the year from families at EHCP meetings. Tonight you will receive a link for a survey via Teacher2parents. This can be completed on your phone (we have tested it and it works!). We would appreciate you completing this for us. Have a great summer holiday. We look forward to doing it all again next year.

I also seek staff views too. Please find attached some fabulous comments about their experiences this year.

KS3- Class SF

Incredible Progress

In class SF this term we have really enjoyed reflecting on the incredible progress we have made this year. There are so many positives and we have really enjoyed learning together. We absolutely love our garden area. We have been growing plants, enjoying outdoor learning and one big highlight has been investigating our bug hotels every day, to see which new additions have joined us overnight. We love to bug hunt in forest school and even saw a very cute little mouse, along with lots of other creepy crawlies!

Happiness Boxes & Memory Jars

We love Thrive in our class and we have enjoyed making happiness boxes and individual memory jars as part of our transition work. These are things we can hold onto and keep looking back at. Our drawing skills have also improved dramatically. We love step by step drawing, especially when we get to colour in Mrs Finley's attempt too! Den building has also been fun, especially in the garden where we enjoy keeping cool and playing with toys.

Creative Writing

All pupils are really proud of the progress they have made in writing this year, especially when writing for different purposes. We have created leaflets on the Taj Mahal, booklets on mythical and letter writing as Harry Potter. We have really focused on sentence structure, with the use of interesting vocabulary and the amazing progress is clear to see.

I wish class SF the best of luck for next year, where we know they will continue to be successful in everything they do at

Hillcrest. Thank you for an exceptional year.



KS3- Class MS

Castles, Knights and Dragons

Our first half of the term focused on our topic of 'Castles, Knights and Dragons' and we learned about the structures of different castles.

We investigated pollution and climate change in Science and designed posters about how we can reduce carbon emissions. In D&T we practised the skill of running and cross stitch to make sewn pictures. This was something that some of us found really tricky and we learned about the importance of resilience and to keep on trying.

Rainforests and Art

Our second half of term has been centred around learning about the 'Rainforests'. and all the different animals that live there. Our art

lessons have focused around animal prints and we have created fantastic art pieces using different types of fabrics.

Adopting a Dolphin

This half term we have been very excited to start our journey of adopting a dolphin. We are working with the Durham Wildlife Trust. We are looking to adopt a bottlenose dolphin and use our letter writing skills to ask the Head Teacher for the funds to do so. The students all loved participating in helping wildlife.



KS3- Class SM

Class Trips and Other Countries

'Class SM have had a fantastic end to the school year. We had some mature discussions about safety and behaviour within the community and even got to go on some trips. The staff team are very proud. Some students even ordered their very own drink for the first time in their lives. What an accomplishment! During Summer B we also really enjoyed learning facts about different countries. If only we got to visit them!

True Scientists!

In Science, each student has become a true Scientist. We have really enjoyed choosing experiments and testing them out. We have had explosions, smashed eggs, lots of smells and spider races.'



KS3- Class HS

North East Coast

We have had a fabulous term in Class HS learning about the coast. We went on our first class trip to Amble and Blyth beach which was a huge success. We enjoyed our picnic at Blyth before digging holes and exploring the battery guns.

Making a Difference

In June one of our class members, wanted to raise funds for the RSPCA and chose to do a bake sale for staff and KS3 students. She spent an afternoon baking cookies and also took some of her own time to make cakes for the staff. She made an incredible £65 in one day which will make a big difference to the RSPCA's work rescuing animals.

Ancient Egyptians

We have had a great time learning about ancient Egypt and making some artefacts. The students used moulds and quick drying plaster before painting the models, trying to add as much detail as possible.

As always, the students have worked incredibly hard and they should be very proud of themselves. They have been an absolute pleasure to teach!



KS4/5- The Bridge- Class LF

What a busy year!

In class LF they have had a busy year and have worked extremely hard. There has been a lot of work around transition, Preparation for Adulthood and learning skills they will need for employment. The class have taken part in class reading and a favourite book of the class was The London Eye.

Accreditations

The students have achieved so much this year, taken part in ASDAN and getting the accreditations, Duke of Edinburgh Awards and Entry Levels.

We all can't believe the year is almost over for all of LF class students, the amazing journey of Hillcrest School is coming to an end for The Bridge students.

Bridge Highlights

Students have said their favourite parts of the year have been;

- Taken part in work experience at The Hope Centre food bank/uniform bank.
- Going out in the local area as part of Duke of Edinburgh building on skills and taken part in physical activities. This includes litter picking in the local area, Blyth beach, walking, map reading. Visiting Northumberlandia and Plessey Woods and taking part in orienteering
- Building confidence in ourselves for transition to college.
- We have had fun taken part in PE and building on new skills and confidence.
- Enjoyed organising a tea party for the Jubilee and celebrating with other classes as part of DofE.

- Planning and organising a coffee morning for part of our qualification in ASDAN.
- Learning life skills in the household and in the community.
- Being supported by good staff.
- Supporting the Ukraine Aid collecting items and taken them to local drop off points.
- Running a Social Enterprise Christmas Shop to raise money which allowed us to visit Sambuca's.



Preparing for Adulthood

KS4- Class DK

Amazing Journeys...

It's the end of the school year! I would like to congratulate everyone in Class DK for their fantastic work and learning journeys they have gone on this year.

Great Gardeners

The gardens are looking amazing, some of the produce has already been ate.

Achievements

We have finished our longest book yet (Glad to see the back of Jefferson in Dark Woods). We have smashed our exams and had a good laugh along the way.

You have all come so far, learnt so much and have grown. The teachers in this class are proud of you all. Have a good rest for summer holidays, you deserve it.

YOU ARE
AMAZING

KS4- Class JB

What a year!

What a year it has been! Class JB have achieved so much and we are all so very proud of them.

Accreditations

This term we have successfully completed external exams in English, Maths and IT. Our ASDAN folders have been submitted and lots of great Duke of Edinburgh activities have taken place.

Social Skills and Hospitality

We have held Jubilee celebrations with students enjoying a picnic, hosting a 'mocktail' session, and holding a royal quiz.

During the year, we have enjoyed lots of opportunities to practice our social skills and we now have quite a reputation for our hospitality through our hosting of a pancake morning, toasties and drinks! We have also been lucky enough to be invited to other classes for various different events. All these have been enjoyed greatly by the students and are a fantastic opportunity to meet up with friends from other groups.

Inclusivity

Pride Month was celebrated in June with the class making and selling unique 'Pride Cupcakes' We also created some great inclusive outdoor artworks with our very own Pride Ambassador who showcased themed clothing and accessories. We are proud, as a class, of our inclusive atmosphere and knowledge of LGBT+ matters.

Class Trips

We have rounded off the term with a cinema visit and a trip to Kirkley Hall College & Northumberland Zoo. This was a great finish to the year and we all had a fantastic time. Students were impressive representatives of Hillcrest. Well done to everyone!

We would like to take this opportunity to wish all of our leavers the very best for the future and we hope everyone has an enjoyable Summer break.



KS4- Class FW

Working hard

This term Class FW have been working extremely hard in Maths and English, learning times tables and multiplication and exploring ghost stories and all things spooky! In Science we have learned about food chains and evolution and were

surprised to learn we came from monkeys!

Outdoor Learning

We have taken advantage of the weather and taken our afternoon reading sessions outside, relaxing in the sunshine whilst we read or listen to our books. We have also spent time in Forest School creating obstacle courses and magic wands, and have enjoyed playing tug of war with some other classes. For Duke of Edinburgh we organised a car wash to raise money for the Newcastle Cat and Dog Shelter, Ms. Walton's car had never been so shiny!

Success

We have had a lot of successes this year, achieving accreditation in Entry Levels, ASDAN and Duke of Edinburgh and have developed our social skills and communication skills along the way. We have had lots of laughter and fun and are excited to continue our journey into Year 11 at Hillcrest.



KS3- Class DM

What a wonderful time

What an absolute wonderful time we have had this year! It has been so amazing working together and developing our friendships and relationships.

Around the World

This term in particular, we have done some remarkable work on Around the World and Roald Dahl. Within Around the World, everyone in the class produced some outstanding tourist leaflets on the Taj Mahal. The amount of effort everyone put in was great and seeing the class so proud of their final products was amazing. We also did a full food tasting session on Indian food where pupils were incredibly brave and tried lots of

new things. Some even discovered new foods that they like!

Roald Dahl

In our Roald Dahl topic, we loved listening to the story of George's Marvellous Medicine. We also looked at some of the crazy inventions that have come up in Roald Dahl's stories and used these to base some fun STEM activities on. We have made parachutes, marble runs, helicopters and even slime! What great fun we have had.



KS3- Class MW

An Absolute Blast!

What a fantastic term Class MW has had! I am so proud of how the pupils are ending the year and they should be equally as proud of the progress they have made. The pupils have worked so hard in their learning in areas such as writing formal letters, reports, map skills, ratio, debate, electricity, global warming, Ancient Greece - the list could go on and on!

Enterprise Project

A real highlight of this term has been our recent class enterprise project in which the pupils have hosted an ice lolly and ice cream sale. They have put in so much effort to collect surveys, calculate profits, budget their spending money and deliver amazing customer service. They have absolutely loved taking part and it has also been lovely to see lots of smiling faces around school as a result.

Personal Development

Each member of the class has also come so far in their personal development. They are beginning to mature into wonderful young adults with a willingness to step out of their comfort zone. It has been so lovely to see them engaging in lots of social time and social games to build upon their resilience and social skills. We have really enjoyed the challenge of 'Wordle' daily, along with lots of Hangman and playing outside. Not only this, but we have taken part in lots of debates and discussions in the classroom around current affairs and topics of interest. The pupils have grown so much in

confidence such that they are able to share their opinions whilst simultaneously listening to and respecting the views of others.

We have had so much fun this term in Class MW - it has been an absolute blast! I hope each and every one of the pupils continues with this across the summer holidays. Staff cannot wait to hear all about it when we return in September.



KS3- Class RB

What a great term!

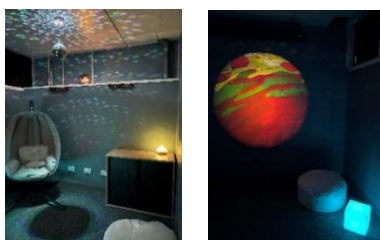
This half term, Class RB have enjoyed our Crime and Punishment topic. In Art, we debated whether graffiti is vandalism, art, or both before designing our own street art. In DT, we designed and made model guillotines, which work using pulley systems. In Humanities we have learned all about the criminal justice system through the ages including taking part in Victorian hard labour, and carrying out a modern day class investigation and trial. We especially enjoyed our trip to Newcastle Castle, where we learned all about the cruel punishments carried out in Medieval England and saw real dungeons and prison cells! We also carried our topic through to our English lessons and wrote some fantastic reports about crime and punishment in the style of Horrible Histories. We have had a great term!

Thank you for all of your support this year, we have had a wonderful year together as a class and are excited to see where our new adventures take us next year!



School Improvements

This summer term we have created a new sensory/regulation space which will be ready to use in September.



KS3- Class SK

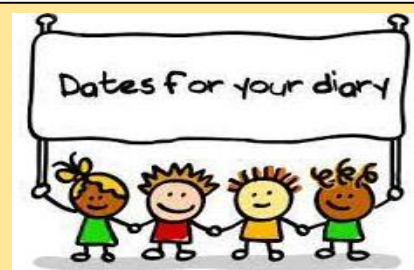
Wonderful Memories

What a year it has been in class SK! We have been lucky enough to have had an amazing year, and we will have lots of wonderful memories to look back on!

Northumberland Zoo

The real highlight of this half term has been our trip to Northumberland Zoo. The students did a lot of work preparing for our visit, which included researching and learning all about endangered animals, and writing letters to thank Northumberland Zoo for having us. The trip itself was a huge success, and the students and staff alike had an amazing time! We got to see all kinds of animals, including racoons, snow leopards and a very friendly group of otters. We were so proud of the way in which the students conducted themselves all day, they were a real credit to the school and left a wonderful impression on the zoo staff.

Without a doubt, though, the best thing this year has been watching some truly amazing friendships form, and watching our students make such an amazing amount of progress. It has been a real pleasure to work with Class SK this year.



- 22/07/22 – School Closes (Summer)
- 05/09/22 – Teacher Training Day
- 06/09/22 -- School Returns (**Year 7 only**)
- 07/09/22 -- School Returns (**Whole School**)
- 21/10/22 – School Closes (Half Term)
- 01/11/22 – School Returns
- 23/12/22 – School Closes (Christmas)
- 09/01/23 – School Returns
- 17/02/23 -- School Closes (Half Term)
- 27/02/23 -- Teacher Training Day
- 28/02/23 -- School Returns
- 31/03/23 -- School Closes (Easter)
- 17/04/23 -- School Returns
- 01/05/23 – May Day
- 26/05/23 – School Closes (Half Term)
- 05/06/23 – School Returns
- 21/07/23—School Closes (Summer)
- 04/09/23 – School Returns



Please remember to update us here at school if you move house, change telephone/mobile phone number or email address so we can contact you.



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