



The Hillcrest News

Spring 2021 Edition

Head Teacher's Update:

Welcome to the new look Hillcrest News. I am pleased to provide this update for our spring newsletter as we are now a whole school again which feels great.

However, the risks of Covid19 still exist and we must continue to work together to protect everyone in our community. You can do this by not sending children to school if they are poorly and are displaying any symptoms linked with Covid 19. These are:

- A high temperature
- A new continuous cough
- Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste.

If in any doubt children should remain at home and a PCR test taken to check they are negative before returning. Remember any other household members who are ill should be tested and students should remain at home until test results are received. This reduces our risk of transmission in school so we can remain open to the majority of our students.

COVID & LFD Tests

Reminder that LFD tests are available for students – please contact the office if you would like a kit. Tests should be continued over the Easter break and results reported to school.

Thank You

All of the staff at Hillcrest deserve a mention as they work tirelessly for our young people and regularly go the extra mile. I'm sure you will join me in thanking them for all they do.

Thanks again for all of your support as we have navigated the last year since the first lockdown started. We work closely with all of our families and appreciate your input. I hope brighter times are ahead and I look forward to seeing you all in person at some point in the summer term. Please keep your fingers crossed we can host Hillfest in July!

I hope you have a fantastic break with your wonderful children and look forward to welcoming them back on the 12th April.

KS3 – Class HS

Growing our Own

It has been brilliant to be back together again as a full class and we have enjoyed growing some different plants as part of our science topic. Our beans have sprouted, our cress looks delicious and we are excited to see how our strawberry plants grow. We have shown how we can take responsibility for our own plants and make sure we water them and that they get the right amount of sunlight.



Messy Easter

We have been working on our sensory skills and enjoying some messy play activities. One of which was to decorate an egg for Easter using a variety of materials. The students worked on their own designs with staff 'egg-couraging' them to be as independent as possible. It has been a pleasure to see how keen the students have been to work with the different textures and materials, a truly 'eggcellent' effort!



KS3 – Class DM

Amazing Work

This term has not been what we had quite hoped for, but Class DM have been amazing as always! Students

have produced some amazing work both at home and in school. Our class highlights were the snow days and doing our live science experiments every Thursday before half term.



Extreme Earth & Vicious Vikings

Throughout this term, we have covered two fun topics, Extreme Earth and Vicious Vikings. We have loved learning about these areas. Within the class we have made some Viking longboats and produced some amazing collages. We have also enjoyed spending lots of time together as friends and playing games!



KS3 – Class SM

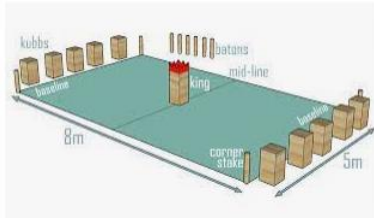
New Ways of Communicating

This term has been all sorts of weird. We have had to go into another lockdown and change how we communicate AGAIN! We all learnt how to use Google Meet properly and the students absolutely aced it. We also had some beautiful reading sessions together, both in the classroom and online.



History and Games

We loved researching and learning about WW2. Some students couldn't believe their grandparents had experienced this. When we were able to fully come back to school, we started to learn about Vikings and have had lots of fun playing Kubba.



KS3 – Class MS

Countries

In Class MS this term, we have undertaken some project work and each studied a different country. We have looked at the physical and human geography of the country, researched the foods and animals from there as well as investigating the traditions and religions that the people who live there follow. Each student has produced a folder of research.



Celebrating Success and a Return to School

On the 9th of February, we took part in safer internet day and our class won the KS3 quiz and we won £5 to be spend on something of our choosing for the class. We decided to spend it on breakfast items for us to have a shared cooked breakfast on the morning of March 8th when we were all back together for the first time. This was a lovely morning for us to catch up with each other and talk about the challenges of home learning, and readjusting back to school life. This half term, we have also celebrated 'World Book Day' and we have created a class display about our favourite books, designed book covers and completed World Bookday activities. On Friday 19th March, we celebrated Comic Relief and took part in the 'Design a nose'

competition. One of the students from our class won the prize- well done Josh!



KS3 – Class RB

Muddy Fun!

We have had a wonderful Spring term in class RB, it has certainly been a muddy one but a fun one, thanks to our parents for accepting their muddy children!



Earth and Space

The children thoroughly enjoyed their Earth and Space topic, making a whole solar system for our classroom as well as designing and making a space rocket. They were fascinated by life on the International Space Station, especially the part where we found out how they go to the toilet up in space!! We made space helmets and imagined what it would be like to land on the moon.

The children have worked particularly well in their English and Maths topics across the term, trying hard even when they found some parts tricky. They have written diaries from space and the most amazing newspaper report about aliens landing at Hillcrest!!



Animals

During the second part of the Spring term we have been learning about animals and where they live, we incorporated our topic into our PE and music lessons, doing animal

yoga as well as learning The Lion Sleeps Tonight in Makaton. Towards the end of the term we have come back together as a whole class which has been lovely. As a class team we are super proud of our students and how well they have coped with a tricky and unknown time, not only in school but out of school as well. We are thoroughly looking forward to our Summer term.

KS4 – Class FW

Back to Routines

This half term's highlights have been having all the students back together, seeing our friends and getting back into our routines.

Arts & Crafts

Our class have also done some excellent art and craft activities, including junk modelling, making our own Worry Dolls, making our own boats and an Easter egg



drop competition.

KS4 – Class SK

Positive Changes and the Future

Class SK are back together again and it is so lovely! The way your children have coped with this term is remarkable. They have either been in school with very few people or have come back after being at home for weeks - neither of which is easy! They have learned new rules and have followed them, have been open to change and have maintained a mature attitude throughout it all. Despite all of these changes the work that we have completed this term has been of a very high level. It has been a genuine pleasure to have the company of your children. It's safe to say that school is not the same without them! We look forward to the summer term and all the possibilities it brings. Thank you all for your support this last term- we really do appreciate it.



KS4 – Class LF

Working towards our Futures

We've had another busy term in Class LF. Despite having challenges to overcome, students have worked really hard and produced some fantastic work.

We have continued to work towards our Entry Level qualifications as well as considering the opportunities that are available to us following our time at Hillcrest.

Plastic Pollution

In Duke of Edinburgh we have been exploring the effects of plastic pollution and considering ways that we can raise awareness and educate others. We have taken part in weekly litter picks within the school grounds so that we can play a part in tackling the issue of plastic pollution.



Students worked together to create a class display and demonstrated excellent teamwork and communication skills.



KS4 – Class JB

Skills for Life

Class JB have spent the Spring Term focussing on skills for life, to prepare us for our Post 16 placements. We have enjoyed looking virtually at Colleges and training providers and making decisions about our future.

As a class we have started to try to be more independent in order to help us get ready for the next stage in our education. We have been practising all the skills that we need to succeed and are really looking forward to a time where we can try these out in real life situations. Our

McDonald Menu exercise went down a storm, with the teaching staff also gaining some useful insights!.

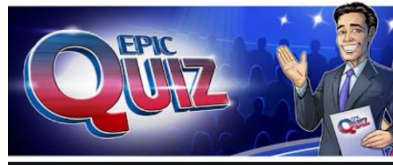


Epic Quiz

In order to work together as a team we have been creating and participating in our 'Epic Quiz' events and our creative sides have been so useful during our crafting afternoons.

We have continued to try and help around school- Colin the caretaker was particularly impressed with our snow clearing during the first wintery weeks of 2021.

We look forward to more hard work and fun activities in the Summer Term- not to mention Epic Quiz number 7!



KS4 – Class DK

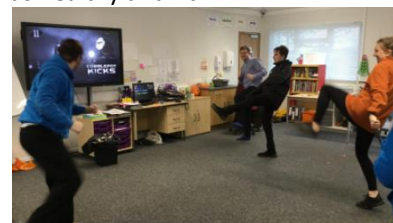
Resilience leads to Good Times

Resilience certainly paid off for Class DK who had a mixture of part time learning recently. This part time learning still meant that we had some good times. Some of our highlights included gardening with our visiting lecturer from Kirkley Hall, outdoor play in the snow and writing letters.



Challenging Ourselves

As a class team we have challenged ourselves during the term with hard maths problems and learning how to be more independent. We enjoyed our Netflix PE to also keep us healthy and fit.



KS5 – Class JP

Cooking

This term in 6th form has been unique. Half of us have been working from home while the other half have been at school. Students enjoyed cooking with the recipes school provided. Peter liked making Rock Cakes the most.

Pet Parade

At school we enjoyed writing newspaper articles, learning about different genres of music and raising money for the Cat and Dog Shelter with our Pet Parade!



We'll Meet Again

A highlight was when we filmed a television show aimed at elderly people. We called it "We'll Meet Again". Everyone worked together really well.

We learned about taking responsibility. We did an egg challenge where we each had to take care of an egg, to make sure it didn't crack. Katie won!

The best part of this term was when we all came back together.

Hillcrest School

Comic Relief

On Friday 19th March, Hillcrest students and staff participated in Comic Relief. Jokes were left around school and students took part in a 'Design a nose' competition. Well done to all those students who entered with prizes for KS3 and KS4. Well Done Josh and for the winning entries.

Collectively we raised £180.00 so a big thank you to everyone who participated in non uniform day and the other activities that were ongoing as part of our fund raising.



School Improvements

The school continues to improve the site and facilities available to our students. Our Studio is now up and running and to compliment this we are investing in a trampoline to start Rebound Therapy with students.



The new access gates for both pedestrian and vehicle access are now both working. The vehicle access gate is open at key times of the day when we have staff and student arrivals. Outside of these times access is via the intercom to the Office Team.



We are also developing our outdoor spaces for Forest School and outdoor play. Watch this space as we unveil the completed areas which we hope that our students will enjoy.

To be continued...



Staff Updates

We have 2 new TA's appointed who start with us in April though not new faces as they have been with us as Agency. Congratulations to Miss Blom and Miss Sutherland and welcome to the Hillcrest Team.



Nappy News!

Congratulations to Miss Johnson from the Office Team who is currently on maternity leave and welcomed a beautiful daughter in March.



Congratulations to Mr Hall from the Teaching Support Team who has returned from paternity leave after welcoming a son in March.

Morag's back!

We are delighted that Morag, our therapy dog, has started back at school. We have really missed having her in. She will be coming in every Wednesday and pupils will be able to book a time to have some dog therapy!



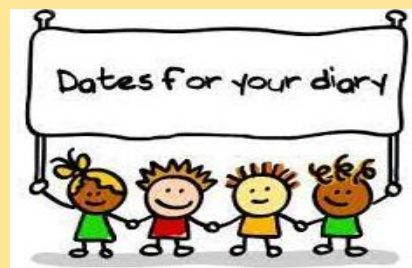
Carnegie Mental Health Award

Hillcrest School have been awarded the Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health in Schools 'School Mental Health Award' Silver Status. A fantastic achievement.



Easter Eggs!

Huge thanks to Mrs Wake and Miss Noble's family who have bought all students in school an easter egg which leaves us to say Have a Happy Easter and enjoy the break.



26/03/21 – School Closes (Easter)
12/04/21 – School Returns
03/05/21 – May Bank Holiday
28/05/21 – School Closes (Mid Term)
07/06/21 – School Returns
15/07/21 – Hillfest (subject to Covid)
(Keep an eye on our website for more dates if restrictions lift)



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.



Hillcrest School
Tel: 01670 713632
Email: admin@hillcrest.northumberland.sch.uk

