



Hillcrest Newsletter

Autumn 2022



Head Teacher's Update:

As you will see we have had a really busy term, which included a visit from OFSTED. Unfortunately, we do not have the report yet, but will share once we receive it. I hope you enjoy a snapshot of the autumn term in this newsletter.

Thank you to the families for being supportive when we have had to close classes when we have not had enough staff in school and have been unable to secure supply. I assure you that it is always the last resort.

Sam Hall will be starting in January as our Family Support Partner. She is very excited to join the Hillcrest Family and is looking forward to meeting all the pupils and families.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our staff who go above and beyond every day for our lovely young people. I hope you all enjoy the festive period and wish you all the very best for 2023.

We welcome back all pupils on 9th January 2023



KS3 - Class HS

The Doughnut Crime!

Class HS have had a great term, settling into Hillcrest and enjoying getting to know each other. In November we had to investigate a serious crime and the students had to interview suspects and explain why they had accused Mr Dobson of eating our doughnuts. We were pleased to discover that the guilty party had been caught and that he has promised to never do it again!

Making Decorations

Recently the class have been working with felt, stitching and gluing to make decorations and beanbags which have been a great success. We are looking forward to a lovely break and being back together again in January.



KS3 – Class MS

World War 2

For our second half term our class has focused on learning all about World War 2. We have done some amazing newspaper articles on Dunkirk, some fantastic poetry about the Blitz, explored evacuee suitcase's in VR and asked some interesting character interview questions for our class text, 'The Missing' by Michael Rosen.



Teamwork

Another focus our class has had this term is learning how to work with each other, take-turns and share an outcome. For Design and Technology, we saw some amazing teamwork skills, working together and producing a WW2 Anderson Shelter. Students researched this during ICT and planned out how to make it before starting. We have also played lots of teambuilding games for PE and their football sportsmanship has come a long way!



Amazing Progress

This term we have seen some amazing progress within Class MS. We have worked hard together to improve communication, working with staff when we need help and trying our best to show kindness to one another. We have had lots of PSHE and Thrive lessons where we have worked on Social Stories, Comic Strip Conversations and group activities around these topics.

I hope everyone has a lovely, well deserved Christmas break and I look forward to carrying on our learning journey next term!

KS3– Class DM

Lego and the Rainforests

In Class DM this term we have looked at two very interesting topics – Lego and Rainforests. When looking at Lego, we learned about the history and origins of Lego and looked at the creator Ole Kirk Christiansen's life. We made some storyboards about his life and worked hard to produce some outstanding Lego models. We then moved on to looking at Rainforests. We learned all about the different layers and animals of the rainforest, where we would locate them and even made some beautiful rainforest dioramas!



Outdoor lessons

We also loved getting outside more this term! We have had some amazing sessions down in Forest School, making rafts and playing hide and seek. We have also really enjoyed some fun PE lessons. We are looking forward to being in the outdoors again next term.

KS3 – Class GM

Ancient Greece

We have had a fantastic term in Class GM learning all about Rivers, Settlements and Ancient Greece.

We have learned all about Greek Gods and Goddesses, plus the story of Icarus. We have tried Greek food (Pitta and Hummus), looked at images of Greek temples, learned about the origins of the Olympic Games and drawn pictures of our favourite Greek characters.

Cinema Trip

We had a lovely trip to the Cinema to see 'The Croods 2' and all the students showed great listening and kind words to ensure we had a safe and successful trip.

Cookery and PE

The students have enjoyed their cookery lessons, making a mixture of delicious savoury and sweet treats. In PE, the students have been learning the basics of field hockey, including how to hold the stick, passing, moving, shooting and even a game amongst themselves. They have also enjoyed riding the school bikes, playing basketball and exploring our Forest School.



As always the students have worked really hard and they should be very proud of their behaviour and academic attainment this term.

KS3 – Class SK

Myths and Legends

Class SK have really enjoyed learning all about Myths and Legends in English. We have specifically been looking at The Loch Ness Monster and Big Foot. We have managed to have some really productive debates and argue why some of us believed in the Myths and Legends and why some of us don't.

Money, Money, Money

One of our favourite topics has been learning all about money maths. We learnt all about the value of money and got the chance to earn money through the week. We then spent our money at our class 'Tuck Shop' where we had to figure out our own change by working out the cost of the treats.



Thrive

Thrive is one of our favourite things in class SK. We have taught each other how to play Chess, Trivial Pursuit and various card games. It is lovely seeing everyone help each other out and having successful social times. As a class we have celebrated four birthdays since September and enjoyed lots of cake and games with each other. Most recently, we have really enjoyed playing in the snow as a class and it is such a lovely memory to have going into the Christmas period.

KS3– Class BL

Getting to Know You

In Class BL we have really enjoyed getting to know each other for this first half term. We have seen some changes within our class but we've worked well as a team to adjust to the changes.

The World is in Our Hands

For the first half term we focussed on global warming and climate change through our reading and writing. We recycled our plastic bottles by making bird feeders to put in Forest School for the winter. They looked good and went a little way towards saving the planet. We used our knowledge and understanding to help us in our writing where we created information texts that were effective and of a high standard.

My Oh Maya

In the second half of the term we focussed on learning all about the Maya Civilisation. We found out all the grim and grisly things they did including human sacrifice and bloodletting. We looked at the wonderful masks and headdresses they wore and tried to recreate our own. Some of them were very impressive. We also made some stunning four seasons calendars that will look beautiful on your walls the whole year round. Watch out for them coming home. Have a very Merry Christmas and we look forward to seeing you all in the New Year.

KS3 – Class EM

Our Environment

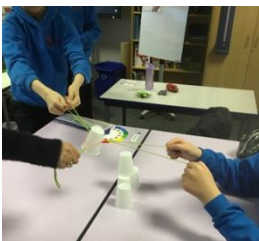
Class EM have had a really enjoyable first term together. In Humanities, during the first half term, we explored our environment and how we can help to protect the world we live in. We learnt about plastic pollution, deforestation, global warming and the dangers of climate change. We also learnt about the importance of recycling and created our own bird feeders from recycled plastic bottles to hang in our Forest School. We gathered leaves from Forest School and created our own 'Leaf Characters' to display in our classroom.

Maya Civilisation

During the second half of the term, we enjoyed finding out more about the Maya Civilisation: their religion and beliefs, writing and number systems and created our own Maya Headdresses using a variety of different materials and embellishments.

Skills Builder

Our Skills Builder sessions have been lots of fun. We have participated in a range of speaking, listening and team building activities that have helped to strengthen our social and problem solving skills whilst also developing our individual resilience, responsibility and respect. The class have built on these skills during our continued Thrive activities and Social Thinking sessions.

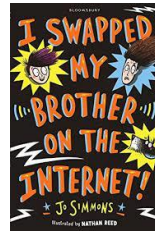
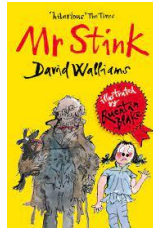


Cinema Trip & Class Reading

The group also enjoyed a class visit to the cinema during the 'Into Film Festival' to see 'Horrible Histories: Rotten Romans.'

As a class, we really enjoy our end of the day reading session and have read several books including: 'Boy in

the Dress', 'Mr Stink', 'Goosebumps', 'I Swapped my Brother on the Internet' and we are currently reading 'William Wenton and the Luridium Thief'.



KS4 – Class CB

Making Great Progress

It's been an absolute whirlwind of a first term but Class CB have been working extremely hard and made great progress. Firstly, I would like to say a huge thank you to the class for making me feel so welcome and helping me settle into life at Hillcrest.

The class has been working well on establishing positive relationships and I have seen lots of WOW moments between them. This term we have loved using the bikes, talking about crime during English and raising money for the teenage cancer trust. I can't wait for next term and I wish you and your families a very merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

KS4 - Class SM

Exams & Experiments

Class SM have had a very busy start to the year. We have been completing maths exams, English exams and carrying out a science experiment. During our science experiment we picked 4 substances and melted them. Our job was to time how long they needed to boil until they became a liquid. Ice was first to melt and candle wax was the last to melt.

Out and About

We have also been able to go on various school trips this term. We have visited Costa Coffee, the Cat & Dog Shelter, Azure College and the local park/shops.



KS4- Class MW

Forming Relationships

What a first term Class MW have had! The class have formed some fantastic relationships between peers and with the staff - it has been lovely to watch the friendships develop as the weeks have gone by.

Working Hard

There have been so many fantastic moments in school and the pupils have worked hard towards gaining their qualifications. We have completed Maths and English papers as well as Science experiments, all of which have showcased the immense amount of progress each student has made so far.

Children in Need

We have been on trips, created class games and a particular highlight of this term has been fundraising for Children in Need. The students organised and ran a tuckshop sale/ raffle to raise money for the cause which has also contributed towards the volunteering element of their Duke of Edinburgh award. The staff are so proud of the class so far and we cannot wait to continue in the New Year!



KS4/5- The Bridge- Class DK

Work Experience & Functional skills

We have had a great first term in The Bridge class at Hillcrest. We have started our work experience at the Hope Centre and have completed our Food and Safety certificate ready to start a café. We were lucky enough to experience the train from Newcastle to Bedlington and back along with a trip to Akzonobel Paint factory in Ashington. All of these trips are developing our functional skills and independence. We have also visited several colleges and attended careers events online and at Alnwick Gardens.



Alongside of all of these activities pupils have been working hard in Math and English lessons daily and we have completed our first science experiment and exam this term.

Well done everyone for this term. Have a well-deserved rest and I can't wait to do it all again in January.

Science

The Human Body

Key Stage 3 have really enjoyed Science this term. We have had lots of fun in our lessons and some of the student's scientific curiosity has definitely increased. The students learned all about how the different organs in the human body function. We investigated the impact that exercise has on our heart and why is important to try and stay healthy. We carried out an experiment where we investigated how our digestive system works and how our food is turned into waste. It was very messy but the students had lots of fun.



Our Solar System

In our solar system topic, we learned about the different planets, how we have different seasons as well as night and day. We also investigated phases of the moon and recreated these using Oreo biscuits, I think it helped that students got to eat all the biscuits at the end!



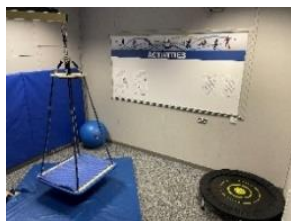
Different Forces

This half term we are learning about different forces and how they impact on everyday activities and experiences. We have thought about where and why friction is useful and where it isn't. We are currently investigating magnetism, how magnets work and which materials are magnetic, as well as where magnets are used and why. I am sure next term will be just as interesting and I'm looking forward to teaching the students more topics!

Hillcrest School

School Improvements

This term we have created our second sensory room. Students use this room for sensory processing and lots of regulation.



Mission Christmas

We have been fortunate to once again receive Mission Christmas gifts for our students. Students will receive a gift along with a selection box donated from school.

Christmas Dinner Day

Thank you to Jackie and Elaine for all of their hard work producing a delicious Christmas dinner for both staff and students. This takes a lot of organising and preparation!



23/12/22– School Closes (Christmas)
09/01/23– School Returns
17/02/23– School Closes (Half Term)
27/02/23– 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)



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

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MERRY CHRISTMAS

K	F	A	M	I	L	Y	T	R	N	K	B	J	L	H
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BOW
CANDY CANE
CAROLS
CHRISTMAS
ELF

FAMILY
GIVING
JINGLE
JOY
LIGHTS

NORTH POLE
PRESENTS
REINDEER
SANTA
SLEIGH

SNOW
STAR
STOCKINGS
TREES

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Spot the difference!

Wishing you good health and happiness for 2023 from all the staff at Hillcrest School.