



Friday 18th September 2026

Headteacher's Newsletter

With kindness, respect and gratitude, together we aim high in all we do

Dear families,

As we approach the midpoint of the half term, it has been wonderful to see how well the children have settled into their new classes and routines. They have made an excellent start to the academic year and are already demonstrating our guiding values of kindness, respect, gratitude and aiming high in all they do.

Our after-school clubs are now in full swing and it has been fantastic to see so many children taking part. Please see the attached information about additional out-of-school activities available locally, including Elton, Rainbows and Martial Arts clubs.

Thank you to all parents who have supported our healthy snack initiative for Key Stage 2 children. If children are not purchasing a snack from the school kitchen, we ask that they bring a healthy alternative such as fruit, rather than items high in fat or sugar such as chocolate or crisps. As a reminder, **Hillside is a nut-free school**. We now have several children with significant and potentially life-threatening nut allergies, so no food containing nuts should be brought onto the school site (including Nutella in sandwiches). Please refer to the attached packed lunch guidance for further information.

We are looking forward to welcoming families to the Friends of Hillside BBQ next Friday from 5.00pm to 7.00pm. Please remember to book your tickets online by Tuesday next week. All parents and children are invited to attend. Please note that children must remain under the supervision of their families at all times during the event.

By now, you will be familiar with the weekly class round-ups shared by your child's teacher. These provide an insight into the learning that has taken place each week and offer an opportunity to discuss and reinforce learning at home. Reading remains at the heart of everything we do, and we encourage families to support daily reading wherever possible. Our next Book Swap will take place on 15th October, giving children the opportunity to recycle books they have enjoyed and discover new ones to take home.

Class photographs and videos are now being shared with families through Class Dojo. By now, all families should have received an invitation from their child's class teacher. If you have not yet been able to access your account, please contact the class teacher for support.

We would also like to remind families about our forthcoming Reception 2027 Open Mornings. These are a great opportunity for prospective parents to visit the school, meet our staff and see Hillside in action. If you know of any families considering a school place for September 2027, please do encourage them to attend. Existing Hillside parents with younger children planning to start in September 2027 are also very welcome, particularly as this provides an opportunity to meet new members of staff and hear about developments within our Reception provision.

The week beginning 5th October will be our Harvest Week. Key Stage 1 children will enjoy their Harvest Breakfast on 6th October, followed by Key Stage 2 on 7th October. Further details will be shared through the weekly class round-ups nearer the time. **We would also like to warmly invite all families to our Harvest Service at St Paul's Church, Helsby, on Wednesday 7th October at 2.00pm. Each class will play a part in this special celebration, which reflects our guiding value of gratitude.**

PTO

Important Dates:

25/09—FOH BBQ 5-7pm KS1 playground
28/29/30 Sept - Book Fair in School Hall
29/09—Reception 27 Open Morning
07/10 - Harvest Service at St Paul's Church 2pm
19/10—Reception 27 Open Morning
21/10—Photographer in for Individual Photos
22/10—FOH School Disco (3.15 KS1, 4.30 KS2)
23/10—School closes for Half Term at 3.15pm
02/11—School Closed for INSET Training
03/11—School opens for Autumn 2 at 8.45am
10/11—Reception 27 Open Morning

Attendance, Absence and Leave During Term Time

Regular attendance is essential if children are to make the most of the learning opportunities available to them.

We would like to remind families that any request for leave during term time must be made in advance by completing a Leave of Absence Request Form. As outlined in our Attendance Policy, holidays taken during term time will not normally be authorised and may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) being issued in accordance with Local Authority guidance. Please refer to the attendance information and policy on our website for full details of the process.

Where children are absent immediately before or after a holiday period, or for medical appointments linked to an absence, the school may request additional evidence to support the reason for absence. Evidence may include appointment letters, screenshots of appointment bookings, prescriptions or other relevant documentation.

We also ask families to model honesty and integrity when reporting the reasons for absence. Any request for a term-time holiday should reflect the full period that a child will be away from school. Parents should not report a child as unwell immediately before or after a holiday in an attempt to avoid the Fixed Penalty Notice process. Where patterns of absence around holidays raise concerns, the school may request further information or evidence and will consider each case in line with our Attendance Policy and local authority guidance.

If your child is unwell and unable to attend school, you must notify the school office, not the class teacher, on each day of absence. Please contact us via the attendance line or email at admin@hillside.cheshire.sch.uk, providing:

- Your child's name and class
- Their symptoms and when they began
- Whether medical advice has been sought or an appointment made
- When you expect them to return to school

Please note that messages sent only to class teachers may not be seen in time and the school office will need to contact you for further information. If a message simply states that a child is "poorly", "ill" or "not well", office staff will contact parents to obtain the additional information required for our attendance records.

The NHS provides useful guidance for parents on deciding whether a child is too ill to attend school, including the recommendation that children should remain at home until 48 hours after the last episode of sickness or diarrhoea. Further information can be found using [this link](#)

Drop-off and Pick -ups

We would like to remind families to follow the recommended one-way system when accessing school via Bates Lane and to park with consideration for our neighbours and local residents. Please avoid obstructing driveways, parking on pavements or stopping in locations that may create hazards for pedestrians and other road users.

If you have any concerns...

As always, should you have any concerns about your child's experience in school, please contact their class teacher in the first instance. This allows us to work together quickly and effectively to answer questions and resolve concerns. Families are, of course, always welcome to contact me directly; however, involving the class teacher at the earliest opportunity is usually the most effective way of addressing any issue promptly.

You will also have the opportunity to meet with your child's teacher during our Parent Consultation Evenings on 13th and 15th October.

The booking system will open next week. These meetings provide an important opportunity to discuss how your child has settled into their new class and the progress they are making so far this year.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support and partnership. Together, we can ensure that every child continues to thrive, enjoy their learning and achieve their very best at Hillside.

Adam Khan—Headteacher