



Hillcrest Newsletter

Autumn 2023



Head Teacher's Update:

What a busy term we have had at Hillcrest. Each Monday morning in staff briefing I ask staff to share their 'magic moments' of the previous week so I would like to share some of mine now:

- A pupil telling me they had their best day ever
- Seeing pupils have fun and dance their socks off at the Children in Need Let's Dance event
- A really happy phone call with a mam who was delighted with how their child was doing
- Witnessing the most amazing staff/pupil interactions
- Greater use of our Forest School and pupils and staff enjoying this
- Productive and positive relationships developing between staff and students
- The choir rehearsing for their concert at Hartford Court
- Pupils sharing their work and successes with the office staff and around school

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our:

- Fabulous young people for making Hillcrest a special place to be
- Supportive families for working in partnership with us
- An amazing staff team who work extremely hard to get the best outcomes for our young people
- Incredible behind the scenes staff who we could not do without – Colin (Site Manager), Debra (School Business Manager), Tina (Office Manager), Kelly (Finance Officer), Becka (Admin Assistant), Jackie (Cook), Elaine (Kitchen Assistant/Cleaner) Suzanne (Cleaner) Bev (Cleaner) and Alison (Cleaner)

As we return in the new year, we welcome back Mrs Dixon from maternity leave and say goodbye to Sam Hall. We wish her all the very best in what she does next.

It was so lovely to see so many parents at the Parents Evening. We will be holding another one on 7th March, so please save this date.

I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas break and look forward to welcoming your amazing children back in school, on Monday 8th January.

KS3 - Class JP

A brilliant first term!

Class JP have been absolutely fantastic throughout our first term together. It has been so lovely to watch each and every one of the students push themselves to achieve the best!

Pirates and Natural Disasters

Our topics this term have been a great success. We started the term studying Pirates and had great fun while doing so! Some students made pirate ships while others made wanted posters and treasure maps. We wrote up some amazing stories about joining a pirate crew and of course watched some pirate movies too.



We then studied about Natural Disasters. We learned all about earthquakes, tsunamis, tornadoes and blizzards. Some students made informational posters, wrote earthquake survivor stories and looked into the science behind what causes these disasters. It was so impressive to listen to many of our students who were already experts!

The class team would like to express how proud we are of the students and how far they have come in just one term! We look forward to seeing what the new year brings.

KS3- Class LM

Lots of Learning

Class EM have had a really enjoyable first term together.

In Humanities, during the first half term, we learned about World Famous Mysteries. We studied the Loch Ness Monster, Big Foot and the Tolland Man. During the second half of term, we enjoyed finding out all about maps, reading maps, using compass directions and using grid references.

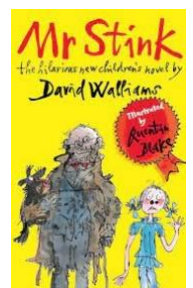
Skills Builder

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. The group also enjoyed a class visit to the cinema during the 'Into Film Festival' to see Mario Bros.



Reading

As a class, we really enjoy our end of the day reading session and have read several books including: 'Mr Stink', 'Billionaire Boy' and 'Diary of a Wimpy Kid.'



Discover

Discover has been great fun! We have enjoyed relaxing in the hammocks, making and cooking bread on the campfire, making S'mores and using our imagination.



KS3 – Class GM

A Fantastic Term

We have had a fantastic term in Class GM learning all about Pets and the History of the Cinema. We have shared with the class information about our own Pets and created presentations during ICT.



History of the Cinema

In Humanities we have learned how cinema and animation began and compared this to modern movies during our class Cinema visit to watch Super Mario Bros.



Our Learning

As ever, the students have enjoyed their cookery lessons, the Fried Rice and Fried Noodles proving a popular choice. In maths, the students have delved deeper into addition and subtraction in Autumn 1 and learned about Money and Geometry in Autumn 2 and how these subjects link to our daily lives.



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

KS3 – Class MP

Positive Relationships

During this first term Class MP have settled into class really well. They have developed really positive relationships with their peers as well as staff and gotten used to their new class routines.

Mystery & Magic

Our first topic was Mystery and Magic where we explored mysterious artefacts and people as well as making lots of magic themed crafts. The class really enjoyed making wizard hats, cauldrons and potions.



All Around the World

Next, we have worked on our topic All Around the World where the class have worked really hard on their Geography skills. We have looked at the continents and oceans of the world as well as getting creative with Rio Carnival masks, origami frogs and Savanna sunset shadow puppets.

Some other highlights have been playing in the snow, making slime and seeing the amazing progress that everyone has made so far.



Class MP wish you all a lovely Christmas and Happy New Year!

KS3– Class SK

A great first term

We have had a great first term in Class SK - and it's been a long one! We have enjoyed learning about different modes of transport and how they changed over time and our topic of extreme weather was really interesting. Discover school is always popular and our skills are

really developing - some of us have even started whittling!

Christmas Cards

Our class made fabulous Christmas cards and peppermint creams to send to the Hartford Court Care Home which was such a lovely thing to do for elderly people in our community.

We continue to be very proud of what Class SK achieve every day and we look forward to what the New Year brings.

Merry Christmas to you all and all the best for the New Year.



KS3 – Class DM

Thrive

Class DM have settled in so well this term! As a class, we have spent lots of time building friendships with new peers in our class and with the staff team. Thrive has been a lesson that has brought us so much fun this term and we have really enjoyed doing lots of creative tasks and playing with each other.



Extreme Earth & Ghosts of the Past

The two topics we have covered this term were 'Extreme Earth' and 'Ghosts of the Past'. The class loved learning about different natural disasters and working together to create examples of these in the classroom. We also loved learning all about the 'Hillcrest Ghost' and significant people from the past.

KS4- Class BL

Duke of Edinburgh

This term we started working towards our Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award. We have worked really hard as a team in Discover, laying down woodchips for the bike track and planting loads of trees so that future students can benefit even more from our outdoor spaces. This was part of our volunteering section and we all found it very rewarding and enjoyable all working together.



Music

We have really enjoyed learning the guitar this term. We have realised that many of us have a natural talent for playing and have already mastered most of the chords and can play some tunes. Who knows, you may see some of us on X-Factor one day.



Super Scores

We have started taking exams this year. At first, we were a little anxious about it, but we've worked really hard on our different units and skills and we're doing really well. We've realised that we can do a lot more than we thought and we love getting our scores and seeing how much progress we've made.

KS4 – Class MS

Greek Myths

In Class MS this term we have been learning about Greek myths in English as part of our AQA accreditation. We read stories about Greek myths and made up our own characters and settings. The students worked incredibly hard and produced some amazing pieces of work. At the end of the unit, the students did an exam based on what they had learned.

Azure

On Thursday 21st December, we will be visiting Azure Garden Centre in Cramlington. We are looking forward to seeing the decorations and we will explore the areas. Azure is one of the colleges that students can attend once they leave Hillcrest so this will be an exciting experience for the students to support them in beginning to think about their next steps in their education.



Hate Crime

We recently had a visit from Northumbria Police to talk to the class about Hate crime. We learned what hate crimes are and how people might commit a hate crime, either in person or online. We learned about the repercussions of hate crime and were able to ask the police officers lots of questions.



In November, we went to Vue Cinema in Cramlington to see 'Super Mario Bros Movie'. We went with several other classes in school and we had a great time. We have been thinking of different places to visit each month so that the students can have lots of experiences outside of school.

KS4 – Class CB

Accomplishments

As we wrap up the year, we're thrilled to share some great things our students have accomplished and experienced.

Our students have been working really hard towards their accreditations in Maths and English. Their dedication is impressive and it shows how determined they are to do their best.

Exploring Different Colleges

Our students got to visit different colleges, giving them a taste of what life after Hillcrest could be like. This has sparked their curiosity and set them on a path toward exciting possibilities for the future.



ASDAN

In ASDAN, our students have explored a variety of interesting topics, like keyboard playing, discovering anime, and enjoying football. These experiences go beyond regular lessons and help them grow in different ways.



Looking Ahead

As we say goodbye to this year, we're excited about what the next one holds. Our students' hard work is the key to our success, and we're eager to continue growing and achieving together.

Thanks for your support, and have a wonderful holiday season!

KS4 - Class SM

The Bridge Way Market

The Bridge have had a very busy start to the year, we have been completing Maths exams, English exams and handling our very own business 'The Bridge Way Market'. We have also been on various school trips this term e.g. The Gate cinema, VUE cinema, Kirkley Hall College, Azure College, Buzz Learning College and the local park/shops.



We are incredibly proud of each and every individual. Due to their ongoing hard work The Bridge visited Sambuca's for a 3-course meal.



KS4- Class MW

Working hard

What a great first term we have had in Class MW. It has been lovely to see how the group has welcomed pupils from other previous classes and how they all interact together. Seeing happy, polite, sociable pupils every day is a pleasure for the staff.

The pupils have worked so hard getting started with their exams and accreditations. We know how daunting this can be, so we are extremely proud of the resilience and effort levels everybody has demonstrated. They should be equally as proud of themselves!

Highlights

Particular highlights of this term have been: fantastic cooking sessions, whereby the class have been designing and making three course meals; our trips out in the local community to develop independence; Science lessons, working practically and finally our amazing topic exploring all things Myths and Legends. The pupils really have showcased their enthusiasm, creativity and knowledge.



We can't wait to get back to it in the new year!

KS3- Discover

Forest School

We have had a great first term in Discover at Hillcrest.

We started with exploring our new and evolving forest school area. Over the summer holiday we have been doing work to add paths, posts and a pond! Pupils from all over the school have helped move wood chips, planted trees, relaxed in hammocks and some pupils are learning fire safety and how to start a fire with flint and steel.



Growing in Confidence

Pupils in Discover have been developing their readiness to learn and have been growing in confidence when using tools in the shed. We've had trips exploring the local area and picking up rubbish when we have been out. Alongside all of these activities, pupils have been working hard in Maths and English lessons and have been enjoying social time in weekly thrive groups.

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

Science- Miss Bishop

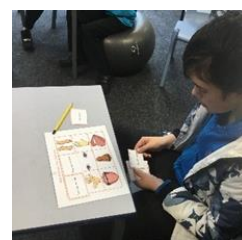
The Human Body

We have had a fantastic start to our Science lessons this academic year! It has been a pleasure to teach Key Stage 3 and observe their learning journey. We have learned all about the human body and how fascinating it is.



We have explored the digestive system, all the different organs in our bodies and what we need to do

to ensure we look after our body and stay happy and healthy. We identified our basic needs and why these needs are so important to us.



Earth & Space

In the second part of the autumn term, we have learned about the earth and space as well as light and carried out some exciting and interesting investigations into how shadows are formed and where our light sources come from. We also recreated the eight phases of the moon using Oreo's which everyone enjoyed!!

We are ending the term by exploring different forces. The students have carried out investigations looking at different objects and how we can make them move and change their shape by applying a push or pull force.



I am really looking forward to the different topics that will be covered in our spring term and observing the student's enjoyment and engagement even more.



Hillcrest School

School Improvements

We have created a new and exciting Library space for our students this term. This is a separate building in our yard which we are looking forward to using more often in the New Year for class reading sessions and reading clubs.



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 for all of her hard work producing a delicious Christmas dinner for both staff and students. This takes a lot of organising and preparation!

Hope Uniform and Baby Bank

The Hope Centre is the only Cramlington based provider of free school uniform. They stock all local sweatshirts, PE kits, trousers, coats etc for students with no referral required. They are also very grateful for donations of good quality school clothing which they can then redistribute. Please find address and contact details below.

Hope Uniform and Baby Bank

Forum Way
Cramlington

NE23 6SJ

Email: hope1uniform@gmail.com

Dinner Money

We have a new system for paying dinner money for our students. If you would prefer to pay online rather than sending cash or cheques into school, please contact the school office.

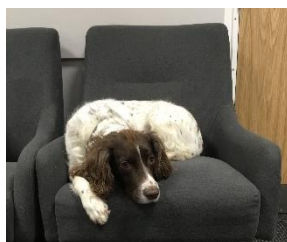
Fundraising

Thank you to Miss Noble for organising our Children in Need Just Dance Party. The students loved taking part and we even had a visit from Pudsey Bear himself! We raised an amazing £118.10



Morag's Pupdate!

Morag has been a regular visitor in school this term on Monday's and Wednesday's and has had lots of visits from students across the school. She appears to have found a new favourite spot to rest between sessions!



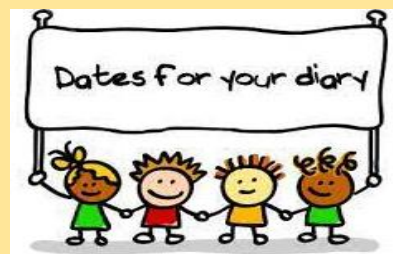
Hillcrest Choir

Staff and students visited Hartford Care Home to deliver handmade Christmas cards and perform Christmas carols for the residents. This was such an enjoyable event as the residents joined in and sang with our students.



Holidays

Everyone at Hillcrest wishes all of our students and their families a happy new year and that you all enjoy the holiday. We can't wait to see everyone back in January.



22/12/2023- School Closes (Christmas)

08/01/2024- School Returns

16/02/2024- School Closes (Half Term)

26/02/2024 (School Returns)

28/03/2024- School Closes (Easter)

15/04/2024- School Returns

06/05/2024- May Day

24/05/2024- School Closes (Half Term)

03/06/2024-School Returns

17/06/2024-Teacher Training Day

19/07/2024- School Closes (Summer)

02/09/2024- 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.



Hillcrest School

Tel: 01670 713632

Email:

admin@hillcrest.northumberland.sch.uk



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 2024 from all the staff at Hillcrest School.