



Hillcrest Newsletter

Summer 2026

Head Teacher's Update:

As we reach the end of another remarkable school year, I would like to take a moment to thank everyone who has contributed to making Hillcrest such a special place to learn, grow and belong.

First and foremost, I would like to say how incredibly proud we are of our pupils. Throughout this year, they have shown courage, resilience, kindness, determination and a willingness to challenge themselves. Whether in the classroom, out in the community, taking part in sporting events, fundraising activities, work experience, wellbeing opportunities or preparing for exams and their next steps, our pupils have achieved so much. Their progress is not measured solely in qualifications and academic success, but also in confidence, independence, relationships, communication and personal growth. Every pupil has a story of success, and it has been a privilege to watch those stories unfold throughout the year. This newsletter is filled with examples of the wonderful learning experiences that have taken place across the school. From trips to beaches, museums, colleges and local businesses, to fundraising events, community projects, care home visits, outdoor learning and enterprise activities, our pupils have embraced every opportunity offered to them. They continue to remind us that success comes in many forms and should always be celebrated.

I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to our exceptional staff team. Their dedication, care, expertise and unwavering belief in our pupils truly make Hillcrest what it is. Every day they go above and beyond to support our young people, creating opportunities, building relationships and helping pupils overcome challenges. Their commitment to ensuring every child feels safe, valued and understood is something I am immensely grateful for.

To our parents, carers and families, thank you for your continued support, trust and partnership. The progress our pupils make is strongest when school and home work together, and we are incredibly fortunate to have such supportive families.

Have a wonderful summer break. We look forward to welcoming all of our new starters on the 2nd September and the rest of the school on the 3rd September.

KS3 – Class SN

We have had an absolutely brilliant year in Class SN. It has been amazing to see all the students grow in confidence and maturity and to see all their personalities really shine through. This term we have learned about lifecycles, maps and co-ordinates and looking after ourselves mentally and physically.

We really enjoyed our English work around Kensuke's Kingdom and produced some fantastic work. All of the students have taken part in lots of Thrive activities which has really helped them to develop their social and communication skills, and the summer term has made outdoor activities much more enjoyable! We are really looking forward to our end of year trip to Concordia to go bowling as a class and celebrate all of the achievements made by the students this year. It really has been a privilege to teach Class SN this year, and we wish them all the best for the future!

KS3 – Class LM

We have had a really enjoyable Summer term in Class EM. We have enjoyed trips to the local park, ice lollies in the sunshine, bug hunts in Discover and social games and quizzes. Our students have really bonded as a class team this term and have developed lovely, supportive relationships.



We have had fun trying lots of different equipment in Music lessons – Look at us being DJ's in music!

Our class novel, Kensuke's Kingdom, which linked to our Humanities topic on Maps and Exploring, really kept us on the edge of seats and desperate to read the next chapter to find out if Michael would ever be rescued! We produced some fantastic pieces of writing using this book as inspiration and using the clicker software to support us.



We enjoyed a visit from the Fire Service and learnt all about fire safety and the consequences of anti-social behaviour. In PSHE, we have learnt about first aid, how to carry out an initial assessment and how to put someone in the recovery position and call for help.

KS3 – Class NM

In Class NM this term we have enjoyed a wide range of activities! It has been lovely to welcome our newest class member and see him settle so beautifully into the class, and seeing the students engage so beautifully together as a class team. We have loved spending time in Discover, particularly taking our class book down to read while we spend time in the hammocks. Students have also enjoyed doing sports such as Basketball, Tennis and Football Rounders in PE and a range of social games as part of our Skills Builder sessions.

Our class have also worked closely with the school's SALT team this term to develop our confidence in the Clicker software, to give us another tool we can utilise to record written work. This has been a really

positive tool for us as a class and we have enjoyed exploring all of its capabilities! We thoroughly enjoyed our Oceans topic, particularly creating our pasta coral reefs, and learning about animal habitats and adaptations in Science.

It has been wonderful to witness the fantastic relationships that have been made this year in the class and to be able to reflect on September and the progress we have all made since then. Well done Class NM for all of your hard work!



KS3 – Class CB

A Fantastic Summer Term!

We've had a busy and enjoyable final half-term in class, filled with exciting learning opportunities and memorable experiences.

One of the highlights was our trip to Sambuca's, where everyone enjoyed a meal together while developing their social and independence skills. We have also loved exploring our English texts, Kensuke's Kingdom and Holes, taking part in discussions and extending our vocabulary by discovering and using our weekly 'Wow Words'.

As part of our Independent Living Skills unit, we made regular visits to Concordia to play squash and table tennis, as well as trips to Greggs, where pupils practised ordering food, handling money and developing their confidence in the community.

In Maths, the class has worked extremely hard, making great progress with addition, subtraction and division. In Science, we researched different animal habitats and discovered how animals are adapted to survive in their environments. We also enjoyed exploring our local area using GeoGuessr, helping to develop our geography and map-reading skills.

Our Wellbeing Day was another fantastic success, with everyone enjoying the opportunity to try a range of new activities and spend time focusing on their wellbeing.

It has been a wonderful year, and we are incredibly proud of everything the pupils have achieved. We would like to wish all of our pupils and families a safe, happy and relaxing summer holiday!

KS3 – Class NS

Class NS has been super busy this term. We have been developing our inference and writing skills in English lessons. All pupils planned, wrote and edited a hero journey based on our reading of 'The adventures of Odysseus'. Pupils did super well in our outdoor learning activities around time and how we use time in everyday life.

Class NS did an exceptional job planning, resourcing and running our Summer football fundraiser. Pupils enjoyed the collaborative effort to raise money for our end of term celebration activity. In PSHE we have been learning about self care and managing change. Pupils did well in coming up with their own strategies they can use both in school and at home. Pupils loved their trip to the funfair where they created forever memories with both staff and peers. They are also excited for our end of term visit to St Mary's lighthouse where we plan to explore our local marine life, linking to our Science topic of Habitats.



KS3 – Class MP

Class MP have had an absolutely fantastic last term and finished the year on a high! They have worked so hard on everything they have been asked to do, spent lovely social time with each other and grown so much as the year has come to an end. For English, they have been amazing at

reading and writing about their class texts: 'The Adventure of Odysseus' and 'Kensuke's Kingdom'. During Maths, they have worked really hard on some topics that have lots of applications to real life, such as time, money and fractions. Also, they applied their learning to their class fundraiser where they held a summer fair and raised enough money for an end of year celebration. Some other highlights have been spending afternoons at the park and having a picnic there, going to 'Cramlington Carnival' fun fair, as well as seeing some beautiful artwork, including textiles skills.



KS4 – Class JP

In Class JP this half term, we have had a real push on fundraisers. As a class, we raised money for Dementia UK through a bake sale and a football match with Collingwood. We all thoroughly enjoyed this and it was made even better by winning the match! Within English, we have focussed heavily on creative writing, developing scripts and characters and even recording our own World Cup Final! This term has been such a joy and we are looking forward to our final class trip as a lovely way to end the year.



KS4 – Class RB

Our Summer term has been absolutely fantastic. Our students finished all of their exam, which they worked really hard on and hopefully this will be reflected in their results. Not only has the summer term been amazing but so has the whole academic year. The students in class RB have shown an increased level of maturity, resilience and

perseverance which I am super proud of them all. I can't express how much I have enjoyed teaching Class RB and the experiences it has brought along the way.

A lot of our students have spent time in our school garden area, helping to keep it well maintained whilst planting seeds and plants to make the area look lovely. It has been nice seeing them enjoying something outside the classroom and working well together with staff and peers.



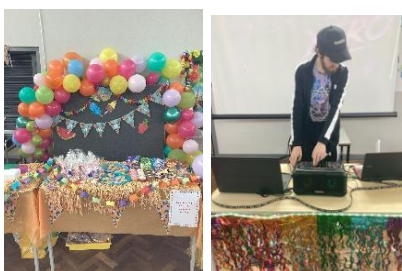
We had our trip to Newcastle Dog and Cat Shelter in order to take our donation of £150, which the students had raised hosting our successful and fun packed Christmas disco. It was lovely to see all the animals there and be informed of how the money we raised would be spent as well as how much money the shelter needs to run. The students represented the school brilliantly and should be so proud of what they have achieved.



We ended the academic year on an absolute high. We hosted our summer disco for the whole school. Students spent weeks planning and preparing for the big day. They explored the costings of what we needed to buy in order to sell food and drinks at the event. They visited the local shops on numerous occasions to buy items that we needed. Students also made decorations for the hall and it looked fabulous! We sold pizza slices, hot dogs, homemade sweet bags and beach biscuits and our very own Chris was the DJ, doing an

amazing job and making us all proud. All the students manned the stalls and did a fantastic job, raising enough money for them to all go out for a celebratory meal on the last week of term. Hillcrest staff couldn't be prouder of what they achieved.

Finally, we said goodbye to our Year 11 leavers, it was lovely to look back and reflect on their Hillcrest journey and to wish them well in terms of their next steps. For those students who are staying into Year 11, I look forward to seeing what it will bring and wish you all a lovely summer break.



KS4 – Class GM

This past term we have worked hard to complete all of our exams in both Maths and English. The students worked really hard in class and even took work home with them to complete over the weekends! Class GM have enjoyed our various excursions in the local community, such as hiking at Plessey Woods and Northumberlandia, visiting the local Cinema to see "The Backrooms" and countless visits to the local supermarket to stock up on supplies for our DofE Skills - Languages sessions (the Feta cheese, olives and pittas were a big hit with everyone!).



Many of our students have been to visit their colleges for next year and took part in their respective induction days. The students enjoyed these visits as they met their new teachers and their classmates, but most importantly

discovered where the student café will be!



At school, we have enjoyed our weekly PE sessions, mainly playing football on the MUGA and showing great peer mentoring to encourage the younger students when they joined in. In English and Maths, we have studied various Functional Skills such as Banking, Hazard Perception, Ethics and Morals and Personal Hygiene. As always, the students have engaged well and took everything they learned on board and hopefully will use these skills in the future!

It has been sad to say goodbye to the majority of Class GM as they embark on the next journey in their lives, but I wish them all the best and sure they will be a great success. As for the students progressing onto Sixth Form, I look forward to seeing them again in September.

KS4 – Class GF

We have had a wonderful summer term in Class GF and everyone should be so proud of their incredible hard work over the year. In Summer term I am thrilled to say that everybody has completed their exams! This has been months of hard work and resilience from everyone and we have had some amazing results!

In English we have completed our Shakespeare topic and got stuck into reading "Twelfth Night". Everyone surprised themselves with how much they enjoyed the story and it was a great opportunity to demonstrate the class's creativity. The class have also enjoyed completing their History ASDAN. We have focused on the history of social changes and local history. To deepen our knowledge we had an amazing trip to the Discovery Museum! It was lovely to see the class bond and spend time together out of school. They showed great

maturity and independence when out in Newcastle.



To finish the year we have also been focusing on a functional Maths and English curriculum in the last half term. This has sparked some interesting class discussions about budgeting, running a household and banking.

It has been an absolute pleasure to teach this class this year. It has been an honour to get to know all of the students and to see them grow over the year. I am so proud of each and every one of them and all that they have achieved. I will miss everyone dearly, thank you for a fantastic year.

KS4- Class MW

In Class MW this term, we have really focused on preparing the class for life beyond Hillcrest, whether that be finishing our accreditations, transition activities or continuing to develop our life skills. We have been so lucky to have had such brilliant sessions to enhance this, including an interview and work experience morning with Colin and a visit from Northumberland Fire Service. The pupils' engagement and enthusiasm have been faultless throughout, and it is evident that each and every one of them has benefitted.

Some highlights definitely have to be our class trips to Blyth Beach and Whitley Bay Arcades as well as our recycled materials art project which has been ongoing in the last few weeks. It has been lovely to see their independence shine.

I am really looking forward to ending the year on a high with our final Leavers' Celebration. I wish every pupil the best of luck as they progress on to their next stages in September and hope that everybody has a safe and fun-filled summer!

KS4- The Bridge

The Bridge has had a productive and rewarding summer term, continuing to focus on developing pupils' independence, functional skills, and readiness for adulthood. Throughout functional skills lessons, pupils have gained experience in a variety of practical tasks, including washing and ironing clothes, managing budgets, planning journeys using public transport, writing and posting letters, and carrying out simple household maintenance through hands-on DIY activities. Visits to The Darts Lounge and Blyth Beach gave pupils valuable opportunities to practise ordering and paying for food and drinks independently, while preparing packed lunches for trips encouraged responsibility and organisational skills.

Pupils have also worked hard to enhance the outdoor learning area. As a team, they have cleared and organised the garden space, moved equipment and outdoor furniture, and planted a range of wildflowers and vegetables. These activities have helped to strengthen teamwork, communication, problem-solving, and practical life skills.



We are extremely pleased that pupils have successfully achieved the ASDAN Personal Development Programme at Silver level, reflecting their commitment and effort throughout the year. Building on this success, they have started the ASDAN Lifeskills Challenge, where they are exploring subjects such as British Values and Art while continuing to develop important everyday living skills, including shopping, meal preparation, and looking after their own wellbeing. Enterprise projects have continued to play a key role in learning this term, supporting the development of financial awareness, communication, and employability skills. The popular lunch service remained a success, and pupils organised a highly successful Brazilian-themed Carnival event, generating a profit of £40.



Preparing pupils for their next steps has also been a major focus this term, as all students move onto college. Through transition visits, discussions about future opportunities, and the creation of personalised pupil passports, learners have been supported in getting ready for the next stage of their education. These passports highlight each pupil's strengths, support needs, and effective strategies for success, ensuring that new staff have a clear understanding of how best to support them. We are incredibly proud of all that our pupils have accomplished this year and wish those leaving us every success and happiness as they move forward into this exciting new phase of their lives.

Daleby House

This year, students visited Daleby House, Beadnell on a residential trip. Both students and staff had an amazing time, enjoying a range of exciting activities and creating lasting memories together. Please see below some wonderful photos from the trip. These special memories will be cherished by both students and staff for years to come.



Hillcrest School

Richard Burn Award

The Richard Burn Award was set up by a parent many years ago after her son tragically died in an accident at home whilst attending Hillcrest School.

Each year staff are asked to vote for 3 pupils who have achieved during the year. This does not just mean academically, it can be an improvement socially, emotionally, behaviour or attitude etc. The pupil with the most votes was awarded £30 and the runner ups £15. The Governors also set up an award and the pupil with the 3rd most votes were awarded £15. A Huge congratulations to Fynley, Kyla and Lewis.

Lunch Balances

A gentle reminder that dinner money balances can be paid via a link. Please can balances be cleared each week to prevent large outstanding balances. Thank you

Care Home Visits

A group of students from Year 7 to Year 12 have been visiting Hartford Court Care Home on Wednesday afternoons. The aim for these visits is for students to build up confidence socialising with people different to them, as well as having tolerance and developing their social skills. The sessions have also been very popular with the residents and have made positive experiences for them which can be visually seen. This year we have hosted a range of activities such as colouring, arts and crafts, bingo, quizzes, flower arranging and even pool noodles sword fights! We look forward to continuing this relationship with the Care Home next year. Any student can sign up, they just have to let their teacher know. They can always have a trial to see if it is for them.

Fundraising

Hillcrest has supported and fundraised for many different charities this year including Children in Need, Red Nose Day, Macmillan, Bright Red Blood Cancer Research, RSPCA etc. As a school we recognise the importance of raising awareness of those in need and highlighting the benefit of helping in any way we

can. We have supported through many different ways, such as non-uniform days, bake sales, Disco parties and much more. We look forward to doing so again next year.



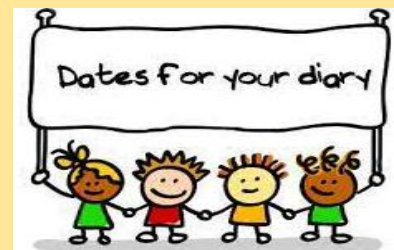
Wellbeing Day

On Friday 10th, Hillcrest had a special Wellbeing Day, giving pupils the opportunity to take part in a wide range of activities designed to promote physical health, creativity, relaxation and teamwork. Planned sessions included music, dance, arts and crafts, forest school activities, board games and a variety of sports. Wellbeing spaces were also available for pupils to relax and enjoy refreshments throughout the day. Staff supported and lead activities, helping to create a fun and memorable experience for everyone. We also had a whole school picnic for school lunch on the field.



Holidays

Everyone at Hillcrest wishes all our students and their families a safe and happy summer and we hope that you all enjoy the holiday. Enjoy your time off and we look forward to seeing you all in September!



17/07/2026- School Closes

01/09/2026- Teacher Training Day

02/09/2026-New Starters

03/09/2026 Whole School Return

23/10/2026- Half Term

02/11/2026- Teacher Training Day

03/11/2026- School Returns

07/12/2026 – Teacher Training Day

18/12/2026- Half Term

04/01/2027- Teacher Training Day

05/01/2027- School Returns

12/02/2027- Half Term

22/02/2027- School Returns

25/03/2027- Half Term

12/04/2027- 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

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