



Hillcrest Newsletter Spring 2026



Head Teacher's Update:

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of another busy and rewarding term, I would like to extend my sincere thanks for your continued support. It has been a wonderful term, filled with progress, memorable moments, and much to celebrate. We truly value the strong partnership between school and home—your support makes a real difference, and we couldn't do it without you. Thank you for everything you do.

I would also like to recognise the contribution of our staff to school life. Their hard work and commitment support pupils' learning and wellbeing every day, and help keep the school running smoothly. Thank you to the team for all they do.

Our fabulous pupils remind us why working in a school is such a rewarding job and to get a comment from a parent like this - 'he always comes home and rates the school 5/5 every week on a Friday', means so much.

Parents Evening next term is for transition, which is where you will be able to meet your child's new class team. This is on the 8th July.

Enjoy reading the snapshot of our term. Wishing you all a restful and enjoyable break. We look forward to welcoming everyone back on the 20th April.

KS3 – Class LM

Class EM have had another really busy and enjoyable term together!

During Spring Term 1 we learned all about animals: their habitats, adaptations and populations. We wrote some excellent non-chronological reports about Bats in our English lessons. In reading, we studied the book 'Fantastic Mr Fox' and enjoyed watching the movie and comparing this with the book.

We have been working on our team work skills and have been tackling lots of different challenges where we need to communicate clearly and work together to complete the task.



During Term 2 we have studied the Tudors and have learned about their reign and Henry VIII's quest for an heir. We read Hamlet in English and discussed the themes of revenge, morals and ghostly messages.

We have really enjoyed some social trips to the park, where we overcame some of our fears of heights on the zip line and climbing frames, and our cinema visits to see Paddington in Peru and Dogman.



We worked really hard with Mrs Eggett from the Jigsaw Team to learn Makaton and achieve our Makaton Level 1 Award.

KS3 – Class MP

This term Class MP have all worked exceptionally hard on a range of topics. They have demonstrated perseverance, independence and enthusiasm.



In Spring 1, we learned all about animals which included applying some geographical knowledge of continents and oceans and what animals we would find there. Whilst studying some different continents, we also looked at famous landmarks and recreated them in Discover.

Something that made me really proud this term, was Class MP's very successful Valentine's fundraiser where we raised a grand total of £107! They all worked so hard and produced some fantastic products to sell. This meant that we were able to have a lovely day playing bowling and getting a McDonald's.



In Spring 2, we have been learning about the Tudors and William Shakespeare. I have been thoroughly impressed with Class MP's reading skills this half-term; their understanding of Macbeth, high frequency words and Phonics has been fantastic. Finally, the class have worked hard on their art projects where they have recreated Shakespeare's Globe Theatre.

Well done Class MP and Happy Easter!



KS3- Class NM

In Class NM this term we have particularly enjoyed our Endangered Animals topic and learning about all of the different animals. The students have really enjoyed working together to build class dens for reading time, doing parachute games and party games in Thrive, teamwork challenges and creating our own mythical creatures in Art... some of them were absolutely amazing!



We've really enjoyed the more practical learning in Science linked to our Materials, States of Matter and Electricity topics, and the practical learning in maths linked to our measurement unit. We've spent time every week working to explore what the Zones of Regulation really mean to us and developing our understanding of how we can apply them in real life scenarios, and have enjoyed exploring a range of regulation tools as part of that.

Moreover, we have enjoyed spending lots of time together as a class – playing together in the park, playing games together and enjoying each other's company. Well done Class NM!



KS3- Class NS

Class NS has been super busy this term. We have been developing our fine motor and perception skills in our English and PE lessons. All pupils have been trying so hard academically from converting measurements in maths, writing letters and news articles in English to crazy science experiments around electricity and states of matter.



School can be hard, that's why in class NS we have been focusing on our enjoyment for learning, balancing academia and enjoyment. Pupils this term have explored and learnt the guitar and piano. We had a lot of fun planning and running our Wildlife fundraiser so we can visit the Aquarium. We've also learnt about the importance of self care and enforced that into our daily school routines. Our trip to Hauxley nature reserve was a wholesome and muddy event! We made some great memories and enjoyed our hot chocolates and seeing the animals.



KS3- Class SK

It has been another brilliant term in Class SK. In English we have enjoyed the Fantastic Mr Fox (the book is better than the film!) and have been studying some of Shakespeare's most famous plays including Hamlet and Romeo and Juliet. We have learnt lots of new words during our 'Word of the Day' sessions and have enjoyed puzzling over the daily word games as a class. In maths we are always looking for ways to challenge ourselves and have completed some really tricky work. We have had trips out to the local shops and to the cinema where our students were brilliantly behaved and showed respect and consideration to others out and about in the community. Now that the weather is improving a bit, we have been spending more time in Discover where there is always something to see or do, even if it is relaxing in one of the hammocks and letting the world go by!

As a team, we are very proud of our class. It is easy to see how much they have all matured and become more confident and we are sure there is more to come. There will always be ups and downs in life but we try hard, appreciate every win (however small it may seem) and we laugh every day.

Thank you all so much for your continued support- it really does make a difference. Enjoy your Easter break, Team SK

KS3- Class CB

This term we have really enjoyed exploring Romeo and Juliet and thinking about how the story can be brought into modern day life. In maths the class has worked incredibly hard across a range of topics including measurement time and data handling so well done to everyone. Our Easter sale was a huge success and we are delighted to say we have raised enough to enjoy a trip to Sambucas after the half term holiday so thank you very much for your continued support. We have also enjoyed trips to Alexandra Park and the cinema alongside taking part in extra curricular clubs such as adventure club music club and football club. In music pupils used an interactive

online program to create their own grime beats which was a highlight for many. Thank you for all your support this term and we hope you have a lovely holiday.



KS4 – Class GM

This term our students have been working very hard, preparing for and completing many of their key exams in English, maths and science. Two of our students completed their Functional Level 1 Maths exam ahead of schedule and the remaining students have all scored great results in their various examinations. However, it has not all been hard work, Class GM have also enjoyed playing musical instruments, such as Synthesizers, stylophones, DJ decks and Brazilian Samba Drum sets. One of our students even bought himself a Stylophone from his pocket money! Class GM has enjoyed spending time in the community at the local parks and visiting the Discovery Museum in Newcastle, a journey made by taking the train!



In DofE, the students have enjoyed learning various topics such as Gardening, Japanese and Comic book studies. We have also been litter picking around school and helping the Food Bank at the Hope Centre.



KS4- Class JP

Class JP have continued all of their hard work this term! This half-term is always tough in KS4 as we approach deadlines for both exams and coursework, our class however have taken this in their stride and smashed every single thing we have put in front of them.



A highlight of this term has to be our mock court. We had a judge, lawyers for both sides and cases built over a number of days with evidence and witnesses. It gave us an excellent opportunity to practice some speaking and listening skills as well as providing a chance to forget all of the work!

As we push on to our final term, we are looking forward to moving away from exam work and spending more time out in the community. We will look to develop more of our independence and life skills while forming lasting memories as a class!

KS4- Class GF

We have had a fantastic Spring term in class GF and I am incredibly proud of everything we have achieved.

We have covered a huge range of topics, more exams and we are so close to completing all of our exam content for the year- well done! In English we have studied the Film and Charities topics where we have focused on our functional reading and writing skills. We have analysed posters and signs, including a trip into the community to do this. For our functional writing we have written reviews, newsletters and emails!



In Entry Level Maths we have completed another 4 exams with incredible results! In Functional Skills Maths we have covered some complex topics to prepare for our exams coming up after Easter- best of luck, you will smash it! We have also completed 2 Biology exams in Science and I was blown away by the results. We have had a big focus on our independence and have taken several visits to colleges to explore our Post-16 options. Everyone handled this with great maturity, having mature and important conversations. The class have also filmed and edited amazing videos for their ICT coursework and should give themselves a well deserved pat on the back for their hard work.

A huge thank you and well done to everyone for their continued hard work! I hope everyone has a well deserved, restful Easter break! See you in Summer term.

KS4- Class RB

The students in Class RB, as well as the staff team working with our students, have had another great term. It has been lovely to see the students completing more qualifications and observing the dedication they have shown towards all aspects of their school day. The students follow the expectations and structure in the classroom brilliantly and this leads to them being happy, settled and focussed.



We ended last term with an absolutely fantastic Christmas Fair/Disco. The students spent a great deal of time making items to sell such as sweet treat bags, tree decorations and reindeer popcorn bags. Alongside this we sold hotdogs, pizza slices, cakes and sweet treat. We also had our green themed Grinch Bar selling drinks. The disco was part of their Duke of Edinburgh Volunteering section, they raised a huge £150 for The Newcastle Dog and Cat Shelter. One of our wonderful students Chris was

the DJ and had everyone up dancing and enjoying themselves. We were so proud of our young people!

In English this term we have been looking at Film as one of our exam topics. Students had to plan their own film review club as part of their Speaking and Listening section, planning what it would look like, what it would require to set it up and then presenting their ideas to others. Despite putting the students out of their comfort zones, they did really well and came up with some great ideas. We finished off our Film topic with a trip to the cinema to see Paddington in Peru. The students were fantastic whilst out and represented the school brilliantly.

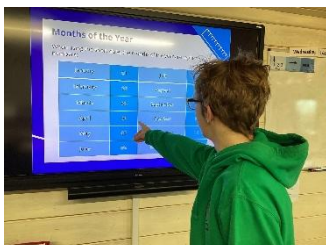


KS4 – The Bridge

The pupils in The Bridge have had a busy and successful term, showing growing confidence and maturity.

The weekly staff lunch enterprise has been a great success, with pupils managing orders, food preparation, delivery, and payments. With around 16 orders each week, the project makes approximately £30 profit, which is reinvested to benefit all pupils.

Students continue to work towards exams and accreditations. In ICT, they have been creating and editing videos using Canva, while in ASDAN PDP they are studying Brazil and planning a celebration day for the summer term.



A key focus has been developing independence in the community. Pupils have visited the library and Wetherspoons, ordered meals independently, and travelled by train to Newcastle for a film and lunch—an excellent achievement.



During January, pupils completed a DoFE sponsored walking challenge, raising £160 for a local animal shelter. They also organised a tombola to fund sixth form activities and future community trips.

With warmer weather, pupils have started preparing planters outside the lodge, researching and planting seasonal seeds. They also contribute to maintaining the school environment through regular cleaning and practical tasks, helping keep the space organised and welcoming.



KS4- Class MW

Class MW have had a busy half-term and are pleased to report that we have almost completed all of this year's exams and coursework. Alongside academic efforts, students have enjoyed a recent trip to Northumberlandia, making the most of outdoor learning, and have also shown growth in their independence through signing up for and using the local library in Cramlington. Some students have shown great leadership and teamwork by taking part in peer mentoring sessions, supporting KS3 students through football activities and other games. Overall, it has been a fantastic period of hard work and contribution to the wider school community. We are looking forward

to having an enjoyable end to the year in the summer term!



Discover

In Discover we have been embracing all weather and enjoying time outside. The term started with us building a very impressive igloo, where we worked with lots of different peers and showed our creation to everyone. Since then, we have been embracing Spring. The flowers are blooming in Discover and there has been lots of preparation for the allotment and wild flower areas. We have used our planning and building skills to create a permanent shelter area, more dead hedges around the meadow and planning future projects. There is nothing better than swinging in the hammocks listening to and watching the birds. We bird watch regularly and have many species of bird visit us in a short duration. We can't wait for the Summer term to work on further Unit Awards for developing the meadow and outdoor areas.



Hillcrest School

Absences Reminder

If your child is absent from school, please call the school office before 9am.

Holidays

Generous donations have given the school the opportunity to offer each student an Easter egg to enjoy.

Everyone at Hillcrest wishes all of our students and their families a Happy Easter and we hope that you all enjoy the holiday. Enjoy the break and we look forward to seeing you all in the summer term.



Care Home Visits

Our students have enjoyed our visits to the local Care Home again this term. We have done various activities such as colouring, bingo and crafts. The most popular activity has been the decorating eggs session. Both students and residents really enjoyed it and gave it their all!



Free School Meal Holiday Voucher

Please see the below information regarding the holiday vouchers that are funded by the UK Government/funded by DWP Household Support Fund.

“Please ensure this voucher is used for its intended purpose only. The voucher must not be sold, passed on or used for any other purpose. If you are not able to use it, or do not require the vouchers for food/clothing please contact the school and arrange for its return. Northumberland County Council reserve the right to carry out checks to ensure the vouchers are used for their intended purpose, and by accepting this voucher you agree to these checks being undertaken. If anyone is found to misuse the voucher Northumberland County Council may take action to recover the money, in full, from you as well as taking any other action they deem appropriate”.

Labour Market Information

Top employment sectors in Northumberland



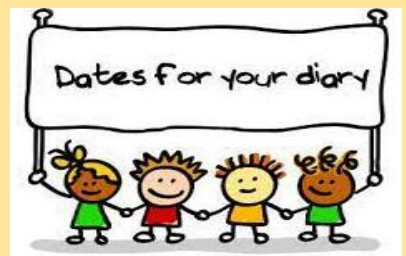
DfA Post!

(PREP FOR ADULTHOOD)

We have had lots of great work this term. There have been visits from the local Army offices, as well as visits to local colleges. The Sixth Form Café has also been very busy. Students have been making and selling subway style subs to staff every week!

Useful Resources:

CEC Resources - <https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/>



02/04/2026 (School Closes) **Easter**

04/05/2026- May Day

22/05/2026 (School Closes) **Half Term**

15/06/2026- **Teacher Training Day**

17/07/2026- (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

Tel: 01670 713632

Email:

admin@hillcrest.northumberland.sch.uk



