



Hillstone News

Lockdown School

Last week we had to close bubbles in Year 1, 2 and 4. Year 1 and 4 are due back on Monday 25th and Y2 on Friday 22nd. These children should now access their learning via virtual school.

Our nursery setting will be open to all pupils, not just vulnerable and key workers from today.

Ofsted

Teachers and teaching assistants are working incredibly hard planning lessons in school and managing virtual school, marking, planning and setting work till late at night. If you think we are doing a good job, why not contact Ofsted and tell them.

Wrap Around Provision

Free breakfast club is available to all children who are currently attending Lockdown School. We don't want to encourage lateness, but we are also providing bagels or toast at 9.15 in their classrooms for any children who have missed breakfast.

After school club is open as normal (till 6pm) to children in lockdown school. The cost including a cooked meal is £7.50 a night.

Staff in breakfast and after school care have made a plea for any board games or other toys that you might think children would enjoy playing. Ours have got a bit tatty and with no PTA events at that moment we do not have any income to buy extras such as these.

Board games are super in the morning as they give children a quiet, calming start to the day. Although, I have to say, board games are not calm and relaxing in my overly competitive family!

Food Offer

Magic Breakfast have extended their free breakfast offer. Free breakfast items consisting of bagels, porridge and beans can be delivered to your door, once a fortnight. This is open to all Hillstone parents, not just those eligible for free school meals. I know the giant catering tins of baked beans are not very popular, we will talk to them about trying to deliver smaller tins. You could decant them into smaller containers, baked beans will normally last 3 or 4 days in the fridge once opened.

You will perhaps have seen some controversy over school food hampers for those children entitled to free school meals. I hope you know our chef would never let anything that poor quality go out from our kitchens. Please take a look at Chef's page on the web site, there you will see a video showing how chef has used all the ingredients from a hamper to make 7 delicious lunches and still have ingredients left over.

Visit <https://www.hillstone.org.uk/wp/chefs-page/> to get inspiration for nutritional, tasty lunches that meet the school food standards.

Virtual School

If children are not in lockdown school they should be learning online in virtual school. It is vital that they do, as they will be falling behind if they do not keep up with their lessons. Children should sign in to virtual school every day — our attendance could be improved. Wednesday seems to be the best day for attendance but even in our best class (reception) attendance at both virtual and lockdown school is only 80%. We understand that it is difficult and our job is to help remove those barriers for you. Trying to work at home whilst delivering home learning and siblings sharing a device are incredibly difficult. Possible barriers for accessing virtual school are:

Access to technology

We have been given some devices (laptops and dongles) from the government and we have had donations from companies such as Purple Bricks so have been distributing these as soon as they become available. Please call the office if you are having issues. If you or the company you work for have any devices that could be repurposed we would be grateful for any donations.

Difficulties with content

I hope you found the exercise books delivered last week helpful for children to record their work. If you find your child struggling with any of the work set, contact the teacher through the virtual school and they can explain the task further. Alternatively arrange a telephone call and they can speak to you or your child in person.

Motivation

A few parents are telling us that their children are just refusing to do any work. Obviously this should not be accepted. After all, they cannot refuse to come to school. Phone and talk to us and we can work out solutions together. It will be of huge benefit to your children to get them into a routine every day of getting up and doing as much of their work as they are able. They should also still be going to bed at reasonable times.

Virtual School Offer

As well as the year group pages, we have lots of exciting specialist pages for you. Look out for Bhav, our actor in residence from the Birmingham Rep. He is delivering some excellent drama workshops for you on the theme of poetry this spring.

Ms Hodgkinson is taking her cake decorating club online and you will shortly be able to find Children's University challenges on this page.

It is essential that children have physical activity, go to Coach's page for some activities that you can do at home. Particularly if you have the help of a small child and some dinosaurs!

Our partnership with the National Theatre has meant we have been offered free access until January 25th to their pantomime Dick Whittington. You'll find this under 'Assemblies and Shows' on our website. Look out for Mr Farr's assemblies each week. This week's is all about our allotment.

Ms Hepburn and Ms Chudleigh have set up an excellent wellbeing page. There are separate pages for children and adults. These pages can provide you with tips to help you and your child as well as signposting to organisations if things get really tricky.

The Special Needs page is also full of information from the autism team, speech and language, physical disability, sensory support teams and our educational psychologist.

As well as information and inspiration about the food hampers, chef has made some videos with simple recipes you and your children can make together. Why not contact us if you have any ideas for recipes you would like to see .

Coming shortly, Ms Norton will be providing an arts page. Although there will be art activities in the weekly curriculum on your year group pages, some children will be missing that chance to be creative and you will find some great ideas and resources here including links to the Ikon gallery.





HILLSTONE STARS

Each week, teachers will choose a Hillstone Star from Lockdown School and one from Virtual School. They will all be celebrated on the Hillstone Stars tab on our website. Here are last week's outstanding pupils.

Scarlett Patton

Holly Griffiths

Preston Griffiths

Rashane Wallisundara

Tyler Starkey

Mason Nicholas

Jessica Burns

Scarlett Thornton

Eliana Grimason

Jzaac Ben-Farhat

Katelyn Taylor

