



Hillstone News

Return to Hillstone

A warm welcome back to all parents and children - I am so looking forward to seeing you all on Monday. As you will know from the news though, we are not out of the woods in terms of the pandemic and this week we had to close a year 6 bubble containing the children who had been attending during lockdown, so unfortunately that small group of children will not return until March 15th. We have procedures in place to help mitigate risks and the twice weekly lateral flow tests for staff have also picked up a case before they came into work. It shows how precarious the situation is and we must continue to follow procedures; social distancing washing hands and wearing masks.

Risk assessments are on the website and letters have gone out with staggered start and finish times and entrance and exit details. Mr Morton, Ms Ballet, Mr King and myself will be on gates if you have any questions.

I know it is an anxious time but we are all in this together. Do phone the office if you have any queries or Ms Gibbon and Ms Hepburn to discuss any concerns.

Staffing issues

Ms Young who is expecting a baby in the summer, is currently shielding and working from home on virtual school, will then be on maternity leave. We wish her all the best and we are pleased to introduce you to Ms Ijaz who will cover the year 1 class for the rest of the year. She is a super asset to our school.

Mr Uddin will also be shielding until after Easter and Mr Campbell will be taking his class. Ms Gibbon has been covering some of the pastoral duties whilst Ms Hepburn is shielding until the end of March.

Car Free Streets

Message from Mr Morton

Thank you all for your continued support and encouraging comments on our car free streets scheme. I am also pleased to see many more parents who are now leaving their cars at home and are now walking their children to school. It is fabulous to see so many children now cycling or using scooters. With this in mind, I would like to stress the importance of safety around our school and roads. Please do not drive cars along Hillstone Road during the prohibited times. With many more children returning, we obviously expect more cars to be on the roads, so please adhere to the highways notices at both ends of Hillstone Road and also avoid parking across any residents' driveways or on the corners of the roads.

Home Learning Heroes



I hope children have been working at being Home Learning Heroes. Mr King has purchased some super prizes to reward children.

Don't forget to return your homework book next week so that your teacher can look at the work you have been doing.

Reading

I thought the world book day activities were wonderful on the virtual school. I think I need a reading den - have a look at Twitter for inspiration. Did you guess who the disguised teachers were? Here are the answers?

1. The Bear and the Piano - Mrs Driver
2. The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs! - Mr King
3. Oi Cat! - Mrs Sheehan
4. After the Fall - Miss Furlong
5. Mog the Forgetful Cat - Miss Langford (and her dog!)
6. The Koala Who Could - Miss Kinsman
7. We're Going on a Bear Hunt - Mr Uddin
8. Little Red Riding Hood and the Wolf, from Revolting Rhymes - Mrs Chudleigh
9. The Ugly Duckling - Miss Milns
10. Leaf - Miss Aluriya

We are still going through all our entries – winners will be announced next week.

Don't forget Mr King and I will be giving book prizes out on Friday afternoon as we visit each class for the Hillstone Stars. We will use a random generator to pick a child in each class; if they have read to an adult at home 3 times in the previous week they will be rewarded with a book of their choice. Don't forget to sign off the reading in their reading diary. It only needs to take ten minutes or so, three times a week and it is a lovely activity to do with your child. It doesn't have to be a struggle, talk about the book, talk about the illustrations, take turns to read pages. Reading will be crucial to help children get back to the levels they need to be at.





Learning Behaviour

When children returned to school after the previous lockdown we were struck by the decline in the children's behaviour. This was more apparent than in their academic study. Children cannot learn well if they are angry about other children's behaviour or if they have just been told off. So I am hoping we can get back to normal as soon as possible. We will be reiterating learning behaviour with key stage 1 children and introducing them to key stage 2. These simple quiet gestures ensure children stay focused on their learning. Watch the video for a demonstration by Year 3 with Ms Chudleigh:

<https://www.hillstone.org.uk/files/index.php/s/FHzc4LrFQ6Fc9SH>



Belle

I wanted to share with you the achievements of Annabelle Robinson in Y5. who exemplifies Hillstone values. At the height of winter, Annabelle spotted a young homeless person. Upset by this she decided she would like to do something to help. They discovered the charity Centrepont which supports young homeless people. Belle decided she would run for 2 miles every

day in February in order to raise money for the charity. Annabelle does not like running but she wanted it to be a difficult challenge. She went running every day with her mom, in the dark, in all weathers and succeeded in raising £1405 running 56 miles over the month.

Happiness/ Art Competition.

We announced a Happiness Art Competition on virtual school. All classes will be spending time working on that next week on their return. Any work that they have done at home could be built on in the class and their ideas shared.

The first part of the work is to discuss what makes them happy. Then they will use their sketch books to create mood boards. They do not have to be able to draw a specific thing, they may decide to create a more abstract piece of work using a found object to represent an image. Eg. Leaves to represent Autumn or colours to represent a football team. The teacher will help children develop their skills either in drawing or in their use of media.

Children may want to cut out images, scraps of material which they bring in to school, either to inspire their mood boards or to use in their final happiness piece.

I feel it is important that our children can recognise some of the simpler things in life that can give them happiness and in turn be part of the creation of a happy Hillstone.

Fitness

Coach noticed a decline in children's fitness levels previously so this will be an important target for us. Physical activity is crucial for improving children's physical, social and emotional health. We have a strong partnership with the Youth Sports Trust and I am one of the lead Head Teacher ambassadors for the organisation. They have some super resources that I think you will find enjoyable and beneficial at home.

Go to <https://www.youthsporttrust.org/family-hub>

In school, we will be delivering an emphasis on fitness programmes in our four week run up to Easter, trying to build up stamina and resilience. Coach has planned some great circuit training activities suitable for each year group and every class will run a mile, three times a week. This activity takes about 15 minutes to complete and children enjoy the physical challenge, being outside and having a break from academic learning.

School Improvement Plan

Every year we write a school improvement plan to see where the focus of our time and resources will be in order to bring about school improvement for our children. The plan is available on the website.

Last September, aware that we were still in uncertain territory, we called our School Improvement Plan the ABC Plan:

A - Academic

Phase leaders and class teachers have worked out exactly what lessons will be missed and the best way to support children to accelerate their learning. An emphasis on basics such as reading and multiplication tables is also essential.

B - Behaviour and Attitudes

As already stated we know from experience that children struggled to get this right last year, we will share our expectations with them and provide training for all staff to ensure a positive environment. This will include public praise but private reprimands. We are also part of a new research programme in the juniors called Stand Together, which is due to start later this year. It's an anti-bullying approach. I'll keep you informed when it starts.

C - Creative Curriculum

You will know this is at the heart of what we believe in at Hillstone and I am determined it will not be jettisoned because of the effects of the pandemic. Our curriculum is underpinned by 5 aspects: arts, sports, outdoor education, food education and international work. Look out for these new exciting projects: Link with school in Lagos, Nigeria and Nature Friendly School supported by the BBC.



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.

Teddy Lucas

Tyler Ward

Riley Flynn

Caylum Hammond

Aoife Nally-Meah

Matthew Murtagh

Ellie Aziz

Izaak Ben-Farhat

Lola France

Belle Allsop

Charlotte Slater

