



Hillcross Primary School

Reception Newsletter

Autumn 1

Welcome!

Welcome to the new school year and to Reception. We have been extremely pleased how all the children have settled into school life. We will publish a newsletter each half term to inform you of all EYFS related learning experiences and trips, as well as the topic learning for that half term. This will be uploaded to ParentMail as well as our Reception page on the school website. The school website offers lots of information on how to help and support your children at home. Please take time to investigate the Reception page and the Thinking Tools page to help support your child at home.

Following a discussion with all the children and taking into account their ideas, the focus for our topic this half term will be...



The Wonderful World of Books!



Within this topic, we will be exploring books, discussing our own personal favourites and trying to understand why we like them. We will also look at the structure of a story, when both orally telling as well as reading print. The children had many ideas of story themes that we will aim to cover across the term too. This will focus around a book and look at linking these stories to our own personal experiences, family traditions and how they differ from one family to the next. The topic will run across the whole term until the end of November. This will allow us to look in depth at our topic and also gives us three weeks to focus on winter festivals across the world as we move into December. Please see the Reception website page for information on the skills we will be teaching.

Along with our topic learning, we will also be focusing on:

Maths: counting, ordering of numerals and counting on from a given number, using numbers to 10, exploring shapes (both 2D and 3D shapes) and we will also be looking at size and measuring length and height.

Handwriting: the focus will be the family of: c, a, d, g, o, q. The children will begin to use diagonal lead-ins and we will reinforce that all letters start at the bottom on the line. Please remember that when we write a digraph we join the two letters together. This helps the children see the digraph as one shape and not two separate letters.

Reading: the children will begin guided reading sessions this week. We will focus on oral blending and segmenting words and will then move onto blending the graphemes we see in written print to read simple words. Along side these skills, we will be showing the children how they are already reading by looking at print in the environment around them. The children will be split into 5 groups and will need to have their communication books with them on their reading day. We will be adding into their communication books information about which day they will read.

Focus books: this term we will be developing our reading areas and focusing on retelling some well known stories and books that link to our topics. The books we will focus on are from the well known authors Jill Murphy & Martin Waddell and will include: *Whatever Next*, *5 Minutes Peace* & *Peace at Last* by Jill Murphy and *Owl Babies*, *Cant You Sleep Little Bear* & *Farmer Duck*. We will then move onto Julia Donaldson stories in December which will include: *Paper Dolls*, *The Gruffalo* & *Room on a Broom*.

For each topic, we like to inspire and excite the children with a launch. For this topic the **launch** will be a celebration of who they are. We will be asking the children to bring in photos of themselves and their families reading together. These photos will help us to develop a display of who we are and our favourite books as a family. Please could we have these photos in school **By Friday 11th October**. The **finale** will be a our trip to the Polka Theatre in December, where we will see the story 'Paper Dolls' by Julia Donaldson brought to life! We hope you will agree the topic sounds exciting and the children are sure to have an amazing time!

Dates to Remember

Wednesday 2nd October– EYFS
Sponsored Pedal Push– see separate letter for details

Friday 11h October– FOH Quiz night– Adults only. Gather a team and book now to come join us!

Monday 14th October– Individual Children's Photo's

Parents evening–
Wednesday 16th October—
3.30-6.30pm
Thursday 17th October—
4.30-8pm

Tuesday 15th October– pm— EYFS
Library trip—**Walnut Class**

Thursday 17th October– pm–EYFS
Library trip—**Chestnut Class**

Please let us know if you can help?

Half term– 21st – 25th October

FOH Winter Disco– EYFS
Monday 4th November—
3pm-4.15pm

Friday 11th November– Children in Need dress up day.

Advanced Notice- Reception Nativity play– Monday 9th December 2pm or Tuesday 10th December at 9am

Christmas Jumper Day & Christmas lunch—Tuesday 17th December

Last day of term—Thursday 19th December at 1.30pm

Donations Please!

Please could we ask for donations of the following things:

- Boxes of Tissues
- Newspapers
- Cardboard boxes
- Cardboard tubes
- Old Birthday /Christmas Cards
- Ribbon
- Bottle tops
- Yoghurt pots
- Games or toys no longer wanted such as super heroes, cars, dolls, tea sets.
- Envelopes
- Writing materials– gel pens etc

Guinea Pigs

The EYFS Guinea Pigs; Raspberry and Pippin are very excited to meet the new children. We are very happy for the children to bring in vegetables for the guinea pigs to eat daily. We also need families to look after the guinea pigs over the school holidays. Please let us know if you are able to help.

EEXAT

Our online assessment system, EEXAT, will be available to all families very soon. We will be sending out a letter vis ParentMail next week for you to sign up to the system. Your EEXAT codes will then be placed in your child's communication books. Full instructions on how to use the system will be available in the letter.

Phonics Books

Thank you to all parents who came along to the phonics training session. Now that we have begun the phonics books, I hope that the session has helped to assist your child at home. If you were unable to attend the session then the PowerPoint and all relevant resources are now on the Hillcross Website– Reception page– Phonics. Please ensure you send in the book every day with your child, even if they have not completed the activity. Many thanks

Entering and dismissing from school

As you have all experienced, the beginning and end of the school day is a very busy time. Staff are there to ensure every child stays safe and is welcomed and dismissed from school in a calm manner. Notes and queries can be shared, but staff will not be able to have in-depth discussions with parents at these times. There will be a Reception adult at the door from 8.35 am every day to take any messages back to the keyworkers for you. Communication books can also be used, but please signal to us that you have written in them so we ensure we read the note.

During the busy times in the morning and after school, could we ask that all parents stand back and do not come onto the ramp or stair area at these times. At the end of the school day staff will dismiss the children directly to their adult. Staff will call out your child's name and wait for you to acknowledge that you are aware and ready to receive your child. A wave helps your child to see where they are walking to and also the staff are then assured the children receive a lovely welcome by their adult. Once all the children have been dismissed, the staff will happily answer any questions or queries you have.

We will also not be allowing any child back into school once they have been dismissed until all children have left. This is to ensure we can be assured all children dismissed safely. We will try our best to ensure the children have all their belongings before they leave school. If you do wish your child to come back to gather a forgotten item then please wait until all children have been dismissed.

We appreciate your cooperation with this and thank you for your patience in advance. This process may take some time in the beginning, but I am sure you will agree the safety of the children is paramount.

Uniform

Please can we remind all families that the Reception school uniform includes:

- Black leather school shoes or **all black** trainers, (Velcro preferable)
- Maroon jumper or cardigan with the Hillcross tree logo (please ensure they are clearly named)
- White shirt or white/maroon polo t-shirt
- Dark grey school trousers, skirt or dress or black tracksuit bottoms

As the months get colder, we would expect every child to have a coat at school as they will have access to the outside learning environment every day. Children are encouraged to wear hats, scarves or gloves when learning outside in the winter. Please could we ask that all items are **clearly named**. It would also be advisable for children to have a pair of wellies they can leave at school too.

PE Sessions

PE for Reception begins after half term, every Monday.

An important part of the children's physical development is being able to undress and dress themselves, which is also an important life skill. Please ensure your child brings their PE kit into school in a separate bag, and do not send them to school dressed in their kit. We advise that tights are not worn on a PE day as they can be difficult to put back on. Instead, we recommend trousers or long socks on a Monday.

PE uniform for this term will consist of:

- White Hillcross logo PE shirt
- Black shorts (NO leggings)

This term we will be developing our Gymnastics skills, so PE will be completed inside. We will be bare foot for these sessions so we do not need plimsolls. We will also be inside for all sessions, so tracksuit bottoms and the Hillcross sports jumper are not required.

All kit needs to be named clearly and stored in a Hillcross PE bag please. Thank you

Early Years Playground Development.

Allotment

We will be developing our allotment ongoing over the winter months and are always looking for donations of:

- Seeds or bulbs
- Small plants, herbs and bushes
- Trowels, hand held digging tools
- Gardening gloves

If you are available to come in and help our children to weed, water and care for the plants on a weekly or fortnightly basis then we would love to hear from you. We have a number of pots and planters that need some development and we would love the children to be involved. Please let us know.

Mini-beast Hotel

Our Bug Hotel has been an ongoing project for the past two years. This year we would like to encourage more insects and creatures to come and live in the hotel and to do this we need the following. An assortment of twigs, wood chips, leaves, bamboo or hollow tubes, thin cardboard tubing, Old logs and Bark. We will then be able to add to the current hotel and attract more bugs!

Wood Work area

We are developing a wood work station for the children to be trained on how to use. This will involve the children handling tools, nails and creating models from wood. They are hugely beneficial resource that many Early Years settings use to develop the children physical development, which we know impacts on their ability to write as they move through the school. To develop this area we will need:

- Off cuts of soft wood and doweling
- Small Spirit levels, Screwdrivers, Hacksaws and hammers
- Nails, screws and tacks

We will also be purchasing lots of safety goggles and ensure all children are trained before using the tools, under adult supervision.

Small world play

In our developing small world area (next to the Reception entrance, under the shelter) we will be looking to acquire:

- More bark and some shingles
- Small, medium and large pebbles and boulders
- Sticks of all lengths and sizes!
- Compost to use in the tyres for planting
- Grass seeds, wildflowers to grow in the tyres
- Plastic toys such as dinosaurs, safari animals, people, cars and trains.

If you have any of the above we would love to give them a new home.

Water play

Another area which the children love to explore and investigate is our water play area. This area is very popular in the summer and the new partitions and tools we purchased last summer have been a huge hit. To help us develop this area further we are always looking for the following items:

- Plastic tubes or pipes and connectors
- Guttering
- Sieves, funnels
- Watering cans
- Buckets of all sizes
- Water pistols



Builders area and Garage

These areas are used daily through all seasons! Because they are well loved they do need constantly updating and new resources purchased. If you have any of the following items please donate them:

Large paintbrushes (new or very clean)

Tools (plastic toy ones as well as any real tools which are not dangerous to hold such as levels, retractable tape measures, files, spanners)

Cones/safety signs

Decking planks

Plastic crates

Cable drums– all sizes but the bigger the better!

Wheel barrows

Watering cans

