

Hillcross Primary School



Reception Welcome Meeting

At Hillcross we nurture our children to think critically and creatively within a collaborative community.



Welcome to Reception



Rebecca Mitchell
Team Walnut

Evvie Cook
Team Walnut

Lucy Young
Team Chestnut

Sarah Barber
Team Chestnut

Steph Mayar
Early Years Leader

Beth Wozniak
Reception Unit

'Staff are incredibly positive about working at the school. They appreciate the care they receive as individuals and the school's kind and collaborative ethos. Leaders at all levels are strategic, ambitious and focused on continuous improvement. Parents, pupils and staff are rightly proud to be part of this 'wonderful' school community' (OFSTED 2024)

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School Values: aspiration, challenge, compassion, responsibility and respect

Transition



A successful transition into school is paramount for supporting your child's personal, social and emotional development. Children will learn best when they feel happy, safe and secure. Once the children are settled their learning journey will truly take off.



Transition Events

- A Stay and Play Session
- Pre-Setting Visit
- Home Visit



Transition for Children already Attending Hillcross Nursery

This has already begun! And it will build up gradually to them spending an hour in Reception and completing activities with the Reception staff before the end of term.

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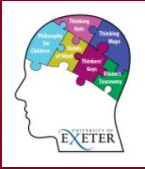
First Two Weeks Procedures



Week 1	
Monday 1st September	INSET day School is closed to all children.
Tuesday 2nd September	All children who are new to Hillcross will receive a home visit from their key workers.
Wednesday 3rd September	<u>Current Hillcross Nursery Children</u> - 8.30 - 11.30am Children <u>New</u> to Hillcross - 9.00 - 11.30am On their first day at school, our new to Hillcross children will have a slightly later start time to enable us to support them coming into school as smoothly as possible. <i>Children will not be having lunch at school.</i>
Thursday 4th September & Friday 5th September	<u>All Reception children</u> - 8.30 - 11.30am <i>Children will not be having lunch at school.</i>
Week 2	
Monday 8th September & Tuesday 9th September	All Reception Children- 8.30 - 12.30pm All children will stay for lunch and will be collected at the end of lunchtime. It is highly recommended that all children have school dinners this week*.
From Wednesday 10th September	All Reception Children- 8.30 - 3.00pm All children will attend for a full day.

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Foundation Stage

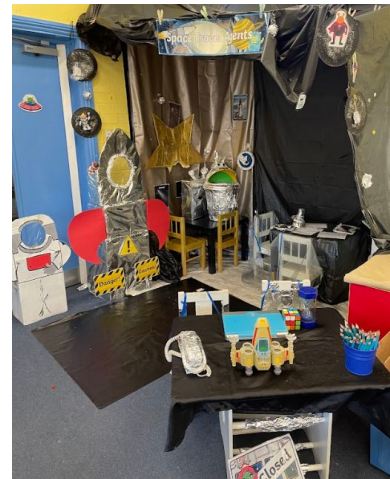


What is the Foundation Stage?

The Foundation Stage is the stage of education for children from birth to the end of their Reception year. The Foundation Stage Curriculum is based on the recognition that children learn and develop best through **meaningful play and active learning**.

Children in the early years form very positive working relationships with adults and their peers. Children feel at home and become engrossed in well-designed learning that offers rich opportunities to find out about the world around them. (OFSTED 2023)

[More information on the EYFS curriculum can be found here.](#)

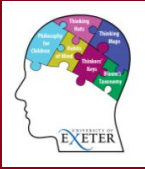


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A play based approach to learning...





Foundation Stage



Characteristics of Effective Learning

The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning identified by the EYFS are:

Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’; *curiosity, representing experiences and taking risks.*

Active Learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; *persistence, concentration and sense of achievement.*

Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things; *having own ideas, making links and reviewing.*

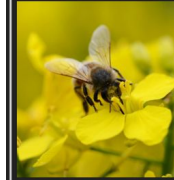
These are reported to parents in the end of year report.

Playing & Exploring



I remember what to do like an elephant

Playing & Exploring



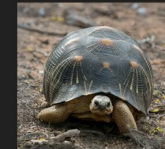
I find out and explore like a busy bee.

Playing & Exploring



I am brave and try new things like a lion

Active Learning



I am persistent and keep trying like a tortoise

Active Learning



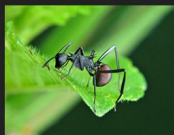
I concentrate like a crocodile

Active Learning



I am proud of what I do like a peacock

Creative and Critical Thinking



I plan ways to do things like an ant.

Creative and Critical Thinking

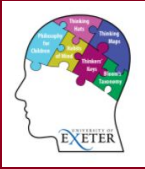


I have my own ideas like a monkey

Creative and Critical Thinking



I make links like a spider



Foundation Stage



What will my child learn and how?

The initial focus in the first half term will be on developing **3 prime** areas of learning::

Prime Areas

Communication and Language –

Listening, Attention and Understanding
Speaking

Personal, Social and Emotional Development –

Self-Regulation
Managing Self
Building Relationships

Physical Development –

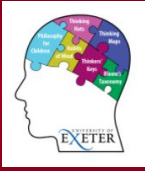
Gross Motor Skills
Fine Motor Skills

Acquisition of these prime is essential to lay the foundations for future learning and school readiness. We want children to learn holistically making the most of our indoor and outdoor environments.



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Personal, Emotional and Social Development

At Hillcross we ensure that;

- We support children as they find their own different ways to manage feelings of sadness when their parents leave them. Some children might need to hold onto a special object/picture from home to feel strong and confident in the setting or use our bounce back zones.
- Help all children to feel that they are valued, and they belong.
- We respond to children's increasing independence and sense of responsibility. As the year proceeds, we increase the range of resources and challenges both outdoors and inside.
- Support children in being responsible for their self and belongings throughout their time in the EYFS.



Healthy Lifestyle

Our EYFS curriculum includes developing the children's awareness of what a healthy lifestyle is. This includes teaching awareness of;

- Healthy food choices
- Oral Hygiene
- Importance of sleep
- Awareness of emotions, change in emotions and strategies to promote self help skills.



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You Can Do It!



Through this initiative the children learn appropriate learning and social behaviour. There are four main areas:

- Confidence
- Persistence
- Organisation
- Getting along



Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. The school sets very clear routines from early years onwards. This enables children to have very positive attitudes towards their learning.(OFSTED 2024)



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In preparation for their journey into full time school, there are a number of ways you can help over the summer.

Developing their independence: This is one of the first skills we develop in our first few weeks. Help your child to develop their independence over the summer in the following ways; getting dressed themselves, putting on and off their coat, fastening their buttons and zip, putting on and off their shoes, using a knife and fork, using the toilet and wiping, washing and drying their own hands.

[Click here for more information on PSED](#)

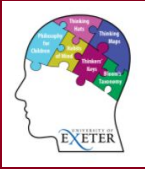
Developing their speaking and listening skills: encourage your child to ask questions about the world around them. Talk to them over dinner and encourage them to take turns in conversation.

[Find out more information on our website.](#)



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Physical development

Physical development also encompasses the following skills;

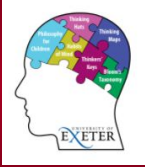
- **Fine motor skills** - when a child uses precise movements using specific body parts, such as the thumb and finger to pick objects up.
- **Gross motor skills** - when a child uses their whole body in a movement, such as jumping or running.
- **Hand-eye coordination** - when a child's hands and eyes are working together, for example catching a ball. These skills are also used when writing.
- **Mark making** - this could be anything, from a baby or child making marks with their fingers in sand, to dipping their hands or fingers in paint, to paint a picture.
- **Pincer movement** - when a child uses an index finger and thumb, to pick up and move objects. These skills are needed to develop an effective and comfortable pencil grip.
- **Core strength** - Development of core strength, coordination, shoulder movements



Children need a range of physical development skills in order to complete handwriting. All children develop at different times and fine motor skills are one of the later physical skills to develop in children. At Hillcross, we are committed to ensuring we develop every child's physical development to ensure they are ready to start formal writing during their Reception year. We have developed a precise and strong long-term development plan that all children move through before we begin to teach formal handwriting.

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Mark making & Early Writing

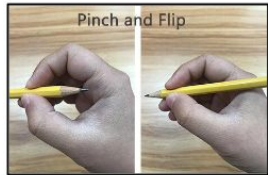
TYPICAL PENCIL GRASP DEVELOPMENT FOR HANDWRITING

10 Months Pincer Grasp	12-15 Months Palmar Supinate Grasp	2-3 Years Digital Pronate Grasp	3-4 Years Quadrupod Grasp
3-4 Years Static Tripod Grasp	5-6 Years Dynamic Tripod Grasp		

How to Help with Pencil Grip

How To Use: The Pencil Grip, The Pinch Grip, The Crossover Grip and The JAMBO Grip.

1. Slide the wider end of the grip on first.
2. Lefties place their thumb on the "1". Righties place their thumb on the "2".
3. Fingers will fall naturally into place with the middle finger on the underside of the grip.



Pre Writing YELs		
Autumn 1	Spring 1	Summer 1
<p>We are learning to use lines and circles in our movements and marks.</p> <p>Start all moves at the bottom</p>	<p>We are learning to form a line of rainbows in our movements and marks.</p> <p>Start all moves at the bottom</p>	<p>We are learning to use diagonal lines in our movements and marks.</p> <p>Start all moves at the bottom</p>
Autumn 2	Spring 2	Summer 2
<p>We are learning to make a zig zag line in our movements and marks.</p> <p>Start all moves at the bottom</p>	<p>We are learning to make anti clockwise movements and marks.</p> <p>Start all moves at the bottom</p>	<p>We are learning to use a diagonal line and hook in our movements and marks.</p> <p>Start all moves at the bottom</p>

The Alphabet

apple bat cat dog egg feather girl
 Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg
 hat insect frog kite ladder map net
 Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn
 octopus pan queen rat snake tent umbrella
 Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu
 violin web fox yarn zebra
 Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

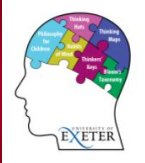
More information can be found on our website within [Cursive writing](#) pages

Physical development is closely linked to a child's ability to write and mark make. Gross motor development needs to be developed initially and then fine motor skills are developed before moving onto writing. Please see '**Early Writing & Mark Making in EYFS**' for more details.

A joined handwriting style links kinaesthetic 'muscle memory' with the relationship between the sounds of our speech and the letter shapes, letter groupings and whole written words.

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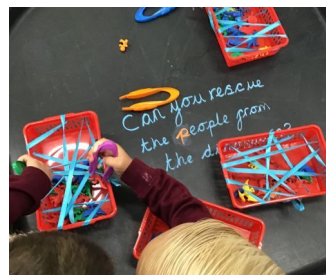
Preparing for school



Mark making & Early Writing

Over the summer you can help develop your child's physical skills in order to help their writing by completing the following;

- Go to the park or swimming
- Learn to ride a bike or scooter
- Help them to dress themselves and fasten zips/ buttons/shoelaces
- Play finger rhymes
- Use clothes pegs
- Dance - Cosmic Yoga is great
- Threading - beads/ pasta
- using scissors
- playing with playdough or cooking



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Communication & Language linked to Early Reading

At Hillcross we believe that promoting a love of reading is intrinsic to a child's education, development and happiness. We work with all children to ensure that this begins with the youngest members of our school community and continues throughout their time in school. As soon as a child joins Hillcross, they are introduced to a literacy rich environment that ensures that we:

- Foster a love of reading and sharing stories, poems and rhymes to develop vocabulary and comprehension.
- Develop children's Communication and Language skills to ensure they can listen, attend and understand language.
- Effectively use assessment to quickly pick up children falling behind and give targeted support.
- To offer challenge to the children who are applying and using phonics skills early on in their school journey to ensure we nurture and continue to move children forward to achieve.



Developing their Early Reading skills: Share stories with your child. Talk about characters in the books and sequence the story into 3 parts; beginning, middle & end. [Find out more information on our website, which includes our virtual library](#)

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Phonics is the basis for reading and writing skills. At Hillcross, we set children up for lifelong reading and spelling when we teach phonics rigorously and comprehensively. Phonics develops the skills needed to hear sounds in words (phonemes) and match them to the corresponding visual representation (Graphemes). Reading and writing are like a code: phonics is teaching the child to crack the code. [At Hillcross, our phonics Programme is Phonics International \(PI\).](#) We will be holding our Phonics Parents Information morning on **Friday 12th September 2025 at 8.50am.** We highly recommend EVERYONE attends this to help your child as they start their Phonics journey.

Before the children start on their Phonics journey it is important that they are able to play with words and differentiates sounds. Over The summer you can help secure these skills;

- Listening and responding,
- Listening and noticing sounds in the environment
- Toy Talking or Robot talking your names
- Singing rhymes and songs
- Alliteration e.g. Silly sausage
- Pronunciation of words

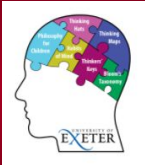
(If children still have dummies or drink from bottles now is the time to stop!)



'Reading is a priority at the school... From the start of Reception, they learn to decode sounds and segment and blend words. Staff are well trained and ensure that the books pupils read match the sounds they are learning. ...All pupils are encouraged to love reading. They encounter a diverse range of authors of the week and poets of the month.'
(OFSTED 2025)

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Maths and Early Number Skills



These Six areas are

- Counting & Cardinality
- Comparison
- Composition
- Pattern
- Shape & Space
- Measure



More information [on our website](#)
or click here for our [Maths Parents Guide](#).

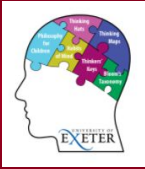
NUMBERBLOCKS AT HOME

Resources to accompany the CBeebies Numberblocks series, designed for parents to use at home with children



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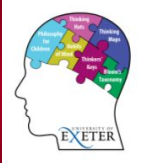
Foundation Stage



Understanding the World



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Foundation Stage



Expressive Arts and Design



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A Day in the Life



Time	Session details
8.30am-8.45am.	<p>School Begins.</p> <p>Children will say goodbye in the playground and will walk into Reception independently (there is some flexibility to this if needed in the first week or so). The children will self-register before choosing an activity to take part in across the unit. Staff will also set up 'early morning' focused activities each day for different children to access. These activities are aimed at closing gaps and focusing on children's next steps in learning.</p>
9am	<p>Wake Up! Shake Up! Session</p> <p>This is a physical development session which develops the children's Gross Motor skills. This also has a positive impact on their fine motor skills and their ability to hold a pencil effectively and to form graphemes (letters) correctly.</p>
9.15am-9.30am	<p>Adult-led learning session in Teams- these are based on Communication & Language skills as well as Maths, Reading and Writing. Adults will also explain the day's adult-led activities and the independent learning challenges the children should complete across the day.</p>
9.30am-10.40am	<p>Continuous Provision</p> <p>The children will learn through a combination of self-chosen experiences and play as well as taking part in adult-led learning activities during this time. Learning challenges will be set up in each room for the children to complete (around 5 challenges across the session). The outdoor learning environment is also open throughout this time, whatever the weather, so please ensure your child brings appropriate clothing, e.g. a coat, to school every day.</p>
10.45-11am	<p>Whole Class Reading - sharing a story and discussing what we have heard. Using one of our 3 -A-Day text.</p>
11am-11.20am	<p>Phonics Session</p> <p>These take place in Teams in the Autumn term. In Spring and Summer 1 children learn in smaller groups according to their progress and attainment. They return to whole class phonics in Summer 2.</p>
11.20am-11.30am	<p>Guided Reading session.</p> <p>Each day a group of 6 children will take part in a focused guided reading session with an adult in order to develop key reading skills. Children will have an allocated day and parents are informed of this via their child's communication book in September.</p>
11.30am-12.30pm	<p>Lunchtime and outside play.</p>

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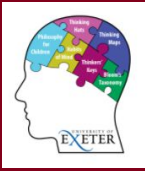
A Day in the Life



	Afternoon
12.30pm-12.45pm	The early years children and staff all participate in a second ' Wake Up Shake Up! ' physical activity session to refocus the children at the end of lunchtime.
12.45pm-1pm	Carpet session- Based on topic linked learning. Adults will also share details of the day's adult-led activities and independent learning challenges..
1pm-2.15pm	Continuous Provision The children will learn through a combination of self-chosen experiences and play as well as taking part in adult-led learning activities during this time. Learning challenges will be set up in each room for the children to complete (around 5 challenges across the session). The outdoor learning environment is also open throughout this time, whatever the weather, so please ensure your child brings appropriate clothing, e.g. a coat, to school every day.
2.15pm- 2.30pm	Mastery Number session - focusing on subitising skills and fact fluency
2.30pm-2.50pm	Tidy up time- Children will be given a key area to focus on and tidy. Tidying skills Reading for Pleasure - Story and then
2.50pm-3pm	Collect belongings to go home.

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Assessment in Reception



Assessment in Early years takes on many different forms. The children will be assessed during adult directed, adult initiated and child led learning opportunities. Observations, photographs and videos help us to develop a holistic view of your child over time. In EYFS we assess against the Early Years Statutory Framework, supported by Development Matters and Birth to Five guidelines.

You will be kept informed of your child's progress through half termly

- Parents consultation meeting -taking place in Autumn and Spring term)
- Progress celebration events - taking place half termly after school when parents can view their child's Learning Journey Scrapbook.

Statutory assessments in EYFS

Reception Baseline Assessment became a statutory requirement for all Reception aged children. The RBA is a short activity-based assessment which must be completed within six weeks of your child starting school. Using practical activities, the assessment measures children's starting points in Language, communication, literacy and Mathematics.

The data from the RBA is only used at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6) as a school-level progress measure. More information about the RBA can be [accessed here](#).

End of year profile - assessment against the 17 ELGs.

Assessing children against the early learning goals For each ELG, teachers must judge whether a child is:

- meeting the level of development expected at the end of the EYFS (and should be assessed as 'expected'); or
- not yet reaching this level (and should be assessed as 'emerging').

The ELGs are based on typical child development at the age of 5, so most children are likely to meet the 'expected' level of development. More information can be [found here](#).

Home learning



Children learn all the time both in and out of school. There are many benefits to targeted home learning activities including challenging and inspiring children's interests, consolidating their existing skills and developing their independence. Home learning also provides an opportunity for children to make links between the learning they do in school and other areas of their life.

Reception		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared Reading (parent reads to child) recorded 5 times a week-, one colour-banded reading book and one Phonics International story card will be sent home each week.* Maths Fluency - daily activities woven into everyday life. Please refer to the Reception Home Learning website page for ideas to support this. From January, for those children whose fine motor skills are sufficiently developed, parents are asked to <u>supervise</u> daily handwriting practice for 5 minutes everyday making reference to the Handwriting videos on the school website for accuracy. Parents are encouraged to buy whiteboards and dry wipe pens for their children to practice handwriting at home as children tend to find this method of practice more appealing and it is also more financially and environmentally sustainable than using paper. 		
Autumn	Spring	Summer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fine Motor (Handwriting) - refer to the Nursery above). Daily phonics activity- Uploaded to Google classroom and in Phonics book Key words (reading) <i>as directed by the key worker</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly phonics & handwriting uploaded on Google Classroom. Key words (reading & spelling) <i>as appropriate</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly phonics & handwriting uploaded on Google Classroom. Key words (reading & spelling) <i>as appropriate</i>
<p>*The children are able to change their books more frequently if they wish to do so. To support your child at home, we will share information about our weekly focus in reading & maths lessons via Google Classroom, which will include suggestions for things you can do and/or areas for you to focus on This does not have to be evidenced and it is for your reference only. For more details, please refer to the Reception Home Learning page: https://www.hillcross.merton.sch.uk/our-learning/home-learning-homework/reception</p>		

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Trips and Events



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Attendance and Punctuality



- **Attendance** at school is paramount to ensuring your child continues to learn and develop. If children miss sections of their learning it can become difficult to ensure they catch up on missed skills. Children benefit greatly from consistent periods of time in school.
- **Punctuality** is also crucial to ensuring a relaxed and smooth start to the day. The staff will carry out specific guided group work on every morning with the children, so please try to arrive as close to 8.30am as you can.
 - **School starts at 8.30am each morning (indicated by the school bell). School gates will open at 8.25am.**
 - **At 8.45am a second bell rings and this means that all classroom doors and school gates will be locked.** Registers are closed so if you arrive on or after the second school bell you will need to take your child to the school office to sign in and they will be recorded as late.
 - **School finishes at 3pm, gates will open at 2.55pm.** Children will be dismissed directly from the Reception Unit doors to the known adult. If someone different is collecting your child, please inform staff beforehand as we will not let children go with another adult without your permission - they will also have to know the unique safeguarding password that you put on your school admissions form.
 - **School gates are closed at 3.10pm** so if you do not enter and exit between these times, you will have access to the Ashridge entrance only.

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Communication



There are three places that parents should look to ensure they are kept up to date with all relevant information about school life.

1. **Your My Child At School (MCAS) Account/App** – although the App may be more convenient, we recommend that families log on to their MCAS account from a desktop as regularly as they can as many parents have told us that this is much easier to navigate.
 - a. **Announcements** are short time related messages/updates that will be automatically removed when they are no longer relevant e.g. cancellation of an extracurricular club.
 - b. **Products/Store:** In the Browser, click ‘Products, All’. In the App, press ‘Store’ at the bottom of the screen (Products will appear). In these sections you will find information about events, purchase opportunities and the Hillcross Children’s Fund. You also book/purchase tickets for school led events from this section e.g. year group performances, film nights, discos and contributions to the whole school topic etc.

Top tip: If you can only purchase one of these items, it will disappear from the store when you have bought it.
 - c. **Trips:** information regarding school trips and visits is sent via email (see section below). On receipt of the email you go to the Trip section and the trip/visit will be in the available section, once you have made your voluntary contribution your booking will appear in the enrolled/named section.
 - d. **Wraparound Care:** you would go to this section if you would like to book an ad hoc (one-off) booking for Breakfast Club or After School Club (please indicate 5pm or 6pm pick up). If you would like to book a permanent place at either of these provisions you must email info@hillcross to make this request. You can book Holiday club sessions directly from here.

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Communication



My Child At School Account/ App Continued

e. **Clubs:** information regarding Extra-curricular enrichment clubs is sent via email (see section below). On receipt of the email you go to the Clubs section and the clubs option will be in the available to book at the specified time, once you have booked and paid for the club, your booking will appear in the enrolled/named section.

Top tip 1: This should not be booked as a families childcare option as they can be cancelled at short notice.

Top tip 2: Parents should make a note of when the different clubs are and are not running, the 'next booked session' will tell you when the next session will be.

f. **Dinner/s:** This is where you book your child a school dinner if you would like the kitchen to prepare a meal for them.e. You select the date, choose school meal, halal meal or vegetarian and press submit.

Top tip 1: Booked meals will then turn green.

Top tip 2: It is significantly easier to book this via the browser! e. You select the date, choose school meal, halal meal or vegetarian and press submit. Top tip: Booked meals will then turn green. Top Tip 2: It is significantly easier to book this via the browser!

2. **The personal email inbox you used to open your Bromcom account** – we will send emails when there is a lot of information to share and/or if the message contains information that you may wish to refer back to over time.

3. **The Weekly Bulletin published every Friday** – an announcement is sent to alert you it has been uploaded and you can go to the website: Virtual Office; Bulletin/Newsletter to read it. The link is here for your ease:
<https://www.hillcross.merton.sch.uk/virtual-office/newsletter>. From September we will be able to put the link to the Bulletin directly into the announcement.

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Other important Information



Arrival and Dismissal

A smooth and stress free start to the day is essential for the children's wellbeing and development. Whilst in the playground it is really important that all parents/carers ensure health and safety rules are followed. EYFS and Year One children use their playground as a learning environment throughout the day and will set up learning activities before school. Please assist us in ensuring your child does not play with the resources in the playgrounds at drop off or pick up. This also applies to any siblings.

Friends of Hillcross (PTA)

We are extremely lucky to have an active and hard working PTA, who organise a number of exciting fundraising activities throughout the year. Every parent or guardian with a child in the school are automatically members of the PTA. The aim of the PTA is to bring together parents, carers, teachers and others in the community who have an interest in supporting the school. Our main objective is to enhance the education of the children in the school. We do this by raising funds to enable the school to purchase the 'extras' that cannot be funded from the school budget. More information can be found on the school website.

Hillcross Children's Fund

The purpose of the Hillcross Children's Fund is to provide additional materials and opportunities to enhance the learning experiences of our children. Contributions can be made by clicking on the QR Code displayed on the website and around the school, by Parentmail, by cash/cheque, through vouchers from Charity Trusts or by monthly standing order. We recommend setting up a monthly standing order as this is a much easier way to contribute. We suggest a contribution of £10 per month (£120 per year) or you can choose any amount that is affordable to you.

The 100 Club

The Hillcross 100 Club as a fun way to raise additional funds for the school whilst also giving those who take part in the lottery style experience the chance to win some cash prizes. It is a monthly draw. Parents can pay £5 per month and are allocated a number (you can have more than one number if you wish to). Each month there are three prizes and the more members we have the more money you could win.

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Last But Not Least



- Come and have a **look around the Reception Unit**. [Rebecca](#)
- Talk to us if are not available for your allocated **Home visit**- [Lucy](#)
- Visit the Copse to see our **Breakfast and After School Club** facilities [Angela](#)
- Visit the **school uniform** stall selling good quality second hand uniform and/or check the sizes of the uniform before ordering on the website. Please remember to label everything- [Almaz, Karla](#)
- **Medical and dietary** needs - [Sarah](#)
- **Purchase white board and pen or Water bottles** - [Louise](#)
- Any **concerns or SEND needs** from your child - [Claire](#)
- If you have not specified your child's current or last setting please can we have this information tonight - [Claire](#)
- Play and stay information - [Julia](#)
- Fill in your standing order form to join The 100 Club.
- Scan the QR Code to make your initial contribution to The Hillcross Children's Fund.

The staff will be happy to help with any queries.
Enjoy the rest of the evening.

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