This is a very special time for our school. We were very proud of the OFSTED report we received in February 2018 and have already made good progress against the areas of further improvement that was identified at that time. We have achieved a fantastic set of statutory outcomes at the end of the academic year 2018-2019 and our internal progress measures are also strong. Our children’s personal development continues to go from strength to strength. This is evidenced in many ways, including external awards such as the numerous Refspect awards (Merton School Partnership); the varied successes our children share in our weekly achievement assembly; and from the extremely positive feedback I receive from everyone who comes into contact with the children both in and out of school.

During the summer term 2019, I have been working with stakeholders from across the school community (governors, the senior leadership team, the staff team, parents and the children) to articulate the current position of the school and to identify where we aim to be in the next three to five years. As a result, we have a new **Mission Statement** that encompasses many, although not all, of our current strengths and a clear **Vision** for our future that is both ambitious and exciting.

**Collaboration** between everyone is going to be crucial if we are going to achieve the shared vision for our children’s education. No one person or group of people will find success on their own, and I ask everyone to commit to working together to achieve more. This will require effective communication, trust and flexibility. To support us on our journey, stakeholders across the school community also identified four other values (in addition to Collaboration) that we will all need to apply to every aspect of school life and in our interactions with each other in order to realise our goal. These are **Aspiration**, **Challenge**, **Responsibility** and **Respect**.

Please go to the school website [https://www.hillcross.merton.sch.uk/_site/data/files/parent%20information/DF1EA7C63158A48664BAFAA94F04AAC34.pdf?pid=1762](https://www.hillcross.merton.sch.uk/_site/data/files/parent%20information/DF1EA7C63158A48664BAFAA94F04AAC34.pdf?pid=1762) to see the Mission, Vision and Values, referred to above, that will form the foundations of our school community over the next few years. These were shared with those parents who attended the curriculum evening last Thursday. Please see the link below for information shared at this evening.

I am really excited about the journey ahead and I am eager to start working towards an enriched future for us all.

Best Wishes,
Lisa Francis
Headteacher.

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**Curriculum Evening**

We were delighted with the number of families that were able to attend the new style curriculum evening last Thursday. There was a very upbeat feel to the event and initial feedback from parents was extremely positive. There is still time to complete the survey that was sent out to parents following the event, so that you can share your views with us—it is open until Monday 16th. If you were not able to attend the event, the following presentations were shared at the workshops:

- Hillcross Mission, Vision and Values
- Y6 Residential Trip to Ypres, Belgium
- Y4 Residential Trip to Carreg Adventure, Wales
- KS1 SATs – Year 2
- KS2 SATs – Year 6
- Phonics Screening – year 1

These have been uploaded to the school website. You can access them by going to Parent Information-Curriculum Evening then selecting the relevant presentation on the page. Alternatively click on the link to access the page: [https://www.hillcross.merton.sch.uk/page/?title=Curriculum+Evening&pid=1762](https://www.hillcross.merton.sch.uk/page/?title=Curriculum+Evening&pid=1762)
Water Bottles

Thank you so much to those parents who are working collaboratively with the school by asking us for clarification about some of the misconceptions that have been shared on the playground and social media about the school's revised policy on water bottles.

There were two main factors that led to the review:

- Every child has the right to drink water whenever they are thirsty, not least because this is a basic human right, but research also suggests this will aid their learning. Some years ago, drinking bottles were introduced so that children could access water throughout lessons without having to leave the classroom to get to water fountains and thus miss valuable learning time. However, over the past year we have seen a significant rise in the amount of lost learning due to teachers having to console a distressed child who can’t find their water bottle and are worried because of the expense for parents to replace it (we have had increasingly extremely expensive water bottles brought to school). Learning time has also been missed due to class teachers having to help resolve disagreements between children about the ownership of bottles or accusations of another child taking their bottle home.

- In line with our drive to encourage children to develop healthy eating and drinking habits, we ask that children only bring water to school. Unfortunately, there has also been an increasing number of children who have been bringing squash, fruit juice and even fizzy drinks into school in their drinks bottles. This has been difficult to monitor as many bottles used by children are not transparent.

As a result, we took the decision to include a standardised water bottle in our school uniform policy.

Before choosing the water bottles, we spent a lot of time researching a variety of options to find something that was transparent and affordable for everyone in the school community. Whilst we would have liked to find a non-plastic alternative, we were not able to find something that would address the reasons for the review. Therefore, we ensured the bottles can be recycled at the end of their life span in normal household recycling and we also purchased additional lids so that these can be purchased separately; therefore, preventing the need to buy a new bottle each time the lid needs replacing. We take our commitment to teaching children about protecting our environment very seriously, but approach this with a measured view by recognising that it will not be possible to remove all plastic from our lives straight away.

The bottles we have sourced come with four different coloured lids that will correspond with your child’s house colour. This encourages cross-school collaboration by raising the profile of the children’s membership of their school house team.

In line with our child-centred approach, no child will be reprimanded for not having a Hillcross water bottle – this is a parental decision over which the children have no control. Furthermore, some parents may decide that they do not wish their child to have a water bottle at all and the children will be given access to water via the water fountains across the school site – we do not recommend this as it will mean your child will have to leave the classroom to access water and this could have a detrimental effect on the amount of progress they make.

I would urge parents to be mindful that information shared in the playground and on social media often becomes a misconception because the meaning behind what has been said/written is misinterpreted or because people put their own spin on things so that comment reflect their personal views and opinions rather than the facts. If you are unsure or concerned about anything, please come and speak to the school. We will genuinely listen and, wherever possible, will act upon parents’ concerns and suggestions. For example, a couple of parents shared with me on Monday that they were concerned that the bottles do not have dust caps and that this could increase the likelihood of germs spreading and their children becoming ill. In response, we have gone back to the supplier, who have informed us that dust caps are available at a cost of £0.15. We have made a small initial order of these (we will order more if there is a demand for them) and we will let parents know as soon as they arrive in school.
I understand that some children are disappointed that they are not able to bring in their own water bottles and pencil cases, and that some parents share this view. In response, I would like to share something with all parents that I shared with the children in the first assembly of the school year.

In the reflection, we agreed that our children’s worth and individuality is not defined by their personal belongings, the home that they live in or how they compare to their siblings or friends. It is their unique characteristics, their personal successes and the way they behave in response to situations and towards other people that are the things they can and should be proud of.

Our school is full of exceptional children (and adults), who all have their own distinctive personalities and qualities. I know this not because of what they look like, or what they have, but because of the way they make me and all members of our school community feel in everything they say and do.

“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”
- Maya Angelou

The Annual General Meeting for the Friends of Hillcross will be held on Thursday 26th September at 7.00pm.

All parents are automatically part of the association and we would love to see even more people come along and get involved in the operation of the group. As well as an opportunity to raise money that will impact positively on your child’s educational experience, attendance at the meetings gives parents an opportunity to meet members of the school community they wouldn’t normally meet and to get an insight into the priorities of the school.
Healthy Hillcross

It has been a great start back to the new school year and there has been a buzz of excitement in the dining hall. Our new salad cart has been a hit with our children having school dinners and we have seen a real variety of food items in packed lunch boxes. Our Healthy School Ambassadors, Rebecca and Alex, have been into the dining hall taking photographs of our children’s lunches so that you can see what the children have been eating.

This term we have launched our new ‘House Colour’ water bottles and the children have loved making the association with fellow house team mates. We will soon be holding a water bottle check, during which we will be awarding house points to every child who has theirs in school. If you haven’t bought yours yet, please pop and see the ladies in the front office.

Following the success of our healthy packed lunch audits last term, many more children are bringing a piece of fresh fruit or a vegetable in their lunch box. We will be running a similar audit later this term for those children who have school dinners. Our aim this term is to increase the amount of fresh fruit and vegetables our children are eating each day. Please support us with this by giving your child(ren) the opportunity to have these at home.

We are very excited to be further promoting our lifelong healthy habits this term with Aldi’s Get Set to Eat Fresh campaign. This term we will be collecting Team GB stickers with Aldi’s Kit for Schools for the chance to win £20,000 to build a health legacy at our school!

This initiative starts right now! From 6th September – 3rd November, when you spend £30 or more in any Aldi store, you’ll receive a special Team GB sticker. If as a school we work together to collect 300 stickers, we will automatically receive an exclusive school sports kit, in addition to entry into the £20,000 prize draw! Please send any stickers you receive into school with your children, which will be passed onto our Healthy School Ambassadors. They will add them to our Aldi’s Kit for Schools sticker poster.

The Aldi’s Kit for Schools campaign supports the aims of Get Set to Eat Fresh, Aldi and Team GB’s award-winning school’s programme, which has already beaten its target to reach 1.2 million young people in the UK by 2020; reaching over 1.5 million young people since its inception.

Throughout the autumn term, we will be trying out Get Set to Eat Fresh’s fun and engaging resources to create healthy moments in assemblies and the classroom. There are also some great activities you might like to try at home – these can be found on the Healthy Schools page on our website. We hope you will enjoy finding out more about the campaign and leading lifelong healthy lifestyles alongside your children.

If you want to find out more about Aldi’s Kit for Schools you can visit [www.getseteatfresh.co.uk/kitforschools](http://www.getseteatfresh.co.uk/kitforschools) or see the attached flyer for more information.

Thank you so much for your support on this project – we look forward to receiving any stickers you collect!
We’re collecting Team GB stickers with Aldi’s Kit for Schools.

Help us collect 300 stickers to complete our poster and we’ll receive an exclusive sports kit plus a chance to win £20,000!

Find out more and get stuck in at getsetatfresh.co.uk/kitforschools
## Dates for your Diary

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event/Meeting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Autumn Term 1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 13&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; September</td>
<td>15:00 - 16:00</td>
<td>Welcome Back Family Picnic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 20&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; September</td>
<td></td>
<td>INSET School closed for pupils</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday 26&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; September</td>
<td>19:00 - 20:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 27&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; September</td>
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<td>Friday 27&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; September</td>
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<td>Phase 3 Film Night</td>
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<td>Monday 30&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; September</td>
<td>14:30 - 15:00</td>
<td>Year 1 Harvest Celebration (1st Performance)</td>
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<td>Tuesday 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; October</td>
<td>9:00 - 9:30</td>
<td>Year 1 Harvest Celebration (2nd Performance)</td>
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<td>Friday 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; October</td>
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<td>Phase 2 Film Night</td>
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<td>16:30 - 20:00</td>
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<td>Friday 18&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; October</td>
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<td>Mon 21&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; – 25&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; October</td>
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<td>Half Term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 28&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; October</td>
<td>8:35 - 15:10</td>
<td>Pupils return to school for Autumn Term 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; November</td>
<td>15:00 - 16:15</td>
<td>EYFS Disco</td>
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<td>Thursday 7&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; November</td>
<td>14:00 - 15:00</td>
<td>Year 2 Presentation to Parents</td>
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<td>9:00 - 10:00</td>
<td>Year 2 Presentation to Parents</td>
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<td>Thursday 7&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; November</td>
<td>15:00 - 16:30</td>
<td>Year 1, 2, 3 Disco</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday 7&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; November</td>
<td>17:00 - 18:30</td>
<td>Year 4, 5, 6 Disco</td>
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**YOU'RE INVITED**

Come and join the FoH for coffee, cake or a brew in the Studio hall from 8:45

To donate to this worthy cause, please bring cakes & healthy treat donations to the school office on Friday 27th September.
Wimbledon Guild Waggy Walk

Sat 28 Sept 2019

BOOK BY 21 SEPT & YOUR DOG GOES FREE!
FUNDRAISING TO HELP PEOPLE ACROSS MERTON
WIMBLEDONGUILD.CO.UK/WAGGYWALK

Start / Finish:
The Hand in Hand,
Wimbledon Common
SW19 4RQ
Walks Start: 10.30am

Family: £25
(2 adults & 2 children)
Adult: £10
Child: £5
(age 4-16)
Dog: £5

Family and Adult tickets include:
• Pet Pavilion goody bag for each dog
• Commemorative rosette for each dog
• Pre walk breakfast
• Post walk drinks and food

Sponsored by:

H.R. Owen Maserati
Pet Pavilion
Ashworths Solicitors

Charity No. 200424
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In aid of Wimbledon Guild
A local charity supporting people across Merton
Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR
#WaggyWalk