



HILLSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Rushey Way
Lower Earley, Reading
Berkshire RG6 4HQ

Headteacher: Mrs N Morris

23rd April 2018

NM/DW/OL/Welcome Back

Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome back to the Summer Term, I hope you have had an enjoyable holiday. Thankfully, the weather is brightening up ready for an exciting term ahead.

As a school, we are making good progress towards our school improvement priorities, and this week we invited a School Improvement Consultant and Ofsted Inspector to Hillside to quality assure our judgements. We will let you know how this validation goes. (This was not our real Ofsted inspection, but one we chose to do).

Our School Improvement Priorities for 2018/19 are:

- Raising attainment and enjoyment in Reading and increasing vocabulary
- Increase the rate of progress in Writing for SEND and Lower Attaining pupils
- Ensure 'Maths Mastery' teaching challenges pupils
- Continue to ensure children know how to keep themselves safe by teaching safeguarding through the curriculum
- Developing a relevant and inspiring curriculum, which will prepare our children to become life-long learners

The Summer Term is probably one of the busiest terms. Alongside our exciting lessons, the children also have lots of visits and visitors planned, Sports Day, transition visits and of course, in the next few weeks the Year 2 and Year 6 children have to take their Statutory Assessment Tests (SATs).

The government ask children in Years 2 and 6 to take these tests for several reasons:

- It measures children's progress from their starting point (Foundation)
- The Year 6 tests inform secondary schools how 'ready' pupils are for the Key Stage 3 curriculum
- They compare school's attainment and progress around the country

For the staff at Hillside, we are particularly interested in ensuring children are making good rates of progress, and ensuring that our Year 6 pupils can start secondary school confidently, with a good range of knowledge and skills, but also happy well-rounded pupils. Of course we want the school to do well for our community, but we work hard to ensure we protect the well-being of our pupils during this time.

SATs

On the 25th April, at 6.00pm, there will be a short talk for parents of Year 6 children to explain these national tests further. (Year 2 have already had this talk). In the meantime, please do not alarm your children and keep routines as normal. Lots of sleep and keeping up with homework is crucial. It goes without saying that punctuality and full attendance is important over the next few weeks, as this will enable us to prepare the children as best we possibly can, so that the children feel comfortable taking these tests. Therefore, please ensure your children are at school on time, and that full attendance is adhered to.

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PUNCTUALITY

Thank you for working with us to improve our overall school punctuality, as most children are now arriving on time for school. Many thanks for your support with this.

This is what some of the children have said to us about arriving to school on time.

- I feel the same as everyone else going into class and don't feel that everyone is looking at me
- I don't feel worried as I know what the teacher is talking about, but I wouldn't if I arrive after the lesson has started
- I have time to get my things ready if I'm on time
- I get time to do the morning work and I can do any feedback I have been given in my books
- I get time to read my book if I'm on time
- I get time to talk to my teachers if I'm on time
- I get time to speak to my friends before school if I'm on time
- Sometimes the whole day goes wrong if I'm late

I thought the comments from the children were very mature and sensible.

Home Learning

As always, we strive to work with you, so your child can grow in confidence, with a love of learning, and a determination to be the best person they can be. With this in mind, I would like to remind you that as parents and carers, we would ask you to encourage your child to continue to complete their weekly Home Learning, especially the Pre-Learning tasks. The Pre-Learning is crucially important, as it allows children to be confident and have a head start in their lessons by understanding the vocabulary and learning that will take place. We have been setting Pre-Learning homework since September now, and the feedback I have from the teachers is that the children who complete these tasks are making better progress than children not completing the Pre-Learning. This is also showing in our Standards Meetings where we look at the rates of progress. We would strongly encourage you to support your children with this, as not only does it aid progress, but it also gives children a great confidence boost when they are already familiar with vocabulary and concepts.

When talking to the children they also say the Pre-Learning really helps them. We are all busy people, but I am sure you will agree that it is important to put a routine in place, whereby children know they must do their Home Learning, especially daily reading. Having a range of books at home and regular visits to the library also encourages this.

Values Based Education

This half term our value is 'Co-Operation', with a specific focus on '*more can be accomplished as a team than on your own*'. Please also remind your children about our value of Respect and following instructions and treating everyone as they would like to be treated.

New Staff

We are delighted to welcome our new Key Person to our Foundation Team (Owl), Mrs. Chaudhry, and a new 1-1 Learning mentor in Year 1 Su Irvin. We have also appointed a new Key Person for the Foxes, Miss Bouri, and hope that she will be able to start very soon, as she is relocating to the area. In the meantime, Miss Wellen will be the Foxes Key Person.

Home time Arrangements

Foundation: you can collect your child between 3:10pm and 3:20pm as this allows time to move from one side of the school to the other

Phase 1 (Years 1-3) 3.15pm **Phase 2 (Years 4-6)** 3.10pm

All children must be collected on time at the end of the school day, by the designated parent/carer. I appreciate that everyone can be late on occasions, but the same few children seem to be regularly collected late, which I hope improves this term. Please remember if you are unexpectedly delayed and have arranged for someone else to collect your child, please call the office to let them know and give permission, as we can only allow children to leave with adults identified by the parent.

School Uniform

It is lovely to see so many children returning to school, looking so smart in their school uniform. As we are now entering the Summer Term the children can wear their summer uniform, which includes a blue gingham dress or grey shorts. Black flat school shoes continue to be part of our uniform through the Summer Term. The correct PE kit must also be worn, which includes a House colour T-shirt and plain blue shorts/ bottoms. We will be monitoring uniform very closely. Also, please ensure you write your child's name on all uniform, including PE kit. Trainers are not acceptable footwear for the school day, but can be worn at break/lunchtime. Thank you for your co-operation with this, as we have so much unclaimed lost property.

Food in School

For children who choose to have a packed lunch, please ensure it contains a healthy balance. Our lunchtime staff will encourage the children to eat as much as they can and we will send home what they don't eat. We also encourage the children to bring a healthy snack for break times. This can include fruit, vegetables, low sugar cereal bars, crackers/breadstick etc. Please remember to protect our children with allergies, we are a NUT FREE school.

Mobile/Internet Safety

As your children become more and more reliant on the internet for both school work and entertainment, we must all, as a community, be more aware for the need to monitor the sites your child visits. In school, through classroom activities and discussion, we highlight positive uses of technology, but also ways in which we can all keep safe through responsible use of the internet, our mobile phones and social media. At home please can you ensure the security systems on your computers, tablets and mobiles are up to date and also, please talk to your child about the dangers of accessing unfamiliar sites.

Finally, it goes without saying, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact myself, the class teacher, any member of the Leadership Team or myself.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "N Morris". The letters are cursive and slightly slanted to the right.

Mrs N Morris
Headteacher