

WELCOME TO



Always Striving to be better

**Parent Information Pack
2023-24**

Dear Parents/carers

Welcome to Hilldene Primary School!

It is a great pleasure to welcome you, on behalf of all staff, governors, parents and children, to Hilldene Primary School. We look forward to working with you in a happy home/school partnership and meeting with you and your family on many occasions during your child's time with us.

At Hilldene Primary, we aim for all the children in our school to become independent, self-disciplined, caring and tolerant young people. All staff and pupils are encouraged to have a positive, determined and resilient approach to learning and we aspire for every child's experience of school to be happy and rewarding. We aim to challenge children's thinking, encouraging them to continually strive to be better.

Thank you for taking the time to read this welcome pack and we hope you find the information useful. If you wish to know more about our school or have any questions, please visit our school website or contact our school office.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "G Delmonte".

Georgina Delmonte
Headteacher

Attendance Policy

Regular school attendance is extremely important and is associated with high performance in achieving expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The school has a duty to make children's time at school interesting and worthwhile. Parents and carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend school in order to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

First Day Absence

If your child is unfit for school, you the parent/carer, should contact the school on the first day of absence, in person or by telephone. When your child returns, he/she is expected to bring a written note signed by you for the period of absence. If you do not send in a letter you must give a verbal explanation for absence to the class teacher or at the school office. The reason you give will be recorded by them.

Reasons for absence other than illness must be discussed with the school.

If a child has a medical appointment during the school day the school must be informed in advance. Parents are requested to minimise the amount of teaching time that the child will lose as a result of such appointments, by registering the child for the first lesson if the appointment is not until later in the morning. Leave may be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments that have to be taken in school time. A written or verbal explanation from you must be given to the school. Every **half-day** absence from school has to be classified by the school as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why the cause for every absence is always required.

If your child does not want to attend school for any reason, it is very important that you as the parent/carer do not make the problem more difficult by allowing him/her to stay at home. Please contact the school so that we can discuss the problem. If the school becomes aware of a parent/carer allowing a fit child to stay at home, a referral may be made to the Education Welfare Service. If you feel you cannot discuss the problem with the school directly, it is possible to contact the Education Welfare Service. A Welfare Officer (EWO) who works independently of the school, can liaise between home and school if necessary.

The Education Welfare Service can be contacted at 9th Floor Mercury House, Mercury Gardens, Romford RM1 3SL - 01708 431777

You can help prevent your child missing their education by:

- Making sure they understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- Taking an interest in their education - ask about school work and encourage them to get involved in school activities
- Discussing any problems they may have at school - inform their teacher or head teacher about anything serious
- Not letting them take time off school for minor ailments - particularly those which would not prevent you from going to work
- Arranging appointments and outings after school hours, at weekends or during school holidays will help to prevent disruption to your child's education and to the school. Under normal circumstances, you should not expect the school to agree to your child going on holiday during term time.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school which are considered unavoidable e.g.
illness,
medical appointments,
family bereavement
religious observance, (in order to take part in a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the child's parent belongs)

Unauthorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given e.g.
minor ailments,
truancy,
excessive lateness,
shopping,
helping at home etc.

An absence will also be considered unauthorised if an explanation for the absence has not been given to the school and will remain unauthorised until an acceptable explanation is received from the parent/carer either in writing or by a verbal message at the school office. This must be received within one month of the absence. It is for the school, not the parent/carer, to decide whether an absence should be recorded as authorised or unauthorised on receipt of an explanation. A note or a verbal explanation does not automatically register the absence as authorised.

Appointments

If you have to make an appointment for your child during school hours e.g. doctor, dentist, hospital etc. you should notify the school either by written note or by verbal message to the class teacher or the school office in advance of the appointment. If your child has several absences due to appointments such as these, the school may ask to see evidence of the appointments e.g. appointment card or letter. Whenever possible, appointments should be made out of school time.

Lateness

Children arriving after the register has been called will be marked Late. Figures of lateness will appear on school reports. The time of arrival of children after **8.50am Juniors or 8.55am Infants** will be recorded. Children arriving late **must** report to the school office and provide a reason for the late arrival. Where a consistent pattern of lateness is identified the issue will be discussed with parents and may be referred to the Education Welfare Service.

Holidays

Family holidays taken during term time will not be authorised. Parents are asked wherever possible to take their holiday in school holiday time. It is very important that you do not book holidays during the month of May if your child is in either Year 2 or 6. This is the month when the pupils complete their end of Key Stage Standard Tests and Assessments and it is essential that they are in school.

The Law

The law states that it is your responsibility as the parent/carer to ensure your child attends school regularly and on time. Neglect of this responsibility can result in your prosecution, the penalty for which can be up to a £1000 fine for each parent/carer.

Further Information

If you have any concerns regarding the attendance of your child, or would like to discuss our school procedures, you are most welcome to speak in confidence to the Headteacher.

Behaviour Expectations

We want to ensure that every child is happy at school, both in the classroom and in the playground. High standards of discipline are essential for effective learning and for the wellbeing of everyone in the school community. Most children behave very well at all times, however there are occasions when children do not behave as they should and, on these occasions, it is essential that parents support the school in following through the consequences for that poor behaviour.

Please talk about the plan below with your child it outlines **our rules, the rewards for good behaviour choices and the consequences of poor behaviour choices**. When you have discussed it, please sign the attached reply slip and return it to school. You may also wish to encourage your child to sign as well if you feel that this is appropriate.

Rules

1. We listen and follow instructions
2. We keep our hands, feet and objects to ourselves
3. We speak politely (we don't tease, swear or call anybody names)
4. We take care of our own and other people's property

An additional rule may be added by class teachers where considered necessary.

We operate a Zero Tolerance policy towards the use of bad language in school.

Rewards for good behaviour choices

1. Praise
2. Using school system of Stay on Green/Sunshine – move to silver/gold zone move to silver moon/gold star
3. stickers/ClassDojo points
4. Certificates to be taken home to parents

Consequences of bad behaviour choices

These may vary slightly between Infant and Junior classes.

1. Warning
2. Using school system of Stay on Green/Sunshine – move to yellow/red zone move to grey cloud/thunder cloud
4. Child is sent to a senior member of staff
5. Parents are contacted

Outside of Class

1. Warning
2. Loss of playtime
3. Child is sent to a senior member of staff
4. Parents are contacted

Instances considered serious will be dealt with immediately by a senior member of staff and parents will be asked to come into school to discuss the matter.

Uniform Policy

Introduction

It is our school policy that all children wear school uniform when attending school, or when participating in school-organised events outside normal school hours. We ask children to wear their shirts tucked into their skirts or trousers and to take pride in their personal appearance. Some items of uniform can be bought from school, whilst others are easily available, at very competitive prices, at local shops including supermarkets. A complete list of the items needed for school uniform including those for Physical Education, can be found below.

Aims and objectives

Our policy on school uniform is based on the belief that school uniform:

- promotes a sense of pride in our school;
- helps to create a sense of community and belonging towards the school;
- identifies the children with the school;
- supports our commitment to inclusion;
- prevents children from wearing 'fashion clothes' that could be distracting in class;
- is practical, smart and designed with health and safety in mind;
- is considered good value for money by most parents.

Jewellery, Hair Ornaments, Make-up and Nail Varnish

For health and safety reasons we do not allow children to wear jewellery. The exceptions to this rule are ear-ring studs in pierced ears, and small objects of religious significance. Children are required to remove any items during PE lessons to prevent them from causing injury. Please note: teachers are not permitted to remove earrings. Hair bands, ribbons/bows or 'scrunchies' should be plain and either blue or black. Hair bands should not have large flowers attached. Make up and nail varnish should not be worn to school unless for an out of school hours function, for example a school disco. Extreme hairstyles are not appropriate for school. The use of styling products should be kept to a minimum and children should not have decorative patterns cut into their hair or have hair coloured or dyed.

Footwear

For health and safety reasons we do not allow children to wear shoes with platform soles or high heels. All children are required to wear plain black shoes or trainers without logos as stated in the uniform list. If boots are worn these should also be plain black. If boots are large and prevent children from sitting comfortably on the floor they may be asked to change into their PE shoes whilst inside the school building.

The Role of Parents

We believe that one of the responsibilities of parents is to ensure that their child has the correct uniform and PE kit, that it is clean, in good repair and that the child's name is written on all items. If a parent has difficulties for any reason with fulfilling this request they are asked to speak confidentially to a senior member of staff to discuss the issues. Parents should be assured that we will do all we can to help. Children who arrive at school wearing non-school uniform clothing will be loaned an appropriate item from our nearly new shop to wear for that day. The same system will apply for children who do not have

a PE kit. Parents will be contacted to discuss the matter. The school welcomes children from all backgrounds and faith communities. If there are serious reasons, for example on religious grounds, why parents want their child to wear clothes that differ from the school uniform, the school will consider such requests sympathetically. If any parent would like to request a modification to the uniform policy they should, in the first instance, contact the Headteacher.

The Role of Governors

The governing body supports the Headteacher in implementing the school uniform policy. It considers all representations from parents regarding the uniform policy and liaises with the Headteacher to ensure that the policy is implemented fairly and with sensitivity. It is the governors' responsibility to ensure that the school uniform meets all regulations concerning equal opportunities. Governors ensure that the school uniform policy enables children to dress sensibly, in clothing that is hard wearing, safe and practical.

Monitoring and Review

The governing body monitors and reviews the school uniform policy through its committee work by:

- seeking the views of parents, to ensure that they agree with and support the policy;
- considering, with the headteacher, any requests from parents for individual children to have special dispensation with regard to school uniform;

School Uniform List

Our school uniform colour is a combination of navy and grey/black. Most items can be bought from high street shops. Items marked with a * below, some of which have the school logo on, are available from specialist school shops.

- Grey skirt/pinafore dress/shorts/trousers or blue and white checked or striped dresses
- White shirt/blouse or polo shirt*
- Navy blue sweatshirt* or cardigan*, without a hood, either plain or with the Hilldene logo
- Plain white short or knee length socks (not over the knee) or
- black, navy or grey tights

Please note skirts should be an appropriate length and of a style which allows children to sit comfortably on the floor. When wearing shorts, even when these are worn over tights, they should also be of an appropriate length. Three-quarter, calf length, leggings should not be worn.

Reversible waterproof coats, with the school logo, which are suitable for everyone, are also available from specialist school shops. Please note that children should not wear scarves inside the school building.

Shoes should be flat, black and appropriate for school. If trainers are worn these should be plain without logos. Your child should wear shoes which they can manage to do up independently. Please do not send your child to school in shoes which prevent them from running in the playground. If boots are worn these also should be plain black. Children who wear boots that prevent them from sitting comfortably on the floor may be asked to wear their PE shoes whilst inside the building.

P.E. Kit

Children need a change of clothes and footwear for P.E (for health and hygiene reasons) and a draw-string bag in which to keep the kit at school. PE kit and PE bags may be bought from the school office. **All school uniforms and P.E. kit MUST be named.** Children can become upset as a result of lost clothing, please help us by naming everything.

- navy blue shorts
- plain white T-shirt or polo shirt
- a pair of plimsolls – velcro fastenings are essential for younger children
- navy or black jogging bottoms/ tracksuit for outdoor lessons in cold weather

For health and safety reasons children are not permitted to wear earrings for PE. Your child's teacher will advise you when PE lessons take place so that earrings can be removed.

Safeguarding

The staff have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children in the school. The Local Authority requires referrals of any serious concerns to be made either to the Headteacher or other nominated member of staff.

Parents are asked to keep the school informed of any unusual or serious injuries which their child has suffered, and of any circumstances at home which might cause a change in a child's behaviour at school. Staff may on occasions wish to speak to you to discuss and clarify the cause of a particular injury or sudden change in behaviour. If this happens please remember that we have a responsibility to promote and safeguard the welfare of the children in our care.

In those instances where staff have serious concerns about the welfare of a child then the school is under a duty of care to make a referral to staff at the Havering Child Protection Team.

Protocol for Collection of Children at the End of the School Day

- All Foundation and KS1 children stay with their teachers until an appointed adult collects them. If they have not been collected by the time all the other children have gone, the child is taken to the school office.
- KS2 children are allowed to leave at the end of the day either via the rear door to the class or into the playground where at least one member of staff is on duty. Any children not collected by 3.20pm are taken to the school office.
- The staff in the office telephone the parent/guardian to see how long they will be and then inform the child to reassure them their parent is on their way.
- If a parent is unable to be contacted, the Headteacher/senior leadership team are informed and they decide the best course of action. In extreme cases social services will be informed.

Protocol for Missing Children

- As soon as a child is reported missing, all staff without children in their care are informed and the site is methodically searched, including the grounds. The CCTV is used to speed up the search.
- If the child is not found (usually within 10 minutes) the parents are informed to check the child has not gone home and the police are contacted via a 999-emergency call.

Hilldene Learning Mentors

We support children who may be worried about:

- Coming to school
- Issues within school
- Lessons
- Friendships
- Playtime/lunchtime
- Problems outside of school e.g. bereavement, separation/divorce

How we can help:

- Worry box – children can fill in a worry box slip and speak to a Learning Mentor confidentially
- 1:1 session
- Group work – to encourage/support those children who may need to build their self-esteem and confidence.

If you feel your child would benefit from our support, please do not hesitate to telephone us or make an appointment with the office.

Home School Support Workers (HSSWs)

It is the role of our Home School Support Workers (HSSWs) to build strong links between you, your child and the school by: -

- working with families where issues may be affecting their child's schooling
- offering support to families with worries or anxieties they may have at home (for example, help with letter writing, accompanying parents to appointments, etc.)

Our HSSWs offer a range of support and advice to parents, carers and families in many areas including: -

- Children's behaviour in school and at home
- Family relationships
- Attendance & punctuality
- Housing matters
- Signposting to services within the community
- Encouraging parents who feel reluctant to engage with the school
- Parenting courses
- General support/advice
- Domestic violence

If you have an issue that is worrying you, we may be able to help. Our HSSWs can meet with you in school or come to your home if you prefer. All of their work is dealt with in the strictest confidence.

Should you wish to talk to one of the team you can either call into the school office, or contact them on the school telephone number 01708 342453.

CLUB

Breakfast Club is available every morning in our Canteen from 7.45am until 8.40am/8.50am when the children are then escorted to their class.

All children from Reception to Year 6 are welcome. The breakfast and care cost is:

£2.00 for 1 child

£3.00 for 2 children

**£4.00 for 3 children
(or more children from the same family)**

**There is a booking system and prepayment is
required via sQuid.**

[Breakfast Club Booking form Link](#)

SCHOOL LIBRARY

All Hilldene children automatically become members of our school libraries. Their class is taken to the library on a weekly basis where they will be given time to choose and borrow a book. A book is loaned to a child for a period of 7 days and needs to be returned to school. In time for their next library session.

If for any reason a book is not returned on time your child will not be able to borrow another one. Sometimes a child can become very upset if they are not able to choose a book, therefore your cooperation in ensuring that books are returned on time will be greatly appreciated.

If, however, a book is lost or damaged beyond repair a £2.50 charge will apply and needs to be paid to the school office. Thank you.