

Hillside News

Hillside First School

where
children
are at
the heart of
everything we do



www.hillsidefirstschool.org ~ 01202 822737 ~ office@hillsidefirstschool.org

DATES TO
REMEMBER



Start of Summer
Term 2

Monday 2nd June



Headteacher Update Friday 23rd May 2025

I can hardly believe we're already at the end of another half term, with just one more to go before the end of the academic year! It's almost 1,000 days since I took over as Headteacher of our incredible school, and I have loved every moment of the journey. It is a great privilege to lead our community alongside a passionate staff team and, of course, our wonderful children—who remain the heartbeat of the school.

Thank you to our families, the Local School Committee, our volunteers, the PTA, and the dedicated staff for your continued support. Your commitment helps our school thrive.

Food Standards Inspection: This week we welcomed an unannounced visit from Dorset's Food Standards Agency. I am delighted to share that we passed with flying colours—congratulations and heartfelt thanks to Mrs Williams, Mrs Buckley and Mrs Scarisbrick for their outstanding work in our kitchen!

Year 2: Start Small, Dream Big: Year 2 enjoyed an exciting visit from representatives of JP Morgan as part of our Start Small, Dream Big careers initiative. The children learned about different jobs and began to imagine the possibilities for their own futures. Further details below.

Sports Morning: You should have received a letter today about our Sports Morning. We hope you can join us for a fun-filled morning of races, games and house competitions!

Celebration of Achievement: Thank you to everyone who attended our Celebration of Achievement this week. It was wonderful to welcome you into the classroom and watch the children proudly share their work with you.

Minecraft: Minecraft remains incredibly popular with our children. I have fond memories of playing it with my own children, and it's a fantastic way to develop creativity, problem-solving and teamwork. Below is a poster with more information. For those interested in coding with Minecraft, we've previously used the resources at code.org/minecraft.

Wishing you all a restful and enjoyable half term break. We look forward to seeing everyone back on Monday 2nd June.

With best wishes,

Mr Graves

WEEKLY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Little Owls 1	97%
Little Owls 2	95%
Tawny Owls 1	96%
Tawny Owls 2	98%
Tawny Owls 3	95%
Snowy Owls 1	100%
Snowy Owls 2	95%
Snowy Owls 3	95%

Whole School 95%

Target



The school day begins
at 08:40

Gates open at 08:30
School finishes at 15:00

Sports Day Morning



Tuesday
24th June

Congratulations to the following children
for being our latest **Stars of the Week**:



Little
Owls 1
Elsie

Little
Owls 2
Evie

Tawny
Owls 1
Hannah

Tawny
Owls 2
Peyton

Tawny
Owls 3
Mark

Snowy
Owls 1
Sultan

Snowy
Owls 2
Leo



Summer Fayre

🎉 A huge thank you to everyone who joined us for our Summer Fayre on Friday! It was a beautiful evening 🌞 and we're thrilled to share that we raised over £2,000 for the school! 🎊❤️

We're incredibly grateful to everyone who donated—both in advance and on the day. Your generosity truly blew us away! 🙌

From 🎰 tombola prizes and 🐎 horse & cart rides, to the incredible support of our staff, 🙌 volunteers, and our amazing PTA—led by the brilliant Tracy 🌟—thank you for making the event such a fantastic success! ❤️



Make it
Happen

Inspired by

J.P.Morgan

This week, Mrs Andrews organised a visit from JP Morgan for our Year 2 children as part of the Start Small, Dream Big Careers initiative. Following the visit, the children are now busy working on designing their own app ideas. One winning concept will be selected and developed by JP Morgan, with a runner-up also recognised.



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MINECRAFT



Still the best-selling game of all time, Minecraft is a bastion of creativity and community, with hundreds of millions of players building and crafting in its almost endless world. The popularity of Minecraft among gamers of all ages means it's important to remain informed about the game, including how to play it safely and whether it's suitable for the children in your care. That's why we've created this guide explaining the risks associated with Minecraft and how to ensure a purely enjoyable gaming experience.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SCARY ELEMENTS

While Minecraft can be seen as a kind of 'digital LEGO', certain game modes include creatures accompanied by eerie sound effects. These can be a bit too frightening for some younger players, potentially leading to distressing in-game combat and other encounters – although the combat is quite basic and free from any real depiction of violence.

GRIEFING

Some players in Minecraft take pleasure in deliberately damaging or destroying another person's creations. This behaviour, known as 'griefing', is a form of bullying – it intentionally ruins someone else's experience by erasing hours of their work and forcing them to start over. Many public servers regard griefing as a serious offence and often ban those who engage in it.

ADDICTIVENESS

Minecraft's focus on creativity means that, as with any creative endeavour, it can be easy to get carried away. If your child is finding it difficult to manage their time because they're drawn in by Minecraft's gameplay loop of resource gathering and building elaborate projects, it could have a knock-on effect on their social interactions and schoolwork.

PUBLIC SERVERS AND COMMUNICATIONS

With public servers being so easily accessible in Minecraft, it's highly likely that children will end up chatting with strangers through the in-game text chat. Some servers even place an emphasis on social interaction, actively encouraging communication between players. While there's nothing inherently wrong with this, it does carry certain risks. In addition to the concerns around speaking with strangers online, players who host their own servers may have their IP addresses exposed, posing a further security concern.

ADDITIONAL PURCHASES

Minecraft is available as a free trial on a variety of devices; however, the full game requires a one-off purchase. After that, players have the option to buy additional cosmetic upgrades or subscribe to Minecraft Realms. Realms is an entirely optional subscription service that allows users to run their own private server to play with friends. Without proper supervision, younger players may end up making unintended or excessive purchases.

Advice for Parents & Educators

CHOOSE THE RIGHT MODE

Selecting Creative or Peaceful mode allows children to play Minecraft without having to contend with enemies. It's also a great way for you to get used to playing the game with them, since the difficulty level is far lower. This allows you to work together on a long-term project, creating something special without the threat of enemies and creatures attacking you or damaging your building.

HOST A PRIVATE SERVER

The easiest way to find a safe server for children to play on is to make one yourself. Hosting a server prevents strangers from finding it, unless they've been given its address and password. A private server also lets you control who's allowed to enter and – if necessary – ban anyone who shouldn't be there. This is the closest equivalent to parental controls in Minecraft. Hosting a private server, however, will cost a monthly fee.

TALK ABOUT STRANGERS

At some point in their lives, almost everyone will make contact with a stranger online. Talking to children about online safety, therefore, is essential – as is having a plan for dealing with any hostile or difficult people. It's important that a child knows never to tell a stranger about themselves online and that they should come to you straight away if they do encounter a problem.

RESEARCH CONTENT CREATORS

Much of Minecraft's early stages can be an exercise in frustration for players who don't know where to start. Thankfully, there's a wealth of material online and in video format to help you learn the basics. Just be mindful that some of this content may not be appropriate for children, so you should consider watching it yourself first.

PLAY MINECRAFT WITH YOUR CHILD

As a creative building tool, Minecraft makes it great fun for children to team up and construct vast buildings accompanied by imaginative landscapes, much like working with LEGO or model kits. Playing in a game mode that includes enemies can encourage critical thinking and teamwork; however, you should consider which game mode is appropriate for the child in your care.

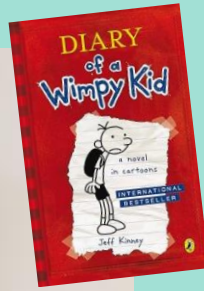
Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Gaming Editor at the Daily Star, and has worked in games media for more than 6 years. A long-time gaming enthusiast, he is also a parent and therefore a keen advocate of online safety for children of all ages.



The National College®

The Book Nook



I like this book because it is funny, strange and weird! The book is all about Greg who is in middle school, alongside his brother Roddrick and little brother Manny. One day, a piece of cheese appeared out of nowhere on the basketball court and nobody dared to touch it because they had no idea where it had come from. However, a child came up onto the basketball court and touched it. Everyone saw this and ran for their lives. This is what started the 'cheese touch'. The only way to get rid of the cheese touch was if someone with it, touched someone else- a bit like tag! I would definitely recommend this book to so many people because they would love it as much as I do and there are many twists and turns, you never know what is going to happen next!



Meet our heroes



We are so proud of Brigitte for completing three dance exams (Ballet, Tap and Modern) and achieving such outstanding results! She puts in so much extra time and effort to achieve this, doing extra Sunday lessons. She is committed, hardworking and so passionate! She is also performing in another dance show in July.

Well done Brigitte!



Summer term

UPCOMING EVENTS



May

Monday 5th

May Day Bank Holiday

Friday 2nd

Mufti Day in exchange for tombola donations for our Summer Fayre

Tuesday 13th

Little Owls School Trip
(Blashford Lakes)



Friday 16th

17:00 - 19:30
Summer Fayre



July



Tuesday 1st

Year 2 School Trip
(Upton Country Park)



Thursday 3rd

PTA Event - Ice-Cream Sale
To be purchased in advance in Arbor

Thursday 3rd

PTA Event
Break the Rules Day



Friday 11th

Year 4 Leavers Service

Friday 11th

PTA Event - Ice-Cream Sale
To be purchased in advance in Arbor

Thursday 17th

17:00 - 19:00
Year 4 Leavers Party



Friday 18th

PTA Event - Ice-Cream Sale
To be purchased in advance in Arbor

Monday 21st

Year 4 Leavers Assembly 14:00

Wednesday 23rd

Last day of term



June

Friday 6th

PTA Event - Ice-Cream Sale
To be purchased in advance in Arbor



Friday 13th

PTA Event

Someone Special Shop

Purchase a gift for a special person on Father's Day



Friday 13th

PTA Event - Ice-Cream Sale
To be purchased in advance in Arbor



Friday 13th

PTA Event

Mufti Day & School Disco
Reception - Year 1 15:00-16:30
Year 2 - Year 4 17:00-18:30



Friday 20th

PTA Event - Ice-Cream Sale
To be purchased in advance in Arbor



Tuesday 24th

Sports Day



Thursday 26th

PTA Event - Ice-Cream Sale
To be purchased in advance in Arbor



Friday 27th

Transfer Day



Hillside Ice Cream Fridays

£1 per treat

- Week 1 - 6th June - Fruit Splits
- Week 2 - 13th June - Rainbow Lollies
- Week 3 - 20th June - Bubblegum Swirl
- Week 4 - 26th June - Fab
- Week 5 - 3rd July - Cola Bottles
- Week 6 - 11th July - Rockets
- Week 7 - 18th July - Strawberry Cone

We will be selling one type of lolly each week.
Pre Orders only on Arbor plus note the deadline date is the Sunday before the sell each week.



DISCO NIGHT

13th June
3pm to 4.30pm - Yr R/1
5pm to 6.30pm - Yr 2/3/4
Tickets £3.50

Water is available and sweets will be handed out at the end of the Disco

Please arrange the collection of your child from the School Hall Please do not send your children in with Sweets for H&S reasons

To run this event we do need volunteers, please tick the box if you can help.



Someone Special Day

Hillside will be running a Someone Special Shop

The shop will be available on the 13th June.

Please pre order your Someone Special day Gift by the 30th May
£2.50 per gift, maximum of 4 gifts per child.

Options are:
Dad, Grandad, and/or another Special Person



The PTA will be serving Hot and Cold drinks on 24th June for Sports Day

We will be open from 8.45 am to 9.05 am and also during the break.

All Drinks £1

STEP INTO A WORLD OF

MAKE BELIEVE AND WONDER

-AT-
HILLSIDE COMMUNITY CIRCUS
joining
JULY 13TH FROM 1PM
AT HILLSIDE FIRST SCHOOL,
VERWOOD, BH31 7HE

PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS NOW
FOOD AND DRINK WILL BE AVAILABLE BEFORE THE EVENT
AND DURING THE BREAK.

[HTTPS://WWW.TICKETSOURCE.CO.UK/HILLSIDE-COUNTY-FIRST-SCHOOL-PTA](https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/hillside-county-first-school-pta)

WE ARE NOW TAKING BOOKINGS FOR CHILDREN STARTING SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER 2026

Hillside Pre-School is open term time, Monday - Friday and accepts children with both 15 and 30 hour funding. We have a Breakfast Club running from 7:45am, and After School Club running from 3pm, for both Hillside First and Pre-School children.

To book a tour of our wonderful setting, which opened in April 1990, contact Mrs Ford on:
01202 820 679
Email: office@hillsidepreschool.org
or visit: www.hillsidepreschool.org

Click on the icons for a quick link to our social media pages, website and email

Instrument Hire to Young People

DORSET MUSIC SERVICE

- Did you know Dorset Music Service directly hire a wide range of instruments to children and young people at a low cost? .
- Prices start from as little as £63 per year, dependant on the instrument.
- Funding support is available to cover up to 100% of the cost for eligible pupils
- You can collect/return by appointment from our Blandford office.
- All instruments are in top condition as our specialist technician ensures they are well maintained.
- Hire is on an annual basis from the month of hire.
- For questions email dorsetmusicservice@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
- You can request an instrument online via our website;
www.dorsetandsomersetmusichub.org.uk
Navigate to Parents and Carers/Instrumental Learning

Viola	French Horn	Alto Saxophone
Violin	Tenor Horn	Clarinet
Classical Guitar	Trombone	Flute
Electric Guitar	Trumpet	Euphonium
Bass Guitar	Baritone Horn	Oboe
Cello	Tuba	Piccolo
Double Bass	Bass Trombone	Specialist Clarinet
	Cornet	Bassoon
		Specialist
		Saxophone

Supported using public funding by

RUN JUMP THROW

Scan me!

ATHLETICS FESTIVAL Y3 Y4

VENUE - St Michaels Middle School Field
DATE - Monday 16th June 2025
ARRIVE - 3.45pm - 4.10pm
REGISTRATION CLOSSES AT 4.15pm
EVENT FINISHES - 5.30pm

Children will compete against the stopwatch or tape measure to gain performance points.
Competitive events - 50m Sprint , 400m run, Standing long jump, howler throw.
Optional events - speed bounce, running long jump, chest push .

SCAN THE QR CODE TO ENTER



Hillside First School Talent Show



COMING SOON

One entry per child to be submitted to the class teacher by Friday 6th June.
Please see email for further information.

School Nursing Team
0-19 CYP Public Health Service

Parent drop-in

NHS
Dorset HealthCare University
NHS Foundation Trust

Your next drop-in will be on:

Tuesday 17th June

2.00pm-3.00pm

Hillside First School

Your school nursing team can provide non-judgemental and confidential support and advice about:

Healthy lifestyle advice

Emotional health and well-being support

Bedwetting and toileting

Nutrition and growth

Sleep advice

Signposting to various services

Parenting advice

Behaviour support



You can contact us via

- School nursing admin hub on 01929 557 558
- Parentline advice 5-19 texting service on 07312263131
- Website at www.dorsethealthcare.nhs.uk/school-nursing

Follow us on social media:



DorsetHealthCare School Nursing



dorsethealthcare_schoolnursing

We provide a confidential service. This means that you can discuss personal information in confidence. We will not discuss your personal information with anyone else without your permission. This includes parents and teachers. We would only pass on your information in order to protect you or someone else from serious harm. Whenever possible we would discuss this with you first.



Hillside First School offers a wide range of after-school clubs to enrich children's learning and creativity beyond the classroom. From sports and dance to music and computing, there's something for every child's interest and development.

Day	Club	Booking Information
MONDAY	Creative Dance 15:00-16:00 (Year R-2) 16:00-17:00 (Year3-4)	Book here for Year R-2 Book here for Year 3-4 Password: Hillside2025!!
	BRS Sports & Fitness Breakfast Club 08:00-08:30 (Year R-4)	Book via Arbor app
TUESDAY	BRS Sports & Fitness Lunch Club 12:00-12:30 (Year R-4)	Book via Arbor app
	BRS After School Football Club 15:00-16:00 (Year 1-4)	Book via Arbor app
WEDNESDAY	Computer Xplorers 15:00-16:00 (Year3-4) 16:00-17:00 (Year1-2)	Book here
	Forest School 15:00-16:00	Book here
FRIDAY	Rocksteady Music School Lessons take place in school	Book here
	Dodgeball 15:00-16:00 (Year1-4)	Book via Arbor app

Hillside Pre-School Breakfast & After School Club

Hillside Pre-School also offers a **Breakfast Club** and **After School Club** for children attending Hillside First School and Hillside Pre-School.

- Breakfast Club runs daily from 07:45
- After School Club is available:
 - ☐ Monday to Thursday: 15:00-18:00
 - ☐ Friday: 15:00-17:00



For more information, please contact Hillside Pre-School on 01202 820679 or visit www.hillsidepreschool.org