

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



Children in Year 1 –
4 return to school
on
**Monday 8th
September.**

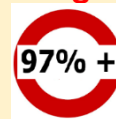


WEEKLY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Little Owls 1	94%
Little Owls 2	90%
Tawny Owls 1	96%
Tawny Owls 2	93%
Tawny Owls 3	96%
Snowy Owls 1	96%
Snowy Owls 2	96%
Snowy Owls 3	99%

Whole School 95%

Target



The school day begins
at 08:40

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

Headteacher Update Friday 18th July 2025

As we draw to a close on our final full week of the academic year, with just three more school days before we finish on Wednesday 23rd July, it feels like the perfect moment to pause and celebrate everything we've achieved together.

It's been a year of real progress and fresh opportunities for our children, and I couldn't be prouder of how far we've come. Saying farewell to our Year 4 leavers is always bittersweet: I've loved watching them grow, and I can't wait to see all they'll go on to accomplish next. A huge thank-you to the Year 4 parents / carers who organised such a wonderful leavers' party last night - those memories will stay with us for years to come!

The circus was a spectacular success, and our thanks go to everyone who came along to support us, and to the local businesses whose generous donations made the event possible.

Last week we remembered Sam Challis, whose bright spirit continues to shine here at Hillside. Please take a moment below to read more about the lasting impact Sam has on all of us.

Congratulations to our Year 2 designers, who recently discovered the results of the JP Morgan "App Design" competition they took part in - details are below.

A heartfelt thank-you to everyone who makes Hillside such a special place: our dedicated staff, our hardworking local school committee, the volunteers who hear our children read, and, of course, our remarkable PTA for their fundraising feats. To the families moving on this summer, thank you for all you've given to our community; to those continuing with us next year, we're grateful for your ongoing support; and to the new families joining us in September, a warm welcome awaits you and your children.

Above all, thank you for the reason we do this every day: our incredible children, who are at the heart of everything we do.

Best wishes for a wonderful summer!

Mr Graves

**Wednesday
23rd July**

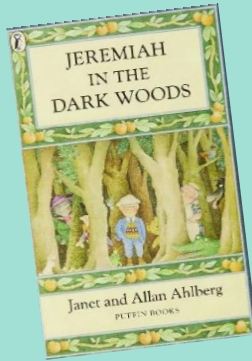


**Children finish
at 3pm as usual**

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



The Book Nook



Violet really enjoys reading **Jeremiah in the Dark Woods** by *Allan Ahlberg*

"I like it because it has lots of different fairytale characters in it. I like Jeremiah because he likes adventures and he is brave and clever. It is funny because the Big Bad Wolf rides a motorbike!"



COME & JOIN US FOR A FUN PACKED SUMMER!

SUMMER HOLIDAY CAMP 2025

WEEK #1	WEEK #2	WEEK #3
Monday 28 th July - Thursday 31 st July 9am - 3pm Location: Hillside First School, Verwood, BH31 7HE Age: 5 - 12 years	Monday 4 th August - Thursday 7 th August 9am - 3pm Location: St James First School, Wimborne, BH21 4JN Age: 5 - 12 years	Monday 11 th August - Thursday 14 th August 9am - 3pm Location: Hillside First School, Verwood, BH31 7HE Age: 5 - 12 years
WEEK #4	WEEK #5	BOOK NOW
Monday 18 th August - Thursday 21 st August 9am - 3pm Location: St James First School, Wimborne, BH21 4JN Age: 5 - 12 years	Monday 25 th August - Thursday 28 th August 9am - 3pm Location: Hillside First School, Verwood, BH31 7HE Age: 5 - 12 years	 Please bring with you: • A packed lunch • Appropriate clothing for outside football Plenty of drinks are included

For more info contact us on 07501688972 or email info@brscoachingacademy.co.uk

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

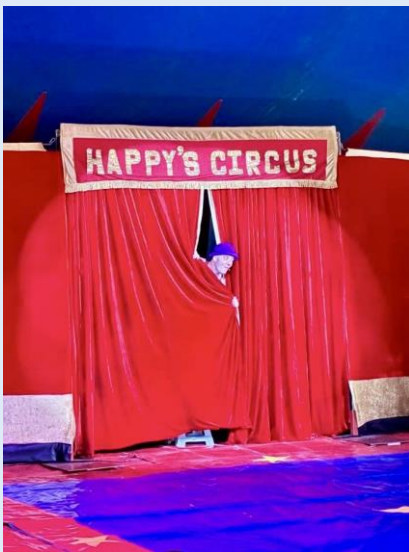
Happy Circus Visit – Sunday 13th July - What an incredible day at school! 🎪🌟

A massive thank you to all the families who bought tickets, came along, and supported our very first circus event—it simply wouldn't have happened without you. Your enthusiasm and encouragement helped create a fantastic atmosphere from start to finish.

Huge thanks as well to the brilliant performers from Happy Circus who wowed us with their skills, and to the local businesses who generously donated to help make the event a success.

I still remember chatting to Tracy, our incredible PTA Chair, over two years ago about a crazy idea to bring a circus to school—and today it became a reality thanks to her dedication and the PTA's hard work behind the scenes.

Yes, it was hot and humid, but that didn't stop the gasps, giggles and cheers! Thank you again for helping to create a truly special day.



Sam Challis

Hillside First School cherishes the memory of our former pupil, Sam Challis, who tragically passed away in 2003 at the age of ten. In his honour, Sam's family kindly donated the Sam Challis Celebration Trophy to be awarded each year to the Sports Day group whose teamwork, determination and kindness best reflect Sam's own spirit. Earlier this term, the original trophy was unfortunately damaged beyond repair, so we commissioned a new replacement to continue the tradition.

Last week, during the Celebration Assembly, we were delighted to welcome Sam's mother, Mandy, and her partner John back to Hillside First School to unveil the new trophy. On behalf of our entire community, we presented the newly crafted Sam Challis Celebration Trophy and reminded everyone that although Sam left us over twenty-two years ago, his boundless kindness, perseverance and love of sport continue to inspire each one of us. We thanked Mandy for entrusting us with this beautiful reminder of Sam's spirit.

Thank you for helping us preserve Sam's legacy and for ensuring that, each year, we celebrate not only athletic achievement but also the generosity of heart that defined his life.

Daily ECHO
www.thisisbournemouth.co.uk
EDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2003 No: 29,457 GOT A STORY? CALL NEWSDESK : 01202 554601 32p

WIN £1,000 OF DEBENHAMS PRODUCTS
SEARCH FOR SOLD - PAGE 29

FIND YOUR NEW HOME
PROPERTY GUIDE INSIDE TODAY

Mother pays a touching tribute to son Sam, 10

He left a little bit of stardust on everyone...

STARTS FRIDAY
SOUTHAMPTON BOAT SHOW
FAR MORE THAN JUST A BOAT SHOW
12PM - 5PM SEPTEMBER 2003
In association with The Daily Telegraph

Win these:
NEW! SAGGONDA
NEW! LEGO
NEW! Sotheby's

Mum's tribute to Sam, 10

► Continued from page 1

She added: "He was a very organised boy who made lists and ordered everyone around - especially the nurses when he was in hospital. But he worshipped his cousins and John. He had a word for everyone - we called him 'Last Word Sam' because he always had an answer.

"He used to chat to all sorts of older people and buy presents from the charity shop. In fact he made such an impression there the shop is closing for staff to attend the funeral.

"But that's how he was. You could not fail to be cheered up by him. He never let his asthma get in the way of living his life and he wanted to try everything."

● The funeral is being held tomorrow at 11.15am at St Michael and All Angels Church at Verwood and afterwards at Verwood Cemetery. Red and white balloons will later be released at Potterne Park to celebrate Sam's life.

Mother pays touching tribute to son Sam, 10

By Rachael Garn

"HE left a little bit of stardust on everyone." These are the words of a loving mum about her football-crazy son who died following an asthma attack at the age of just 10.

Despite his tender years, "cheeky chappie" Sam Challis from Verwood made a huge impression on everyone he came into contact with, according to his grieving family.

Mum Mandy said: "He was so full of life I just feel he was put here for a reason and that was to cheer everyone up. He left a little bit of stardust on everyone."

The youngster, who attended Hillside First and then Emmanuel Middle School in Verwood, lived with Mandy, her partner John and brother Alex in Hillmeadow, seeing dad Michael at weekends and spending time with his huge network of extended family relations.

He lived for his football being an avid fan of both Southampton FC and Bournemouth Cherries.

Mandy said: "He didn't just like football, he lived it. He followed the league tables - all of them - and read magazines and newspapers for the sports news, bought stickers and went to see the matches. He was crazy about it."

"He couldn't just tell you who had won a match, he would tell you about it in a blow by blow account but he loved all sports, especially wrestling."

Continued on page 2



🎉 Make It Happen App Design Competition Winners 🎉

“Make It Happen” is an exciting JPMorgan Chase initiative that inspires digital learning by challenging children to design innovative apps. Guided by expert engineers, one winning idea per school is turned into a real, fully functional app published at

makeithappen.club/winners.

Congratulations to Geoffrey, Elizah, Millie, and Alfie for being recognised in our school competition, and a special shout-out to our overall winner, Hollie, whose brilliant app has now been developed and will soon be available online!





Smartphone-Free Childhood: A Timely Consideration for Year 4 → Middle School

Following a conversation with a parent this week, I'm raising awareness of the **Smartphone-Free Childhood** movement. As our children prepare for middle school, the pressure to get them a smartphone can feel overwhelming - but starting middle school doesn't have to mean handing over a device. The transition from Year 4 into middle school is a natural crossroads for families and a perfect moment to reflect on whether your children are truly ready for a smartphone.

Delaying a first phone can:

- **Foster curiosity:** Children explore the world around them without screens as a default.
- **Strengthen social bonds:** Face-to-face play and conversation build confidence.
- **Protect wellbeing:** Later smartphone use is linked to lower anxiety and better sleep.

If you're not ready for a full-featured smartphone, you're not alone - and there are great alternatives. From simple basic phones for calls and texts to smartwatches with limited features, you can keep your child connected without opening the door to every app and social feed.

Many families are choosing to wait - and you can too. For research, practical tips, and to join the conversation, please visit:

 smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk

We hope this information helps you make the best decision for your children at this important transition.



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



**Monday 26th to
Friday 30th May**

Half 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



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



Joining the Summer Reading Challenge

Children sign up through their local library and receive a sticker booklet. They set a reading goal and borrow books of their choice during the summer, collecting special stickers. Children who complete the Challenge are presented with a medal when they have read 6 books, and a certificate is sent to school in the Autumn term.

The Challenge starts on Saturday 5 July



How the Summer Reading Challenge benefits children:

- significantly improves reading confidence and independence
- ensures students are ready for their return to school, preventing the summer reading 'dip'
- aids the successful transition between year groups and key stages

Schools online author event with Gareth P. Jones to launch Story Garden

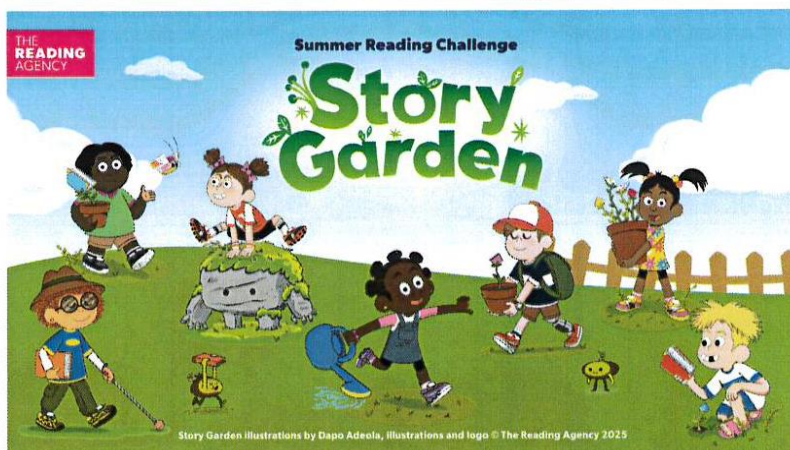
Thursday 3 July 9.15 - 9.45 am



[Book your place for our online launch event](#)

What next

- display posters in your school
- send a newsletter to parents and carers with information about the Challenge
- talk to students about Story Garden during assembly time
- visit the Summer Reading Challenge School Zone for more information and free resources



2025 Summer Reading Challenge, Story Garden - Adventures in nature and the great outdoors

This year's exciting theme will inspire children to tap into a world of imagination through reading, exploring the magical connection between storytelling and nature.

The Summer Reading Challenge is a FREE holiday activity for children. It's all about reading for fun, aiming to improve children's reading skills and confidence.



We value your support in helping us to promote the Summer Reading Challenge and therefore we will be pleased to:

- attend an assembly to talk about the Summer Reading Challenge
- provide an electronic promotional flyer for emailing to parents and carers
- provide a PowerPoint presentation to explain the Summer Reading Challenge to children in an assembly or classroom situation. We will notify you when it is available

To ensure all children hear about Story Garden, library staff would be delighted to visit an assembly to talk to children about the Summer Reading Challenge.

Assembly visits are available between 23 June and 16 July

[Book your assembly visit](#)



The Summer Reading Challenge is developed by The Reading Agency and delivered in partnership with public libraries.



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 (Year 3-4)	Book here for Year R-2 Book here for Year 3-4 Password: Hillside2025!!
TUESDAY	BRS Sports & Fitness Breakfast Club 08:00-08:30 (Year R-4)	Book via Arbor app
	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 (Year 3-4) 16:00-17:00 (Year 1-2)	Book here
THURSDAY	Forest School 15:00-16:00	Book here
FRIDAY	Rocksteady Music School Lessons take place in school	Book here
	Dodgeball 15:00-16:00 (Year 1-4)	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