



Hillcrest School and Sixth Form Centre Prospectus 2023 - 2024

'Pupils at Hillcrest School and Sixth Form Centre are hard-working, polite and welcoming. They enjoy coming to school and achieve well.'

'Leaders have high expectations for staff and pupils alike. They have planned an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).'

Ofsted September 2022

www.hillcrest.bham.sch.uk

Twitter @HillcrestSch





Contact Details

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Headteacher	Ms J A Davies
Deputy Headteacher (DSL)	Mr S Connor-Hemming
Deputy Headteacher	Mr S Abbotts
Assistant Headteacher	Mrs S Palmer
Assistant Headteacher/SENDCo	Mrs C Jacobs
Business Manager	Mrs S Johnson
Chair of Governors	Miss D Mcilmurray
Emotional Well-being Co-ordinator	Mrs M Bunce

Hillcrest

School Values and Ethos

Hillcrest School and Sixth Form Centre is a **safe and respectful** learning environment where **every child is valued as an individual** with **unique talents and ambitions**.

We:

- are an **outward looking** and **confident** community, actively promoting the **fundamental British values** of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
- are a **happy, responsible** and **fair** school respected by the community;
- improve our environment to meet the **educational demands of the twenty-first century**;
- raise expectations and **achievement for all**;
- prepare everyone for the **challenges of modern Britain** and a **changing world**; and
- develop a **passion for life-long learning**





Welcome to Hillcrest School

At Hillcrest, we provide each student with the opportunity to achieve their full potential in both academic and social terms. I hope within these pages you will discover something of how we combine the best of traditional values with the very latest in teaching methods and technologies to inspire our students to succeed in everything they do.

We have very high expectations of our students. Great emphasis is placed on: self-discipline and self-respect; hard work and achievement; and high standards of behaviour.

We have a highly qualified team of staff committed to delivering quality education to all our students. Your child will enter a safe and secure environment in which high quality learning can take place effectively. We are proud to play our part in helping students become the thoughtful, caring, confident and well educated young adults of tomorrow.

We believe our school is an ideal size, since it is large enough to provide a full range of subjects and to enable us to employ specialist teachers, but not so large that the individual becomes lost in the crowd.



Hillcrest

The School Day



	<i>Dining Room open to students</i>
08:00	<i>Building open to students for clubs</i>
08:45 - 09:10	Registration and Form Period/Assembly
09:10 - 10:10	Period 1
10:10 - 11:10	Period 2
11:10 - 11:30	BREAK
11:25	Warning Bell
11:30 - 12:30	Period 3
12:30 - 1:15 1:10	LUNCH Warning Bell
1:15 - 2:15	Period 4
2:15 - 3:15	Period 5
3:15	Dismissal of students

The canteen serves breakfast between 8:00am and 8.30am. Upon arrival students should use the main student entrance adjacent to Room 5.



ParentMail - Paying for School Items (students **CANNOT** bring cash into school)

- Top-up your child's lunch money so that they can use their swipe card to purchase food and drinks in the school dining hall.
- Pay for items online e.g. all school trips, school ties, revision books, swipe cards, stationary.
- View the meals that your child has eaten at the school dining hall.

Not yet registered?

Registering on ParentMail is simple, all you need to do is make sure that we have your most up-to-date email address and mobile phone number and just activate your account when you are sent a registration link.

Please contact the school and **request a ParentMail link to activate an account** (if you have not already received or lost the ParentMail activation letter).

Need access to the internet to use ParentMail?

We provide an internet access point in the school reception area for you to come into school to use ParentMail online if needed.

Breaks and lunchtime



- Students stay on site during the school day. No student other than a member of the sixth form (Years 12 and 13) may leave the premises during lunch.
- Students may bring their own packed lunch if they wish. However, an excellent school meals service is available in our school dining room before school, at break and at lunchtime. Hot and cold food, snacks, sandwiches and drinks are available and take account of vegetarian and cultural needs. Students who need special diets for medical needs are also catered for. Parents are asked to contact the school in writing or by telephone if they need this provision.
- Students are charged for each item they take so it is not possible to state the exact cost of a full meal; in general about £2.53 per day should be ample. There are Meal Deals available each day that include a hot meal or sandwich, a drink and a fruit pot or snack for £2.53.
- All students are issued with a swipe card that they can use to purchase snacks, food and drinks in the dining room. Parents will need to go to www.parentmail.com to add credit/money onto the card. Students are then able to purchase items in the school dining room. When parents log onto ParentMail they will also be able to view what their child has purchased each day.
- Students who are entitled to free meals are credited with £2.53 on their card each day.
- Students bringing packed lunches may eat them in the dining room or in the allocated picnic area.



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The school dining hall is open to students from 8:00am for breakfast and at break time and lunchtime.



The school dining hall offers:

- A Grab and Go counter
- World kitchen - weekly menu of hot meals
- Hot Deli counter - hot wraps, paninis, topped jacket potatoes, pizza slices and fresh pasta with homemade sauces
- Cold Deli counter - range of homemade savoury and sweet items, freshly baked baguettes, rolls, wraps, sandwiches and salads
- Range of - cold desserts, homemade cakes, biscuits and fruit pots
- Live cooking events on special occasions

The school dining hall guarantees:

- Fresh, high quality and locally sourced food
- British Red Tractor farm assured meat
- Fish from sustainable sources
- Free range eggs
- Locally sourced fruit and vegetables
- All food will be made from fresh ingredients
- Halal and Non-Halal selections

Visiting the School/Parking Near School

- In the interest of **student safety**, parents who bring their children to school by car, or who collect them at the end of the day must park on the school side of Stonehouse Lane or in the car park at the bottom of the drive and not come up the school drive. **Please only park in the marked spaces in the lower car park, any other parking will block the flow of cars and emergency services.**
- We have worked with West Midlands Travel to produce a school travel plan. Student and parents views were part of this review.
- Students must use the pedestrian crossing at the bottom of the school drive.
- If your child has a medical condition that requires you to drop her off and collect her right outside school, please apply directly to the Headteacher for permission. Parents/Carers will be issued with a written pass to confirm they have permission to drive up to school.
- There is a car park behind the school, please turn left at the top of the drive. Disabled parking bays are signposted to the right as you reach the top of the drive.



Books and Equipment

The school supplies books and teaching materials but **students must replace lost or damaged books and equipment and will be asked to pay for any damage to school property wilfully caused.**

It is normal practice for students to take articles home from lessons such as Food Technology and in these circumstances parents are asked to provide the necessary resources.



It is important that students have the basic equipment for lessons. Suggested essentials are:

- Pens (blue, black and green).
- Pencils, a pencil sharpener, a selection of coloured pencils
- A rubber
- A ruler
- Glue stick.
- A notebook for rough work
- A protractor and compass.
- Casio Scientific Calculator FX-83GTBLACK (available from most supermarkets).
- An English Dictionary.
- A French Language Dictionary.
- Scissors and a small stapler.

Students will be issued with a swipe card in order to borrow books from the **Open Learning Centre.**

A selection of equipment is available to be purchased in the Open Learning Centre.

Uniform & Jewellery

We expect our students to take pride in their appearance and we believe that the wearing of school uniform fosters a sense of identity. If students attend school inappropriately dressed, their parents will be contacted. Students are not allowed to attend lessons out of uniform.

Students must wear:

- Black blazer with Hillcrest Badge.
- Black skirt (Not stretched or tight materials. Should be at least knee length) or trousers of regulation style and length (Not leggings or cropped/slim legged/tight fitting trousers).
- Plain black tights, or black socks.
- White school shirt (not a polo shirt) closed collar autumn and spring term and open collar in summer optional in the summer term.
- Black shoes of plain style, well-fitting and FLAT HEELED, but not sling backs or boots.
- School tie (correctly worn to the neck).

Optional:

- Black V neck jumper.
- For Religious reasons students may wear the regulation headscarf in white or black plain material.

If students wish to wear extra clothing under their uniform it must not be visible.

Trainers and boots are not to be worn. Students will be expected to wear a pair of school authorised shoes if they fail to wear appropriate footwear for school.

For PE:

- Hillcrest design polo shirt.
- Hillcrest design sports sweater.
- Black shorts or skort (optional).
- Black tracksuits bottoms (Not leggings or tight fitted)
- Black Football socks.
- Sports Trainers.
- Shin pads
- Black PE Headscarf (Please see our uniform booklet)



Uniform Suppliers 2023- 2024

Somal Fashions

11 Faraday Avenue, Birmingham, B32 1JP
Tel: 0121 4232969

Gogna Schoolwear and Sports

67/69 Rookery Road Birmingham B21 9QU Tel: 0121 5235572 w:
www.gognaschoolwear.co.uk

Kids Essentials

67/69 Rookery Road, Birmingham B21 9QU Tel: 0121 523 5572
w: www.kidssentialsschoolwearbirmingham.co.uk

Jewellery must not be worn. One pair of small stud earrings is allowed. Body piercing, e.g. nose studs, eyebrow studs, tongue studs etc are not permitted. Students will be asked to remove body piercings and will be sent home if they fail to do so. Jewellery, if worn, will be taken and will be returned to students at the end of term, or parents may come in person to collect the item.

Make-up and nail varnish, including nail extensions should not be worn for school. Students who arrive at school wearing make-up or nail varnish will be given the appropriate materials to ensure it is removed.

Hair styles should be appropriate for school and without unnatural colouring e.g. blue, purple, red, pink.



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Curriculum

Year 7 students are arranged in mixed ability form groups in which they are taught for the following subjects: Dance, Drama, PE, Technology, Art, Computing, History, Geography, Music, Religious Education and Life Skills. Students are placed in ability sets for the core subjects (English, Maths and Science) usually at the end of the first half-term in Year 7. Students are then banded into groups in French during the first term in Year 7.

All Year 7 students will experience the lessons below:

Art

Computing

Dance

Drama

English

French

Geography

History

Mathematics

Music

Life Skills

Physical Education (P.E.)

Religious Education (R.E.)

Science

Technology

In Key Stage 4, compulsory subjects are English, Mathematics, Science, French, PE and RE. Advice and guidance about the most appropriate choices is given to all students in Year 9 during the options process. All GCSE courses start formally in Year 10, although students will begin to study course content in lessons in Year 9.





Information Advice and Guidance (IAG)

Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) is an ongoing part of student support as they progress through KS3, 4 and 5. Parents/carers will also receive information regarding curriculum choices and developments at parent consultation evenings and via other school communications. Our **Careers Advisor** in school is **Mrs Matto**. Information and support on careers for students and parents can be found on the school website. If parents/carers have any questions about their child's career options, they should contact **Mr Connor-Hemming (Deputy Headteacher)**.

Teaching and Learning

Effective teaching is central to our success. All students are entitled to receive a high-quality education.

We aim to ensure that students develop a habit of lifelong learning, that they acquire the skills needed to continue further into education and work, and that they fulfil their potential over the seven years they will study with us.

Through the delivery of exciting, motivating and relevant topics, students are taught that knowledge is power, and they will learn how to:

- *Question and challenge*
- *Make connections and see relationships*
- *Make predictions*
- *Explore ideas*
- *Reflect critically on ideas*

At Hillcrest, we believe that understanding how you learn effectively is also essential to success. Teachers focus on six key strategies for academic success and they will make explicit links to the work of cognitive scientists and specifically '**The Learning Scientists**'.

More information on the strategies can be found at:
www.learningscientists.org

Education for Life Skills

The school places considerable importance on personal, social, moral and health education. Learning in these areas is developed through the Life Skills and Character Education curriculum, and the day-to-day life of the school.

It is the school's legal responsibility to provide 'Relationship and Sex' and 'Health' education in the context of family relationships and to inform parents that this is taking place. Parents do have the legal right to withdraw their children from the sex education aspects of Life Skills days after formally writing to **Ms Davies (Headteacher)** and meeting to discuss the reasons for the withdrawal. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 makes RSE mandatory in all schools from 2020. Sex Education in Science is mandatory. Parents are not allowed to withdraw their child from relationship or health education.

Assemblies and Religious Studies

Assemblies and lessons are fully in accordance with the 1988 Education Act and are planned in the awareness that students of all faiths and none are present. The vast majority find no difficulty in joining in. On very rare occasions, parents have found that something said or done in school is not quite in accordance with their religious beliefs or cultural practices. If this should happen, it is likely to be quite unintentional but we would be most anxious to know about it as we are all learning all the time! Parents do have the right to withdraw their child from Assemblies if they wish after discussion with the school. Again, parents should formally write to **Ms Davies (Headteacher)**.



Extended Learning

This helps our students in a number of ways: -

- To learn how to work independently
- To develop responsibility for planning and organising their own time effectively
- To do background reading and research to extend what they have learnt in lessons or prepare for the learning in the next lesson
- To reflect on their work and think things through for themselves

An 'Extended Learning' timetable is sent to parents at the start of each school year and is also available on the school website. In their first year students should be doing about an hour to 1½ hours each night, and this increases to 2 hours from year 9.

Extended Learning will be set in the following ways:

It is an expectation your child will read for 20 minutes every evening. Please support them in doing so.

- Online Work Hegarty Maths (or other online platforms - Active Learn, Seneca etc.)
- Work set around **knowledge organisers** (self-quizzing on essential knowledge or, preparation for retrieval tests etc.)
- Any other work the class teacher sets (if an extended piece of writing is set, then the teacher will provide feedback on this).

What are knowledge organisers?

Expertise in an area relies on a person possessing a high level of knowledge. Students who know more can understand more and thereby become more successful in their studies.

'Higher-order thinking is knowledge-based: the almost universal feature of reliable higher-order thinking about any subject or problem is the possession of a broad, well-integrated base of background knowledge relevant to the subject'. EDHirsch

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We, therefore, have knowledge organisers for each topic or unit of work. For example, in a unit of study (e.g. 4-6 weeks), teachers compile the 40-50 key facts students need to have acquired in their long term memory to be able to master the topic. (Note: though knowledge organisers can be used for revision purposes, they are not in themselves, a revision pack. Subject-specific revision packs would be provided by departments)

Our Pastoral System

In **Year 7** students are split into form groups in **Nightingale College**. In **Years 8 and 9** students are organised into tutor groups in **Parks College**. In **Years 10 and 11** students are organised into tutor groups in **Malala College**. Form groups meet during registration periods at the start and end of each day, as well as the daily form period during the day.

Year 7 College Leader - Miss J McDonald

Year 8 College Leader - Miss K Ankiah

Year 9 College Leader - Miss J Smallwood

Year 10 College Leader - Miss A Adenike

Year 11 College Leader - Miss H Winter

Head of Sixth Form - Mr L Provis

SENDCo - Mrs C Jacobs

Learning and Emotional Well-Being Mentor - Mrs M Bunce

High Level Teaching Assistants - Mrs T Stansbie and Mrs K Hughes

Place2Be Practitioner - Miss A McFetridge

Peripatetic Music lessons

Music teachers come to the school each week to give lessons on a variety of instruments. Students already receiving lessons in their primary schools are given priority if we have to limit numbers. Please contact **Mr Nock** at school if you would like any further information about Music lessons.



Special Educational Needs and Inclusion

Hillcrest is an inclusive school where the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of every child matters. Our SEND policy is in line with the SEND Code of Practice 2014.

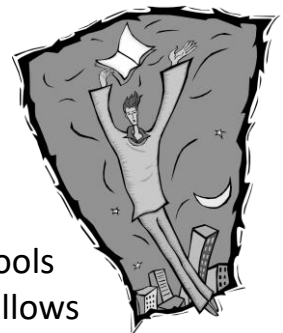
In Year 7, we identify the additional needs of students from information and results provided by primary schools and the completion of tasks focusing on literacy and numeracy skills. This allows us to put the needed support in place for our students, such as in class assistance or small group work following specific programmes. Students also have the opportunity to join lunchtime and after school reading and homework groups. Support is also provided for students who need additional help when English is not their first language.

Key staff will work together with students on the targets for their Individual Education Plan or Educational, Health and Care Plan in consultation with you. We understand that you know your child best and firmly believe that school and home should work closely together. Our **SENDCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) is Mrs Jacobs**. Please feel free to contact her at school if you would like any further information about the support your child can access.

To ensure we have the best chance of removing barriers to achievement, Hillcrest also has strong links with vital support agencies outside the school, e.g. - Educational Psychologist Service.

Sixth Form

The Sixth Form at Hillcrest is part of 'The Oaks Collegiate' of schools who work together to provide Post 16 Education. This allows students to access a broad and balanced range of subjects at Hillcrest and from across the collegiate. Schools in 'The Oaks Collegiate' Sixth Forms are: Hillcrest School, Lordswood Girls' School and St Thomas Aquinas School.



Our Head of Sixth Form is Mr Provis.

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What does this mean?

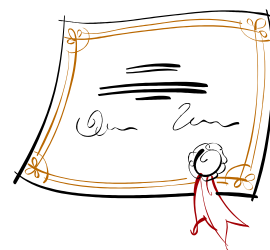
This means that a student can choose to do one or more subjects at Hillcrest School together with a subject (if not taught at Hillcrest) at another school. Every Wednesday students are involved in 'Enrichment' where they can choose from a range of activities. Students in the Sixth Form have their own personal tutor who they meet with to discuss their progress and have personal guidance in completing their higher education or apprenticeship applications.

Many visiting speakers lead sessions for Sixth Form students to give guidance on the options available after Year 12 and then Year 13. Sixth Form students have their own facilities in the school including a common room and a dedicated computer suite.



Rewards

We firmly believe in recognising and rewarding hard work, effort and behaviour.





‘Getting It Right’



It is the aim of the school to create a happy, successful school in which students are able to learn and develop to their full potential. They can therefore expect to be valued and respected as individuals, to be treated with fairness and understanding and to be encouraged and praised for effort. We welcome and encourage the involvement of parents and members of the community in school to enrich and improve education for all. Students must be prepared to follow the ‘Getting It Right’ Policy. The policy rewards ‘good’ behaviour and hard work, but also outlines the consequences issued when students fail to meet school expectations.

Getting It Right Rewards

Getting It Right Rewards underpin every aspect of learning and school life. Every lesson students automatically have a GIR point. Their challenge is to keep their point by the end of the lesson by following school expectations in terms of behaviour, organisation, and punctuality to lessons. However, they can lose their GIR point in a lesson if they fail to meet any of these expectations (see page 29). **By the end of the year students are expected to have kept a minimum of 96% GIR points in lessons.** However, they cannot earn their GIR points if they are not in school, so attendance is crucial if students are going to achieve above the 96% threshold. During the year students receive certificates based on their GIR % at the end of each half-term.

Gold certificate awarded to students with **100% GIR total**

Silver certificate awarded to students with **98%-99.9% GIR total**

Bronze certificate awarded to students with **96%-97.9% GIR total**

At the end of the year students who meet the minimum thresholds will receive a ‘**Hillcrest star**’ badge and will be able to take part in specially organised celebration events.

Parents/carers will receive a letter at the end of each term showing if their child’s GIR% is above or below the 96% minimum threshold.

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Getting It Right Bonus Points

In addition, students can also earn GIR Bonus Points for producing exceptional pieces of work in lessons. There is also a special Headteacher Commendation (worth 5 bonus points). Students are also invited to participate in other celebratory events if they meet the expected bonus point threshold and can achieve different levels of certificates.

Bronze certificate is awarded to students who earn **30 bonus points**

Silver certificate is awarded to students who earn **40 bonus points**

Gold certificate is awarded to students who earn **50 bonus points**

Platinum certificate is awarded to students who earn **60 bonus points**

Diamond certificate is awarded to students who earn **80 bonus points**

Emerald certificate is awarded to students who earn **100 bonus points**

Community Certificate

These will be awarded to students who make a contribution to the Hillcrest community. This might include being part of a team, taking part in an event or being a guide when we have visitors in school.

The Hillcrest Superstar Award

This is the highest level of award at Hillcrest. A Hillcrest Superstar will be someone at the end of year that has:

- A minimum of 96% Getting It Right points
- 50 or more Getting It Right bonus points
- 6 Community Certificates
- An exceptional one off achievement e.g. School athletic games medal winner

Hillcrest Superstars will receive a special certificate and their names will be displayed on a roll of honour. They will also be awarded with a special Headteacher tie - one which is of a different design to the school tie. Students who achieve the award for a second time receive a special glass trophy; for a third time a Headteacher medal and for a fourth time a Headteacher cup.



An Awards Morning is held annually, to which parents/carers are invited. Prizes are presented to those who are judged to have made the most effort or progress or who have given outstanding service to the school throughout the year.



Extended Learning Awards

We celebrate students' achievements in their efforts to successfully complete 'Extended Learning' throughout the year. Students can receive the following awards:

Termly:

Gold Award - Student completes every piece of extended learning in the term

Silver Award - Student only receives one H consequence in the term

Bronze Award - Student only receives two H consequences in the term

Annually:

Gold Award - Student completes every piece of extended learning in the year

Silver Award - Student only receives three H consequences in the year

Bronze Award - Student only receives five H consequences in the term

'Getting It Right' Policy (GIR). This is a behaviour policy based upon:

- ✓ Praise
- ✓ Choice - students make choices which dictate their actions. These actions can then result in either positive or negative consequences.

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'Getting it Right'

- In all classrooms everyone should feel comfortable and non-threatened
- We expect that in all classrooms there should be three times as much praise as there are Consequences
- 'Getting it Right' points - students will start the lesson with a point and will only lose it if they receive a 'C' - Consequence
- Every half-term the 'Getting it Right' points are added up
- Certificates will then be presented and letters sent home through ParentMail

Anti-bullying Policy

It is a basic right of all young people to receive their education free from fear, humiliation and abuse. Every person who is a part of Hillcrest School has a responsibility to take action to care for each other in order to create and maintain a secure and safe environment at school.

The school has an anti-bullying policy, which has been produced in consultation with students, parents, staff and governors: -

Bullying is when an unpleasant situation gets out of control. Bullying can include physical violence, mental abuse such as name-calling, threatening, ignoring or insulting another person or his/her family, religion or race, or anything which intentionally makes a person feel unhappy. Students must speak with their College Leader immediately if they experience any relationship issues with other students in school, out of school or on-line.

What Students should do:

You have a responsibility to prevent bullying.

If you are being bullied, or you see someone being bullied:

- You should talk to someone (teacher, friend or parent)
- Remember we want to put a stop to bullying
- Trust staff to take appropriate action
- You should not encourage the bully
- Students who tolerate bullies are supporting them.



What Staff and other adults employed at school should do:

- Be prepared to listen to students
- Report any instances of bullying straight away
- Examine their behaviour to ensure they are not bullying students or colleagues
- Include teaching of positive behaviour

Parents have a responsibility to:

- Contact school if you are aware or suspect that bullying is taking place
- Encourage your child to talk to someone if they are aware or suspect that bullying is taking place
- Encourage your child not to be aggressive with other people

Parents/carers are encouraged to look at the school website as it contains a great range of information about how to ensure your child is behaving safely and appropriately online.

The school has a group of trained peer mentors who will regularly meet with and support any student experiencing difficulties in their relationships with other students in and out of school.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is the use of Information Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else.

Today's children and young people have grown up in a world that is very different than that of most adults. Many young people experience the internet and mobile phones as a positive, productive and creative part of their activities and development.

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Unfortunately, such technologies can also be used negatively. As mobile phone and internet use has increased so has the possible misuse of these technologies to bully. If you are concerned about 'Cyberbullying' please contact the school. We would ask all parents/carers to:

- Be vigilant of how their child uses such technologies.
- Use the relevant safety 'tools' that are available to help monitor and manage the internet
- Keep any evidence of offending emails, text messages or online conversations.



Pupil Premium

Pupil Premium is additional funding provided by the Government to enhance the education of the most socio-economically deprived.

Pupil Premium Strategy

Our Pupil Premium Strategy ensures that funding is spent to enable entitled students to receive additional support and resources to remove any barriers to learning. This happens across all key stages where we have extra staff hours to allow smaller groups, small group, and teaching assistant support. Funding is also being used to finance Out of Hours Learning Support Classes, behaviour and pastoral support programmes, revision programmes and materials, special projects and additional resources. For example, the Accelerated Reading Programme, music tuition, Gifted and Talented programmes (The Brilliant Club), Home Learning Programmes and Special Educational Needs resources. The impact on educational achievement arising Pupil Premium expenditure are the outcomes for these students, as demonstrated in achievement, attendance, and reward data.



Taking Responsibility

The school is committed to providing as many opportunities as possible for students to take on real responsibilities.

- Each form elects a **College Prefect**. This post is for the whole academic year. College Council meetings are held every week. The students put items for discussion forward and they also organise many whole school charity events.
- We have an active **Student Parliament** that is made up of elected representatives from the College Prefect teams.
- Each form selects an **IAG representative**. This post is for the full academic year and the students selected will organise careers events.
- In Years 8, 9, 10 and 12 students have the opportunity to complete a training programme to become **Peer Mentors**. They work with students who may experience issues with homework and behaviour, as well as any emotional issues they may face.
- In Year 7 students can train to be **Transition Mentors** to work with Primary to Secondary transition.
- In Year 8 every student has the opportunity to take part in reception duty in the Main Reception area.
- In Year 11, students are encouraged to become prefects and to take on a variety of roles in the day to day running of school life.

Assessment and Reporting

We monitor each student's academic progress through regular assessment and testing. School examinations are held each year in the summer term and for older students in December as well. Students are entered for a range of external examinations. Dates of examinations are sent to parents in advance.

Every student receives a detailed written report once a year. A reply slip will be provided for you to acknowledge receipt and to comment if you wish to do so. Parents will also receive two snapshot reports each year. These give an indication of the grade your child is working at and an estimated grade they are predicted to achieve at the end of the year. This report will also show if your child is handing in homework, putting in the required effort and bringing all the correct equipment to lessons on a regular basis.

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Friends of Hillcrest

All parents/carers of students attending Hillcrest are automatically Members of the Friends of Hillcrest (PTA), as are all members the school staff.

We aim to:

- Encourage activities of all kinds to promote the education and welfare of all students attending the school.
- Assist the school staff in making new families welcome and to feel that they belong to a large community comprising of other parents as well as students and teachers.
- Support the school in times of difficulty whichever way will prove to be beneficial.
- Help the school to maintain and improve amenities, with financial support, which is not provided by central funding.
- To support the school in raising funds for equipment and activities which cannot be provided out of normal school budgets.

The really important consideration is the full and happy education of your child. The Friends of Hillcrest continually strives to this end.

If you would like to know more, please contact Mrs Fowler (Chair of Friends) via the school office.



Extra-curricular and Out of Hours Learning Activities

Activities during the lunchtime or after school are an important part of life at Hillcrest. They encourage students to pursue their interests and help them make friends in other forms or years.

The Performing Arts Department organises a range of choirs, instrumental groups, Dance and Drama activities and parents are invited to our concerts which are held each term. There are various PE teams and activities held during the lunch hour and after school. There is also an Art Club, Maths Clinic, Science Club, Technology Club and Homework Club to name but a few.



Visits have also been to Spain, America, Australia, Alton Towers, Drayton Manor, London and Stratford. Language visits have also taken place to France. There are residential field courses in Geography for Sixth Form students and many day trips for all students in curriculum areas, including Outward Bound Activities. Visits to theatres, art galleries and museums are also an integral part of the school curriculum.

A sample grid showing Out of Hours Learning Opportunities is included on Page 32 of this handbook.

Medical problems and Emergencies

- If your child has any medical problem that is likely to affect her work or her life in school, please inform her **College Leader or Mrs Bunce**.
- The school staff cannot give students any form of medicine or tablets unless special arrangements are made with parents/carers in connection with medication prescribed by a doctor.
- All medicines/tablets which have to be brought into school should be clearly labelled with your child's name and form as well as clear instructions regarding the dosage to be taken. This must be discussed with the College Leader or Mrs Bunce who will then ensure the relevant staff are informed.
- In terms of asthma, allergies and diabetes it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure their child has the correct equipment with them in school to deal with any medical emergencies, i.e. – inhaler, epi-pen, blood glucose monitor. Parents/carers must ensure that their child brings a spare inhaler and epi-pen that can be stored in student reception and used in emergency situations.
- If you have any queries relating to your child's health you may contact the relevant College Leader or the **School Nurse directly at Quinton Medical Practice. Telephone number: 0121 466 3510.**
- If your child is taken ill, or has an accident, we may need to contact you urgently. Every year you are asked to provide us with an update of whom we could contact in an emergency. **If these details change, please ensure that we are informed.**
- Messages can be conveyed to students only in extreme emergencies. Similarly, students may only use the school telephone in an emergency.
- Child Protection is an integral part of the caring ethos of the school. We are committed to protecting and ensuring the safety of all students and the school has a legal duty to follow the Birmingham LA Child Protection procedures.
- If staff become aware of, or have a need to become involved in, situations where a child may be at risk of hurting themselves or others or, if the behaviour of the child seriously disrupts good order in the school or causes damage to property, staff may need to take steps to intervene physically. In such circumstances, staff will follow the school's policy for dealing with such situations. Any parents wishing to view this policy may do so on request.
- The school has separate Asthma and EpiPen policies, please refer to these which are available on the school website.



Safeguarding

Hillcrest School is committed to the highest standard in protecting and safeguarding the children entrusted to our care. Information on our safeguarding procedures, along with guidance for parents on e-safety and prevention against extremist radicalisation, can be found in the 'Keeping Children Safe' section on the school website.



Our school will support all children by:

- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school
- Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness
- Effectively tackling bullying and harassment

We recognise that some children may be the victims of neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse. Staff working with children are well placed to identify such abuse.

At Hillcrest in order to protect our children, we aim to:

- Create an atmosphere where all our children can feel secure, valued and listened to
- Recognise signs and symptoms of abuse
- Respond quickly, appropriately and effectively to cases of suspected abuse

School Holidays 2023-2024

	Opening Date	Closing Date
Autumn Term 2023	Wednesday, 6 th September	Friday, 27 th October
	Monday, 6 th November	Friday, 22 nd December
Spring Term 2024	Monday, 8 th January	Friday, 9 th February
	Monday, 19 th February	Friday, 22 nd March
Summer Term 2024	Monday 8 th April	Friday, 24 th May
	Monday, 3 rd June	Tuesday, 19 th July

Teacher's Training Days

Monday 4th & Tuesday 5th September
Friday 24th November
Monday 8th January
Monday 22nd July

An example of our Out of Hours Activities Grid

Hillcrest School

Quality Learning, Quality Care

