



Hilltop School Newsletter

Issue 5 2025-26

I hope that all of our families had a happy half term. We are now half way through the academic year. Hopefully the weather will begin to brighten soon so that we can start to pack away scarves and gloves. We always look forward to the top playground drying out so that it can be used for PE lessons and playtimes without the worry of mud.

We continue with our Year of Reading. A big thank you to the book donations we have received from families via our two Amazon Wish lists:

https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/3SC1JQFEM802Q?ref=wl_share

https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/365KIPHHRO18B?ref=wl_share

We would also be happy to accept any second hand Yoto cards that families may no longer listen to.

Please do remember to include your child's details if you would like the donation book plate to include their name.

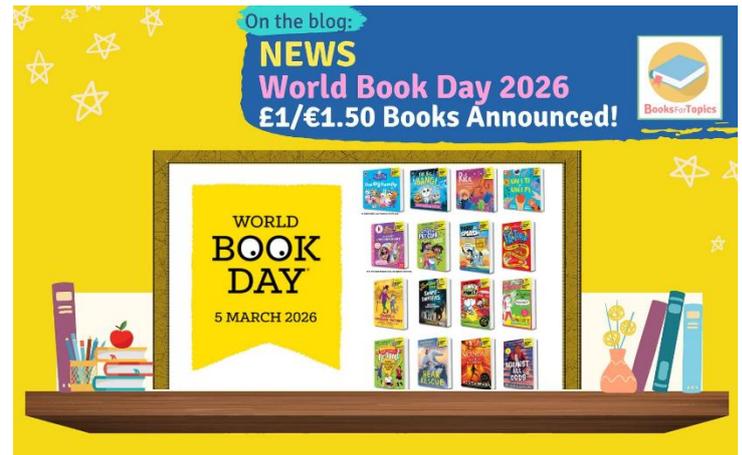
We will be joining with National **Book Day** celebrations next week. Children are invited to wear pyjamas to school on Friday 6th March as we celebrate Books at Bedtime. We will once again have our annual Book Swap and ask that every pupil brings in one book that they would like to swap for a different title. The success of this event really relies on every child bringing in a good condition book at a level which they are currently reading. Please do not send in books which are not in the sort of condition that your child would choose to pick up and read. Please also do not send in toddler/board books. Books can be brought to school from Monday 2nd March. They should be given to class teachers.

We would appreciate the help of a few parents during the morning who could help with laying out books and helping the children make their choices. If you are available and would like to help, please speak to me on the driveway at drop off time or send an email to the school office.

We are still very much looking for volunteer parents and grandparents who are able to make a fairly regular time commitment to read with children across the year groups or help with the library during one of the KS2 lunchbreaks.

All parents are invited to join us from 2:15pm for a whole school Reading Golden Time. We'd love you to come along and enjoy a story with your child(ren). You are welcome to bring along a favourite book to share. Please note that parents must arrive before 2:30pm. Where parents have more than one child in the school, they will be able to move between classrooms during the afternoon. We are able to provide childcare for younger siblings who are not invited to join Golden Time. It is essential that parents let us know by

the end of Wednesday 3rd March if they require childcare so that we can plan for this.



We have made the decision to send home the National Book Day tokens early this year since the books are already out in stores. Please check your child's bookbag on Thursday 26th February. These £1 tokens can be used towards purchasing any children's printed or audio book. There is a wide selection of specially published £1 Book Day books available in many supermarkets and book stores including the Works and Waterstones. The full list of these books can be seen here: [Books Archive - World Book Day](#)

The children have some **exciting topic linked events** to look forward to this term. Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 pupils will be enjoying a visit from the pop-up planetarium this week. They will also enjoy space themed activities across the day. Key stage 2 will be visiting Butser Historic Farm towards the end of the term. Please do check if you have paid your child's contribution for these special visits. We rely on the costs being shared across all children.

The KS2 trip is considerably more expensive due to the coach costs. Family contributions do not fully cover the cost so we will be having two **cake sales** to help to make up the shortfall. All **Year 3 children are asked to bring in a plate of baked goodies to sell on Friday 20th March** for a cake sale at pick-up time. We will share more details closer to the time. We will ask Year 4 pupils for a similar donation in the summer term.

The children in Years 1-4 thoroughly enjoyed exploring how artists use colour during our recent Art Week. We look forward to sharing their final pieces with you at our **Art Exhibition on Friday 13th March**. This coincides with a Coffee Shop afternoon so come along and enjoy a hot drink and baked treat after admiring the artwork from 2:15 onwards.



Our two recent Pantry food tasting events were very well supported. Feedback from parents was positive with the freshly baked pizza, veggie noodles and lasagne being firm favourites. Our **new Summer menu** begins from this term. The finger food options on two days of each week have been chosen because we believe they will appeal to a wide range of the children. They are approved by the Pantry nutrition team and freshly prepared on site using quality ingredients. The children are served crudites and encouraged to eat them in the same way as they are with cooked vegetables. The dates for menu changes are set by The Pantry and we do not have the option of waiting for the summer term to begin our picnic menu. Please be assured that the children will not actually be eating outside until the weather is a lot warmer and dryer.

I recently visited the lunch hall and was shocked at how much food is dropped on the floor and how many of the children, even those in Year 3 and 4, are still eating with just a spoon or a fork. Without using a knife to cut their food, the children rely on scooping large portions into their mouths as they lean low over their plate. Although staff encourage children to cut their food, it is clear that many of the children do not yet know how to hold or use a knife. We ask that **families please teach children how to use cutlery at home** and encourage their children to practise this life skill from an early age. Staff will continue to help younger pupils to cut up their food as required but we will be insisting that all children from Reception upwards hold a knife and fork in their hands while eating hot meals.

As promised here are our latest attendance figures. A reminder that the DfE attendance expectation is 95%.

	Attendance as of January	Attendance as of February
Nursery	87.9%	91.3%
Reception	89.4%	90.3%
Year 1	94.5%	94.2%
Year 2	92.3%	93.4%
Year 3	93.8%	93.9%
Year 4	93.5%	94.2%
Whole school	93.7%	93.9%

Thank you for your support in this whole school concern.

Dates for the diary

- Thurs 26th Feb – KS2 Learn to Pedal programme
- Fri 27th Feb – FS & KS1 Planetarium visit
- Fri 6th Mar – World Book Day
- Fri 6th March – Whole School Reading Golden Time
- Fri 13th March – Art Exhibition
- Fri 13th March – Coffee Shop
- Fri 20th March – Cake sale (Yr 3 donate cakes)
- Wed 25th March – KS2 trip to Butser Farm
- Fri 27th March – Easter Bonnets
- Fri 27th March – End of term 1pm pick-up

Please check the website calendar for Tiny Time and Parent Craft Dates.

Lynn Bima
February 2026