



NEWSLETTER

Dear Parents/Carers

It is has been a pleasure to welcome pupils back to school this week. I hope everyone had a lovely Christmas break and was able to enjoy some special time with family and friends.

We have a busy term planned and as always it is so important our pupils are in school every day to benefit from all the opportunities they have at Hillside.

For too many pupils the start of the new year hasn't seen them return to school with the attendance needed and this is disappointing. As always, a massive well done to all the pupils, supported by their families who braved the weather at the start of the week and made sure they returned to school and have attended all week. We know good school attendance is the one factor, above everything else that ensures our pupils fulfil their academic potential. As we move into the second week of term I ask for everyone's support in ensuring pupils are in school every day. Our Progress Leaders, Attendance Team and Mrs Banks in Pupil Support are all here to offer any help and support needed.

I am delighted to introduce Mr Mitchell who has joined us a Senior AVP for the Spring Term. Mr Mitchell is leading on Behaviour and Attendance and will be the Senior Link to Year 7. I know he is delighted to have joined Hillside and that all our pupils have made him feel very welcome this week.

Amanda Ryan, Executive Principal



Congratulations



Winner of Year 11, Period 6 Attendance raffle is Emily M – 11LB

Mr Mitchell, Senior AVP

Attendance

If your child is unable to attend school you will need to ring the school office on 0151 525 2630 between 7.30am-8.30am. The call will be received by one of our admin team who will discuss the reason for your child's absence.

* Dependent on the reason and your child's current attendance there will be some challenge as to why they are not able to come to school. Each day at 9.30am the Pastoral Team meet and establish who is absent and the reason why. Dependent again on your child's attendance and the reason for their absence the most likely outcome will be a member of the Pastoral Team visiting your home to discuss how we can get your child back into school with as limited time absent as possible. Please can you ensure that if your child is absent for more than one day that you still call the school office each day they are absent.

Christmas Carol Concert – Liverpool Cathedral

On The 20th December 2025, Mrs Ryan was invited to attend The Christmas Carol Concert at the Liverpool Cathedral. Making this occasion even more special was the opportunity to listen to Julie Anne F, Year 7 who has secured a very prestigious chorister position in the choir.

Julie Anne attends up to 3 times per week and at weekends to practice. What a delightful experience to listen to the Choristers in such a magnificent Cathedral. The performance was so uplifting and spiritual. After the concert Mrs Ryan was invited to join Julie Ann and her family for a mince pie and a cup of tea.

Also, there was Mr Wijesinghe and Malinsa and Lithuli who were there supporting their younger brother who was also sings in the Choir. A lovely start to the Christmas holidays. Mrs Ryan is very proud of Julie Ann and her accomplishment.

Mrs McGing



New Year Resolutions

It has been my pleasure to deliver assemblies this week and welcome all our pupils back to school. In our assemblies I have spoken about New Years Resolutions.

New Years Resolutions...love them or hate them....every where your turn every one is talking / posting about them!

I find the whole concept fascinating and that's why I always set myself New Years Resolutions! But as I explained to the pupils, if you went through my lists of New Year's Resolutions you would find one thing surprising...they are nearly always the same! As I explained to pupils this is exactly the problem, isn't it!

When you go to bed on 31st December and wake up again on 1st January.....very little has changed! Ok the year....so this year we left 2025 and woke up in 2026!

If you are lucky enough to have the energy you may have stayed up to see the New Year in....you might have celebrated with family and friends....or watched, as I did the fireworks from London....with my husband and 3 kids, the youngest of whom is 9 and stayed up to midnight for the first time ever...the excitement soon waives and tiredness hit as he questioned how long the fireworks last!

Anyway back to New Year's Resolutions...whether you love them or hate them it's worth thinking about! What is wrong with using such a clear marker as the start of a New Year to assess how life is going and what you want to do better! Or as an interesting thread I was reading pointed out....is this a whole lot of hassle you don't need....in fact by setting yourself resolutions are you just setting yourself up to fail and who needs that feeling on 1st January!

To some degree the problem sits with what I said earlier, you are the same person when you wake up a few hours later, regardless of the new year! And I suppose that's why so many of us fail (and often fail so quickly at our resolutions!) Some of my favourite threads this year have been about setting resolutions to not doom scroll or be on your phone...the irony of reading these on my phone isn't lost on me! Whether we want to call them resolutions or intentions or as a friend I know says....a theme for the year....is there any harm in using this time to reflect on what we want to do better!

I would also argue that a resolution / setting yourself a challenge doesn't need to be on 1st January. As you know I set myself the challenge last year of running a half marathon and I hadn't even thought about that on 1st January....something clicked mid-June and I decided I wanted to challenge myself to start running. As I stressed to the pupils we don't need to wait until 1st January to set ourselves challenges and think about the things we would like to do better! When you read anything about resolutions, lots centre around our time and how we use it. I saw one post which stated....

'Very soon 365 days will be added to your account. Live them the way you truly want!'

This reminded me of a brilliant piece of work Deborah James, Bowel Babe quotes in her book. She challenges us to think about what we would do if we were gifted \$86,400 every day, those dollars go into our bank account and you can spend them how you want. The only thing is at the end of the day your account is wiped, they are gone, you lose them! I know I would certainly be spending everyone! She then goes onto explain that this is exactly what happens with time, every day we are given 86,400 seconds but often we don't have the same focus to spend (or use them) these wisely!

My challenge to our pupils is to think wisely about how we use our time. Bowel Babe isn't here to speak for herself, but from reading her book and seeing her interviews, I know she would say time is the biggest gift we are all given and yet it's the one thing we often waste! That's why so many resolutions focus on our time and what we are going to do with it!

Reflections following assembly:

Did you set yourself any New Year's Resolutions?

Have you kept them up so far?

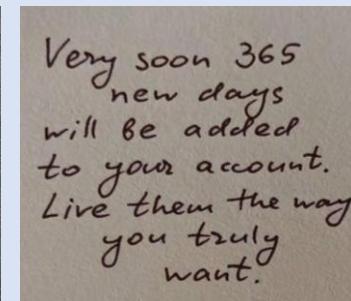
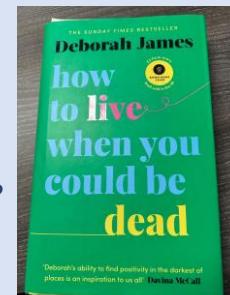
Do you think it's a good thing to set yourself New Year's Resolutions?

How do you use your 86,400 seconds everyday?

Do you think you always use them wisely?

Has listening to the story about the \$86,400 made you think

more about how you use your time?



KEY DATES IN 2026

January 2026		February 2026	
5th January	Start of Term — Back to School	5th February	Year 9 Progress Evening - 4:15pm - 6:45pm
13th January	HPV Year 8 and Catch Up Vaccines for Year 10 &11	13th February	End of Term — Last Day of School
15th January	Year 10 Progress Evening - 4:15pm — 6:45pm	23rd February	INSET Day (School Closed to Pupils)
19th January	Year 11 Predictor Results Day	24th February	Start of Term — Back to School
22nd January	Year 11 English and Maths Progress Evening		
March 2026		April 2026	
5th March	World Book Day	13th April	Start of Term — Back to School
10th March	MENACWY Vaccines— Year 9 pupils.	23rd April	Year 8 Progress Evening 4.15pm-6.45pm
9th-13th March	Year 9 Options Interviews		Year 11 Spanish Speaking Exams
19th March	Year 11 English & Maths Exams	20th — 22nd April	
16th March — 27th March	Year 9 Progress Evening & Options Event 4.15pm- 6.45pm		
27th March	Year 10 Work Experience End of Term—Last Day of School		
May 2026		June 2026	
4th May	Bank Holiday — School Closed	1st June	Start of Term — Back to School
5th May	The start of Year 11 GCSE Exams	23rd June	Year 8 HPV Vaccine— Immunisations
21st May 22nd May	Year 7 Progress Evening End of Term — Last Day of School	24th June 25th June 26th June	End of Year 11 GCSE Exams Year 11 PROM & Year 6 Transition Day INSET Day (School closed to pupils)
July 2026		August 2026	
2nd July	Year 7 Welcoming Evening 6pm	20th August	GCSE Results Day
3rd July	Festival of Sport Day		
9th July	Summer Community Evening		
15th-16th July	Summer Productions 7pm		
17th July	End of term — Last day of term		