Wednesday 4th November 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you have all had a good half term break.
Our Learning focus this half term is all about Autumn, Keeping Healthy and of course Christmas.

At pre-school, we will be supporting the children to make healthy choices at snack time and to taste new fruits and vegetables, and they will also be growing cress.
We will be also be focusing on the importance of keeping teeth clean, good hygiene and enjoying lots of exercise activities.
The staff will support children to be increasingly independent in their self-care, for example putting on their own coats and doing up the zip (Physical Development, EYFS 2026). We have been teaching children the "Hillside Flip" as a way of putting their coats on – ask your child to show you this new skill.

To extend your child's learning at home, please support them to keep healthy by being active – with walks or playing at the local park. You can also support your child's teeth cleaning and remind them of the importance of hand washing and hygiene.





Term Dates 2026/27

Autumn Term

Children in Need Pyjama Party - Friday 13th November

Last Day of Term - Friday 18th December

Spring Term

INSET DAY (Closed) - Monday 4th January

First Day of Term - Tuesday 5th January

Half Term - Monday 15th - Friday 19th February

Children Return - Monday 22nd February

Last Day of Term - Wednesday 24th March

Summer Term

First Day of Term - Monday 12th April

MAY DAY HOLIDAY (CLOSED) - Monday 3rd May

Half Term - Monday 31st May - Friday 4th June

Children Return - Monday 7th June

Last Day of Term - Thursday 15th July

(First School finishes Friday 16th July)

Wellington Boots -
Although we realise that wearing Wellingtons in the wet weather is a good idea when walking to pre-school, we do not think that they are suitable footwear for children to be wearing indoors all day. If your child does come to pre-school in Wellies, please also send in their shoes so that they can be more comfortable indoors.

Pupil Premium and 30 hours funding -
If your family is in receipt of benefits (e.g. income support, income related employment or job-seekers) you may be entitled to Pupil Premium for your child. Pupil Premium is paid to the setting to help the education of your child – if you think you may be eligible then please speak to Mrs Pitcher.
If you think that you may be eligible for 30 hours funding for the first time in January 2027, the Government website **www.beststartinlife.gov.uk** has more information. (Click on the highlighted link and you will be re-direct to the page.) You must apply for this in the term before the funding is due, so if you think your child will be entitled from January now is the time to apply – before 31st December 2026.

Children starting school in 2027 -
The closing date for applications for First school places is 15th January 2027. You can apply for your child's place online by clicking **here** or by telephone on: **01305 221060**. The local schools are advertising their open days for parents to attend.

Easy Fundraising -
Easy fundraising is an easy way to help pre-school raise funds whilst you shop. If you log into easyfundraising.org.uk/Hillside Pre-school Verwood before you shop online at popular sites (including Amazon, M&S and Argos) then the pre-school receives a small donation. This is especially useful with the Christmas shopping time approaching!
Click **here** to be re-directed to our pre-school Easy Funding page.

Button batteries –
If you use these batteries at home, please keep them safe away from children. There have been several cases in the news where children have swallowed them causing life threatening injuries.

Children in Need 2026 -
Children in Need day is Friday 13th November. This year we thought that we would have a pyjama Party at pre-school. The children can come to school in their pyjamas and bring a named teddy/soft toy. We will have games and music and decorate a biscuit. To support this worthwhile cause, we are suggesting that parents please donate £1 (or more if desired), there will be a collection tin by the gate and front door. We will be talking with the children about the importance of helping others in the community and wider world (EYFS 2026).

Christmas 2026 -
We will be closing for the Christmas holiday on Friday 18th December. We will be having class parties during the last week and Father Christmas will drop off a small gift for every child. To help fund the party food and gifts we will be holding a Christmas raffle – more details to follow.

Health and Safety advice -
The school site - We would kindly remind parents please walk along the pathways and not through the car park, as this in in constant use throughout the day.

Potty training -
The website www.eric.org.uk gives lots of advice in their 'parents section' on how to help children become potty trained; click **here** for further information.

'WOWs'-
Don't forget to send us your child's 'WOW' picture so they can share their achievements from home with teachers and friends. You can upload a photo using the QR code at the bottom of this page or the one on our **website** — QR codes are also displayed around pre-school for easy access. Not sure what to share? It can be anything your child feels proud of — learning to ride a bike, helping at home, trying a new food, sport or hobby, creating a special picture or model or visiting somewhere exciting!
Also, we will be regularly posting information, reminders and photographs on our Facebook page, in addition to our newsletters. Click on the facebook icon below to access our page.

Kind regards,
Melanie Pitcher
Pre-School Manager

Scan this QR Code to send us your child's WOW photo



WOW MOMENTS FROM HOME



WE LOVE CELEBRATING CHILDREN'S ACHIEVEMENTS FROM HOME.
KEEP SENDING THEM IN BY SCANNING THE QR CODE