

Headteacher: Mr Ryan Lewis

Ridgeview Road, Prenton. CH43 9HG

Telephone: 0151 6779960



Co-op Academy  
Hillside

## Summer Newsletter

Wednesday 29th May, 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

We hope you enjoyed the half-term break, it was lovely to welcome back all our families today.

### Headteacher

When I joined in September, it was only ever going to be for the year, it's a long trip from Yorkshire! I will write again before the summer, and I'm sure I'll see you all to say goodbye before I go, but I just wanted to let you know the plan for September.

Miss Begman is the Executive Headteacher for Co-op Academy Hillside and Co-op Academy Woodslee, and will increase the time she spends at Hillside. Mrs Culshaw, the Deputy Headteacher, has now returned following her maternity leave, and will support Miss Bergman in leading the school.

This arrangement will continue to strengthen the relationship between the two schools, allowing both schools to benefit from their talented teams of colleagues.

For those of you who didn't manage to meet Miss Bergman last week, she will be around the academy every week, and she'll be joining us for end of year events.

### Progress - Redevelopment

We're continuing to make good progress with the redevelopment of our building, and we're confident that our pupils will have a school to be proud of, as we complete more and more of the work:



- The roof is almost complete, over all of the classrooms and learning spaces, offices, and the kitchen. This has been replaced with a top of the range 'warm roof' - this will keep the school weatherproof, warm, and more environmentally friendly.. The Hall is almost complete, leaving just the Creating communities building and Key Stage 2 roof to be completed in the next six weeks
- The Trust have committed almost a quarter of a million pounds to safety improvements across the school, including new internal doors, a full new door access system, new flooring for the school hall, and new blinds to keep classrooms cool and comfortable through the summer months. This work is starting now, with new hall flooring being installed during the May half-term, and the door access system due to be installed in the coming weeks (this will include a new buzzer and lock for the front gate; we know this will be less convenient than the current arrangement, but it will secure the site more fully)
- In recent weeks, it's been confirmed that we will receive a further contribution from central Trust funds to improve the IT infrastructure in school. We have just completed an upgrade to the internet connection, giving us a 300mb connection, we will now also receive new network equipment, WiFi, interactive classroom screens, and computers for teaching. This will really improve the schools provision for teaching

I hope you're pleased with the progress we're making together, and the improvements in your child's learning and achievement; if you're not, please come and tell me, I'm always ready to listen.

## Safeguarding and Culture Audit

Last half-term, we had our Safeguarding and Culture Audit, this is an audit undertaken by the Trust to check that the Academy is fulfilling its responsibilities, including:

- Safeguarding procedures and records
- Checks on Adults entering and working in school
- The safety of the environment, including ongoing refurbishment work
- Policy compliance, including what is published on the website
- Staff training and development, such as First Aid, medicine, and fire safety
- Reviewing the curriculum to ensure that Sex and Relationships, PSHE, Online Safety, and wider extra-curricular learning is appropriate, and benefits pupils

The process was led by the Trust's Regional Director for the Stoke, Staffordshire and Merseyside regions, and supported by the Regional Safeguarding Lead, the Clerk to Governors and the Trust's Attendance and Behaviour Director

The Academy was found to have strong procedures in place, and we will continue to work to ensure that our practices keep the school and its community safe.

## Staffing Updates

There are a few changes that I just want to share with you.

- Mrs Culshaw, the Deputy Headteacher, returned from her maternity leave after Easter. This means Mrs Hamer will return to her role as Early Years leader after the May half-term holiday. I am sure you will join me in welcoming Mrs Culshaw back, and thanking Mrs Hamer for her support in acting as Deputy Headteacher.
- Mrs Brancombe returns from her maternity leave after the May half-term, and will teach in Year 3.

Miss Keelan has covered teaching in Year 3 this half-term, but with the return of Mrs Culshaw, and Mrs Brancombe, they will begin to increase their teaching of the class. To keep things as stable as possible for the children, Miss Keelan will continue to teach part of the time in Year 3 for the rest of the year, and we'll make the changes gradually.

## ParentPay

We currently accept cash in the school office, and we really need to stop doing this - handling cash adds to work hours, means we need two people involved in counting, handling and accounting for it, and we have to pay for security collections so it's not stored on the site. All of this takes money away from educating children.

We've decided to be completely cashless from September, but we'd like to test this with all upcoming payments; that is rather than cashless, we'll be less-cash for the next six weeks, encouraging you not to bring cash, but prepared to accept it in emergencies. To be clear, from September, we will have no facility to handle, store, count, bank or transport cash. We simply will be unable to accept any cash for any reason.

You don't need to panic, you'll be able to make deposits in cash on your parentpay account at any local shop displaying the paypoint logo; we'll have letters with barcodes available in the school office for every payment.

There is one small exception, we will accept cash for charitable events, and other fundraising activities, as we'll be able to bank this in full on the day, and process the payment to the charity.

## Reports

Teachers are currently writing reports for pupils, and we are aiming to have them with you on or around 12 July. There won't be another parent's evening/afternoon, but should you need to speak to your child's teacher regarding their report, we are happy to arrange this. We'll include a reply slip for you to send back in.

## Arbor

Arbor is our Management Information System, we store all of our records here. We want you to be able to access as much of this information as possible, so we've sent you the details for you to access the parent portal. In the first instance, you'll be able to see your child's details, as we hold them; you'll also be able to see their attendance. As we move forward through the term, we plan to make behaviour and rewards accessible, and we may add further services. It's important for you to get signed up

We currently also pay to send text messages to you; if you have the app, we'll be able to do this for free.

If you're not sure of anything, speak to Alison.

We'll write with more information separately.

## Website

Our school website contains a range of up to date information about our school.

Please visit [www.hillside.coopacademies.co.uk](http://www.hillside.coopacademies.co.uk).

Our website also contains a live feed from our school Facebook page with pictures and updates of events and activities from around school.

## RSE Policy

The Academy hasn't consulted on the Relationships and Sex Education Policy since joining Co-op Academies Trust. We haven't changed anything, it is in line with the recently updated Government guidance and many of you have been consulted on it before. Details about the consultation, how you can respond, and when the meetings will take place are on page 1 of the document. You can find it [here](#)

You can also speak to us any time.

## A few reminders

Drop off and collection:

Year group	Drop off	Collection
Nursery (F1)	Nursery door – gate next to main office	Nursery door – gate next to main office
Reception (F2)	Green gate – main playground	Reception door – through green gate
Year 1	Main playground	Year 1 door – through green gate
Year 2	Main playground	Year 2 door – through green gate
Year 3	Main playground	Main playground
Year 4	Main playground	Main playground
Year 5	Main playground	Main playground
Year 6	Main playground	Main playground

## Uniform

Details of the school uniform are on the school website, and can be found [here](#). As has been the policy of Co-op Academies Trust, the previous uniform will remain current and acceptable, and will never be withdrawn, this is better for the environment and better for your pocket!

Yours Sincerely,

Mr Ryan Lewis  
Headteacher (Interim)