



HELSBY HILLSIDE – FAQ's for parents/Carers

School Uniform and Equipment

Q. What should my child wear for school and PE?

A. Our school uniform policy can be found [here](#)

Item	Optional or required	Branding	How to acquire
Royal Blue Hillside sweatshirt	Required	School logo (optional) left hand side	Non-logo from supermarket / logo items from supplier detailed above.
White Shirt or Polo Shirt	Required	School logo (optional) left hand side	Non-logo from supermarket / logo items from supplier detailed above.
Grey Trousers / shorts (summer)	Required	None	Items available at most high street shops / supermarkets
Plain Grey Socks	Required	None	Items available at most high street shops / supermarkets
Royal Blue Hillside sweatshirt/Cardigan	Required	School logo (optional) left hand side	Non-logo from supermarket / logo items from supplier detailed above.
Grey Skirt /Pinafore / Trousers	Required	None	Items available at most high street shops / supermarkets
Blue/White dress	Optional	None	Items available at most high street shops / supermarkets
Plain white Socks	Required	None	Items available at most high street shops / supermarkets
Black Shoes (not open toed sandals)	Required	None	Items available at most high street shops / supermarkets
Royal blue shorts	Required	None	Non-logo from supermarket / logo items from supplier detailed above
Royal Blue tracksuit	Optional for winter	None	Non-logo from supermarket / logo items from supplier detailed above
White t-shirt (round neck)	Required	School logo (optional) left hand side	Non-logo from supermarket / logo items from supplier detailed above
Velcro fastening trainers (any colour)	Required	None	Items available at most high street shops / supermarkets
Book bag	Required KS1	School logo centre	Logo items available from supplier detailed above
Royal Blue Reversible Coat / fleece	Optional	School logo (optional) left hand side	Non-logo from supermarket / logo items from supplier detailed above
Royal Blue knitted hat (winter)	Optional	School logo (optional) centre	Non-logo from supermarket / logo items from supplier detailed above

All uniform can be ordered via:

http://www.myschoolstyle.com/school/helsby_hillside

<https://www.uniformityschools.com/collections/helsby-hillside-primary>

All items of clothing should be labelled with your child's name.

If you are unable to access the internet, or unable to pay via one of the accepted methods, please contact the school office.

Q. Where else can I buy reasonably priced uniform?

A. Supermarkets are a good place to look for uniform such as trousers and skirts, plain polo shirts etc. Argos, Marks and Spencer and other department stores also stock similar items.

Q. Is it OK for my child to wear a white plain collared t-shirt without the school logo?

A. Yes

Q. Can my child wear formal shorts during the summer?

A. Yes.

Q. Can my child wear sandals to school during the summer?

A. No, open toed sandals are not allowed for safety reasons.

Q. What bags should I buy for my child?

A. Your child will need a school book bag. These are available via our suppliers above.

Q. What size of uniform should I buy for my child?

A. Details of the available sizes are available for each item of clothing can be found on the supplier website. If in any doubt, and you know another Hillside parent, it may be worth seeing if your child can try any item of their uniform, so that you can more easily find the right size.

Any items can be refunded or exchanged, please liaise directly with the suppliers.

Q. Does my child need a tracksuit for PE?

A. No, it's optional.

Q. Can I buy second-hand uniform?

A. Yes, school has a selection of second hand items. These are free or a small donation can be made to 'friends of hillside'. FOH will also hold a sale from time to time.

Q: Does school hold lost property?

A: School will retain lost property which can be checked by contacting the school office. Items will be put outside during good weather to rummage through. Uncollected items will be retained as second hand clothing or disposed of. Please label your clothing so it does not become lost property.

Q. Does my child need to take a book bag to school everyday?

A. Yes. This is used to carry your child's reading book and reading record, and sometimes letters, information flyers or leaflets will be put into the book bag for you to read.

Q. Does my child need to take a PE bag to school everyday?

A. Parental preference – for KS2 and year 2 PE kit can be brought to school at the beginning of term and your child will have a coat peg on which they can store the bag. The kit will be returned to you for washing, usually every half term, but more frequently if needed. All bags and each item of PE kit should have some kind of name label or be marked with your child's name. Alternatively, if you prefer please send in PE kit on designated day. Reception and year 1 will come dressed in their PE kit on PE days.

Q. Do I need to put spare uniform in my child's book bag, in case they get wet?

A. No. Parents will be contacted in the rare event that a change of clothes is required. Parents are informed in advance if children are involved in a messy/art activity and advised to bring in an art shirt/old clothing. Please send in coats during adverse weather.

Lunch at School

Q. How will I know what my child has had to eat each day?

A. School lunch menus are available on the school website [here](#). They follow a 3-week cycle. Please refer to the school calendar [here](#) to confirm which week the menu is on. Two choices are provided, including a vegetarian option. Children are asked to confirm their choice with their class teacher, at registration each morning. Sometimes there will be special lunches on a "theme" such as Valentines Day or Bonfire Night. Meals cost £3.27 a day from and need to be paid in advance. Alternatively, you may prefer to send your child to school with a packed lunch.

Q. Is my child entitled to free school meals?

A. All children in KS1 (Reception, Year 1 and 2) are entitled to a free school meal. Other children may be entitled to a free school meal. To find out if your child is eligible for Free School Meals, please speak to the school office or see the attached link on the Cheshire West and Chester website for further information [FSM eligibility](#)

Q. Are there any rules about what I can give my child for his/her packed lunch?

A. Yes, a balanced diet/healthy items are encouraged. Sweets/chocolate are not allowed and no Nuts due to allergies.

Q. Are snacks provided

A. Morning snack is available to buy in school for KS2 children (toast, bagel, etc.) or children can bring their own. Healthy options are encouraged, crisps and chocolate/sweets are not allowed. KS1 children are provided with a fruit/vegetable option.

General

Q. Do I need to check my child's book bag each day?

A. You will need to read with your child regularly, and will need to make an entry in the reading record after each read. Also, it's worth checking in the book bag for any communications from school or Friends of Hillside.

Q. How do I find out about what is going on at school (e.g. dates for the diary)?

A. Firstly, please make sure you are signed up to receive updates through Parentpay, this is our communication and payments platform. New parents will be sent an activation letter when their child starts school.

All events will be communicated to you via the Headteacher weekly newsletter, which is emailed via Parentpay during term and also loaded onto the school website. This also includes any events organised by Friends of Hillside, separate newsletter are also emailed via Parentpay. Texts/email are also sent to parents sometimes, with reminders.

Your class teacher also emails a weekly roundup.

We also use Twitter to share picture of school activities and have a calendar of events on the website [here](#).

If you think you are not receiving communications via ParentPay or your class teacher, please contact the school office so we can check your contact details are correct.

Q. I have only just found out that my child has a place at Hillside, and I have missed the induction evening. What should I do?

A. Don't panic! Lots of information can be found on this website. If you have more questions, please just contact the school office, who will be happy to help. If you would prefer to speak to another parent, or a member of the PTA, please e-mail friendsofhelsbyhillside@gmail.com

Q. Is there anyone that can help me if I have questions during the school holidays, and I can't find the information I need on the school website?

A. Unfortunately school is closed during the school holidays so we would encourage parents to contact us during term time. However staff are usually in the office on INSET days. Lots of information can be found on our website.

Q. Will there be extra-curricular activities available?

A. Yes, full details of the clubs available are normally provided by letter during the first week or two of each term.

Q. Can my child have a mobile phone in school?

A. Children in Reception, Year 1, Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4 are not permitted to bring mobile phones into school.

Children in Years 5 and 6 are permitted to bring mobile phones into school, if they have written permission from a parent or carer. Their phone must be turned off and handed in at the start of the day. It will then be given out at the end of the day to take home.

Q. What do I do if I have a complaint?

A. Please contact the school office and/or refer to the complaints policy [here](#)

Q. What's Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2?

A. Key Stage 1 (KS1) includes the Early Years Foundation Stage/Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes. Key Stage 2 (KS2) is Years 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Q. What differences should I prepare my child for, when they move from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2?

A. They may need snack money if they wish to purchase a healthy snack at morning break and universal free school lunches are no longer available.

Q. How often are the school fairs, and what's involved?

A. The Summer Fair is usually held in June, and the Christmas Fair at the beginning of December. Both are fun events, organised by Friends of Hillside, to raise money to enhance the learning experience of all the children attending Helsby Hillside.

Parents are asked for small non-cash donations of items to assist with the fair and in return for non-uniform days prior to the fairs.

Details of the fair will be communicated in advance, via newsletters, queries can be directed to friendsofhelsbyhillside@gmail.com

Q. What happens at sports days?

A. Sports days are usually held in the Summer term, there is one for KS1 children and one for KS2. Children have a practice session beforehand. On the day, parents are very welcome to attend, and parking is available on the school field. There are usually four races, like the sack race, and a running race. Each child is encouraged to compete. At KS1 all children competing receive a sticker and special ones for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place. In KS2 the children earn points towards the 'Team Sports Cup'. This is competed for by the red, yellow, blue and green teams. Sports Day is always a fun event!

Q. Where is the school field?

A. The school field is on Proffits Lane, Helsby, within walking distance from the school.

Q. Does school celebrate Christmas?

A. Yes, as part of the RE curriculum children learn about a variety of religions including Christianity. There is usually a nativity or similar play each year – one for key stage 1 and one for key stage 2. There are usually 2 performances of each, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. Tickets are limited, due to the space available in the hall, but full details will be provided to everyone around November.

There is a Christmas Fair near the beginning of the month, which is organised by Friends of Hillside (PTA).

There is also an opportunity for parents and carers to come into school on the last day of school before Christmas, for carols around the Christmas tree.

Q. What's the best way to contact my child's teacher? Do I need an appointment?

A. You are able to speak to your child's teacher either before school or at home time for any quick queries but an appointment is advisable if you wish to discuss anything at length. Please contact the school office who will liaise with the teacher and arrange a mutually convenient time. Class teachers are also contactable via yearx@hillside.cheshire.sch.uk

Q. Does the School have a 'reward' system for continuous good behaviour?

A. All children are encouraged to behave well and follow the rules. Our behaviour policy is available on the school website. Rewards include verbal praise, stickers, team points and certificates. Children who exhibit excellent learning behaviours are rewarded by being appointed as 'lead learners' and receive a special prize in assembly. They then set an excellent example for the other children in their class.

Q. When are parent's evenings?

A. Progress evenings are held in Autumn and Spring terms. Dates are communicated with as much notice as possible. You will be asked to book an appointment online via School Spider (our website).

Q: I cannot access my School spider account to book a parents evening appointment?

A: Please click on parent login on the home page of our website [here](#), if you do not know your password, there is a link on the login screen to reset your account. If it is your first time logging in you will need to click the link on the login screen to create an account. To do either of these you will need to use the email address attached to your parent account in SIMS.

Please be aware: Usernames are firstnamesurname (all one-word lowercase) not your email address. If you are unsure of your username you can reset your account, the username will be on the email you receive.

Q. Is the e-mail address for the school office, monitored in the school holidays?

A. No.

Q. Are there any opportunities to speak to other Hillside parents? If so, will they be at times when working parents can get involved?

A. You may also want to get in touch with Friends of Hillside, they are our Parent Teacher Association, and will be more than willing to help. Some year groups also have WhatsApp groups.

Q. Are there any school trips organised?

A. There are residential (overnight stays) in Year 2 (1 night), Year 4 (2 nights) and Year 6 (4 nights). Full details are provided to parents and carers in plenty of time beforehand. There are also other opportunities for other day trips and visits, and again these will be communicated as and when those opportunities arise.

Learning

Q. Will my child get homework, and if so how often? How long should it take to complete?

A. Yes, homework is set each week. This includes an expectation that the child will practise their reading regularly. Full details for each class are available in the homework policy available on the school website and the class updates which is given out at the start of term.

Q. How often should I read with my child, and for how long?

A. If possible, daily for at least 10-15 minutes, especially in Reception and KS1. Whatever time you can spare, please make sure that it is quality time enjoying a book together.

Q. During SATS and other testing, will my child know that they are being tested?

A. Yes in KS2. In Reception and KS1 this is done less formally when possible.

Q. Do I need to prepare my child for SATS and other testing?

A. Regular support and monitoring with homework is really helpful but talking to them about their work and helping them with any revision or testing, for example, on their times tables should suffice.

Q. Where can I get more information about SATS and other testing?

A. Ask your child's class teacher or Mr Khan or look up SAT's online where detailed information and sample tests are available.

Pick ups and Drop offs

Q. How do I contact a teacher if I don't drop off or pick up?

A. You don't need to inform school about dropping off however please contact the school office if someone different/unknown to your teacher is collecting your child. They will pass the information on to the class teacher.

Q. What time can I leave my child in the morning in the playground? Is it different for infants and juniors?

A. The school gates are opened at 8.40am. KS1 children should not be left on their own. KS2 children can come into school on their own from 8.40am however please do not leave children unaccompanied before then as the school cannot be responsible for their safety and welfare. All children must be in school for 8.55am.

Q. What should I do if I am stuck in traffic and cannot get to school on time to collect my child?

A. Please contact the school office and we'll arrange for the children to be looked after until parents arrive. If it's likely to be a long delay, the onsite link club is an option.

Link Club and Breakfast Club

Q. What is Link Club?

A. Link club is now managed internally for wrap around care 'before and after school club' at Helsby Hillside School.

Q. What time do breakfast club and afternoon "link club" start and finish, and what do they involve?

A. Breakfast club opens at 7.30am and finishes at 8.55am (school start times).

All children will be provided with breakfast and will then be free to play, supervised, until school starts.

Afternoon "link club" starts at 3.15pm and ends at 6pm, by which time all children should be collected. A snack is provided. Children can be supported with homework during this time, or they can play, make crafts and are supervised by link club staff.

Please email linkclub@hillside.cheshire.sch.uk for more information about how to book a place.

Friends of Hillside (PTA)

Q. Is the PTA open to any parent or carer?

A. Absolutely, yes!

Q. When are FOH meetings and what are they like?

A. There is usually an FOH meeting approximately two or three times per term. They are friendly, open, informal meetings and all parents are welcome to come to express their views, make suggestions and/or help out!

Q. Do I have to commit lots of time to help?

A. No. We would ask all parents and carers to do at least one thing during the school year, when it is convenient for them. We have a small band of willing parents who regularly help, but if every parent did one thing to help during the school year, it would be so much easier and the likelihood is that we would be able to raise more money. Details of any help needed for events is included in the weekly newsletter.

Q. What can I do to help?

A. Details of help needed are always included on the weekly newsletter, and also posted on our Facebook page. We would encourage parents and carers to do whatever they feel comfortable with. We always need volunteers for manning cake sales and stalls, but sometimes we need volunteers for painting, or you may have a skill or trade that you think might be of use. All offers are very much appreciated!

Q. Do you use Social Media?

A. Yes, Friends of Hillside has a Facebook page. "Liking" the page is a great way to get updates on upcoming events and other things that are happening at school. Just search for "Friends of Hillside".

Absence and School Policy

Q. What is the School's policy on bullying?

A. The school has a zero tolerance approach to bullying and, though rare at Hillside, any incidents are dealt with seriously and immediately. The school supports national anti-bullying week every November, including 'Blue Friday', an anti-bullying day. A copy of the anti-bullying policy can be found on the school website [here](#)

Q. What is the school's policy on absences?

A. Term time absence is strongly discouraged and holidays will not be authorised unless in exceptional circumstances. A copy of the absence policy can be found on the school website [here](#)

Q. What is the school's policy regarding unacceptable behaviour?

A. A copy of the behaviour policy can be found on the school website [here](#)

Q. What should I do if my child tells me that another child or children has hurt him in the playground?

A. Please contact your class teacher or a member of staff asap.

Q. If my child has a medical appointment at 11am, should they come to school beforehand, and should they come back to school afterwards?

A. It is preferable for appointments to not be booked during the school day/term time. However if it is unavoidable, ideally children should only miss school for the duration of the appointment and related travel time, depending on the time of the appointment. Where ever possible therefore, essential appointments should be made at the beginning or end of the school day to avoid disruption. Please let the class teacher or school office know in advance. Evidence of appointments may be requested.

Q. Can I take my child on holiday during a school term?

A. Head teachers are unable to authorise leave during term time, unless for exceptional circumstances, which does not include family holidays. Parents are requested to complete a leave of absence request form in advance if they wish to take their child out of school for any period of time (excluding medical appointments). Parents may be liable for a fixed penalty notice, issued by Cheshire West and Chester Council.