Dear Parents/Carers

Rear Pedestrian Gate
We are ever conscious of the need for security around school and to this end, the rear pedestrian gate is only unlocked at certain times during the day, as follows:

- until 9.15 am at the beginning of the school day
- between 11.15 am and 11.45 am for collection from morning Nursery
- between 12.15 pm and 12.45 pm for drop off at afternoon Nursery (gates manned by member of staff if children on field during lunchtime)
- from 2.55 pm onwards for pick up at the end of the school day

I know that parents sometimes have to bring children into school or pick them up for an appointment at other times during the day and having the gates open at other times would make their journey much shorter or easier. However, in the interests of the safety and security of all of the children, I am sorry but it is not possible to open the gates at times other than those mentioned above, except in a pre-arranged instance eg when a whole group of parents are coming in for a special event.

Disclosure and Barring Checks for Parents
I would like to take the opportunity to clarify the position regarding helping in school or on school trips.

- If you plan to come into school to help in class on a ‘one-off’ occasion, you do not need to complete any checks provided you are always under the supervision of a trained member of staff and never left alone with a child.
- If you plan to help in school on a regular basis, or for more than 4 times in any 30 day period, you will need to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service check. The application must be done electronically and can only be completed in school. We will need you to bring in certain identity documents and the application may take two or more weeks to be processed. Please note that a DBS check once completed, will need to be kept current by helping in school at least once every half term.
- If you volunteer to help on a school trip, we would ask you to give your name to your child’s class teacher. The teacher will then compile a list of the helpers he/she will ask to help and pass the names to the school office so that we can check everyone’s current DBS status. You may be asked to provide some details to enable us to undertake a special check for the trip in question. We are always very grateful for offers of help but of course space is limited and it will not always be possible to take up everyone’s offer.
- Occasionally you might be asked to help on a small scale local visit, eg accompanying a class walk to the church. In such cases, no check will be necessary, as you will be with a whole class group, under the direct supervision of school staff.

I understand that all of the above is quite complicated but I know you will agree that it is important for us to adhere to strict practice in such an important matter.
Macmillan Coffee Mornings
A huge thank you to everyone who came into school to support our Macmillan fund raising events. We raised a grand total of £620 which has been forwarded to the Charity.

Harvest Celebration
Following our Harvest Celebration last week, Norwich Foodbank have asked us to pass on their sincere thanks for your kind donations, which will be stored, ready to distribute to local families who are in need or crisis.

Open Days for Reception 2015 Parents
Unfortunately we have had to change one of the dates of our Open Days for parents of children due to start Reception in September 2015. Please note they are now as follows and not as specified on the school Calendar of Events which came with the last newsletter. Perhaps you could mention this to anyone you know who is interested in their children joining Hillside Reception next September.

- Thursday 13th November
- Wednesday 19th November 9.30-10.30 and 1.30-2.30 on both days

Black History Month
Parents of children in years 2, 3, 4 and 6 are invited into school from 2.45 pm on Tuesday 21st October, to view the work we have been doing on this and other ‘Enquiry’ topics this term. Year 5 children are currently working towards their visit to Holt Hall next week, so will focus on the topic of Black History after half term and parents will have a chance to view their work.

Refurbishment of the School Library
We are soon to undertake a major refurbishment of our school library and the Library will therefore be out of use from the end of the school day on Friday this week (17th October). This will mean that we will have quite a lot of used bookcases to dispose of and if anyone might find a use for them either as functional bookcases or scrap, please let the office know. They should be available just before we break up for the half term holiday.

Half Term Holiday Activity Scheme
As usual, Broadland District Council is running the Tots2Teens Club over the October half term holiday. They offer a varied and exciting programme, with discounts for local families claiming certain benefits. Please have a look at their website for full terms and conditions www.broadland.gov.uk/t2t or call the booking line on 01603 430525.

Universal Free School Meals for Children in Reception to Year 2
Thank you to all parents of children in Reception to Year 2 who have been prompt in sending back the advance order forms for your child’s school lunches. The new system seems to be working well. As part of the Universal Free School Meals, when children in Reception to Year 2 go on a school trip they will be offered a school snack pack to take with them. There are various options of sandwich filling and prior to the trip you will be asked to complete an order form to let us know which option your child would like, or whether you would prefer to provide your own snack pack on that day, so please look out for the form if there is a trip coming up.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Gutteridge
Headteacher