



# Kents Hill Junior School



Kents Hill Road, Benfleet Essex SS7 5PS  
Telephone: 01268 792133 Facsimile: 01268 795357  
e-mail: [admin@kentshill-jun.essex.sch.uk](mailto:admin@kentshill-jun.essex.sch.uk)

Headteacher: Miss Joanne Parkes

17<sup>th</sup> April 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the survey on school trips and experiences — we received responses from 116 families, which is really helpful in shaping our next steps. We appreciate the range of views shared and want to be open about what we've heard and how this is informing our planning moving forward.

From those who responded (and I appreciate this may not reflect every family's view), some key themes emerged:

- 99% of responses shared that school trips are valuable
- 85% are happy with the range of workshops and trips provided
- 82% would like a mix of in-school workshops and external trips
- 93% feel the cost of trips and workshops is manageable
- 65% suggested a reasonable annual contribution would be £41–60, with a further 21% suggesting £61–80
- 91% asked for the Year 6 residential to be at least 2+ days
- 74% feel there should be at least one trip or experience every term

### Why are trips, workshops and residential so important?

Trips and residential are far more than “extras” — they are powerful learning experiences that bring the curriculum to life. They help children build independence, resilience, confidence and social skills in ways that the classroom alone cannot always provide.

For many children, these opportunities also offer experiences they may not otherwise have access to — whether that is visiting a historical site, exploring nature or spending time away from home with their peers. These moments often become the memories children carry with them long after they leave primary school, and they are a key part of our commitment to providing a rich and inclusive education for every child.

### What will trips and experiences look like going forward?

In response to your feedback, we will be planning a consistent structure across the year:

#### Autumn Term – In-school workshop

Each year group will take part in a “Portals to the Past” style workshop during the Autumn term. We aim to keep costs as low as possible (this year these were £7).

These workshops immerse children in a historical period through a range of engaging, hands-on experiences. A typical day includes a costumed “time traveller” introducing the theme, opportunities to handle artefacts, interactive storytelling and drama, practical activities such as trying on clothing or armour, and games to reinforce learning—all ending with a memorable finale.

Children may take part in role play, explore historical objects and recreate moments from the past, making learning both meaningful and memorable.

You may wish to view the Year 3 “Day in the Life of a Roman” on our social media pages as an example.

Our wonderful PTA has kindly offered to support families by collecting donated costumes, helping to reduce any pressure this may bring.

### ***Learning ~ Friendship ~ Safety ~ Success***

***At Kents Hill Junior School we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and we expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Designated Safeguarding Lead – Miss Joanne Parkes***

*Academy Trust (Registered in England) – Company Number 7804282*

*Reg. address: Kents Hill Junior School, Kents Hill Road, Benfleet, Essex, SS7 5PS*





# Kents Hill Junior School



## Spring Term – External trip

Each year group will have an off-site visit linked to their learning. We will always aim to keep costs down; however, transport (particularly coaches) does make up a significant portion of the cost.

## Summer Term – Whole school beach trip

We will continue with our whole-school beach trip, travelling by train. This year we are able to fully fund this thanks to some very kind donations.

Alongside these, we are increasing opportunities for local visits within our community across the year, which help reduce costs while still providing valuable experiences.

## What about residential trips?

We will be continuing to offer both Year 5 and Year 6 residential for the time being, as they provide two very different and equally valuable experiences:

- **Year 5 Residential:** A science and history-focused experience (for example, this year’s highly successful visit to Winchester Science Centre).
- **Year 6 Residential:** A more “outdoorsy” experience, focused on adventure, teamwork and personal development.

We have explored a range of providers for Year 6 and have made changes for next year with a focus on reducing costs. While we greatly appreciated the suggestions from families, our cohort size (around 90 children) means we must choose venues that can accommodate the entire year group together. This is very important to us, as we want all children to share the experience beyond their individual classes.

We have also introduced residential savings pots from Year 3, allowing families to contribute small amounts over time if they wish. This is entirely optional but we know some families find this helpful.

## What does the school fund?

Alongside the contributions requested for some trips and experiences, there are a number of opportunities that are fully funded by the school for every child.

### Roots to Food workshop (every year group, every year)

Each child takes part in a *Roots to Food* workshop annually, funded entirely by the school. These are hands-on cooking sessions led by a professional chef, where children prepare and cook a dish from scratch while learning about ingredients, nutrition, and food origins.

Although cooking is already a strong part of our curriculum, these workshops provide something extra: specialist guidance from a professional, new recipes and techniques and an engaging, real-world context for learning. They build confidence, encourage children to try new foods, and connect practical skills with knowledge about healthy eating and sustainability — enriching what we already do in school and making the experience memorable for every child.

### ***Learning ~ Friendship ~ Safety ~ Success***

***At Kents Hill Junior School we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and we expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Designated Safeguarding Lead – Miss Joanne Parkes***

*Academy Trust (Registered in England) – Company Number 7804282*

*Reg. address: Kents Hill Junior School, Kents Hill Road, Benfleet, Essex, SS7 5PS*





# Kents Hill Junior School



### Religious Education trips and visitors

We also fund religious visits or visitors for every year group. Moving forward into the academic year 2026/2027, we are committing to fully funding these so that all children gain meaningful, first-hand experiences of the five major religions by the time they leave our school.

This is incredibly important in helping children to develop respect, understanding and tolerance of different faiths and cultures. It directly supports the teaching of British Values, particularly mutual respect and tolerance of those with different beliefs. These experiences help children to become thoughtful, informed and respectful members of society.

### Additional sporting workshops

Throughout the year, we also provide a range of in-school sporting workshops and experiences, funded by the school. These give children opportunities to try new sports, develop skills and build confidence in a fun and inclusive way.

### **Why do we ask for contributions, and why might trips be cancelled?**

Although contributions towards day trips are voluntary, these experiences sit above the National Curriculum and unfortunately the school cannot cover the full cost for every child.

When we say a trip may be cancelled if insufficient contributions are received, this is not something we say lightly — it is simply the reality of the financial position. We are always hopeful this won't happen and are incredibly grateful for the generosity shown by many families who have supported not only their own child but others too which has meant we have so far not needed to do this.

### **Why don't we ask parents to drop children at trip locations?**

We understand why this was suggested by some; however, we feel this would place additional pressure on families and could create barriers for some children attending. With multiple classes in each year group, this approach could unintentionally lead to children missing out simply due to logistics. It would also mean we would need to consider only those options available in a much closer area to our school ruling out some brilliant opportunities slightly further afield.

### **What if families are finding costs difficult?**

We fully recognise the financial pressures many families are currently facing. We are actively trying to reduce costs by increasing in-school and local experiences.

If you are finding it difficult to contribute, please do reach out to us. We will always work with you sensitively and confidentially to ensure that no child misses out — whether due to financial reasons, anxiety or other needs.

### **Why don't we make all trips "pay to attend"?**

Some parents suggested a system where children only attend if payment is made. While this is the case for residential and some events, applying this to all trips would likely mean the same children miss out repeatedly — and these may be the very children who do not have access to such experiences outside of school. We feel strongly that this would not be equitable.

### **Learning ~ Friendship ~ Safety ~ Success**

**At Kents Hill Junior School we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and we expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Designated Safeguarding Lead – Miss Joanne Parkes**

Academy Trust (Registered in England) – Company Number 7804282

Reg. address: Kents Hill Junior School, Kents Hill Road, Benfleet, Essex, SS7 5PS





# Kents Hill Junior School



## Why do we send multiple payment reminders?

We understand that life is busy and we view this communication as a helpful reminder; they are essential in helping us make informed decisions about whether a trip can go ahead.

Often, when we send reminders, families respond to say they believed they had already paid. We also tend to receive many contributions very close to the deadline, which can make planning difficult.

We aim to give as much notice as possible and send reminders so that families are aware if a trip is at risk of cancellation. This is part of our commitment to being open and transparent with you.

## Our overall approach

We are passionate about continuing to offer these opportunities. Not all families are able to provide these experiences outside of school and we believe they are a vital part of a child's education and development.

When we reflect on our own school days, it is often the trips and shared experiences we remember most. This is a key driver behind our "50 Things to Do Before I Leave KHJS" initiative — ensuring every child has access to meaningful, memorable experiences such as watching a sunset or sitting around a campfire.

We know that no approach will work perfectly for every family, but please be assured that every decision we make is with the aim of supporting as many children and families as possible.

Thank you again for your continued support, honesty and partnership.

Kind regards,

Miss J Parkes  
Headteacher

### **Learning ~ Friendship ~ Safety ~ Success**

**At Kents Hill Junior School we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and we expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Designated Safeguarding Lead – Miss Joanne Parkes**

Academy Trust (Registered in England) – Company Number 7804282

Reg. address: Kents Hill Junior School, Kents Hill Road, Benfleet, Essex, SS7 5PS

