

## Building Community, Enriching Lives

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### Welcome Back!

A huge welcome back to everyone, children, families and staff. We have had such a wonderful start to the Autumn term and the children have settled in well. We are incredibly proud of them all. We must say welcome of course to all our new children in Reception – we have 11 children in Reception and 7 new families to the school which is wonderful for our school community. I know that you will make the parents feel welcome and help them get to know Longney school and village too.

Welcome in Reception to Jasmine, Frankie-Jack, Alfie, Katie, Grace, Theo, Mia, Penny, Archie, Paislie and Mya. Welcome as well to George and James who have joined us in Skylarks class this September.

We have been up to lots already in our curriculum. The children started the year with PSHE lessons to settle them in to the school. They looked at subjects such as identifying our own and others' emotions, how to ask for help and who is there to help us and the importance of respect. As well as this, they set their classroom rules for the year together in line with our new values.

On Monday, we had a values day in school where we introduced the children to our new vision and values and they spent the day in their houses, working together across all ages to hear stories and create art in line with each value so that they could engage with the meaning of each word. This work will be displayed in the hall to remind us of each value daily during worship.

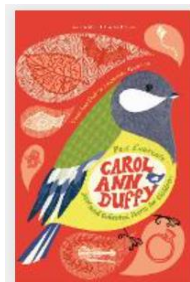
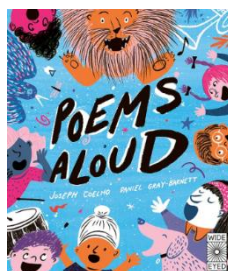
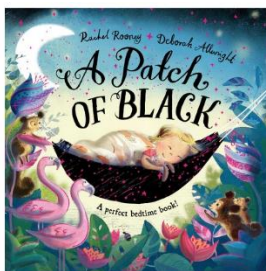
This week the children have launched into their science weeks – asking the following questions in line with our curriculum:

Skylarks – why is a rock a rock? (materials and their properties)

Goldfinch – How do cats eyes keep me safe? (light)

Swifts – Why is it night-time in Australia and daytime here? (Earth and space)

They have also been learning poetry off by heart whole class as part of our English curriculum. Skylarks have learnt the poems of Rachel Rooney, Goldfinch have been learning Joseph Coelho's poems and Swifts have learnt some poems from Carol Ann Duffy. They will perform this poem on video so that we can share it with you at our upcoming welcome event (see below for more information). To find out more at home about the poets they have studied, please click below:



Thank you to them all for their hard work and positive attitudes this week!



Lots of fun and learning in Swallows class...





## Anti-bullying Week and Welcome Event

We are kicking off the year with an anti-bullying week – taking place week commencing 23<sup>rd</sup> September. The children will take part in a range of activities each day to help them understand what bullying is and the impact that it has, both in person and online. We will also be thinking about ‘compassion’ and ‘harmony’ two of our key values. As part of this week, we will send out information to you as parents on how you can support your children online and so that you can understand our approach to bullying in school.

Next Friday, at the end of the school day, we will be holding a ‘Welcome Event’ similar to last year where you will have chance to come back into the classroom once you have picked up your child and see where they sit, say hello to the classroom staff and see a snapshot of their learning so far. We will also be holding a talk for parents of Swallows and Skylarks parents to help you understand our phonics teaching and reading scheme so you can support your children effectively with their reading at home.

## PE Days

As per the previous School Ping, PE days this term are as follows:

Swifts – Wednesday, Skylarks – Thursday, Goldfinch – Thursday

We are very excited to share that Jez from Cotswold Archery is coming in on a Wednesday this half term to work with the children in Swifts class during their PE sessions – they will have chance to have a go at Archery each week whilst also continuing with their national curriculum lessons taught by our Atlas Sports coach.

On Thursdays, Team Rubicon will be coming in to give skateboarding and scootering lessons to the children in year 2, 3 and 4 alongside their normal PE lesson with Mr Sherwood. They provide all of the skateboards and scooters and all the safety equipment so the children can enjoy learning new skills together. As you can see, they had a great start this week!



## Environmental Work in Longney

There is some upcoming work planned in Longney by the environmental agency and they have informed us that they will be using the top end for the car park. I have spoken to them and they have assured me it will only be a small part of the car park so hopefully it won't be too disruptive. I have also arranged with them that they won't move any vehicles around during drop-off and pick-up times to keep the children as safe as possible. We don't have a date yet but I will update you as and when I receive one.



## How and Who to contact

I wanted to let you know who it was best to contact at school for different queries and how to go about that:

For anything that is urgent, please call or email the school office – this is the only email address that is checked daily so if you need to get a message about your child being absent or about pick-up arrangements or anything that is on that day, always go through [admin@longney.dgat.org.uk](mailto:admin@longney.dgat.org.uk) or phone the school office.

Please be aware that Mrs Hinde does not work on a Tuesday and Thursday afternoon and so there will not be a response from the email in these times. Please call the school and leave a message and we will pick up any going home messages at the end of the school day if needed.

For anything related to your child's special educational needs or if you think your child may need SEND support, please contact Miss Prosser, our SENCo on [rprosser@longney.dgat.org.uk](mailto:rprosser@longney.dgat.org.uk) Please remember that Miss Prosser is in class all day so she cannot check her emails whilst she is teaching.

For friendship issues or any worries or concerns related to your child, please always talk to their class teacher first, they know them best and can advise you or let you know if it would be best to talk to Miss Prosser or myself if needed. You can contact your child's class teacher by emailing [admin@longney.dgat.org.uk](mailto:admin@longney.dgat.org.uk) and asking for the email to be passed on to them. You can also talk to them at the start and end of the school day. For anything more private, you can call them on the office number or email [admin@longney.dgat.org.uk](mailto:admin@longney.dgat.org.uk) to request that they call you when convenient. Please remember that the teachers are in class all day so they will not be able to respond to emails immediately.

Finally, if you need to contact me, please call or email me on [head@longney.dgat.org.uk](mailto:head@longney.dgat.org.uk) – obviously I am not in school everyday and I cannot always check my emails daily so please expect a response within a day or two unless of course it is a more urgent matter.

For all **safeguarding** concerns or to update us on anything that is happening at home that we need to know about to safeguard and support the welfare of your child in school, please contact myself at Designated Safeguarding Lead or Miss Prosser as Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## Forest School

Our forest school leader, Mr Pritchard, as many of you will know, was diagnosed with cancer in recent years. He has continued to work incredibly hard since his diagnosis but has decided to take a leave of absence for the autumn term in order to spend time with his family and take a well-earned rest!

I'm sure you will join me in wishing him the absolute best for this period and thanking him for all that he does at Longney in giving the children such wonderful and life enriching experiences. We look forward to welcoming him back after Christmas.

As a result, forest school will start for all classes after the Christmas holidays.

## Start of Year Forms

Mrs Hinde will be sending home lots of forms for you to fill in soon, some on paper and some via School Ping. Please do so as soon as possible and return them to school. These are all important forms that allows us to have all the information to keep your children safe in school. Without them, we cannot do that so please fill them in as soon as you receive them. Thank you.

## Friends of Longney

The Friends of Longney had some fantastic events last year that have raised a brilliant amount of money for the school and which have also brought a huge amount of **joy** to us all too! In recent times, where school budgets are particularly stretched, it is invaluable to have such brilliant support from the Friends.

We can't thank the committee enough for their time and effort and to all of you who support and attend the events. Last year they raised the following:

Colour Run - £549

Fete – over £2000!

Wacky Wednesday - £100

Disco – over £200

We can't wait for more events ahead this year.

There is a Friends of Longney meeting after school next Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup>, please do come down to the classroom to join if you are able.

## Uniform and Bags

Thank you so much to everyone for adhering to our new policy on no large backpacks in school. I cannot tell you the difference this has made to the main corridor. There is no room on the hooks for the coats, so they don't fall off into the corridor and cause a tripping hazard.

All older children should have a reading folder which they can use to transport their reading books, children in Swallows and Skylarks have been provided with a book bag they can use. They shouldn't have anything else that they need to bring back and forth to school. Obviously, they can carry their lunchbox and water bottle separately.

If your child has a medical need which means they need to store a change of clothes in school for example, this can be done either in their book bag for younger children or in a drawstring bag which can sit easily on the peg and it can happily stay in school until it is needed.

Older children in Goldfinch and Swifts are very welcome to bring a book bag to school if they wish but they don't have to.

Thank you so much for your support with this, it has really made a difference this week.

## New Attendance Policy and Updates

As some of you may be aware, the government have made some national updates to school's attendance policies for this year. Attached to this school ping you will find a standard letter to parents explaining these updates.

Attendance at Longney last year was below national average at 94% so we will of course be doing all that we can this year to support you to ensure all children attend school unless there is an authorised reason for their absence. As part of this, **we will be issuing penalty notices for unauthorised holidays taken with in term time** going forwards this year, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The impact of unnecessary absence from school both socially and academically on the children cannot be underestimated. In maths in particular, the curriculum moves so fast that there will be concepts that they have not been taught because they were absent from school. Please consider this when booking any family holidays this year and do so within the school holidays to avoid a penalty notice being added to the cost.

It is of course important as well that you let us know where your child is each day so that we know they are safe. It is our legal duty to follow up on all school absences. I have attached to this message a handy flowchart which explains what you need to do on the day of absence or two weeks before for any pre-planned absences.

If your child is struggling with coming to school, please come and talk to myself or Miss Prosser or contact us via email and we will do all that we can to support you and your child to attend regularly going forwards.

Our attendance policy is on the school website [here](#) if you would like to read it in more detail.