

Long Close School

School Handbook

Early Years Foundation Stage

2023/2024



Our Vision...

Empowering future leaders
and aspirational
changemakers.

Our Mission...

We aim for higher things
by being academically, socially and
personally ambitious for every
member of our school family.

Contents

4- Head Teacher Welcome

5- Welcome from the Head of Early Years

6- Our Early Years, Transitioning to School

7- Pre School/Nursery School day, Collection by another adult

8- How will my child learn?

9- Partnership with parents

10- Tapestry Online Journal

11- Key Person, How will I know how my child is getting on?

12- Trips and Visits, Read, Write Inc Phonics

13- Toileting, Uniform

14- End of Reception, Emergencies, Celebrations and Birthdays

15- Food & Catering, Sun Protection

16- Term Dates

17- Attendance

A Long Close Education



Dear Parents

Thank you for taking the time to read the Early Years School Handbook. Contained in it, you will find lots of useful school information.

As a parent myself, I know that keeping abreast of all school information can be overwhelming at times. This is why we are committed to working with you to ensure you have all the necessary information at your fingertips. Whether it's through this handbook or via our online communication system, Cognita Connect, we aim to make it easy for you to stay in touch.

Our school operates an open-door policy, so should you ever need to email the teacher, have a quick chat at pick-up or simply telephone the school, we are here to support you. We also have regular coffee mornings, which are scheduled in the school calendar, so I hope to see you there. I am even partial to a morning cup of tea and a chat, so I encourage you to book-in a time should you wish to discuss any matters on a one-to-one basis.

We look forward to working together to ensure your child and family gets the very best experience at Long Close School.

David Laird
Headteacher

Welcome to Early Years

A very warm welcome from Long Close School and Nursery.

We are delighted that you have chosen Long Close School and Nursery for the care and education of your child. Choosing a setting for your child is one of the most important decisions you will ever make. Not only is it essential that your child feels safe, confident and happy in their new environment, but you must also feel comfortable that their developmental needs are being met.

A child's Early Years experience are the most important years in their education. This is your child's first experience of school and will instil a love of learning for life.

At Little Long Close, we firmly believe that every child deserves the best possible start in their educational journey, providing the support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in their early years has a major impact on their future and provides the foundation for children to make the most of their talents as they grow.

Our EYFS parent handbook contains considerable information about the daily running of the Early Years Department. It is designed to answer some of the questions that you may have and to give you relevant information. We look forward to building a strong and positive partnership with you and your family.

There will be a whole school booklet that you can reference to for further information regarding the wider school community, but please remember that we are always here to answer your questions. I look forward to welcoming you soon.

Mrs Carpenter
Head of Early Years



Our Early Years

We are exceptionally lucky to have a fantastic purpose-built building for our Early Years children.

This is split into three age brackets:

Nursery – Children aged from 2 years old

Pre School – Children aged 3 to 4 years in their Pre-reception year

Reception – This is the formal entry year into school for children aged 4 to 5

All children in the Nursery and Pre School are assigned a Key Person, to establish a warm and loving relationship. After Pre School, children enter our Reception class before moving on to Key Stage 1.

Children are required to attend a minimum of 5 sessions in Nursery. In Pre School, children will start the year attending a minimum of 6 sessions, as part of our fee structure, an additional session will build each term to help ready them for full time school in Reception.

Transitioning to our school

We aim to make the transition from home to school run as smoothly as possible. To support you and your child when settling in we will offer settling in sessions prior to starting.

Our Admissions Manager will contact you a few weeks before your child's start date to discuss a convenient time for 2 settling in sessions. If you wish you may stay in the setting with your child on their first visit. On your child's second visit, we recommend leaving them in the room with their Key Person, this will enable the Key Person to form a relationship with your child.

We recognise and understand the anxieties for both parents and children when starting school. Some children will settle in on their first visit whilst others will take a little longer to adapt to their new environment.

Nursery/Pre School Day

Pupils can be supervised from 8.00–8.30am in our Early Years early morning club. The morning sessions begin at 8.30am and registration will be completed by 8.40am

School ends at:

Long Close Nursery/Pre School (mornings only) end 11.45am

Long Close Nursery/Pre School (mornings plus lunch) end 12.15pm

Long Close Nursery/Pre School (afternoons only) start 12.15pm

Nursery/Pre School/Reception School (full day) ends 3.30pm

Sibling Club (for children with older siblings in the school) ends 3.45pm

After School Care operates until 6.00pm if booked in advance/a light tea is provided.

Please note that the Early Morning Club and After School Care provision must be booked via the school club booking system each term to secure a place.

We will provide a separate Nursery, Pre School or Reception timetable at the beginning of term outlining specific activities throughout the day.

Collection by another adult

We have a password system in place so that if you are unable to collect your child in person, someone can collect them on your behalf using the password.

However, even when using the password, we prefer to be introduced to that person first by the parent/carer, have the full name of the person collecting and be informed on the day that someone else is collecting.

In emergencies, please phone the school to let us know someone else will be collecting and provide details about that person. This not only ensures that teachers are prepared to receive an unexpected adult, but it also allows us to prepare your child for the fact that you will not be collecting them.

How will my child learn?

We have a child-led approach which ensures we plan and take part in activities that the children have chosen. By following the children's interests, they are engaged, excited, and fascinated by their learning each day.

Within the Nursery, Pre School and Reception Classes we follow the Early Years and Foundation Stage Framework which explains how and what your child will be learning to support their healthy development.

Your child will be learning skills, acquiring new knowledge and demonstrating their understanding through seven areas of learning and development. Children should mostly develop the three prime areas first.

These are:

Communication and language

Physical development

Personal, social and emotional development.

These prime areas are those most essential for your child's healthy development and future learning.

As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in these four specific areas.:

•Literacy

•Mathematics

•Understanding the world

•Expressive arts and design

These seven areas are used to plan your child's learning and activities. The professionals teaching and supporting your child will make sure that the activities are suited to your child's unique needs. This is a little bit like a curriculum in primary and secondary schools, but it is suitable for very young children, and it is designed to be extremely flexible so that staff can follow your child's unique needs and interests.

As part of the children's daily timetable offer, they will be taught by specialist teachers in Music, PE, Spanish, Dance and Fencing.

Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, as well as through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside.

Partnership with parents

The most important person in a child's life is you! Parents have a fundamental role to play in their child's education. Together, as partners, we can make their Long Close experience a huge success. We pride ourselves on our parental partnerships and involve you fully in your child's learning and development.

We believe that effective communication and partnership with parents is key to establishing a safe, welcoming, and purposeful environment where children feel confident, secure and able to reach their full potential.

In Reception, Pre School and Nursery, the 'Tapestry Online Learning Journey' is used to document all your child's observations whilst at school.

All Children in Nursery will use Tapestry as a 'Home School Communication Log', this is used as a means of communication for parents to share information regarding general wellbeing (sleeping, toileting and dietary patterns) and information personal to your child.

Cognita Connect is our secure app and web-based parent portal. It gives you 24hour access to personalised news and information in relation to your child(ren)'s school life and activities via your mobile, tablet or desktop device. You will receive your login details for Cognita Connect on the day your child starts school.

Key features of Cognita Connect:

- Access through the app or online
- Personalised newsfeed with information relevant to you
- Smart calendar to keep track of important dates and events
- View letters and give trip permissions
- Make payments for trips, clubs and wraparound school care

Tapestry Online Learning Journal

We have chosen to use the Online Learning Journal software, 'Tapestry'. Tapestry is hosted in the UK on secure servers which conform to very high environmental standards and are proactively managed 24 hours a day. Each Tapestry account has its own database and the code itself is developed using hack-resistant techniques. Filenames are encoded for uploaded videos and images, making Tapestry a safe and secure Online Learning Journal tool.

The benefits of Tapestry as an online tool is that by logging on with a secure username and password, you will be able to view all your child's observations, photographs and videos from their time at Meoncross School. You will receive an email when a new observation has been added to Tapestry, enabling you to follow your child's individual progress and reflect upon their achievements. In addition to viewing our contributions, we encourage you to also add to it by uploading photos and comments, or commenting on an observation made by us.

Please complete and sign the Tapestry Consent Form enclosed in this offer pack to allow us to take photographs of your child, as these will be used in your child's Learning Journal. However, if you do not wish for your child to be in photographs in other children's Learning Journals used on Tapestry. Safeguarding is of paramount importance, and you will be required to confirm that you will only share your journal with immediate family members, and that no photographs will be published on any social media sites.

Please can you complete, sign and return all forms to us on your child's first settling in session. During your child's first few days, you will be sent log-in details from Tapestry; please check your emails for this. We will be unable to issue you log-in details if the consent form is not returned to us.

Please do get in touch should you need any assistance with Tapestry and we will be very happy to help.

Key Person

During your child's first week at school, they will be allocated a Key Person. If your child is joining Reception, the class teacher is the child's key person.

The role of this person is to:

- ensure that your child is safe and happy in the environment
- plan activities to take your child's learning to the next level of understanding
- be a source of help and guidance to you as parents

The Key Person is likely to change as your child progresses through the different Foundation Stage classes, but through conversations, recordings of observations and regular transition meetings we ensure a smooth transition from one Key Person to the next. Your child's Key Person will be your main point of contact, they will host parent's meetings and write your child's end of year report.

How will I know how my child is getting on?

It is important that you and the professionals caring for your child work together. You need to feel comfortable about exchanging information and discussing things that will benefit your child.

Tapestry is used for daily assessment and observations of the children within our school environment. Staff members will upload observations regularly, giving you an insight into your child's time whilst at school.

We host informal 'Settling in Meetings' at the beginning of October. This is an opportunity to discuss any initial concerns or successes since starting the term. Formal Parents' Meetings are arranged in the Spring and Summer Terms for you to talk to your child's Teacher or Key Person about their progress. As a school, we do operate an open-door policy, and if you wish to talk to your child's teacher or Key Person, we request you make an appointment to ensure you have the time needed to discuss any matter. When required, Microsoft Teams can be used for our Parents' Meetings, 1-2-1 meetings and workshops.

You will receive an Attainment Report at the end of each term outlining the progress and achievements your child has made. This will include personalised targets and next steps in each area of learning.

Trips and Visits

We pride ourselves on providing a rich, stimulating and inspiring curriculum for all our learners. Our learning topics can be enhanced through a school trip or an external visitor. These create opportunities to be inspired, to learn in different environments and to experience something new.

When planning a school trip, a letter will be sent out via Cognita Connect informing families of all information needed, including any payment details that may need to be made. We always strive to give families as much notice as possible when planning a school visit.

Some visits or trips will involve all children within the Early Years where age appropriate. But some may be planned with just one class, linking carefully to their current learning topic.

Read Write Inc Phonics

The development of good literacy skills, in particular reading skills, is essential for children to access the whole curriculum. From an early age, the children at Long Close School are taught phonics through the Read Write Inc. scheme. This is based on a 'synthetic phonics' approach which, as the Rose Report (2006) advocates, "is, for the vast majority of young children, the best and most direct route to becoming skilled readers and writers".

As a School, we are a Centre of Excellence for Read Write Inc Phonics due to our outstanding training, practice and results.

Our Reading leader, Miss Staniford and I will host a Phonics Workshop designed to support parents with Phonics whilst at home. I urge you to attend this workshop; it is highly regarded by previous families, and we endeavour to give you all the tools and information you need to feel confident in Phonics. Once this workshop has been delivered, you will receive a pack with the resources you need to support your child with phonics at home.

We understand phonics is a new initiative for many parents, so we want you to feel supported and understand how your child is learning. Phonics workshops will take place throughout the academic year to ensure parents understand the Read Write Inc. scheme that we follow at Long Close.

Toileting

We work in partnership with all our parents to ensure that we can provide your child with the same toilet support in the setting as you do at home. If you want to begin toilet training your child, please inform their Key Person so we can support your child whilst they are at school.

If your child is in nappies or pull ups, you will need to provide your own nappies and baby wipes. We will request more supplies when needed. Nappy changes are reported to you through 'Tapestry'.

All children have accidents, it is part of their learning. Therefore, we ask for **all** children to have a change of clothes and underwear in their bag each day- this can then remain at school. We only have a very small amount of spare clothes and children feel much more comfortable in their own change of clothing.

Uniform

All children are required to wear school uniform which must be purchased from Billings and Edmunds only.

Your child will need a Long Close School bookbag to carry their belongings. This not only encourages independent organisation skills but also gives the children a sense of belonging.

Please ensure you provide your child with a named water bottle each day. We are happy to clean and keep your child's water bottle at school if you wish.

Please refer to the school website for further information www.longcloseschool.co.uk to see the latest school uniform requirements. It is imperative that all your child's uniform is clearly labelled.

Swimming

Reception and Pre School will be attending swimming lessons on Tuesday mornings at Windsor Leisure Centre. This will be lead by swimming instructors from the leisure centre.

Please see the uniform list for what equipment your child will need.

End of Reception Year

At the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage – in the summer term of the Reception year in school – teachers complete an assessment which is known as the EYFS Profile. This assessment is carried out by the Reception teacher and is based upon what they, and the staff caring for your child, have observed over a period of time.

Another important part of the EYFS Profile is your knowledge about your child's learning and development, so do let your child's class teacher know about what your child does with you: how confident they are at writing their name; reading and talking about a favourite book; speaking to people your child is not so familiar with or their understanding of numbers.

All the information collected is used to summarise what your child has achieved in the seven areas of learning and development by the end of Reception. We will give you a report of your child's progress, including information from his or her EYFS Profile.

Emergencies

In the event of a medical accident or incident concerning your child, you will be informed via email using our Meditracker software.

In the event of a serious accident or an illness, you will be telephoned immediately. If an ambulance is needed, the child's Teacher/Head of Department/appropriate persons will travel with the child to hospital.

In the event of an emergency or unforeseen circumstance that results in the closure of the school, Cognita Connect, the school website and school answerphone will be used to provide parents with the required information. This will include times when the school is closed due to poor weather conditions.

Celebrations & Birthdays

Pupils may only bring in bought cakes, sweets or similar items that are clearly packaged/labelled to celebrate their birthdays with their classmates. These should be given to the class teacher immediately on arrival at school.

Parents are reminded that we have a high number of pupils at school who are allergic to a range of food ingredients, including nuts and eggs. These include air borne allergies. We ask parents to support our school policy in respect of allergies by not allowing pupils to bring to school any food items or sweets containing nuts.

Food and Catering

As a school, we will provide all food that your child will consume throughout the day.

Please discuss special dietary requirements with the Head of Early Years prior to your child's official start date. If these change throughout the year, please inform the school office and your child's Key Person.

We are a nut free school. It is essential your child does not bring any food into school which may contain nuts due to multiple children with severe allergies.

Snack: Healthy snacks and milk are offered in the morning and afternoon for children.

Lunch: Children who attend all day will be offered a choice of hot meals and dessert in the Early Years Multipurpose Hall. Staff sit with the children during lunch to encourage them to eat a sufficient amount, try new foods, develop good table manners and make healthy choices which will stay with them for life. Water is freely available at this time.

Afternoons: During the afternoon, children have free access to fruit and milk.

Children staying for After School Care will be provided with a 'light tea' which will have been pre-booked with the school office.

Sun Protection

In the event of hot weather, parents are required to apply sun protection lotion to their child before the start of the session. We recommend the use of eight-hour protection cream. For those children attending all day, parents are asked to provide sun protection lotion for their child so that it can be reapplied after lunch.

We would also request you provide your child with a Long Close sun hat.

Term Dates - September 2023 to July 2024

Autumn Term 2023

Starts

Wednesday 6th September 2023

Half-Term

Monday 23 October – Friday 3 November 2023

Ends

Wednesday 13th December 2023

Spring Term 2024

Starts

Monday 8 January 2024

Half-Term

Monday 12 – Friday 16 February 2024

Ends

Friday 22 March 2024

Summer Term 2024

Starts

Monday 15 April 2024

Half-Term

Monday 27 – Friday 31 May 2024

Ends

Friday 12 July 2024

Attendance

We firmly believe that regular school attendance and punctuality are essential if our pupils are to fulfil their academic potential and make the most of the educational opportunities available to them. Irregular and late attendance seriously disrupts the continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, and can lead to underachievement and low attainment. Attendance is carefully monitored by the class teachers and action will be taken by the Safeguarding Team for those with less than 95% attendance.

Authorised absences:

These are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies, or other unavoidable reasons. Please try to limit these as much as you are able. All absences require a written request/explanation addressed to the class teacher.

Extended absence:

Any requests for extended absence from school must be made in writing to the Headteacher.

Temporary absences:

Requests for temporary absences for medical purposes, or to attend an appointment, should be made in writing either using your child's School Diary for communication with the class teacher or by emailing info@longcloseschool.co.uk. These occasions need to be recorded in the 'off site' booklet held in the main office. When children are returned from an appointment back to the school site, the record in the booklet should be amended to show a return time.

Absence due to illness:

Please help us by informing the School Office as early as possible if your child is ill or unable to attend school. This allows the class teacher to mark the register appropriately.

This can be done in the following ways:

Phone: Leave a message on the pupil absence line that can be accessed by dialling 01753 520095, choosing option 1. We would appreciate being informed as early as possible. Please just leave the following information: pupil name, form and reason for absence (we do not need full medical details).

Email: We have an account for parents to email us if a child is absent or late – the address is: info@longcloseschool.co.uk.



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