

Monday 14th September 2026

Long Wittenham C.E. Primary School



Show our love through kindness, determination and curiosity; strengthening ourselves and our community

At Long Wittenham School we show our love through kindness,
determination and curiosity; strengthening ourselves and our community.

"...Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all
your strength and with all your mind; and, 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'"
Luke 10:27

Kindness

Determination

Curiosity

As we complete our first full week of the new school year, our focus has been on establishing the routines and expectations that help children feel secure, confident and ready to learn. Investing time in these foundations at the start of the year is incredibly important, as strong routines enable children to thrive both academically and socially throughout the year ahead.

One of the great privileges of leading a small school is having the opportunity to spend time teaching across all four classes. Last week, I taught in every classroom and was delighted to see how quickly the children have settled into their new year groups. Their enthusiasm, positive attitudes and readiness to learn have been wonderful to see, and they should all be very proud of the way they have started the term.

This year, our assembly programme is centred around a different theme each week. Our focus last week was on our vision, values and safeguarding. Through stories such as *Kindness is My Superpower*, *The Dot* and *Ada Twist, Scientist*, we have explored our core values of kindness, determination and curiosity, considering how these can be demonstrated both in school and beyond. We have also discussed what it means to be part of a school community and the important role each of us plays within it. As part of our safeguarding work, we reminded children about trusted adults and how to seek help if they have any worries. We also talked about the importance of good attendance and how being in school every day helps them to learn, grow and make the most of the opportunities available to them.

Finally, a reminder that our **Meet the Team and Open Classroom Event** will take place on **Wednesday 16th September at 5.00pm**. This is a great opportunity to meet the staff who work with your child, visit their classroom and find out more about school routines and expectations. We look forward to welcoming families and continuing to strengthen our partnership between home and school.

Miss Clarke

Telephone: 01865 407850

Email: office@long-wittenham.school

Attendance

Good attendance is one of the most important factors in a child's success at school. Even short periods of absence can have a significant impact on learning, progress and friendships. For this reason, we strongly discourage holidays during term time.

Please note that submitting an Exceptional Leave Request Form **does not** constitute notice or approval for absence. All requests for exceptional leave will be considered individually, and parents will be required to meet with the Headteacher (or designated representative) before a decision is made. This meeting provides an opportunity to discuss the reason for the request and the impact that any absence may have on a child's education and attendance record.

Key points to remember:

- There is no automatic entitlement to leave during term time for holidays.
- The school does not normally authorise holidays during term time.
- Exceptional leave is unlikely to be authorised where attendance is below 96%.
- Exceptional leave will not be authorised where there are concerns about unauthorised absence, truancy or repeated requests.
- Unauthorised term-time holidays may result in the Local Authority being asked to issue a Penalty Notice.

We appreciate parents' support in ensuring that children attend school every day and make the most of every learning opportunity.

Every day counts.

If you are not sure if your child is well enough to come to school please check the following guidance: [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS](#)

This Week's Learning

Acorn Class:

This week in Acorn Class, we have been enjoying reading the story *The Family Book*, talking about and drawing lots of different types of families. The children have shown great enthusiasm and creativity while sharing their ideas and learning about what makes every family special. In Maths, the children have been using their counting and sorting skills to demonstrate their existing knowledge and confidence with numbers. It has been wonderful to see them engaging so well with the activities. We have also been busy learning and adapting to our new school routine, including taking part in assemblies, lunchtimes and making new friends on the big playground at playtimes. The children have done a fantastic job settling into school life and should be very proud of themselves. It has been a busy and exciting week, and I'm sure there will be some very tired little Acorns by the end of it!

Mrs Beeton & Mrs Humphries

Birch Class:

In Birch class, we have made a positive start in our first week with the academic timetable. Children have been introduced to subjects like Geography and Science for the first time, as well as PSHE, RE, Computing, and more. In English, we wrote speech bubbles for characters from our book of the week, *I Want My Hat Back* by Jon Klassen. We are focusing on our fundamental skills of sentence writing, as well as counting and partitioning numbers in Maths. All this hard work in lessons was balanced with plenty of book time, Forest School, and some Golden Time (play) at the end of the week, to help us stay regulated and make friends.

Mr Bruno

Pine Class:

Last week, Pine Class had a very busy and exciting start to the term as we launched our new learning across the curriculum. In English, we began exploring witches through our writing unit, inspired by the engaging book *Inside the Villains*, which introduces familiar characters including wolves, giants and witches. In our reading lessons, we have

Telephone: 01865 407850

Email: office@long-wittenham.school

also started enjoying *The Witches* by Roald Dahl. In Maths, we have been revisiting addition and subtraction strategies across 10 as a foundation for our upcoming work on place value in 3- and 4-digit numbers. During Science, the children explored their prior knowledge of forces and magnets, sharing ideas and questions to guide our learning this term. On Thursday morning, we took part in an exciting workshop led by Bright Sparks Science, where we investigated healthy foods and healthy bodies by comparing the amount of sugar in different foods and taking a range of body measurements. We finished the week with our first swimming lesson, which the children thoroughly enjoyed, and homework was sent home to be completed each week.

Mrs McNamee

Oak Class:

Oak Class have had a fantastic first full week back! In Maths, we have been developing our understanding of decimal fractions and applying this to a range of challenges. In writing, we have begun planning a balanced discussion, exploring the question: Should children be allowed to journey through the forest alone? This has already sparked some thoughtful debate and interesting ideas. In Geography, we have started learning about North America, identifying its physical and human features as we prepare to explore the countries that make up the continent in more detail. We have been very impressed with the children's enthusiasm and engagement across all subjects this week.

Mrs Greenway and Miss Clarke