



LONG CLOSE SCHOOL

# Early Years' Welcome Booklet

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Long Close School and our Early Years Department. We are looking forward to welcoming you and your family to our inspiring setting.

This booklet is intended to give parents helpful information on the day-to-day life and essential information for Early Years.

This can be used as a point of reference but if you do ever have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to consult with your child's Teacher or Key Person.

We hope that the information in this booklet is useful and will help all new pupils and their parents to quickly settle into the family of Little Long Close.

Our Early Years department encompasses the early stage in a child's education. This is the Foundation stage (Nursery and Reception). These are important years in a child's education and the development of a love of learning and strong values are instilled.

I hope that you find this booklet useful. There will also 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 and I look forward to seeing you soon.

**Milly Carpenter**  
**Head of Early Years**  
**Long Close School**

## 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 loving relationship. Following on from our Pre-school, children enter our Reception class before moving on to Key Stage 1.

## Curriculum

Within the Nursery, Pre-school and Reception classes, the children follow the Early Years Curriculum and undertake activities in the following 7 areas of learning:

### *The Prime Areas*

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

### *The Specific Areas*

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

We follow 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.

## Collection of a child by another parent/carer/adult

We have a password system in place so in the event that 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 the school teachers are prepared to receive an unexpected adult but allows us to prepare your child for the fact that you will not be collecting them.

## Early Years Communication

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 well-being (sleeping, toileting and dietary patterns) and information personal to your child.

Tapestry will also be used to document all your child's observations whilst at school. This is a fantastic way for you to see what your child is doing whilst at school. You can also add your own pictures and videos from home; the children love sharing these with their peers.

**Cognita Connect** is our secure app and web-based parent portal. It gives you 24-hour 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. Please go to the 'Forms' section of the app to complete all relevant forms, including the photo permission form.

### 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

## 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 and if an ambulance is needed the child's Teacher/Head of Department/Nursery Manager/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 etc.

## Festivals and Celebrations

We celebrate Christmas and Easter, as do the whole school, along with many other major religious festivals inclusive of all the children's and families' faiths in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents and carers are always welcome in to share important events in their lives with all our children.

We celebrate the birthdays of all our children and staff with candles, music and dancing. We ask that you do not bring in cakes to share with the children due to an increasing number of children with severe allergies in the Early Years setting.

## Key Person

Throughout the Nursery and Pre-school, each child has a designated Key Person. In Reception the class teacher is the child's key person and the teaching assistants also feed individual children's observations to the class teacher for their Tapestry online interactive learning journals to aid assessment and planning for next steps activities.

The role of this person is to:

1. ensure that your child is safe and happy in the environment
2. plan activities to take your child's learning to the next level of understanding
3. 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.

## How to support your child's learning

Below are suggestions as to how parents can help their child in this stage of their development-please refer to the 'Little Long Close Ready' document that you should have received for further guidance and suggestions.

- Ensure children arrive at School on time to ensure that they participate in self-registration and group time
- Recite Nursery Rhymes and Number Rhymes. Rhythm and rhyme are very important underlying skills for later literacy development
- Read stories to your children
- Encourage children to put coats, shoes on/off etc. independently
- Develop children's ability to independently use the toilet and wash hands
- Practise undressing/dressing with your child
- Look for numbers/letters in the environment
- Counting informally e.g., up and down stairs
- Involve children in everyday activities such as shopping and cleaning for example and talk to them about what it is you are doing
- Set aside a quiet time each day to talk to your child about what they are doing in Nursery/Reception, their teachers and friends. Do not be surprised if at first your child has little to say as you will find that as it becomes part of the routine they will begin to talk more freely. Use Tapestry to support and engage/record your child's learning at home

## Parent Meetings

Formal Parents' Meetings are arranged in the Autumn, 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 is used for our Parents' Meetings, 1-2-1 meetings and workshops.

## **Read Write Inc Phonics Scheme**

The development of good literacy skills, in particular reading skills, is essential to open up the whole curriculum to children. 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".

You will receive a pack with the resources you need to support your child with phonics at home. When your child is ready, we will begin sending reading books home for you to enjoy together.

We understand phonics is a new initiative for parents and 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.

## **Sun Protection Cream**

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. Parents must also complete a permission form allowing staff to support their child to reapply the cream.

## **The Long Close Nursery/Pre-school 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 8.35am.
- School ends at:
  - Long Close Nursery/Pre-school (mornings only) end 11.45pm
  - 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 After School Care provision must be booked via the school club booking system each term to secure a place.

## **Toileting**

Children in the Early Years will be all be at different stages in their development with regard to toileting. We work in partnership with all our parents to ensure that we provide the same 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 ensure we 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.

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. 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. Please refer to the school website [www.longcloseschool.co.uk](http://www.longcloseschool.co.uk) to see the latest school uniform requirements. **It is imperative that all your child's uniform is clearly labelled.**

### Helpful contacts

Head of Early Years and Reception, Deputy Early Years Safeguarding Lead and Early Years SENCO  
[milly.carpenter@cognita.com](mailto:milly.carpenter@cognita.com)

Nursery Manger, EYFS Designated Safeguarding Lead  
[Tina.brindley@cognita.com](mailto:Tina.brindley@cognita.com)

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