

Dear Parents/Carers,

As the Summer term draws to a close, I wonder at the speed with which this academic year has gone by. Where has the year gone? It has been a really successful and busy year for Longwill staff and pupils and much has been achieved. I cannot mention everything, but some highlights for me have been: recognition for our excellence in both E-Safety and 'Basic Skills' teaching; the Y6 residential trip; hosting two Oscar-winning guests; our whole school trip to Conkers; Foundation Graduation and our three pupils playing keyboard at a concert at Birmingham University. I am also immensely proud of our Y6 pupils who have worked so hard this year and achieved so much during their time with us. We shall bid them farewell on Friday, as Longwill tradition dictates (a final handshake between every member of the school) and wish them well for their future.

Justine Case

Sports Day

Last week we enjoyed our Sports Day, which was a great success. Inspired by our World Cup, pupils formed 'national teams' as they competed inside and out in great spirit. Many parents and family members joined us and their presence made the afternoon even more enjoyable. France won and finally, we all celebrated with a cooling ice pop. There are some photos on the school website, please do take a look.



Foundation Graduation

This took place last Friday. What a triumph this was! Parents, friends and family were treated to an outstanding production of 'The Gingerbread Man' in which every child took part with such confidence! Then our Nursery pupils entertained us with several songs, as the Reception class prepared for their 'graduation' ceremony. Their gowns and mortar boards added gravitas to the event too!



End of Year Show

Our End of Year Show involved every pupil in the school and they all took to the stage this Wednesday morning. The event culminated in the very special Y6 Leavers Presentations. We were treated to memorable performances from all the pupils in school. Year 1 Birch 'wowed' us with their very cool dance off between the ballerinas and Michael Jackson. Another highlight for me was Year 4 Sycamore's outstanding rendition of 'Believe'. Their performance moved us all to tears (yes, I wept in front of the whole audience!). We then heard from every 'leaver' and enjoyed their presentations about their Longwill memories. We are so proud of them all!



E-Safety Update

Last week, we were assessed for the 360 Online Safety Award, which is a nationally recognised award for excellence. Many of our staff, pupils, governors and parents met with the assessor, who examined all aspects of online safety. She was very impressed! Thank you to all who took part in the day - your knowledge and enthusiasm was much appreciated! Her report is available for you to read on the website. Parents spoke positively about how you liked our Teachers2Parents texting service as a way to optimise communication and also how aware children are about how to keep safe online. On that note, we have updated our E-Safety page on the school website with the latest information for parents (GDPR for Parents and the risks of the app, 'Fortnite').



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Headteacher's Tea Party

This took place a couple of weeks ago and invited pupils attended, along with Briony Brookman, our Chair of Governors. These children were recognised for their excellence in home learning. We enjoyed sandwiches, scones and cakes along with a lovely cup of tea! This was a huge success and we will be making this a regular termly event.



Victoria School Extension

One of the other schools on the site will soon begin building extension work, which will last for all of next year. You will notice that the car park at the bottom of the site will be closed and this will make parking a little trickier! I will keep you all informed as I know more.



Co-operative Trust

Earlier on in the year we consulted with you all on whether or not we should join in a newly created co-operative trust with eight other special schools in the city. We are all in agreement that this is a positive step for our school and we are looking forward to the prospect of working closely with each other for the benefit of our children. The plan would be for a launch very soon. We are just waiting for the LA to come back to us with some more information and 'assurances' before this can happen. I will keep you up to date with plans in the new academic year.

Attendance:

Every moment of your child's education is important! As you know, our attendance target this year has been 95% and I would like to thank everyone for helping us to achieve this. Unfortunately, this year our attendance is quite significantly lower than last year and it currently stands at 90.3%. Whilst some absence is out of our control, I do hope that next year we can improve on this! Research has made a direct link between outcomes for children and attendance.

Please help us to help your child by ensuring they are in school every day they can be next year!

Thank you.

Chair of Governors Update

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of this year I wanted to wish you all a happy summer break with your families.

It has been an eventful year. The co-operative process continues and I know Mrs Carter will keep you up to date with developments. The Governors are very much involved with the processes necessary to make this a smooth transition.

Yet again we have children working very hard. Recently I enjoyed meeting with those children who had worked diligently all year with their home learning. We had a lovely tea party, with thanks to Mrs Jackson who organised it, and the children were excellent examples of what we want our children to be: polite, hardworking, enthusiastic communicators. I do thank you all for supporting your children and the school and thank the staff for their hard work. We mustn't also forget the fun at Longwill: sports days, Christmas productions, keyboard lessons and much, much more!

I have thoroughly enjoyed my year with Longwill and look forward to meeting some of you next year. Until then have a restful summer.

Yours

Briony Brookman



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Farewells and Welcomes!

We bid farewell to five teachers who are off to pastures new (Miss Alsop, Mrs Beach, Miss Blackwell, Mrs Plews and Mrs Straw). We wish them every success in their new schools and adventures.



We will be welcoming two new teachers in September (Miss Bryan and Ms Firstbrook), both of whom have been in school over recent weeks to meet their new classes.



Congratulations: all the best to Lisa Curtis who will marry in August and become Mrs Boyce! We hope she has a wonderful day celebrating her marriage with her friends and family.



Dates for your diary

Autumn Term 2018

Term Starts: Monday 3 September 2018

Half Term: Monday 29 October 2018 – Friday 2 November 2018

Term Ends: Friday 21 December 2018

Spring Term 2019

Term Starts: Monday 7 January 2019

Half Term: Monday 18 February 2019 – Friday 22 February 2019

Term Ends: Friday 12 April 2019

Summer Term 2019

Term Starts: Monday 29 April 2019

Half Term: Monday 27 May 2019 – Friday 31 May 2019

Term Ends: Monday 22 July 2019

INSET/TRAINING DAYS

Monday 3 September 2018

Monday 5 November 2018

Monday 28 January 2019

Monday 3 June 2019

Monday 22 July 2019

Can I close by taking this opportunity to say a big 'thank you' to all the wonderful staff here at Longwill. The team who care, teach and support your children are a truly fabulous group! With them and the superb support of you all, the children are able to flourish and achieve. Now, as the holidays approach, I wish you all a safe and fun-filled summer holidays and look forward to welcoming pupils back on **Tuesday 4th September**.

Alison Carter
Headteacher

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