

Learning for Life!



Headteacher: **Ms Annemari Ottridge** M.Ed. NPQH NPQEL

Dear Parents and Carers,

One evening in mid-June, with twilight approaching and our school year moving into its final weeks, I watched a full summer moonrise in the night sky. A moon so clear and bright it cast a soft glow over everything.

Funny how one thought links to another but it reminded me of our school year. Like the cycles of the moon, we shine bright but also deserve to rest after a busy twelve months, need time to prepare ourselves to rise again in September.

For me, the rising of the moon is the promise of new things, a chance to shine brighter than before. That is one of special things about Lonsdale life. For all of us, what we do ebbs and flows. We rise, we change, we achieve new things and sometimes we drop back to rest and reflect.

And what a year this has been - rising again from our experience of Covid's restrictions, adding experiences, learning new skills, going to places we've never visited before.

The school trips and education visits started in earnest from January 2022. Most of the classes have ventured outside the school site for short trips in the local areas and some have taken day trips to Woburn Safari Park, Whipsnade Zoo and Stanborough Lakes. Weekly offsite educational activities also included horse riding, Stevenage Museum workshops, shopping and visits to the forest school site. We have also successfully completed the Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award Expedition with four pupils, who are delighted with their achievements!

Our first residential trip took place this June when 11 students and 8 staff travelled to the Lake District to spend an exciting week in Bendrigg Activity Centre. The week of fun and outdoor pursuits gave students opportunities to build their confidence and resilience. Who wouldn't be a bit spooked to go caving first time ever?! Well done and thank you, team Bendrigg. We are going again next year so if you have received a letter from Mrs Thiele, please get in touch.

Creative Arts are an important part of our school curriculum and we are committed to offer our students a variety of cultural events throughout the year. We have had theatre company visits from M&M Productions and Interplay National Sensory Theatre, and some of our GCSE students have visited West End shows as part of their coursework. The Blood Brothers performance had us all, students and staff alike, in tears, even when we knew how the story would end. Finally, what would be a year without Voice in A Million event in Wembley, where the Lonsdale choir joined once again some 7000 other young people to sing and perform in support for Adoption UK. Thank you, Mrs Thiele, Mrs North, Mrs Rosenberg and Mrs Sumner for organising these events.

Lonsdale School prides itself for being the sporting hub, offering a multitude of physical activities and sports for all students. Our teams have competed successfully against other schools in Pentathlon, Boccia, Table Top Cricket and Dance. A big thank you, Mrs Woolley, Mrs Read and Ellie Andrews for coordinating these fixtures.

Lonsdale School has been awarded with the Silver School Games Mark Award. Well done, Lonsdale School and PE Lead Mrs Woolley, for achieving the Silver School Games Mark on its return after a COVID-hiatus!

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The 6th Form Business Enterprise has ran the Whole School TuckShop for students and staff every Friday. Their products has been very popular and sales have hit a record high. Congratulations to the student Directors for running a successful business this year!

The magnificent four - Ollie, Kyra, Thomas and Aoife. Our Prefects have made sure that student voice is represented loud and clear. Thank you for your ideas, feedback and support during this year. Lonsdale students are very lucky to have such dedicated and approachable Prefects in post.

Charitable work has always been in the heart of being a Lonsdale student, together with the importance of understanding the role of active citizenship. This year, we have supported a number of charities, including Macmillan, Children in Need, Red Nose Day, Shire Horse Association and Race for Life - the top few to mention. Thank you everyone for your contributions for these important causes!

House competitions and events have taken place throughout the year. It has been a tight race this year, and I'm pleased to let you know that in 4th position with 169 points is the Blue Hawking House, 3rd place with 289 points is the Yellow Rose House, 2nd place with 293 points goes to the Green Cains House, and the winner of the 2022 House Cup is the Red Glennie House with 383 points! Well done to all students and staff!

We are saying farewell to the Year 13 leavers, who are ready to conquer the world and start their further education in local and national colleges. It has been a privilege to be part of your learning journey and we wish you all the best for the future.

This year we are also saying goodbye to Anne Harris, who is leaving Lonsdale School after 30 years of working with our students and staff. Mrs Harris's commitment to our school and the Local Authority has been recognised by Jo Fisher, Executive Director of Children Services, who wrote to Anne in person. I am sure you will join me to wish Anne a very happy retirement.

Mrs Sheena Harley has been studying her Master Degree in Environmental Studies, and Sheena is leaving us to embark on an exciting, next phase of her professional journey. We would like to thank Sheena for all her work in establishing the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, Forest School and outdoor learning curriculum for the school. We wish Sheena the very best for the future and thank her for the wealth of outdoor learning opportunities and events she has coordinated for our students.

We are saying goodbye to Jack Draper, our graduate LSA, who is starting his teacher qualification course in the University from September, and Odile Barclay, MSA, who will join a local school as a fulltime LSA. We thank you both for your commitment to the school and wish you good luck with your new ventures.

The lunar cycle begins with a new moon and ends with the full moon. Some traditions say that the first two weeks are best for creative work like planting and making; while the last two weeks are better for letting go and resting.

As July unfolds and the summer holiday comes closer. It is a time in school life to let go, rest, plan and make changes.

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2019-2022

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Looking at the calendar, I can see that in early September when our new school year begins, the moon's cycle is in its first phase, growing and shining more as each day passes. What an opportunity to look ahead with optimism and determination!

In Chinese tradition, the full **moon** is a symbol of peace, prosperity and family reunion – a perfect parallel for Lonsdale School.

Whatever your plans this summer, enjoy the break and come back to enjoy, in the words of the song "A Full Moon Rising."

Best wishes

Annemari Ottridge
Headteacher

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