

Learning for Life!



Headteacher: **Mrs Claudia Thiele** BEd Hons NPQSL, NPQH

23rd July 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of the school year, we are proudly looking back at the many things that have gone on and been achieved.

The school has been expanding this school year, and all new pupils have settled well into life at Lonsdale. The four secondary groups learning upstairs have embraced their new spaces. There will be some final works that will take place over the summer break to complete work on the practice flat and add awnings and film to windows to help during hot weather.

Our secondary pupils have worked as part of the 'Voices of Hertfordshire' project this year, which is the collective name for Children and Young People in Hertfordshire, who are involved in shaping services for those with special educational needs and / or disabilities. All work, comments and feedback from these children and young people feeds directly into the SEND partnership for Hertfordshire to support improvement work. Voices of Hertfordshire is coordinated by Sarah Stevens who is the participation lead for Hertfordshire.

Thirty-three educational visits enabled our pupils to go into the community, engage with sporting events, visit places of interest and continue their learning beyond the classroom. Eighteen pupils, who are Lonsdale's regular football team, were invited on 21st July to tour the Lamex Stadium, home of Stevenage F.C. Did you know that their pitch is a hybrid lawn made of 85% real and 15% artificial grass?

Throughout the school year, the school has celebrated and engaged in many events including Design Technology, Maths and Planting Days, as well as House events, Sports Week and a Lonsdale Talent Show, which saw our pupils turn into singers, actors and comedians.

The School Council class representatives have worked collaboratively to discuss school dinners, activities, events and fundraising. This year, they chose to support the Alfie Jones Foundation as their chosen charity for a whole year to raise money for the fight against sepsis. We would like to thank you all for supporting the multiple sponsored event which have run throughout the school year. With your generosity and contributions, the school has been able to raise an astonishing £4163 to date! If you would like to donate or follow the fundraising efforts, please visit <https://www.gofundme.com/f/lonsdale-school-are-supporting-the-alfie-jones-foundation>. It was fantastic to see so many of you joining the Family Fun Day at the Pear Tree Pub on Sunday 20th July. Thank you again for joining us!

Our newly developed after-school club offer was well attended throughout the Spring and Summer Terms. Clubs on offer ranged from sports, games and karaoke to science, creative and gardening clubs. We have started reviewing the clubs on offer with our pupils and will integrate their ideas and wishes for further after-school clubs for the next school year.

From the Spring Term, the school has had to run an amended timetable on Fridays to be able to mitigate the effect of staff vacancies on our pupils' learning. We welcomed Mrs Willis to our

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teaching team in the Spring Term. We also saw Miss Bradbery and Mrs Andrews successfully advance their careers. Congratulations!

We are sadly saying goodbye to Mr Smiley (Teacher) and Tara (LSA) who are leaving our staff team today, and we wish them all the best for their future ventures. We have got teachers interviews scheduled early in September, and we are positive about recruiting a new teacher to our team. Support staff recruitment has also continued and will continue into September. An expansion, new pupils and new roles needed to support all pupils have meant that we have needed to recruit additional people in our support team, too.

Our job adverts are on Teach in Herts, <https://www.teachinherts.com/find-a-job.htm?schoolid=327>, if you would like to help spread the word.

We are looking forward to reverting back to our usual opening times after the Autumn Term. In the interim, we have made some changes to our learning offer for pupils throughout the week since the Spring Term to ensure that the temporary earlier finish on Fridays at 1.30pm does not adversely impact pupils' learning. Friday afternoons had always been reserved for our 'ACE Afternoons', which was an opportunity to take part in learning activities embracing the school's values of ambition, community and empowerment. We have re-modelled our lunch social interaction times throughout the week to offer more structured and varied learning activities for our pupils linked to their EHCP targets, social communication and interaction and the school's values. Pupils embrace and enjoy this daily offer after they have eaten their lunch.

Thirteen young adults are leaving our school today, and five pupils are moving from primary to secondary. We wish all of those the very best and a good start in their new settings or phase. Their departures were celebrated, Lonsdale-style, through the Leavers' and Primary Proms, which are two annual events the whole school enjoys.

There is now only time for me to wish you a restful and relaxing summer, surrounded by your family, friends and lots of sunshine.

With kind regards,

Mrs Claudia Thiele
Headteacher

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