



Longstone CE Primary School Newsletter Jan 2025

'Where every child is nurtured, a love of learning is ignited and each child can shine.'

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am delighted to be writing the first newsletter of 2025, reflecting on the eventful month of January. As many of you know, January can often feel like a challenging month with the festive season behind us, cold and dreary weather and the wait for payday. This year was no exception, with Longstone facing its own sets of challenges, including snow and ice at the start of term and wave of illnesses affecting both children and staff.

Despite these hurdles, there was no room for January blues at Longstone. Our incredible children, with their boundless energy, passion and enthusiasm, brightened even the gloomiest January days. Therefore, I am excited to share their achievements and activities with you in this newsletter.

Warm regards,

Mark Knight

Headteacher

Inside the classrooms



Donaldson

Miss Hall: "This half term we have been learning all about the Arctic and conducting experiments to test how animals stay warm in the Arctic as well as testing materials to find the best one for a coat!"

Up and coming: "Over the next couple of weeks, we are learning about Lunar New Year and will be making lanterns and doing a food tasting."

Dahl

Miss Fox: "Dahl loved our Dragon Hunt at the start of this half term and we described where we found them using prepositions. They've also loved writing their own Dragon Encyclopaedias. In Art they have been exploring primary and secondary colours. In computing, they have loved using the laptops to create pictograms and bar charts."

Up and coming: "Dahl will be identifying similarities and differences between our school now and schools in the past. In Science, they will be learning about different habitats and food chains."

Morpurgo

Miss Sedgewick: "In Morpurgo, we have been enjoying our new book: The Dragon Machine. We have produced some fantastic Dragon Encyclopaedias, letters and Dragon Guides so far! As well as this, we have loved learning about rocks and fossils in Science and settlements in Geography."

Up and coming: "We are so excited to start making our slingshot cars in DT!"

Rowling

Mr Raybould: "Children in Rowling class have really enjoyed getting into writing their "Lost Thing" stories as well as learning about stop-motion animation."

Up and coming: "We'll be writing a biography about Ignatius Sancho as well as filming our stop-motion animations. Not only that, but children will also be designing their own playgrounds and learning more about Islam."

Writing at Longstone



I hope your child has come home this month full of enthusiasm and excitement about their writing. We have introduced a new and highly regarded writing programme called Literacy Tree.

[Our Impact](#)

This approach engages and inspires children by basing their writing on books, novels, and picture books. For example, our Y2/Y3/Y4 students have been on thrilling dragon hunts around the school, while the Y5/Y6 students experienced a theatre trip and discovered a 'lost thing' in their classroom. Meanwhile, our Rec/Y1 students have been enchanted by the discovery of a magical paintbrush.

The books currently being studied are:

- **The Magic Paintbrush** by Julia Donaldson (Rec/Y1)
- **The Dragon Machine** by Helen Ward (Y2/Y3/Y4)
- **The Lost Thing** by Shaun Tan (Y5/Y6)

In next month's newsletter, I look forward to sharing our whole school display, showcasing some of the high-quality writing produced through this exciting new approach (while in the future we hope to adopt the reading and spelling part of the Literacy Tree approach).

"Thank you" from a surprise visitor!



In the previous newsletter, you may recall the fun we had running the 'Merry Mile' to raise funds for Blythe House Hospice, which supports people affected by life-limiting illnesses ([Blythe House Hospice – Support for people affected by life-limiting illness](#)) I am thrilled to announce that we raised an incredible £499!

As a token of their appreciation, a very special visitor surprised the children during a recent assembly, making the event even more memorable.

A heartfelt thank you to Mrs. Reeves for organizing this wonderful event and to all of you for your kind and generous donations.







Sporting Stars



One way to beat the January blues is to stay active, and that's certainly been the case at Longstone School. This month, our students participated in cross country and indoor athletics events. I am delighted to report that they represented the school with their usual high standards, demonstrating excellent sportsmanship and a strong will to win. Their efforts paid off, resulting in the school winning a trophy in the indoor athletics!

Reports written from the children:

Cross Country

Quinn and Hugo: "Last Wednesday the year 5/6 girls and boys went to Whitworth park for second round of cross country. We ran 1.5 km. The Year 5/6 boys came 7th overall out of 14 schools. Kiera came 2nd out of 94 children. Well done Kiera!"

Ewan: "We had to run 1km (1 lap) around a weaving course. The girls went first, and we all ran well with some of us finishing in the top 20 out of 80 runners. Overall the girls team came 4th out of 14 teams."

Anwen: "Next, it was the boys team and just at the last minute the organiser said they would need to run 2 laps which was 1.5km, as there were a lot of boys and they were worried

about them bumping into each other. Overall the boys came 4th out of 15 teams. Ewan ran a fabulous race and finished 6th overall out of over 90 runners - a superb effort!"

Indoor athletics

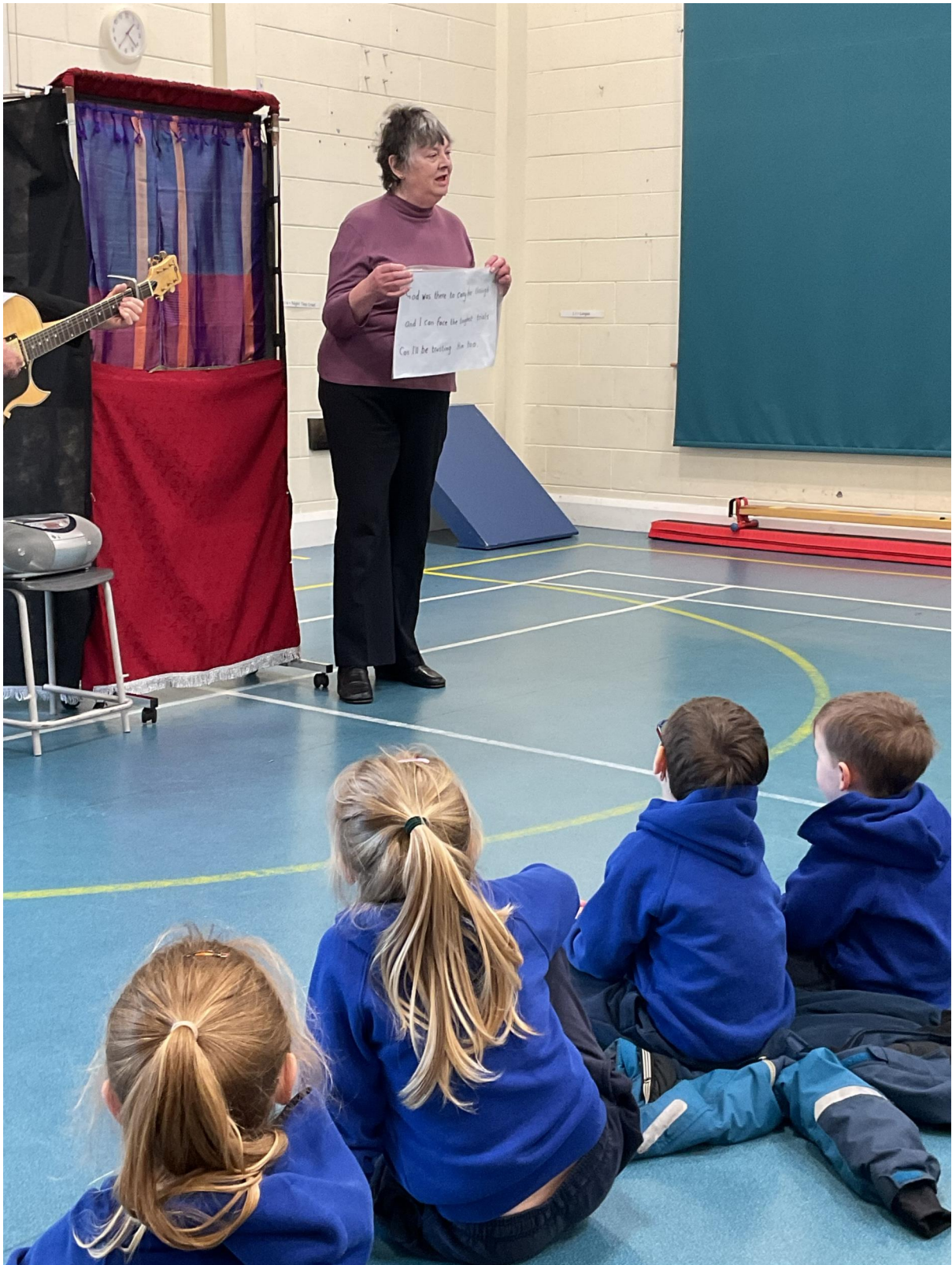
Kiera: "Events included speed bounce, standing long jump, triple jump, vertical jump, javelin and chest push. After fields events was running. Overall Longstone A won with 362 points, Baslow A came 2nd with 375 points and Longstone B came 3rd!"







MAST puppets

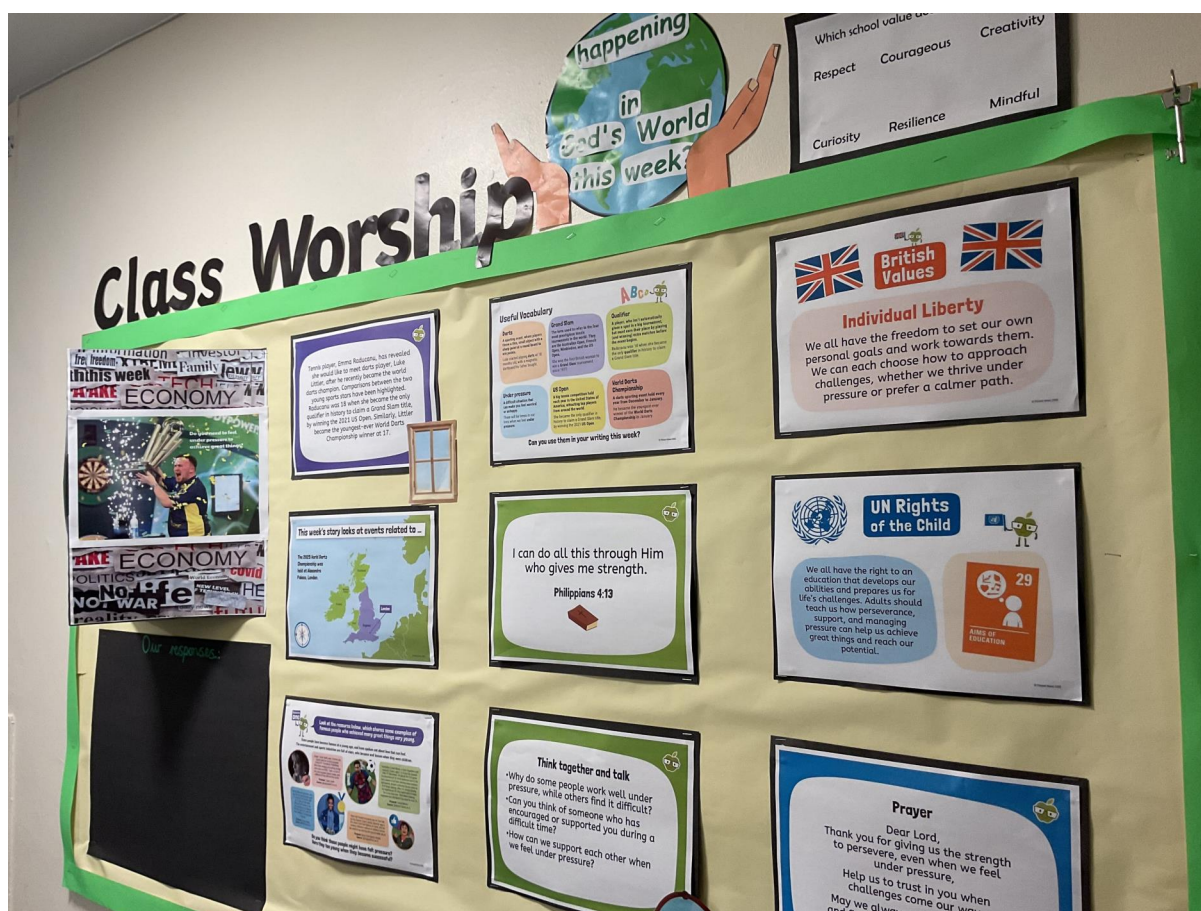


It was my pleasure to watch my first MAST puppet show, which I hear is quite an institution and fondly remembered by many of you from your school days in Der! Mr. and Mrs. Briddon captivated the KS1 children as they brought a Bible story to life with their delightful puppets.





Displays to be proud of...



A new year demands a 'spruce up' and therefore the school displays are undergoing a revamp. When you next visit, be sure to check out the following:

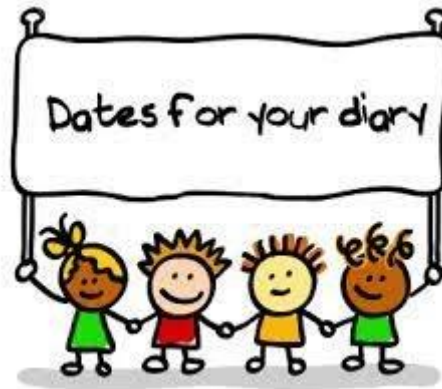
- **Collective Worship Wall:** Updated weekly to reflect what the children are learning about in current affairs.
- **Proud Wall:** Showcasing exceptional work from children, highlighting their effort and achievements.
- **Writing Wall:** Displaying all the fantastic writing happening across the school.

A warm welcome to Mrs Madin - our new School Business Officer



I am pleased to announce that Mrs. Madin, our new School Business Officer, is now in post. I know that you will extend a warm Longstone welcome to her and be understanding as she settles into her new role and gets to know you all!

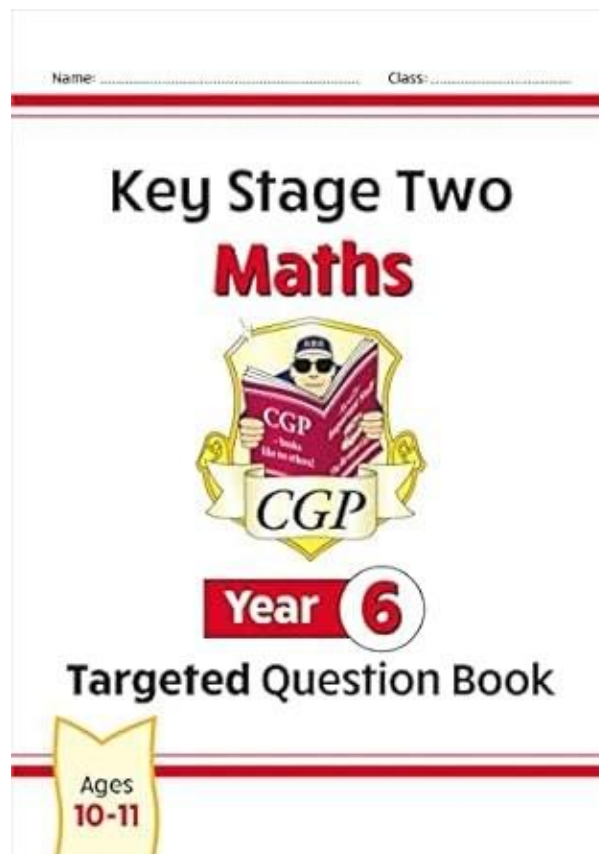
Spring term dates for your diaries...



Make sure you have the following dates in your diary:

[Longstone Dates Spring 2025 .docx](#)

Homework



I hope the changes we have made to homework are positively impacting your child's enjoyment (and yours too!). I would like to extend my gratitude to the Friends of Longstone (FOLs) for funding the homework books.

Please find attached a link to the homework policy and a handy overview of homework expectations for your child as they progress through school.

[Homework Policy 2025.docx](#)

[Homework overview of expectations at Longstone.docx](#)

If you are struggling to access any of the online homework platforms e.g. Spelling Shed, Times Table Rockstars etc please inform your child's class teachers.

Healthy habits for a healthy school



As we navigate through the winter months, it's essential to reinforce good hygiene habits with our children to keep everyone healthy. Please remind your child to wash their hands regularly with soap and water, especially before meals and after using the restroom. Encourage them to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue or their elbow when they cough or sneeze. Additionally, if your child is feeling unwell or showing symptoms of illness, kindly inform the school office as soon as possible. This helps us take necessary precautions and support the well-being of all our students and staff.

Thank you for your cooperation and support.

Every school day matters!

Attendance Matters



EVERY SCHOOL DAY MATTERS!

A new National Framework for Penalty Notices have come into effect on 19th August 2024. This means that the fine for school absences will be standardised across the country.

Fines will be considered if a child has missed 10 or more sessions (equivalent to 5 days) for unauthorised reasons. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence. For example, 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks. These sessions can be consecutive, e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week; or not e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks. The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years, e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term.

The fines will be set at £80 if paid within 21 days, and £160 if paid within 28 days. This adjustment aligns with inflation and represents the first increase since 2012.

Additionally, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, the fine will be set at the higher rate of £160. There will be a cap of two fines per parent within any three-year period. If this limit is reached, further actions such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

It is important to note that money raised through these fines is used solely by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system and to fund attendance support initiatives. Any excess funds are returned to the government.

We understand the importance of regular school attendance for your child's education and overall development. If you have any questions or need further clarification regarding these changes, please do not hesitate to contact us at school.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

Breakfast and After School Club at Longstone



Do you know that we have an amazing Breakfast Club and After School Club here at Longstone?

The Breakfast Club runs from 8am and provides the children with a welcoming, safe and fun start to the school day. The children are provided with a selection of cereal, toast, orange and apple juice while having the opportunity to play and chat with the fellow school friends.

The After School Club (The Hive) runs straight after school (Tues to Friday), with your child collected directly from their class at the end of the school day until 5pm. They are provided with snack and lots of stimulating activities in a fun and safe environment.

*Please note - currently the After School Club does not run on a Monday evening due to a lack of demand, however I would be interested to know if this has changed. Please contact the Office if you would be interested in using the After school club on a Monday evening.

Tel:01629 640377

Email: enquiries@longstone.derbyshire.sch.uk

School Uniform



We feel it is important that children feel comfortable and happy whilst at school. Wearing a uniform unites us as a Longstone family, a place where we are all nurtured as equals, but have the opportunity to remain unique individuals. The school encourages the wearing of uniform and the children enjoy showing that they belong to the school in this way.

New school uniform can be ordered via www.logoleisurewear.com and it will be sent to school free of charge. Second hand uniform is available in the school entrance, donations can be made via the FOLS post box if you do so wish.

School Uniform Guidelines:

GIRLS (Reception to Y5)

Royal blue sweatshirt or cardigan

Grey skirt, pinafore or trousers

White* polo shirt

Black shoes

BOYS (Reception to Y5)

Royal blue sweatshirt or cardigan

Grey trousers

White* polo shirt

Black shoes

GIRLS (Y6)

Navy blue sweatshirt or cardigan

Grey Skirt, pinafore or trousers

White* polo shirt

Black shoes

BOYS (Y6)

Navy blue sweatshirt or cardigan

Grey trousers

White* polo shirt

Black shoes

*please note that hoodies should only be worn on PE days.

PE Kit

Navy shorts and Navy blue T-shirt trainers (for outdoor activities)

Safeguarding leaders in school



Safeguarding is of utmost importance here at Longstone School. It runs at the heart of our values and aims; in fact it runs through everything we do. Safeguarding covers so many aspects of school life including:

- Child Protection
- Physical Site security
- Online safety
- Prevent Agenda
- Anti-bullying

To make you aware of the relevant members of staff:

Mr Knight - Designated safeguarding lead

Mrs J Reeves - Deputy safeguarding lead

A prayer to find joy and optimism in each day

Dear God,

As we journey through the challenges of January and onwards we ask for your guidance and strength. Help us to find joy and optimism in each day, even when the skies are grey and the days are cold.

Grant us the resilience to overcome any obstacles we face and the wisdom to see the blessings in our lives. May we support one another with kindness and compassion, and may our hearts be filled with hope and positivity.

Amen.