

*Loving to learn, Learning to love.
For every child a chance to shine*



LAYSTON C of E FIRST SCHOOL

The Causeway, Buntingford, Herts. SG9 9EU
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Head teacher: Mrs Adele McMurrugh

22th April 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

Spiritual Development:

In Forest School this week children have been identifying leaves - holly, cherry, ash, rowan, birch, hazel, lime, elm, sycamore, horse chestnut, as well as ivy, hawthorn and cow parsley. This activity supported children's spiritual development by encouraging a sense of awe and wonder as they observed the beauty and diversity of the natural world and developed a deeper connection with nature.

Kindness Shout-Out of the Week

Our Well-Being Ambassadors are excited to introduce a new weekly initiative to celebrate kindness across the school community. Each week, they will recognise pupils who have demonstrated exceptional care, support, and positivity towards others.

This week's Kindness Shout-Outs go to:

Phoebe Roberts - for showing kindness and care towards children in Reception

Olivia-Rose - for including and supporting her friends

Alby Stockwell - for helping staff at Forest School and in Year 4

Well done to all three pupils for being such positive role models and helping to make our school a kind and supportive place.

The Well-Being Ambassadors have also created a display for their board, which will be updated weekly to celebrate acts of kindness across the school.

Fundraising:



It was wonderful to see so many pupils taking part in Football Shirt Friday, proudly wearing their favourite kits to support Cancer Research UK. We are incredibly proud of how our pupils came together to raise awareness and funds for such an important cause. Thank you to all families for your support- events like this remind us of what a caring and generous school community we have.

We raised £91.50.

FOLS

The Easter Egg drawing competition has now been completed. The winners are:

Year R - Nellie

Year 1 - Eadie B

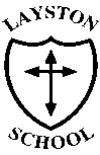
Year 2 - Georgie H

Year 3 - Olivia B

Year 4 - Poppy

They have been given their prizes today.





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Smoking and vaping:

A reminder that we are a non-smoking site, this includes vaping. Please can we ask that parents and carers do not smoke or vape on the school site or in the vicinity of the school gates where the children are able to see this.

Attendance and lateness:

The school day begins at 8:45am and finishes at 3:15pm. The school gates are closed at 8:55. If your child arrives after this time please can they go to the school office reception where they will be marked as late. Registers are open until 9:00am. Please can you make every effort to get your children to school on time as lateness disrupts the other children in the class, as well as your child's learning. Please be aware that children arriving after 9:10am will be marked as an unauthorised absence in line with guidance from the county Attendance Officer. If your child has a medical appointment and is a school dinner, please email in their food choice to the office before 9:30. Please remember to report your child's absence by 8:45am to the office on 01763271235 or via email at admin@layston.herts.sch.uk. Thank you for your continued support.

Parent engagement:

Thank you to all our parents who filled out the parent questionnaire. Below is a summary of the findings.

Overall picture:

Parent confidence in the school is **very strong**. Almost all parents would recommend the school, and perceptions of **happiness, safety, behaviour and staff care** are consistently high. The main areas for improvement are **communication, consistency and wider enrichment opportunities (clubs, wraparound provision, swimming)**.

Headline strengths

- Exceptionally high parental advocacy (94% recommend)
- Strong sense of safety and wellbeing
- High trust in staff and SEND support

Key improvement themes

- Extra-curricular and extended provision
- Timeliness and consistency of communication
- Visibility of progress feedback beyond early years

You said: "There are not enough lunchtime or after-school clubs, and opportunities have reduced compared to previous years."

We are doing:

- Reviewed current enrichment offer across year groups.
- Committed to expanding lunchtime and after-school clubs, including creative and sporting options.
- Introduced a clear plan to ensure all children have access to enrichment opportunities.

You said: "Working parents need more notice for meetings and more flexible ways to engage."

We are doing:

- Improved forward planning through clearer termly communication.
- Begun offering alternative meeting formats, including flexible appointment times where possible.
- Reviewed how and when we share key information with families.

You said: "We would like more regular updates on how our children are doing, especially beyond Reception."

We are doing:

- Strengthened expectations for regular learning updates across the school.
- Built on the successful communication approaches already used in Reception.
- Clarified how parents will receive progress information between formal meetings.





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Thank you to all parents who completed the Parent View survey. Your feedback helps us improve and ensures that we continue to grow as a school community while keeping children at the heart of everything we do.

Diary dates:

Girls Football club	Y3 & 4, every Monday at 3:15-4:00pm
Tag Rugby club	Y3 & 4, Tuesday lunchtimes
Phonics club	Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri lunchtimes
Choir	All year groups, Monday lunchtimes
Mad Hair Day	15 th May
School class photos	1 st June
Y2 visit from Rabbi Imrit Shillor	4 th June
Y4 Egyptian Day	8 th June
Hudnall Park Residential trip Y4	June 10 th , 11 th and 12 th . School trips for other year groups will be updated when confirmed
Sports day	18 th June 9:30-11:30 (Reserve 25 th June)
Reports out	6 th July
NON-UNIFORM National Sports week	10 th July
Open afternoon	17 th July
Leavers service	21 st July TBC
Leavers BBQ	21 st July TBC

Have a relaxing weekend,
Best wishes,

Adele McMurrough
Head teacher