



LONGCROFT

— SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM COLLEGE —

NEWS LETTER



Friends Explore Fantasy Worlds Together

D&D Club Goes from Strength to Strength

Miss Sinclair's D&D Club offers pupils the opportunity to express their creativity while developing social skills, building confidence and making friends.

Millions of players worldwide have stepped into the boots of mighty heroes to create their own stories and Longcroft's club, which meets after school every Tuesday in our Library, is firmly established and popular with pupils of all ages.

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Mr Baker said, "Miss Sinclair's enthusiasm is matched by the pupils, some of whom have been attending for five years. I always enjoy visiting the Library when D&D Club is on – there's a real buzz of excitement, pupils of different ages are working together and older pupils take on the leadership role of Dungeon Master. Pupils' creativity is impressive."

Year 10 pupil Jake has been playing for three years. He said, "D&D is fun, and it's my favourite after-school club. I like the creativity and adventure. I've also made friends through D&D club. It's an enjoyable way to spend time."

Mary is in Year 10. She explained, "I started playing in September. I like to use my imagination." Mary's creative writing skills have seen her feature in previous Newsletters and we look forward to publishing more of her wonderful work in the future.

Mason, who is in Year 8, added: "I've just started playing. I wanted to start because of the creativity of the game, and I'm looking forward to playing more."

We are certainly proud of our enrichment programme, and D&D offers something different – the opportunity for friends to explore fantasy worlds together as they embark on epic quests.





Headteacher's Welcome

At Longcroft School and Sixth Form we are committed to a holistic approach to education; one which involves a distinct focus on the whole child and preparing them to become well-rounded and confident adults, ready to embrace new opportunities, develop strong and positive relationships and contribute productively to their community and society.

We focus through our values on ensuring academic excellence, but also an appreciation of self and place in an ever changing and complex world; as well as on developing care, compassion and respect for others, and for the environment we share. A truly holistic education seeks to support the fullest possible development of each young person and enable them to experience all they can from life.

One way in which we support such development is through our enrichment programme, aspects of which are often featured in our Newsletters. Participation in clubs, groups and activities plays an important part in the development of young people. As we understand more about cognitive science, physical and mental health it is increasingly clear that the benefits are profound and widespread.

Lunchtime and at the end of the school day are often highlights in my day to be around the school and amongst our pupils and students. Whether it is talking about their enrichment experiences or witnessing them in action, it is great to gain a sense of the impact of getting involved. Yesterday evening as I was heading across the site, there were clusters of pupils at every turn rehearsing their lyrics in preparation for singing in our Theatre. The quality of the performances as they practiced with confidence was to behold and their conduct and interaction with each other was just wonderful. Our Dungeons and Dragons club is a longstanding feature and is now being supplemented by opportunities to engage in similar activities new to the school. The levels of engagement and genuine joy that are evident when the many pupils and students sweep in to our library each week are simply fabulous.

Whatever a young person's interests, there is something to get involved with in school and I encourage you to promote participation at home at every opportunity. It is also important to note that we always welcome new suggestions and our class and year representatives provide a great opportunity to feed ideas through to our school council.

Enjoy reading about some of the fabulous things are pupils and students have been up to this week.

Mr Perry
Headteacher



Reward Totals

So far this term our pupils have been awarded the following rewards for acting with Great Heart, Thought and Vision:



Acts of Great

HEART

40,437

THOUGHT

175,555

VISION

175,413

GRAND

TOTAL:

391,405





LOWER SCHOOL



Mr Worthington writes:

We have high standards at Longcroft, and expect pupils to show each other respect, always wear their uniform correctly and try their best. We want all of our pupils to do well and we are supportive in helping children to achieve their potential. We encourage a positive “can do” mindset towards learning, create positive learning experiences which develop our pupils’ resilience in the face of a challenge and carefully scaffold learning so that all pupils make good progress.

This week, I have spent time in various lessons across the three year groups in Lower School. Our teachers plan enjoyable lessons to include challenging content, encouraging wonder and discovery in each subject.

During the time spent in Year 7 lessons this week, I particularly enjoyed seeing how the pupils were rising to the challenge of looking at Power and Control in the context of the historical time period between 1066 and early 20th Century. The pupils could articulate their ideas well, and had a good grasp of how William the Conqueror exerted his authority as the new King in a different nation. This builds well upon existing knowledge about castles and fortification.

Another subject I have focused on this week has been Mathematics, a subject that is essential for everyday life and understanding of our world. A particular highlight for me this week has been seeing how the Year 8 and Year 9 pupils have continued to develop their algebraic skills. In our Mathematics lessons, we provide an environment where pupils can learn and become confident users of the subject and its applications. This enables our pupils to develop a deep and lasting understanding of procedures and concepts so that their chances of success are maximised. I

was very impressed by the willingness of the pupils to share their successes with me in the subject, and all were keen to demonstrate their new skills acquired at a higher level.

Part of Year 8 Science involves research and independent study into areas of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Being able to conduct independent research is important; it can develop inquisitiveness by providing opportunities for long term research and other work. Also, it can provide pupils opportunities to explore their interests in more depth and to make decisions about how and where they will direct their focus. In particular, our Year 8 classes have enjoyed researching about the Periodic Table. For their learning, the children have looked into the history of one element in particular detail.

In all of these examples what impressed me the most was how the pupils reacted to the high expectations and challenge in their lessons. As ever, our school has felt focused, calm and purposeful and our children are enjoying their learning.

Mr Worthington
Head of Lower School



UPPER SCHOOL



Mr Henderson writes:

This week has seen the start of Intervention sessions for Year 11. Pupils are working with subject specialists on areas that we have identified as being the most impactful.

The sessions, which include English, Maths, Science, Geography and History, take place on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 8.45 until 9.15.

The pupils were fantastic on Tuesday morning, arriving promptly at their session, focused and ready to learn. Mrs Ellis, Mr Thompson and I will be supporting pupils and where appropriate teaching assistants are contributing their expertise in sessions.

Mr Charlesworth is leading the History intervention sessions. He said, "All the pupils were ready to make the most of today's session. Some sought clarification of underpinning knowledge while others asked questions and advice that will help them consolidate understanding and potentially exceed their target."

On Tuesdays, Mr Charlesworth will focus his 'Starter' activity on recalling and briefly defining key concepts which pupils will self-assess. Pupils will then decode and plan an exam answer, using study materials where necessary.

Thursday's History intervention sessions will involve pupils writing an exam answer in timed conditions. These will be self/peer/teacher-assessed and then improved based on reflections.

Mrs Scott, who led Science intervention, said: "We went over key scientific terms such as errors and variables. Pupils were really well engaged. I chose this focus following analysis of mock examinations. Pupils had clearly found questions linking to types of error (parallax and zero) challenging and the time was well-spent."

Mr Henderson
Head of Upper School



SIXTH FORM



Mr Chapman writes:

We're in a good rhythm now in the Sixth Form. Students have a good grip of their timetable, including their study periods, where they are super busy with their work and where they can catch up with friends over a book, computer or a game of chess.

I have noticed Year 13 students are particularly focussed on their journey towards the completion of their time with us. For example, now that they are getting their mock papers back from teachers many are re-doubling their efforts to ensure that they plug any gaps in their knowledge and understanding of certain topics. What's particularly pleasing to see on an almost hourly basis with Year 13 is how they support one another. Seeing them help other with revision, snacks or a coffee-run is brilliant. Year 13 are also balancing completing their applications to University through the UCAS process, a key aspect of which is writing their Personal Statement—an opportunity to sell themselves to the admissions departments across the country. Year 12 watch as they model work ethic, behaviour, independence and tenacity.

Year 12 meanwhile are determined to maintain the high standards that they set in the first term. Attendance recognises their understanding that any lesson missed will be hard to catch up. A Levels are tough and need full attention. They are giving it! I enjoy seeing them working together, after lessons, to check their understanding and challenge each other- this seems to happen a lot with the Politics students! I also see students in subjects like Art in their specialist rooms pushing themselves to reflect and refine their work. This week I have seen our Theatre Studies students perform one of their challenging pieces to other students at lunchtime. The sense of focus, challenge but then pride afterwards seen in these students is one we can all learn from.

Finally, I visited Year 11 once again this week in assembly as our application process continues. There's a positive buzz in Year 11 about our Sixth Form—which is great. In the days leading up to half term, we will be interviewing all those who have applied—ensuring their needs are going to be met in our fabulous Sixth Form.

Exciting times for all in the Sixth Form now and for the future...

Mr Chapman
Head of Sixth Form

SHOW RESPECT TO OTHERS

**TELL A TRUSTED ADULT
IF SOMETHING UPSETS YOU**

**DON'T
CHAT WITH
STRANGERS**

BE HONEST WITH PARENTS & CARERS

ASK PERMISSION
*before
downloading
anything*

AVOID SHARING PRIVATE PHOTOS

Don't give away
personal
information

Stick to trusted apps

TAKE NOTICE OF AGE RESTRICTIONS

DOUBLE CHECK YOUR NEWS SOURCES





TEACHING & LEARNING

*Mr Taylor writes:*

Hello again. In the run up to the exam season, today I will share some further tips on how you might support your child through the revision process.

Establish effective study habits

Help your child create a study plan early on (this will make you aware of their exam dates too), making sure it is realistic and achievable to avoid de-motivation. Planning in advance will also help avoid ineffective cramming sessions further down the line. Encourage them to use a weekly planner so they are accountable for their work. Don't micro-manage. Provide extra support if they need or ask for it.

Take a break

Don't try and force them to work for hours at a time. Their concentration span is limited and it will hinder the success of their revision if they are trying to do mammoth sessions. Suggest the use of a timer as well as regularly changing revision subject, to avoid getting stuck in a rut.

Watch for signs of frustration

It's important that your child is in the right frame of mind for revising. If they are struggling over something in particular, it may be best to park it for the night, reassess the next day and break it down into manageable chunks. Look out for stress and worry over exams that have been and gone. Be sure to ask them how their exam went, then shift their focus to what's coming up next and encourage them to say in a positive mindset.



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Read the syllabus

Every exam board maintains a syllabus for their exams. For example, the exam board called OCR maintains a GCSE PE exam syllabus. Check your child knows which exam board will be writing their exam, as there can be differences between boards. Once this has been figured out, it's easy to find the right syllabus for the exam. The syllabus is an invaluable resource, setting out exactly what can be tested on the exam. This makes the decision of what topics to revise easy: if it's on the syllabus, revise it!

Focus on weaknesses

This point may seem controversial. For parents, it's often hard to focus on their child's weaknesses. For pupils, it can be even harder. Therefore, there's often a tendency to overlook weaknesses and focus on strengths. However, when it comes to exams, addressing areas of weakness can pay the best dividends in terms of increased marks scored on the final exam. For example, if your child's already scoring 70% on the trigonometry section in Maths GCSE, they will need to work hard to increase that to 90%. On the other hand, if they are scoring only 10% on the algebra section, it will be much easier to grab a couple of extra marks to get to 50%+; remember, even working can get marks in the final exam! Don't let the law of diminishing returns get in your child's way.



Test your child

Revision can be demotivating for many teenagers, especially for those taking public exams for the first time (e.g. GCSEs). It's really the first time they will need to spend their spare time studying. Rather than just forcing your child to spend hours in their room, try to make revision interactive. For example, you could test your child on a particular topic, or help them to make flashcards. This can be far more effective than going solo with revision.

Take your child out for a treat

The quotation "Spare the rod, spoil the child", while a figure of speech, raises the age-old question of whether it's best to exercise unbending discipline or more liberal leniency. Ultimately, this is a personal question for you to answer, and different approaches might work better for different children. However, those parents who have tendencies towards the side of more rigid discipline shouldn't forget to take their child out for a treat once in a while. Even though like most teenagers your child might not express it, they'll be grateful to you for recognising that revision is tough and for giving parental sanction to some break time. Taking breaks to do fun things will also allow your child to go back to revision with a fresh mind, ready to absorb information like a sponge.

I hope you find some of these ideas useful.

Mr Taylor
Head of Teaching and Practitioner Development



IN FOCUS

SCIENCE

Pupils in Year 7 are enjoying their Science lessons. Miss Sinclair and Mr Wilson have been covering 'Reproduction' this week, and Mr Baker said: "I was impressed with pupils' work and thinking. In Mr Wilson's class Ben, who is in 7RTO, asked some excellent questions while in Miss Sinclair's lesson pupils offered answers that showed tremendous maturity and understanding of sexual and asexual reproduction."

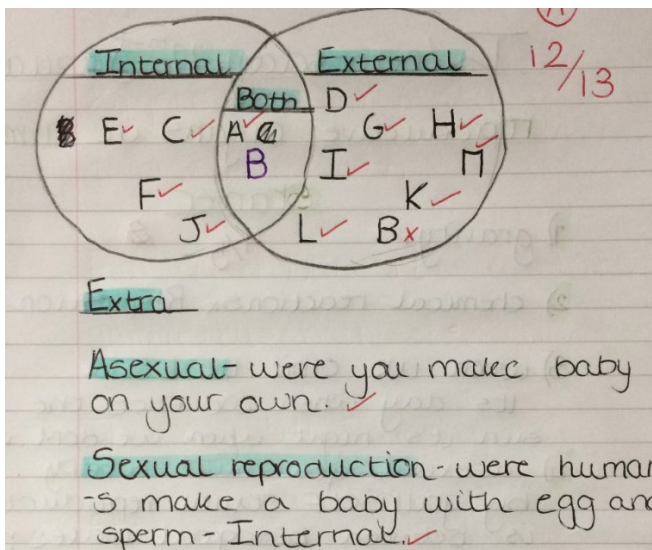
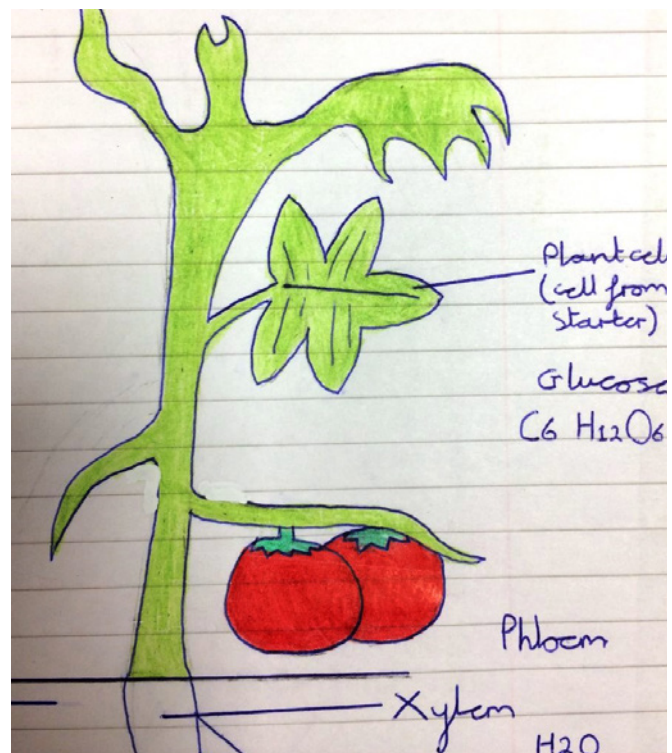
Year 7 pupils Annabel, Bella, Scarlett and Sophie who are in 7PDV discussed their work in Science. Annabel said, "I liked the 'Space' topic. I enjoyed learning about the planets – their orbits and gravity." While all the girls had studied Science at their primary schools, and Bella recalled learning about light and electricity and building a circuit, she added: "It wasn't as interesting because there weren't as many new things."

Sophie explained, "I like doing the practicals. We dissected a chicken thigh and looked at the ligaments, joints, bones and nerves. We also used the microscope to look at the cells of an onion." She added, "With Miss Sinclair we've learned about the earth's crust – the inner and outer core."

Scarlett said, "I most enjoyed learning about the cells and the human body. We learned about the heart and the digestive system." Miss Sinclair said, "The pupils have done some excellent work and are always full of enthusiasm!" Some of the girls' work is featured here, alongside work from Matilda who is also in 7PDV.

Internal and External Fertilization	
Starter	Fertilization
Similarities	Differences
Male and Females both have Gametes. Everyone has Gametes. Uses sperm and egg. Results in a zygote being formed.	Females have a uterus and ovaries where as a male doesn't. Males have sperm cells and testicles but have different hormones than a female called testosterone. A biological female is XX and a biological male is XY.

Asexual = Asexual is where you don't feel sexual attraction to anyone. Only involve one parent, this doesn't get two combined gametes. **Sexual** = Sexual is where you feel attracted towards someone or you feel sexually active. X involves male and female gametes (fertilisation) and this is how you get your parents DNA. This doesn't have to have sex or intercourse.





Memory Lane

This week we take a trip back to 1979 and feature Mr Usher's tutor group.



Back row:

*Nigel Banks; Andrew Hagyard;
Nicholas Kelly; Gregory Douglas;
Paul Curtis and Alick Scott.*

Second row:

*Kate Kershaw; Lisa Graham; Jane Sibert;
Sarah Ankrett; Janette Forder;
Sonia Bailey; Angela Pilkington;
Claire Brusby; Sarah Brabiner
and Joanne Garbutt.*

Third row:

*Graham Chastney; Philip Rank;
Garry Standish; Simon Anderson;
John Bennett; Robert Littlefield;
John Cameron and Dewi Winkle.*

Front row:

*Anne Buckle; Jacqueline Swaine;
Lynn Galvin; Beverley Hudson; Mr Usher;
Jayne Gommell; Sally Beavis;
Michelle Latham and Helen Chorlton.*



Intra-School Sport Results

While Longcroft has a well-deserved reputation for success in competitive sport, our PE curriculum ensures all pupils enjoy regular opportunities to compete through intra-school events. Last term all pupils took part in a dodgeball competition. Pupils are organised into teams, named after inspirational competitors from London's 2012 Olympic Games.

Mrs Henderson said, "The pupils really enjoy the competition, which is always played in a great spirit. The sporting etiquette shown by the pupils is always very impressive."

Dodgeball – Boys

	Adams	Ennis	Grainger	Trott
Year 7	3rd	1st =	1st =	4th
Year 8	3rd	1st	2nd	4th
Year 9	1st	4th	3rd	2nd
Year 10	4th	2nd	3rd	1st

Dodgeball – Girls

	Campbell	Farrah	Ainslie	Wiggins
Year 7	4th	3rd	1st	2nd
Year 8	4th	2nd	1st	3rd
Year 9	2nd	3rd	1st	4th
Year 10	3rd	1st =	1st =	4th



LIBRARY NEWS



Ms Carvill writes:

Competition Time

This month First Story launch their 100-word story competition, open to all year groups at participating First Story schools. Longcroft will be running the competition in-house and sending our winning entries to the national finals. We have had great success with our submissions previously and can't wait to read some of yours.



Telling a story in just a few words is called flash fiction or micro fiction, and it can be quite challenging but it's also great fun. Here are a few tips to consider:

- Pick the type of story you want to write.
- Really think about the genre. Is the story emotional, a snapshot, or an anecdote?
- Decide on a title, it can be a great introduction.
- Introduce the unexpected.
- Be succinct and make your words work.
- Limit your characters
- Jump into the story. Begin at the most important part, the heart of the story.
- Edit, edit, edit. Cut everything that isn't 100% necessary.
- Further resources are available from the Library and your English teachers. The deadline for the competition is Friday March 3rd. Prizes will be awarded.

“The most valuable of all talents is that of never using two words where one will do.”

—Thomas Jefferson



Hive Young Writers' Competition

Poetry / Flash Fiction / Short Story **2023**



This open-themed competition is open to young people across Yorkshire and the nearby north. The deadline is January 31st. You can enter two pieces of writing free. It can be fiction or poetry.

You'll find ideas, writing prompts, editing tips and everything you need to know here: <http://www.hivesouthyorkshire.com/competition>

Age Categories: 14 – 16; 17 – 19 and 20 – 30

Judges: Dan Powell (fiction) & Kathryn Bevis (poetry)

Great prizes including publication!

“Words can be like X-rays if you use them properly—they'll go through anything.
You read and you're pierced.”

—Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*





Care and Achievement Co-ordinators

Our Care and Achievement Co-ordinators work with specific year groups to ensure the welfare and progress of pupils and are the first point of contact for parents.

They support children to achieve academically by establishing a positive learning environment, visiting and working in lessons and supervising and supporting individuals and groups of pupils.

Our team, and their work mobile phone number which parents can use to contact them, are pictured below.



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Miss Taylor

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