



Leedon Lower School

'Learning without limits'



Welcome to Leedon Lower School

Foreword: Richard Benson,
Head Teacher, says...

It is with great pride that I welcome you to our truly wonderful school.

We are a Community Lower School that provides education for children from the age of two, up to nine years. We cater for up to 330 full time children, and have 60 places in 'Leedon's Little Learners Pre-School'. We are a popular school and have just expanded to 90 places in Reception year due to demand.

Welcoming and successful

We are a very welcoming school with a friendly, family atmosphere. The school is very successful at ensuring that its pupils attain good academic

standards. But, not at the expense of a rich, real and exciting curriculum that produces independent thinkers!

Nurture Group

We have a Nurture Group that provides intervention for children who we feel require extra support in Reception

Learning

We want to ignite an interest in learning, and for our pupils to be independent and enthusiastic 'lifelong learners'.

Enriched learning

We enrich our curriculum with many learning opportunities including trips to local educational sites and invite in many interesting visitors.

Excellent behaviour

I'm very proud of the behaviour of our pupils. They are a credit to the school, and most important of all, to themselves and their families.

Committed staff

None of this could happen though without our highly experienced, dedicated staff who want the best for all pupils!

Parent partnership

Another very important part of our school is you, the parent. We look forward to working in partnership with you to provide the very best quality education and learning experiences for your child.

By reading the many parent and pupil stories within this prospectus, we hope that you will see

just how important you and your child are to us. We also hope that you will realise how hard everyone works to try and make learning fun so that all of our pupils become passionate independent learners and develop great self-belief.

Get in touch

The staff and governors of Leedon Lower School understand that choosing the right school is probably one of the most important decisions you will make. For this reason we would like to invite you to visit us so that you can meet the children and adults who work in our school and see for yourself what makes our school so friendly and special.

To make an appointment please email: leedon@cbc.beds.sch.uk or call 01525 374713.

Georgina Pantling and Matthew Hughes live in Leighton Buzzard with their daughters, Taylor, aged 13, and Ruby-Lei, aged eight.

Ruby-Lei is now flourishing and enjoying learning in the caring atmosphere of Leedon Lower School

Fresh start

It was like turning a corner and coming into the light for Ruby-Lei and her parents when she started at Leedon Lower School at the age of five. Her Mum, Georgina, says: "Ruby-Lei made a fantastic start at the school considering she was unwell and her condition had still not been completely diagnosed. The staff at Leedon did a lot to help her, she made new friends and she soon started to blossom."

Understanding staff

Ruby-Lei has subsequently been diagnosed with Irritable Bowel Syndrome and possibly also has Inflammatory Bowel Disease. Georgina says: "The staff did not understand her at her first school, but at Leedon they have been marvellous with her. They have gone above and beyond the call of duty to try to help Ruby-Lei and us, as her parents."

Showing they care

Leedon arranged a care plan with Georgina before Ruby-Lei even started at the school. "And now they regularly invite me in to ask me how I am and how things are going. I have never experienced this with any other school before," she explains.

Warm welcome

The Education Welfare Office recommended Leedon Lower School to Georgina and Matthew. "I liked Leedon straight away when I went to see it. The school had a warm, welcoming atmosphere and I felt very reassured. After Ruby-Lei started, I was impressed with the excellent communication between

members of staff. Everyone knew about Ruby-Lei's situation, including the reception staff and dinner ladies. They all understood something was not quite right even though Ruby-Lei's condition hadn't been fully diagnosed when she first started," Georgina says.

Help with learning

Educationally Ruby-Lei soon began to pick up. "She was really behind when she started at Leedon and couldn't even recognise her own name because she couldn't pick out the letters. As parents, our main priority was for Ruby-Lei to be happy and comfortable at school, but the staff started her doing extra reading and writing and she has now caught up and is doing well and enjoying her lessons," Georgina says.

Kind reception ladies

"Ruby-Lei likes all the friends she has made and she particularly likes the ladies on reception who are brilliant with her. If she is having a bad day they will care for her. Knowing she can go to these ladies helps her continue at the school and means she doesn't have to stay at home if she is a little bit unwell in the mornings. I am comfortable that she can give it a go at school knowing that she will be looked after," Georgina says. "I can't praise the reception ladies highly enough for all the help they have given her. The dinner ladies are brilliant too and know what she can't have to eat and never try to persuade her to eat too much."



Children say

Ruby-Lei says: "I enjoy learning Spanish at school and helping out the reception ladies."

Friendly atmosphere

Georgina would wholeheartedly recommend Leedon to other families. "It is such a friendly, caring environment for the children and nothing is too much trouble for the head teacher and the staff. If you have a query they sort it out quickly even though they are such busy people. If you ask about something at the beginning of the day they will give you the answer straight after school. It is very reassuring for the parents," she says.



Jackie and Keith Machin live in Leighton Buzzard with their four-year-old twins, Dylan and Ellie.

The Machin twins are both thriving in the homely atmosphere of Leedon Lower School

Settling in

Jackie and Keith are delighted with the good start their twins made at Leedon Lower School. Jackie says: "Our experience of the school so far has been brilliant. The twins started in Leedon's Little Learners, the nursery, at the age of three and moved up into the Reception class last September. Dylan had problems settling in but the staff were all very good with him. They would greet him in the morning and take him off me because he was very clingy to begin with. They suggested I rang up at about 10 am to see how he was getting on and would tell me he was sitting doing his phonics and was really happy."

Coping well

Eventually Jackie and Keith discovered Dylan had Type One Diabetes. Jackie says: "Now he is getting the right treatment for his condition he is like a different child, but the staff handled his issues very well at the time when we didn't know what was wrong with him. When Dylan was first diagnosed I didn't want him to miss school, but he has to have his blood sugars tested four times a day because his condition changes and he has to have injections, so I used to spend all day with him at school caring for him with the help of his teachers."

Help from staff

Now staff at Leedon have learnt to test Dylan's blood sugars and give him his injections, Jackie just goes in for the lunch time test and to give him his insulin. "Because I am on the school premises every day, I now provide lunch cover in Little Learners. I help out with the children while the staff take it in turns to have their lunches and I really enjoy it," she says.

Smooth transition

Both Dylan and Ellie settled in well in the Reception class. "The school handled the transition skilfully by taking them from the nursery up to the main school to visit the Reception class. Ellie loved it immediately and Dylan has also settled in well now. He is coming on in leaps and bounds with his writing and loves doing phonics. Ellie loves painting, doing her numbers and reading. She is more laid back about schoolwork than Dylan, but she is progressing well," Jackie says.

After school

The twins both love PE and playing outside with their friends. They also enjoy the extra activities organised by Leedon. Jackie says: "On World Book Day they invited the children back to school in the evening and read them a bedtime story. They gave them all a cup of hot chocolate and a biscuit and the kids thought it was brilliant."

Warm atmosphere

Leedon is a very friendly, welcoming school and the children are happy and confident. Jackie says: "When we walk to school the children all seem pleased to see their friends and to be going to school. The Head Teacher says hello to the parents and the children as we walk into school and knows all the children's names. The school office staff are always friendly and welcoming and the dinner ladies are brilliant too."



Children say

Dylan says: "I like all my friends and playing with Lego at school."

Ellie says: "I like playing on the outside play area."

Family friendly

The school is in a lovely setting with a playing field, a garden and other outside spaces for the children to play in. Jackie says:

"I attended the school and so did my brothers and sisters. Some of the teachers who taught them are still teaching at Leedon. They remember us as a family and even ask after my Mum. It's such a friendly, happy place."



Universal Infant Free School Meal (UIFSM) scheme.

Break-time and drinks

Under the Fruit in School scheme children in Reception and Key Stage 1 are entitled to a piece of fruit each day free of charge. This is given as a playtime snack. Water is always available during the day. We offer milk to Reception children and Pupil Premium children for free.

School hours

Early Years Foundation Stage & Key Stage 1

• 8.50am to 3.10pm with an hour and 15 minutes for lunch and a 15 minute morning break

Key Stage 2

• 8.50am to 3.15pm with an hour for lunch and a 15 minute morning break.

Wraparound care

We run a Before School Club from 8am, until school starts, and an After School Club until 5.30pm. Breakfast is not provided, but children are welcome to bring in snacks.

Uniform

A simple uniform is helpful in establishing good standards of appearance in school and by wearing it children quickly feel part of the community. Children throughout the school wear a uniform of white polo shirt and royal blue pullover/ sweatshirt or fleece plus grey pinafore dresses or trousers/shorts (or a blue checked dress in summer).

School meals and snacks

Children can either enjoy eating a school meal or bring in a packed lunch from home. School lunches are cooked on the premises and offer an excellent choice. Children in Reception, Year 1 and 2 are entitled to a school meal for free under the governments



Luisa and Gennaro Borrelli live in Leighton Buzzard with their sons, Antonio, aged ten, Fabio, aged eight, and Nicolo, aged two.

Antonio and Fabio developed educationally and socially in the nurturing environment of Leedon Lower School



Kind staff

Luisa and Gennaro are delighted with the good start made by both Antonio and Fabio at Leedon Lower School. Luisa says: "I've always loved the school because it's such a happy, nurturing environment. When Antonio started in the Reception class they did an amazing job, giving him one to one care and support in the areas where he needed it most and since then he has come on in leaps and bounds. The staff were kind to him and he felt loved. I don't think he ever had a bad day at school."

Learning outdoors

When Antonio went up to into Year One he continued to progress well both socially and educationally. "The school provide an enriching curriculum for the children. The staff seem to really understand boys and know how to get them interested in learning by providing the right kind of topics and plenty of outdoor activities. The school had a larger farm when Antonio started, with animals for the children to visit. The staff provided a practical approach to learning that particularly suited boys," Luisa says.

Social skills

By the time Antonio reached Year Two, he was very good at reading and his writing had also come on a lot. Luisa says: "The school also gave social skills and communication skills a high priority, which I think was absolutely right. I believe this really helped Antonio's development. I was confident he was ready and well prepared to move up to his middle school when the time came."

Academic progress

Fabio went through very much the same introduction to learning at Leedon as his brother and has thrived on it, Luisa says. "Fabio is now doing very well academically. He's in one of the top sets for Maths and is being given lots of opportunity to improve his writing. The school are preparing him both mentally and orally to do a big piece of writing each week and I can definitely see that his written work is improving as a result."

Activities and trips

Luisa is pleased that Leedon has an excellent cookery room where the children can learn to make things. "Fabio loves cooking and made a wonderful pizza recently, which we all enjoyed at home. Leedon are probably the only school in the area that provide a field trip each term for each year group. When they were studying the Romans they took the children to see the Verulamium museum at St Albans and when they were learning about rugby they took them to Twickenham. It is a lot of work for the staff to put on a trip every term but they are all enthusiastic about what they do."

Caring teachers

Leedon has a good mix of female and male teachers, which Luisa thinks is a good thing for the children. "It really helps boys to have male teachers as role models as well as being looked after by female teachers at this stage. All the staff at Leedon are very committed, caring and approachable which is great for both parents and children."

Children say

Fabio says: "It's always so interesting to go to school, it's never boring."

Antonio says: "I liked all my teachers when I was at Leedon Lower School- they made learning fun."

Helpful office staff

"I would definitely like Nicolo to follow his brothers to Leedon and I always recommend the school to other people I meet. As a part-time teacher myself I can tell that Leedon is a good, well-run school with an excellent Head Teacher. The office and support staff are lovely and go above and beyond what they have to do and stay and help out at occasions in the evenings, such as school concerts and charity fund raising events," Luisa says.

Curriculum

The curriculum is divided into three stages:

- Early Years Foundation Stage: from ages 0-5
- Key Stage 1: from ages 5-7
- Key Stage 2: from ages 7-9

Leedon's Little Learners Pre-School

Each term features a fun and educational topic. Children also enjoy activities based around seasonal activities such as Chinese New Year, Valentine's Day, Mother's Day and Easter.

Reception

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum is based on seven areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- English
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Key Stages 1-2

Areas of the curriculum are:

- Mathematics

- English
- Science
- Information and Design Technology
- History
- Geography
- Art
- Music
- Physical Education
- Religious Education
- Personal and Social Education
- Spanish

All of these are taught through Key Stage or whole school themes for instance;

- Turrets and Tiaras
- Cosmic Colours
- World in Union

Sport

As well as following the Physical Education programme of work as set out in the National Curriculum, a variety of P.E. activities are offered to Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils. These include:

- gymnastics
- unihoc
- tag rugby
- football
- cricket
- athletics
- games skills
- golf



Extended curriculum: trips and visits

To extend the curriculum, and make learning even more fun, we offer many trips and activities. Recent educational trips have included:

- Reception visit to Sea Life Centre, Birmingham
- KS1 Visit to Cadbury World
- Year 4 residential trip to Grafham Water, where children enjoyed mountain biking, high ropes, power boating, archery and bushcraft
- Visit to Twickenham
- Reception to Rushmere Country Park
- KS1 to Warwick Castle
- Whole school Panto visit
- Year 4 to Wickstead Park
- Milton Keynes Cinema
- Safety Centre
- Harry Potter World
- Whipsnade Zoo
- Gullivers Land
- Christmas and Easter trails at the local church

Outdoor activities: Forest School and a farm

Our school grounds include an environmental area for topic work, and fantastic Forest Schools activities. We are also lucky enough have 15 chickens. As well as two playgrounds for Reception and a main playground, that are used all year round, we have access to Brooklands Middle School field for games and sports clubs sessions.

ICT Suite

Rather than a dedicated ICT room we utilise mobile technology within the curriculum. We have banks of mini iPads and laptops that a class can use whenever they wish to so that they can support class based learning.

Christine Nectoux and Neil Holkham live in Leighton Buzzard with their sons, Joshua, aged 12, who attends middle school, and Samuel, aged five.

Samuel is happy and making good progress with the support of caring staff at Leedon Lower School

Good choice

Samuel has settled in well at Leedon since he started in the Reception class last September. His family went to a lot of trouble to find the right school for him because he has special needs. His Mum, Christine, says: "Samuel is really enjoying going to Leedon but we visited five different schools in Leighton Buzzard before we chose it because we wanted to make sure we picked the right school for him."

Receptive Head Teacher

Christine and Neil had a discussion with the Head Teacher about Samuel's requirements and made him fully aware of their son's difficulties. "We felt Mr Benson at Leedon was the most receptive of all the Head Teachers we spoke to. From our initial discussion, he felt that the school would be able to meet Samuel's needs but wanted to discuss Samuel's situation with his Special Educational Needs Coordinator first. He got back to us later the same day and said they would be happy to have Samuel as a pupil. The main reason we chose Leedon was because Mr Benson was interested in Samuel's circumstances and he got back to us quickly with a positive answer," Christine says.

Nursery visit

Samuel started at the school in September 2015 just before his fifth birthday and settled in extremely well. Christine says: "Before starting school, Samuel used to attend a nursery situated 15 miles outside of Leighton Buzzard. The Special Needs Coordinator and the lady who would be giving him one to one support visited him there to get to know him and see him in that environment so they could understand his

needs in advance. The nursery wasn't anywhere near the school and they had to go out of their way to get there so we were very impressed."

Enjoying reading

"Samuel particularly likes doing phonics and writing now he is at Leedon. He can spell and write his name and knows all his letters. He has always liked books and enjoys reading," Christine says.

Football fun

"Samuel is a very happy little boy with an infectious laugh. Other children seem to be drawn to him and like to play with him. He particularly likes playing football with the other children in the class. He will always have difficulties but he is making steady progress and is definitely going in the right direction. The school go over and above what they have to do for Samuel and this is one of the reasons why he has made so much progress over the last few months," Christine says.

Help with mobility

"The staff are always keen to find ways of helping Samuel and because he is not as mobile as the other children they have got in touch with his physiotherapist to ask for exercises that they can do with him at school to help him become more mobile. I am impressed that they are prepared to look outside to get him the help he needs," Christine says.



Children say

Samuel says: "I like going to school and playing football with my friends."

Right approach

Christine would recommend Leedon to any parents looking for a good lower school for their child. She says: "I would like to emphasise that the staff are particularly good with special needs children and have the right approach to caring for them within a mainstream school."



Inclusion: a curriculum for all

Behaviour and Self-Development

Special Educational Needs

The staff are very aware of the needs of the children in their care and aim to identify any special needs as early as possible. Work is then differentiated to meet those needs, and progress is carefully monitored and regularly reviewed. Parents are kept informed at all times.

Special Needs Coordinator

If we feel that suitable progress is not being made, an individual will be placed on a provision map to meet their needs. This will highlight interventions and extra small group or 1:1 support that is being delivered.

Access

The school is a single storey site and children with a physical disability are fully supported in accessing all parts of the school.

Gifted and talented children

We recognise that all children are individuals with their own specific needs, gifts and talents. Children who are identified as being

exceptionally able or talented, are monitored and provided with stimulating and enriching lessons to help them extend and develop to their full potential. We believe our thematic approach maximises opportunities for every pupil to fly! We place no ceiling on a child's learning and through our independent curriculum children have the opportunity to extend their own learning.

Praise

Leedon Lower School's behaviour policy is based on positive praise, within firm guidelines and boundaries. We expect high standards from everyone and encourage children to show care, courtesy and consideration at all times.

Encouragement

Praise and encouragement are used to promote and maintain a positive and happy atmosphere in the school. Behaviours that do not meet school expectations are dealt with. Problems are shared and talked through in order to try and understand the reasons why and we hope that all our children realise we are there to support and care for them no matter what. Bullying is not tolerated in any form.

Visions and Values

We are a values based school. Each month a different value, such as respect, perseverance, honesty, caring, love etc. is introduced and the children earn 'Values Bricks' that are then displayed in the entrance hall and parents receive a text message to celebrate this success with their child.

School Council: pupil responsibility

Giving children responsibility, and a voice in their school, helps with self-development. Each class elects two representatives to sit on our School Council, which is a very active body that considers issues from within the school and participates in initiatives and conferences.

Clubs

We have a wide variety of clubs that children benefit from, including:

- Spanish
- Drama
- Guitar lessons,
- Film Club
- ICT Club
- Violin lessons
- Jewellery Club
- Ukelele Club.
- Cookery
- Tennis

These clubs are in most part free and open to all.



Kerrie Ferguson lives in Leighton Buzzard with her five daughters, Elizabeth, aged 11, Victoria, aged ten, Olivia, aged nine, Scarlett, aged seven, and Kerris, aged five.

The Ferguson girls have all had happy and varied experiences during their time at Leedon Lower School

Comfortable environment

When the Ferguson family left Leighton Buzzard to go and live in Dunstable the girls missed Leedon Lower School so much they moved back after a year. Their Mum, Kerrie, says: "Elizabeth was in Year Three, Victoria was in Year Two, Olivia was in the reception class and Scarlett was in Little Learners. They had all missed their school and were thrilled to be able to restart. It showed me how good Leedon is and that when somewhere feels comfortable it's where you want to be."

Good move

"The staff at Leedon are all so friendly, in some ways it seems more of an extension of our family than a school. It all began when Elizabeth was two and a half and in a playgroup she didn't like. Fortunately I was able to move her to Little Learners at Leedon where she was very happy. She then moved up into the school and was followed by her sisters, who all had a good experience starting school and settling in."

Happy memories

Elizabeth and Victoria are now at middle school but have wonderful memories of their time at Leedon. Kerrie says: "Elizabeth excelled at her work, had lots of friends and liked all her teachers. She particularly enjoyed being in a production at the school just before she left as she loves performing arts. Victoria also excelled at the school and was happy there."

Maths and reading

"Olivia, who is in Year Four, really enjoys Maths, it's her favourite subject at the moment. Her reading has improved because one of the teachers has been doing extra reading

with her. I think it was just a confidence thing but the school spotted it and were straight on to it," Kerrie says. "Scarlett is excelling at reading. Although she is in Year Three she is being given Year Five and Year Six keywords and is a free reader."

Fun with art

Kerris, who is in the reception class, loves arts and crafts. Kerrie says: "She comes home with her school shirt covered in paint because she is so eager to get started she doesn't stop to put an apron on. The school have been giving her extra help with her speech. She was referred for speech therapy when she was in Little Learners and the school have been very supportive to her."

Individual experiences

"The girls are all different from each other and I am delighted the school have appreciated them as individuals. There is one teacher who has taught the first four but has not had Kerris yet. She is looking forward to being able to say she has taught all the Ferguson girls, but she will find Kerris different again from the others," Kerrie says.

"I couldn't have wished for a better school for my girls. Scarlett took an ornament in she had made at Brownies for show and tell but dropped it in the playground and broke it. One of the dinner ladies took it home and mended it for her, that's how caring they are. The reception ladies are also wonderful. They are the heart of the school and will do anything for you."



Children say

Elizabeth and Victoria say: "We would love to be back at Leedon, we enjoyed it there."

Olivia, Scarlett and Kerris say: "We love going to Leedon Lower School."

Good education

Kerrie would not hesitate to recommend Leedon to other families. "If you ever have any concerns there is always someone available to talk to. The education the children have received has been fantastic. I have never had any problems with the school in ten years and never heard of any issues from other parents either."



Admissions

Visiting

Parents who are thinking of applying for a place at Leedon Lower School are invited to attend one of our opening evenings or arrange to visit and look around the school at any time with the Head Teacher.

Applications

Central Bedfordshire Council deals with all new admissions to Lower Leedon School. Contact details for the School Admissions Team:

Tel: 0300 300 8037
Email: admissions@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
Web: <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk>

Communicating with parents

Good communication is always our top priority, and we work very closely with parents. We send out regular newsletters and termly curriculum leaflets.

App

To improve communication further we launched the Leedon Lower School app, which can be used for diary dates, information, news, contacts, alerts, permission and absence reporting. We also write a weekly blog about what we have learnt this week. We hope that this keeps people up to date with what is going on in school. The blog is also on the school website and our Facebook page.

Your child's progress

Consultation evenings are arranged in the autumn and spring terms so that parents and children can discuss their progress and achievements with the class teacher and review their targets. Prior to the summer term open evenings, parents receive a written report, which informs them of the progress made by their child. It also sets targets for further development and progress. Parents and children then have an opportunity to look at work throughout the school and to meet their new teachers.

Getting involved

Parental Involvement

We create an atmosphere where parents always feel welcome, and that allows staff and parents to talk openly and honestly. The opinion of parents is highly valued. By establishing a close partnership with parents we aim to provide the very best education possible for your children. As part of our open door policy, parents and carers are welcome in school any time and the Head Teacher and teaching staff are available to answer any questions or queries you may have or to discuss any issues with you.

Governorship

We have a very active governing body at Leedon with dedicated parents and people from the community who have an interest in the school. Anyone can join the governors when a vacancy comes up. Photos of the current governing body can be found on the website and inside the school entrance hall.

Parent Teachers Association (PTA)

At Leedon we have a very active, supportive and hardworking PTA, that organises social and fund raising activities throughout the year, ranging from Christmas fetes to fashion shows. In recent years the PTA has funded improvements to the pond area, equipment for the classrooms, music equipment, juke box, sports equipment, ICT resources and helped purchase our new reading scheme.

Do you want to join the PTA?

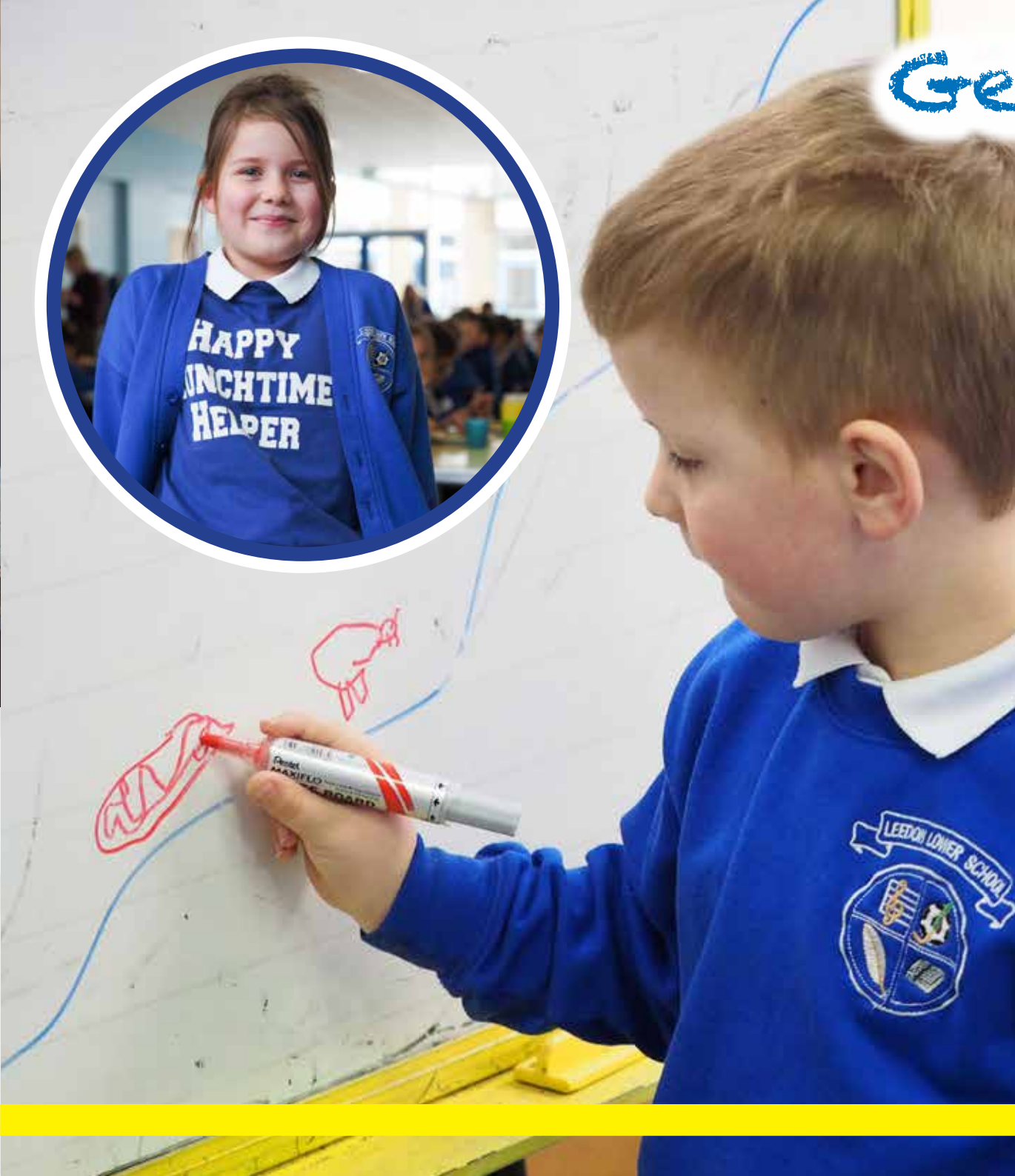
Parents are warmly encouraged to come along and join the PTA and/or help with our fundraising activities. For further information please enquire at the school office or download a PTA nomination form from the school website.

Voluntary helpers

We encourage parent helpers to support the school in all ways, including reading, cookery, accompanying pupils on education visits. If you are interested in getting involved, and have some time to spare, please have a chat with a staff member.

Community

Our community links are very important to us and, whenever we can, we involve our local community in our school life, whether it is our local playgroups, community road safety officer or local businesses and shopkeepers. We work collaboratively with several other schools in our Learning Community as well as county-wide.





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