



Dear Families,

NEW TO SCHOOL - FARM SCHOOL PROGRAMME



We are delighted to share that our whole school have been offered the unique and exceptional opportunity to take part in visits to **Holly Green Farm, Bledlow** from September. Throughout the year, each year group will take it in turn to visit the farm for two afternoons a week for a term. This is a generous offer from Mr Neil Dyson, a highly respected local dairy farmer and qualified science teacher, who has been welcoming school groups for many years. Neil is offering this programme entirely **free of charge**, **combining the very best of farm school and forest school learning**. His unique blend of farming expertise and scientific knowledge makes this an exceptional learning opportunity for our children.

Holly Green Farm is a 450- Holstein Friesian cow Arla Innovation Farm, meaning it is one of the farms selected to demonstrate the latest research, sustainability practices and modern dairy technology to farmers, customers and organisations. Neil is also President of European Dairy Farmers, an international benchmarking organisation, which reflects his leadership and influence within the dairy sector.

The farm has a long history of providing high-quality educational experiences for children and has been shortlisted for national awards recognising its outstanding commitment to farming education.

What does this mean for our children?

At Longwick, we believe that children learn best when they are immersed in meaningful, hands-on experiences. Farm School is an outstanding opportunity for our children to learn science in a real-world context, develop confidence outdoors and experience the rhythms and responsibilities of farm life in a safe, structured and inspiring environment.

Farm School is not just about meeting animals. It is about understanding the whole way of farm life — caring for land, animals and habitats; observing the seasons; learning where food comes from and developing responsibility; understanding food production; learning how weather, seasons and environment shape daily decisions

Wellbeing -social and emotional development

Farm School supports far more than academic progress. Being outdoors, surrounded by nature, animals and open space has a calming and grounding effect. Children return to school more settled, focused and full of stories.

These experiences build:

- * confidence
- * curiosity
- * responsibility
- * perseverance
- * respect for living things
- * gratitude for the world
- * developing team work and problem solving and noticing nature
- * nurturing spirituality and appreciating creation.

The calmness of nature, the rhythm of farm life and the joy of meeting the farm dogs all contribute to a sense of peace, confidence and connection.

Many activities mirror the ethos of Forest School, encouraging exploration, resilience, curiosity and respect. This aligns closely with our **Christian vision: Grow · Flourish · Fly**

Along with learning about the animals, below is a list of potential activities that the children **may** be involved in:

Year 1 – Growing and Changing

Comparing themselves to a newborn calf as part of science
Helping feed and care for newly hatched chicks
Exploring textures, smells and sounds around the farm

Year 2 – Castles, Knights and Old England

Visiting an ancient barn to explore how buildings were used in the past
Jousting games in the fields
Tasting a simple honey drink inspired by medieval life

Year 3 – From Seed to Stone Age Loaf

Rubbing wheat grains from the husk
Grinding flour using Stone Age methods
Kneading dough and exploring changing states in science

Year 4 – STEM on the Farm

Testing flood-resistant structures in simulated rainstorms
Exploring natural disasters and environmental impact

Year 5 – Life Cycles and Living Things

Comparing the life cycles of cows, frogs and native plants
Observing pond life
Planting hedge saplings to improve biodiversity

Year 6 – Dig for Victory

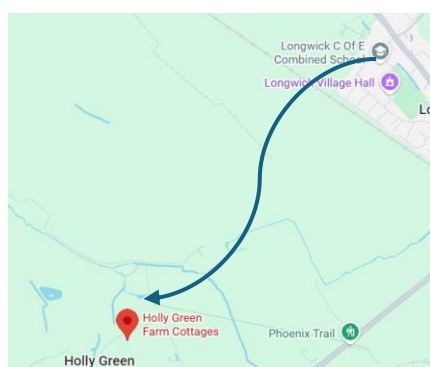
Learning about rationing and wartime farming
Digging and preparing soil to plant potatoes
Understanding how communities relied on the land during WW2

Additional Activities May Include:

Farm maths — weighing feed, measuring fields, calculating yield
Nature journaling — sketching plants, tracking weather, recording wildlife
Habitat building — bug hotels, bird feeders, hedgehog homes
Farm machinery exploration — understanding how tractors and tools work
Seasonal cooking — making soup, butter, or simple preserves
Environmental stewardship — composting, recycling, water conservation

How do we get to the farm?

Farm School takes place in all seasons and all weathers. We will be walking to the farm, approximately 20 minute walk along Walnut Tree Lane and designated walking tracks. The route is safe and a school risk assessment is in place to ensure the safety of all our children. We will take a packed lunch and eat at the farm. Please let school know if you need to order a packed lunch.



Health and Safety

The farm has a purpose-built barn for school groups including a toilet area and sinks. There are multiple opportunities for children to wash their hands in this area and from hand sanitizers around the farm. Mr Dyson will clearly explain the rules for keeping safe on the farm once we arrive.

Allergies

If we are not already aware, please let the school office know of any allergies i.e hayfever, that your child may suffer from. Medication will need to be administered before we leave school. As on all trips, a first aid kit will be taken with us with your child's medication.

What to wear?

This is a working farm and we will be **visiting in all weathers**.

Strict clothing guidelines from Mr Dyson must be adhered to at all times. Children must wear:

- Long trousers – jogging bottoms, t shirt, sweatshirt/jumper
- Wellies and / old trainers – guidance will be given weekly depending on the weather.
- Waterproof coat

Please note: fashion clothing and footwear including branded items, logo items, strappy tops, shorts and jewellery are not permitted. Hair must be tied up. Parents may be called to replace clothing if it is felt inappropriate.

Order of visits

1. Autumn 1 – Year 5 / 6
2. Autumn 2 – Year 4 / 5
3. Spring 1 – Year 3
4. Spring 2 – Year 2
5. Summer 1 – Year 1
6. Summer 2 – Year Reception (to be confirmed due to the length of journey there and back).

We are incredibly grateful to Neil and his team at Holly Green Farm for offering our children such a rich and generous learning experience. We hope the weekly visits will inspire curiosity, confidence and a deeper understanding of the world around them.

If you have any questions, please contact the school office.

Thank you for your support.

Ms Collinson



