

NEWSLETTER Wednesday 22nd July 2026

The last ever Landscope newsletter from Jill

Dear Parents,

Please grab a coffee and settle for 5 minutes as this is likely to be one of my longer letters, and with only one picture!

Firstly, I need to mention our Year 6 leavers. Our Leaver's service yesterday morning was, as ever, a moving time to reflect on the finale of the Landscope journey for Y6.

Through a story I wrote for them I told them that:

"You've each brought something special to our school – your laughter, your questions, your kindness, and your courage. You've lived our values: Trust, Empathy, Respect, Responsibility, Forgiveness, and Perseverance – not just in words, but in action.

You've shown us that being brave doesn't mean never being scared – it means doing the right thing even when it's hard. You've supported each other, lifted each other, and grown into young people ready to take on the world.

As you step into your next adventure, remember; you are enough, just as you are. Keep learning, keep caring, and keep being you. The world needs your voices, your dreams, and your hearts." x

Although the children are always a little sad, I know that they are ready for the excitement and challenges that lie ahead.



And so, to my final day at Landscope...

I am typing this final epistle from my garden feeling somewhat like a shrunken balloon, the sort you find on the morning after enjoying a great party. However, I could not be happier. My life since last Friday has simply been – amazing! You have all made me feel really special during these last few days and I will never forget how my Landscope adventure reached the final destination, the bishop's Chair in St Matthew's! And what a fantastic journey this has been!

Twelve years ago I made a promise to Robin, the previous Headteacher. I promised him that I would look after his school. Looking back now, I realise that promise carried more meaning than I could ever have imagined.

You see, schools have a remarkable way of becoming ours. Not in the sense of ownership, but in the sense of responsibility, belonging and love. Every child who walks through the door becomes one of ours. Their triumphs become our celebrations, their challenges become our concerns, and their futures become our shared purpose. Together, as a school community, we strive to make a difference to every person who is part of that journey.

When I arrived in January 2002 at Landscope as Robin's "Gatekeeper" (his affectionate term for a deputy!), I never imagined quite where the journey would take me. Within two terms I found myself as Acting Head, and not long after that I was asked to step in as Acting Head at Berry Pomeroy. Robin later told me that when the county education team asked if he knew someone with the character and strength for the role, he described me as having "a velvet glove with an iron fist" – a compliment I'm still not entirely sure how I feel about! Some years later, I had the privilege of working across Landscope and Broadhempston, learning from incredible colleagues, children and families along the way. Yet no matter where the role took me, I always found myself drawn back to my school family and my home. It has been an honour to be part of this community, and I will always be grateful for the relationships, support and memories that have shaped my time here. Instead of moving on, I suppose that I kind of fell in love with the special spirit of the school. Over the years the school has gone from strength to strength and developed into the school that we all know and value today.

For me personally the outcome of all the hard work has been rewards far greater than I ever could have imagined! When I describe the school to strangers, I have always said that we are a school that is built on success stories. Some big, some small, some public but most private. The message is simply that we want all the children to feel the warm glow of success and be motivated individuals who are constantly striving to do exceptional things. Whether it is playing a significant role in one of our school performances or simply mastering the 5 times table we believe that success is a key ingredient in the production of happy children who are ready to play a positive role both within and beyond the school gates. I have made it my job to find and exploit as many "warm glow opportunities" as possible as we have all shared our journey of adventure together.

But one woman, on her own, can only do so much. To do the job properly you need to have a strong team all supporting each other and pulling in the same direction and the team that I leave behind is the strongest that I have ever had. Schools are never just buildings or results or plans—they are people. And I have been incredibly fortunate to work alongside a truly remarkable team – the staff, the children and their families. Working together and supporting each other is the key to the successes of the past and also the successes of the future. There are still plenty of "opportunities" waiting to be discovered by Mrs Last when she starts to steer the ship.

And what will the future hold for Gray and me? I can't tell you all the details because I don't know them myself yet. However, we will take our first ever holiday in September – I am quite excited about a term time holiday in Greece. Beyond that, my garden will look fabulous as I will have the time and

energy to give to it, and I intend to get back into my art... so I should be busy! (I also have a surprise list of DIY for Gray 😊)

Now the time has come for us to part ways as we each follow our own dreams and future paths. Thank you to everyone who helped give me the most wonderful send-off. I have been lucky enough to be the centre of attention at two truly memorable and enjoyable events, and I hope you enjoyed them just as much as I enjoyed the laughter, friendship, and precious memories they created.

Who would ever have expected the staff to sing “We Are Family” in church? It was brilliant! The Landscope Past and Present Orchestra playing Canon in D (Pachelbel's Canon) was simply fabulous. Seeing former pupils, now grown up and so talented, was incredibly moving and touched my heart.

Then there was the quartet on the field, followed by the lovely Paul Copley, and finally my grandchildren. As many of you know, my darling dad passed away at the end of last year. He would have absolutely loved being there yesterday. Dad was a huge country and western fan, and at his funeral we all sang “Country Roads.” Ivy had the wonderful idea of bringing him into my celebration through that song, and it was so special to have both Ivy and Tommy singing. It was a beautiful moment that I will treasure forever.

I know Jo had set down carefully laid plans for yesterday (She must be exhausted as I know she would have taken her role most seriously) and between them, the lovely staff, families and the children I really couldn't feel sad... just well loved!

As for the cards and the pressies, what can I say? We could open up a flower shop today if we wanted to and also a wine shop! The main gifts presented in St Matthew's were simply amazing – I am wearing a beautiful gold t bar necklace from the staff; I cannot wait to frame the John Dyer picture of 'Moon Daisies and Fishermen', and use the voucher at Boringdon hall, and I must mention all the personal messages, individual gifts and shared memories...Phew! It took us ages to pack the car once we got home! Thank you, thank you, thank you!

As I come to the end of this chapter, I do so with a heart full of gratitude for the children, families and colleagues who have made Landscope such a special place to call home. The friendships, lessons and memories I have gathered over the years will stay with me always. Thank you for allowing me the privilege of keeping the promise I made twelve years ago. Thank you for letting me be part of your stories, and for becoming such an important part of mine. While it is time for a new adventure, a part of me will forever belong to this wonderful school family. I leave you with a blessing that feels particularly fitting:

May the road rise up to meet you.

May the wind be always at your back.

May the sun shine warm upon your face;

The rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again,

May God hold you in the palm of His hand.

I hope that you all have a good summer break - and that the weather does the honourable thing and lets the sunshine (but perhaps a few degrees cooler than of late!). September will soon be here, and you will all be starting up another brilliant year full of new mini adventures in the autumn.

Here's looking to a great future for the special little school that we all love.

With warmest wishes to you all.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jill Ryder." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Landscape Head Teacher, chief tidier and organiser, friend, problem solver, listener and letter writer

2002 - 2026