



Prospectus and Parents' Handbook 2017-18

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**WELCOME TO COLEHILL FIRST SCHOOL:
'A HAPPY SCHOOL,
WHERE CHILDREN LOVE TO LEARN'**

**We are a community school for children aged 4-9 years.
Since 2015 we have been part of Wimborne Academy Trust:
a multi-academy trust of 7 schools in the Wimborne area of East Dorset.**



At Colehill First School we believe that your child's first experiences are really important because they lay down the foundations for everything that follows. We want all children here to feel positive about school and learning, so that they can continue to learn effectively right through into adulthood and enjoy happy, fulfilling and productive lives.

Our aim is to provide the highest possible quality of education for all our children, enabling them to realise their individual abilities, talents, skills and personal qualities. We pride ourselves on the warm, caring ethos of our school, within which all children can feel happy, safe, engaged and enabled to learn.

Without doubt, the best education is achieved when there is a strong partnership between home and school, with close communication at its heart. We have an 'open school' policy and welcome parents into our school community. We also strive to work in partnership with the wider community to enhance the education of all children here.

Welcome to Colehill First School: we look forward to a close partnership with you and your child!

COLEHILL FIRST SCHOOL AIMS

We Aim To:

- *Provide a happy, secure environment in which every child can realise their potential.
- *Stimulate enthusiasm for learning, an enquiring mind, a desire to explore and investigate in order to discover more about the world.
- *Provide a broad, balanced curriculum enabling children to acquire knowledge, skills and the practical abilities and attitudes necessary for the world they live in now and for the future.
- *Develop in our children aesthetic awareness and the ability to express themselves creatively.
- *Encourage self-esteem, self-discipline, and a developing degree of independence.
- *Develop children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness and their physical and mental well-being.
- *Encourage our children to develop personal qualities which will enable them to become caring and considerate members of the community and the world at large.
- *Ensure that all children have equal opportunities in all aspects of school life.
- *Develop co-operation, understanding and partnership between home and school.
- *Encourage every child to express their views appropriately, and participate fully in the life of the school.
- *Foster good links with the community.

OUR CORE VALUES

Our core values are linked closely to British values, as defined by the government.

- CELEBRATING DIVERSITY: We celebrate that we are all special and unique, and welcome the differences between ourselves and others;
- EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: We treat each other kindly, politely, honestly and fairly;
- RESPONSIBILITY: We take responsibility for our words and actions;
- RESPECT: We respect the rights of every member of the local and global community;
- ACHIEVING GOALS: We want every learner to achieve their best, recognising that each person has a valuable contribution to make;
- LOVE OF LEARNING: We love to learn through purposeful activity;
- COLLABORATION: We take pride in our team achievements.

OUR ETHOS

We believe that happy, enthusiastic and well motivated children will make the best progress, and so from the very beginning we encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour, developing independence and self-discipline as they move through the school. We emphasise co-operation and collaboration as we believe these are essential skills in preparing children to take their part in the wider world of work and leisure beyond school.

We are proud of the learning progress which our children make, and of the high standards which they achieve. Teachers and teaching assistants design learning experiences that are motivating and rewarding, involving first hand experiences whenever possible. The school has a number of reward systems so that all children know how well they are doing, and receive positive, constructive feedback to build confidence and self-esteem.

We have a thriving School Council, run by the children, enabling every child to have their say. Representatives are elected by each class to speak on their behalf at council meetings. The School Council members discuss and make decisions about all aspects of school life including learning, play and extra curricular activities. They also design an annual questionnaire for all children to give their views on a range of important school issues.

We have high expectations of behaviour, and children are expected to follow the School Charter.

OUR SCHOOL CHARTER

It is our right to....

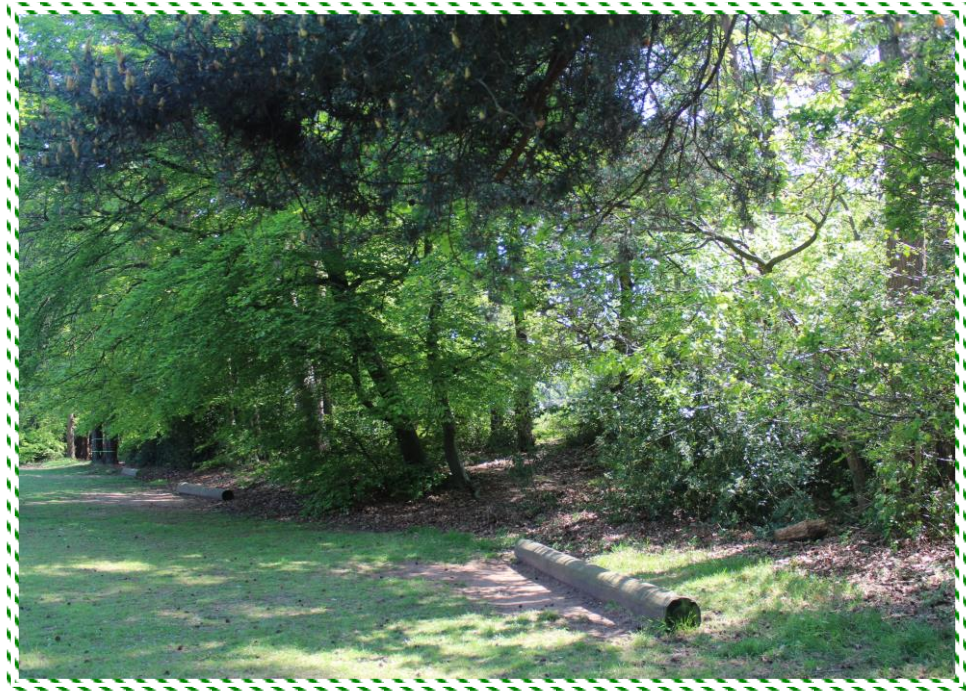
- *be proud of our school and community
- *be treated with respect by everyone
- *be safe in school
- *have resources to play and learn with
- *learn to the best of our ability
- *have our say
- *share our successes

It is our responsibility to...

- *look after our school and community
- *treat everyone in school with equal respect
- *keep others safe in school
- *treat resources with care and respect
- *let others learn well too
- *listen to others
- *allow others to share their successes too

Unacceptable behaviour is dealt with promptly and fairly. Whenever necessary, the school will contact parents without delay so that we can work together to address behaviour effectively. A copy of the School's local behaviour guidelines is available on the website.

ENVIRONMENTS FOR LEARNING AND PLAY



Colehill First is set in wooded surroundings, and features modern purpose-built accommodation which was completed in December 2004. The building has full disabled access, and comprises an ICT suite featuring 16 networked PC workstations; a large hall which is well equipped for P.E., music and drama lessons; a bright and well resourced library; 5 classrooms, one for each year group and accommodation for our partner pre-school, Colehill Nursery.

Every classroom has direct access to the outdoor environment and this enables outdoor learning to feature strongly within the curriculum. Our facilities are put to good use for outdoor learning across the curriculum and for school events. We have excellent play facilities including an early years outdoor learning area, set amongst woodland, a zoned playground, a play trail, a mini-climbing wall and a play castle climbing frame, with slide and fireman's pole. The school field is used at playtimes whenever weather permits.



SCHOOL ORGANISATION

Our published admission number, or PAN, is set at 30 Reception pupils per intake year.

We have five single age group classes – one for each year from Reception to Year 4:

- Reception Class are known as 'Hedgehogs';
- Year 1 Class are known as 'Foxes';
- Year 2 are 'Squirrels';
- Year 3 are 'Badgers';
- Year 4 are 'Kestrels'.

Classes are arranged along a central corridor from years R to 4 in chronological order.

We meet together every day for assembly and at playtimes and lunchtimes.

THE WIMBORNE PYRAMID

Colehill First is part of the St. Michael's Mini-Pyramid of schools, offering education up to 18 years of age.



Pyramid schools work closely together to ensure continuity and progression. Teachers regularly liaise to ensure that transfer from first to middle school is as smooth as possible for every child. Before transferring, Year 4 Colehill children spend a full day at St. Michael's with their new teachers. In some cases it can be beneficial for individual pupils to experience a more personalised transition from first to middle school. We ask parents to discuss their child's needs with us well before transition in order to plan for this. Please do talk to us if you have any questions about transfer to middle school.

WIMBORNE ACADEMY TRUST

WIMBORNE
Academy Trust

Colehill First School is proud to be a founder member of Wimborne Academy Trust. This is a multi-academy trust of 7 schools, five first schools and two middle schools, all in the Wimborne locality. The Trust was founded in March 2015. Other member schools are: Hayeswood First School, Colehill; St. John's CE First School, Wimborne; Merley First School, Wimborne; Witchampton CE First School, Wimborne; Allenbourn Middle School, Wimborne and St. Michael's CE Middle School, Colehill. For more information about the Trust, please visit wimborneacademytrust.org

THE CURRICULUM

EARLY YEARS

Reception class follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. This follows on directly from the curriculum followed by pre-schools and nursery schools and leads into the National Curriculum which children follow from year 1 onwards.

NATIONAL CURRICULUM

Although the National Curriculum is organised subject by subject, we recognise that young children do not always separate their learning into neat subject compartments. That's why we carefully organise learning around themes or contexts that are meaningful and relevant to the children and that enable subjects to be combined effectively together. Teachers at Colehill First School ensure that the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are given high priority and that children have the opportunity to use and apply these skills in all of the other subjects taught. The same high priority is given to the skills of ICT and computing.



Britain At War Role Play



Shelter Building

AGE RELATED EXPECTATIONS

The new National Curriculum, launched in 2014, is structured around the notion of **age related expectations** for each year group for the core subjects of English and mathematics.

Pupils in years 1 to 4 are assessed at the end of each year in reading, writing and mathematics, and placed within one of the following categories:

- *Working **below** age related expectations;
- *Developing skills **within** age related expectations;
- *Securely **achieving** age related expectations;
- *Achieving **greater depth** within age related expectations.

ENGLISH

This covers speaking and listening, reading and writing.

Speaking and Listening ~ As language is the basis for all learning this is given a very high priority. Children are encouraged and supported in becoming confident and clear speakers who can also listen and respond effectively to one another. Talk partners, class assemblies, drama lessons, circle time, concerts and other school events all play their part in creating an articulate school.

Reading ~ We use a range of approaches to the teaching of reading, placing strong emphasis on phonics. In school we have a wide variety of books from a range of reading schemes, as well as non-scheme books

by well-known authors. We encourage children to take books home to read each day, and ask parents to join with us in this most important aspect of children's learning by reading with your child and / or hearing your child read as often as possible. Reading record books facilitate home-school communication on a regular basis, and we ask that parents use these to give feedback to staff in school.

Writing ~ We know that children gain greatest satisfaction from writing when they have a strong sense of purpose and audience. As part of their learning, they will be asked to write to entertain, to create, to describe, to explain, to inform, to instruct, to persuade, to recount or to respond, depending upon the context. They may write for themselves, for the teacher, for other children in school as well as for a wider audience. We encourage children to be confident writers and spellers by identifying strengths in their writing as well as pinpointing areas for development.

MATHEMATICS

We promote learning through understanding, rather than learning by rote, in every aspect of mathematics. We want our children first to develop a secure grasp of the value of number and of number operations and to build up a range of mental and written calculation strategies, including formal written methods. We place emphasis on children learning number bonds and multiplication tables by heart to enable quick and efficient problem solving. We ask for parents' support in helping children to learn mathematical facts and develop mathematical skills.

We emphasise problem solving and investigation as these provide opportunity for children to use and apply their mathematical skills in a variety of situations across the curriculum. We develop confidence in mathematics by giving children opportunity to talk about how they have used mathematics to solve problems, explaining their strategies to others.

We do recognise that the teaching of mathematics has changed since parents were themselves at school. Please ask your child's teacher if you have any questions about the strategies that your child is learning.

SCIENCE

At Colehill First School there is an excellent outdoor environment for scientific learning, and we make full use of the pond, woodland area and field. In science, children learn to ask questions, compare, look for cause and effect, and investigate under fair conditions. The programme of study is broad, and covers natural, physical and material sciences. We believe that all children learn a great deal from first hand experience and there are many opportunities planned for this. We make educational visits, and invite guests to school, all of which enhances their learning.



Eco-Workshops on Composting

Computing and Information Technology

We have a suite of 16 networked personal computers, supplemented by portable laptop computers and tablets, enabling access to a wide range of educational applications. There is a broad range of learning themes including simple coding, graphics, word processing, control technology, data handling and information research. Children make full use of their ICT skills to access learning across the whole curriculum. Every classroom has a 'Smart Board', making learning interactive and visual. Internet access is safe, being carefully filtered and monitored by South West Grid for Learning. A programme of E-Safety education is included within the curriculum so that our children know how to be safe users of the technology available to them, not only at school but also at home and in the wider world.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

We have our own scheme of work based on the Dorset Agreed Syllabus. This is broadly based on Christianity, but also develops an awareness and respect for all other major world religions. It contributes greatly to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of learning. We encourage our children to respect and care for others, by showing fairness and celebrating diversity (one of our core values). Parents have the right to withdraw their children from R.E. and assemblies should they wish to do so: any such request should be made in writing to the Headteacher.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)

We believe that all children have individual needs, many of which can be met in class as part of a differentiated curriculum. A child with special needs and / or disabilities is likely to experience specific additional barriers to learning. In this case, adjustments to provision are made in order to address these barriers and ensure effective access to the full range of learning opportunities.

We write 'Individual Provision Plans' for each child with SEND, detailing the support in place and any required adjustments to the provision of learning. Parents and children are invited to contribute towards the process of setting learning targets and reviewing progress. If your child has SEN or disabilities, you are always welcome to discuss the provision made for them with school staff. The school's policy on Special Educational Needs is updated at least annually, and may be viewed via our website.

SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION (S.R.E.)

This is taught as part of our personal social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. Children learn about sex in the context of families and relationships, with a strong emphasis placed on healthy lifestyles. Due regard is given to children's ages and stage of development when answering their questions. The school is careful to ensure that S.R.E. is taught with due regard to fundamental British values. If you have any questions about this aspect of the curriculum, please speak to the Headteacher.

PARENT-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

Parents are encouraged to be active partners with us in support of all children's learning.

Home School Agreement

In line with long-standing national policies, we have a home school agreement which parents and children will be asked to read and sign up to. This sets out the responsibilities of the school, the parent and the child in making our home-school partnership successful.

Home Learning Policy

A copy of the school's home learning policy will also be made available to you when your child starts school. Home learning gradually increases year on year. The school is mindful of the need to allow children time for extra-curricular activities, and home learning expectations are never onerous. However, home learning is essential to consolidate learning that has taken place in school, and we value the contributions made by parents to support their children's learning in school. Please come and talk to us if you have any queries or concerns.

Parent Help in the Classroom

We welcome parental help in the classrooms, on school trips and at special events. Many areas of school life are greatly enhanced through parental support. If you would like to help, even if it is only occasionally, please let us know. For safeguarding purposes, we ask all regular parent helpers to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. This is free of charge but essential. We also ask all parent helpers to read and sign a Code of Conduct which sets out clearly our expectations of all adults in school.

Finding Out About Your Child's Progress

We aim to keep parents fully informed, and teaching staff are always happy to discuss your child's learning and progress. Please do share with us any queries or concerns, however small, straight away. Likewise, staff will contact you if they have any reason. The Headteacher is usually available to meet with parents either informally or by appointment.

In October each year we hold parent consultations to discuss how the children have settled into their new classes. At this meeting, targets are shared with parents. During the Spring Term, there is a further parent consultation to discuss learning progress and new targets are shared. A written report is sent out at the end of the Summer Term, with a further opportunity for parents to discuss this with their child's class teacher.

Celebration of Learning

At the end of the Summer Term each year, children invite their parents into school during one afternoon to share all the learning from the entire year. This popular event is called our 'Celebration of Learning'.

Assessment

Teachers continually monitor children's progress in order to plan appropriate learning. In addition, more formal assessments are carried out periodically to check progress. There are statutory end of Key Stage 1 assessments made in the Summer Term of Year 2. These are not solely centred around tests, although tests do form one key aspect of the assessment, but are based on the teacher assessment of learning over time. Our teacher assessments are moderated for accuracy by Wimborne Academy Trust and also externally by Dorset Local Authority. This means that parents can trust the accuracy of our assessment information.

Class Assemblies

Twice a year, each class presents a class assembly to which parents are invited. The subject of the assemblies will vary, but each assembly offers children the chance to share their learning with you.

Newsletters

These are sent out several times a year, and keep parents informed about school events, dates for the diary, and reports on all aspects of school life. Governors also contribute to newsletters, enabling parents to learn about every aspect of the Governing Body's work.

Colehill First School Association: C.F.S.A.

This is a thriving school association which organises many fund raising and social events. It helps fund school trips by subsidising coach costs, and also meets the cost of educational visitors to school. Funds raised have added significantly to resources available to the children. The CFSA committee are always ready to welcome interested parents, whether they would like to join the committee or simply contribute to a school event. All parents are automatically members of the Association and new members are always welcome on the committee. Meetings are held in school every 6-8 weeks during the school year.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

There is a wide range of opportunities for children to participate in lunchtime, after school or Saturday morning clubs. The choice varies from year to year with individual expertise, but we always offer a variety of sporting, musical and other activities. Please enquire at the School Office for details of this year's programme.

STARTING SCHOOL

PARENTS MEETINGS

All parents of prospective new pupils are invited to meet the Headteacher for a tour of the school. There is also a welcome meeting before children begin school, when we will let you know about our 'Twiglets' Induction Sessions, the pattern of the school day and the learning that the children will be involved in.

TWIGLETS

'Twiglets' are pre-school induction sessions which help children transfer into school from pre-school or nursery. They take place in the Summer Term prior to children starting school in September, and are led by the Reception class teacher with two classroom assistants. They give opportunity for children to sample an afternoon in school, to get to know the adults, discover the learning and play environments and follow some key school routines.

ADMISSIONS POLICY

The School Admissions Policy is identical to that of Dorset Local Authority. All children start school in the September of the school year during which they become 5 years of age.

ROUTINE MATTERS

THE SCHOOL DAY

School Hours are: *Morning session: 8.55a.m. – 12.00 mid-day;
 *Afternoon session: 1.00 p.m. – 3.15 p.m.

BEFORE SCHOOL

The pedestrian gate to the playground opens at 8.45 a.m., and the playground will be staffed until the bell rings at 8.55 a.m. Children can make their way straight to class from 8.45 a.m. Staff are available on the playground to take messages for class teachers. The School Office is also open from 8.40 a.m. each day.

BREAK TIMES

Children have two playtimes, each 15 minutes long, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Children can bring fruit to school to eat during the morning break. Milk is available for all children, either to drink at breaktime if in Reception, or otherwise with lunch.

LUNCH TIMES

Children can either stay for a cooked school lunch, bring a packed lunch, or go home for lunch. Hot lunches are currently provided for us by Forerunner, a local hot meal provider supplying schools and care settings across Bournemouth, Poole and East Dorset. All meals are prepared freshly each day to strict nutritional standards set down by the School Food Trust. Hot meal order forms are distributed to every family on a weekly basis, and meals can be ordered flexibly, i.e. there is no requirement to order on the same day/s each week. Hot meals and packed lunches are eaten in the Hall, under the supervision of a kitchen assistant and several lunchtime supervisors. In line with our healthy eating policy, we ask that lunchboxes contain a nutritionally balanced lunch, and that sweets and chocolates are not included.

DRINKS AND SNACKS

All children are required to bring a bottle of water each day to be kept in class. Fruit is supplied daily for children in Reception, years 1 and 2. All children may also bring a fruit snack to school in a named container (if necessary). In line with our healthy eating policy, we do not encourage other types of snack or drink.

AFTER SCHOOL

Each teacher brings their class out to the playground at 3.15, and children are carefully matched up with their parents/carers or whoever is collecting them. Any children not collected by 3.25 will wait in the Reception Area adjacent to the School Office.

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

It is vital that we have the telephone numbers of relatives or friends to contact, in an emergency, if unable to get hold of you. Please keep us informed of changes to these details. Problems can occur when we are unable to make contact in an emergency. At the beginning of each new school year, a contact sheet is sent out to every parent or carer, and we would ask that all telephone numbers and contact details are carefully checked to ensure that they remain accurate. The school cannot be held responsible for failure to make speedy contact in an emergency if the details held on our records are not up to date.

ATTENDANCE

Please telephone by 9.00 a.m. on the first day of absence if your child is unwell and cannot attend school. Messages can be left on the school answerphone. We also ask that you keep us informed on a daily basis if the illness is protracted.

HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

Requests for term-time holidays can no longer be authorised under government regulations which came into force in September 2013. Term time leave can only be granted in 'exceptional circumstances'. For more information, please consult the school website.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The school has a comprehensive Health and Safety handbook, with due regard to all legal requirements. This is available for reference via the website.

MEDICINE

All medicines must be clearly labelled with your child's name, dose and frequency of administration, and handed into the school office (not to the class teacher). If medication needs to be administered during the school day, parents are welcome to come into school to do this. If this is not possible, parents need to complete a permission form (available from the school office) enabling staff to administer medication on their behalf. We can only give medication once written consent is received. As a rule we do not administer non-prescribed medication, such as liquid paracetamol.

LONG TERM HEALTH NEEDS

For children with very specific longer term medical needs, parents are asked to complete with us a Medical Care Plan to give detailed information and instructions. Each care plan is reviewed annually.

ILLNESS

If your child is ill please do not send them to school. This will reduce the risk of infection being passed around school. We will always contact you promptly if your child is unwell during the day. In cases of sickness and/or diarrhoea, children should be clear of symptoms for 48 hours before returning to school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

If your child is, for any medical reason, unable to take part in Physical Education, please let the school know, either by telephone or by letter, before the P.E. lesson is due to take place. Unless we hear to the contrary from parents, all children are required to participate in P.E. as it is part of the curriculum.

GOVERNORS CHARGING POLICY

The Education Reform Act 1988 prohibits charges for school activities except in clearly defined circumstances. However, without financial support from parents it would be extremely difficult to finance many of the activities which enrich the basic curriculum. Therefore parents are usually asked for voluntary contributions towards the cost of trips, theatre groups or materials (e.g. for cookery). Whilst not compulsory, these contributions make a huge difference to the school's ability to cover costs. The School Association subsidises the cost of coaches for educational visits, thereby reducing the contribution sought from parents to below cost price.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

If you are unhappy about any aspect of your child's school life please speak in the first instance with your child's class teacher. If this does not resolve matters, parents should arrange to see the Headteacher. If the concern still remains, parents have the right to take complaints to the Governing Body and ultimately to the Chief Executive Officer of Wimborne Academy Trust.

MONEY

If children need to bring money to school for any reason please could it be put in a sealed envelope with their name and class on it. This will ensure it is handled quickly and efficiently!

TOYS

We do not encourage children to bring toys to school as it can cause problems; particularly when there is a 'craze' and many children bring the same type of toy. From time to time teachers may invite children to bring something 'special' to share at speaking and listening time. This would not normally be a toy.

UNIFORM

The school uniform is grey skirts or trousers, royal blue cardigan, jumpers or sweatshirts, and white, royal blue or sky blue polo shirts. Colehill sweatshirts and cardigans are available to purchase from the school office.

In summer girls can wear blue (check or striped summer dresses) and black smart trousers in the winter. Shoes must be chosen so that children can play safely (trainers or open-toed sandals are unsuitable). We do not encourage the wearing of jewellery in school for health and safety reasons, although simple stud earrings are acceptable. Watches are also acceptable providing they are not of the 'novelty' kind that could detract from learning!

PE KIT

This comprises white T-shirt, black or navy shorts and black plimsolls. In Years 2, 3 and 4 children need outdoor trainers and a tracksuit in the winter. The children will also need a suitable PE bag to keep their kit in.

LOST PROPERTY

Please make sure all clothing is named! A Lost Property box is kept in school for any unclaimed items. This is emptied at the end of each academic year or more frequently if required.



It is hoped that this booklet has answered any questions that you may have.

However, if not, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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