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**BLUE SKYE THINKING COVERAGE** August 2014

## LANCASHIRE Telegraph

Readers are eager to help Skye's wishes come true



Skye Hall looks into the eyes of his mum Sally as they create loom bands as part of a challenge which has already generated 3,000 likes on Facebook

First published Saturday 9 August 2014 in [News](#)



by **Alex Wynick**, Reporter covering Blackbird Leys and Greater Leys. Call me on 01865 425403

THE family of youngster Skye Hall have been inundated with calls since their appeal in the *Oxford Mail* to help the dying youngster's wishes come true.

Five-year-old Skye from Abingdon has been battling with a brain tumour for a year and has been working to complete a bucket list of fun activities before he dies.




All that is left on the list is for Skye to go swimming in a private hydrotherapy pool and to pull a prank where Skye would sit in a fake ice-cream dispenser and surprise people by plonking ice cream on the unsuspecting customer's empty cone.

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The toddler, who featured in the *Oxford Mail* on Wednesday, has touched people's hearts and the family have received dozens of calls and emails from people eager to help.

Skye's father Andy, 42, said: "A lot has happened in the last 24 hours, people have really responded.

"I have a lot of emails to look through.

"We're talking with people to try to get

things happening next week."

As well as trying to complete Skye's list, Mr Hall and his wife Sally have set up the Blue Sky Thinking charity and launched the Loom to the Moon appeal.

The appeal aims to make the world's longest loom band – a craft where you tie small plastic bands together to form a chain.

The idea for the challenge came when Skye was making loom bands while receiving treatment in a hyperbaric oxygen chamber for hours at a time.

Despite only being set up this week, nearly 3,000 people have already liked the Loom to the Moon Facebook page and tens of metres of loom band have already been made by quick-fingered volunteers.

Blue Sky Thinking and the appeal will raise awareness and fund research into new treatment for brain tumours.

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**9 August 2014**



# Lancashire Telegraph cont..

Mr and Mrs Hall say that the current treatment options are not good enough, as Skye's radiotherapy treatment has given him radionecrosis, where healthy cells in his brain and spinal cord have been damaged.

Mr Hall, a PE teacher at Abingdon School, said: "Skye is clearly our primary focus, but what is also of importance to us is that other children who are afflicted by this horrible disease have access to treatment which is less cruel and less debilitating in nature.

"It is brutal and barbaric. We say that, because his disease is stable, but it is the side effects of the treatment which are killing him.

"We want to accelerate the good work being done in research centres around the UK and prevent more children from dying as a result of the toxic treatment."

- For information or to help visit [blueskyethinking.org](http://blueskyethinking.org) or email [a.hall455@btinternet.com](mailto:a.hall455@btinternet.com)
- To learn more about Loom to the Moon, like the Facebook page at [facebook.com/loomtothemoon](https://facebook.com/loomtothemoon)
- You can post completed loom bands to Blue Skye Thinking, 59 Hendred Way, Abingdon, OX14 2AW

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## 'I want to loom to the moon': Heartbreaking quest of brave five-year-old battling aggressive brain tumour who wants to make the world's longest loom band to raise money to help others

- Skye Hall from Abingdon in Oxfordshire was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumour in August last year, just days before starting school
- The five-year-old's treatment has left him paralysed and fighting for life
- He's now attempting to set a world record for the longest loom band to raise money for research into childhood brain tumours
- Stars including Richard Branson and Denise Van Outen have tweeted support of Skye's campaign [#loomtothemoon](#)
- Skye is raising money for the charity [Blue Skye Thinking](#) to help fund research into and the treatment of brain tumours

By [MARIA LALLY FOR MAILONLINE](#)

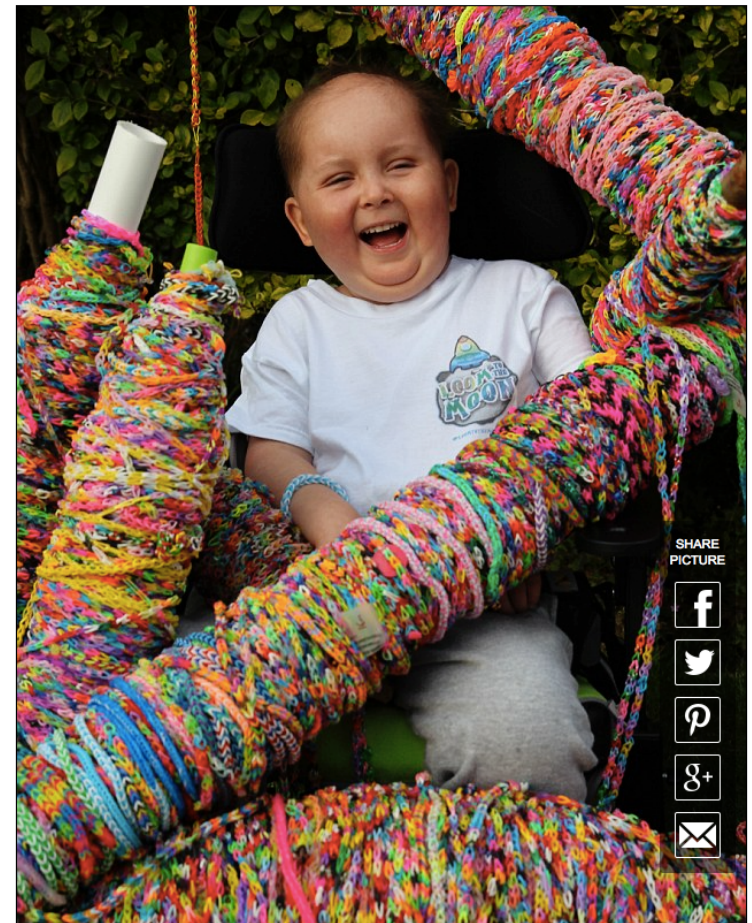
PUBLISHED: 15:08, 19 August 2014 | UPDATED: 10:12, 23 September 2014

This time last year Skye Hall, like thousands of children, was preparing for his first day at school.

His new uniform was hanging in his wardrobe and he was excited about starting at the local primary across the road from his Abingdon home.

But instead of joining his friends in class, Skye found himself in hospital having battling cancer.

Doctors told his parents Sally and Andrew, scans had revealed their eldest son had a medulloblastoma, an aggressive and cancerous brain tumour.



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19 August 2014



# Daily Mail Online cont..

**Five-year-old Skye Hall is attempting to create the world's longest loom band, as part of his charity challenge Loom To The Moon. He was diagnosed with an aggressive brain tumour just before he was due to start school last year**



While his friends were preparing for their first day at school, Skye, pictured before treatment, was admitted to hospital where he underwent a six-hour brain operation followed a week later by an 11-week course of chemotherapy

Skye was taken into hospital immediately, and underwent gruelling chemotherapy and radiotherapy.

It was during treatment, in a pressurised oxygen tank with a special helmet on, that the five-year-old came up with the idea Loom To The Moon.

Skye is appealing for help to create the world's longest loom band, to raise money for the charity Blue Sky Thinking, which helps children diagnosed with brain tumours.

Since launching his appeal, the inspirational youngster has received support from a number of celebrities including Sir Richard Branson and Denise Van Outen.

'A year ago today life was so normal,' his mother Sally Hall, told MailOnline.

'Skye was about to start school, his younger brother Jesse was 18-months-old and my husband Andrew and I were trying for a third baby.

'We had no idea of the horrific and gruelling journey our family was about to embark on.'

Skye was born in November 2008 after a straightforward pregnancy and birth.

'He was every bit the wonderful baby you imagine your first child to be,' Sally, a 36-year-old veterinary nurse, said.

'It's a moment I'll never forget.

'He was a happy, wonderful, charming little boy and when his brother Jesse came along in October 2011 he was a fantastic big brother from the start.'

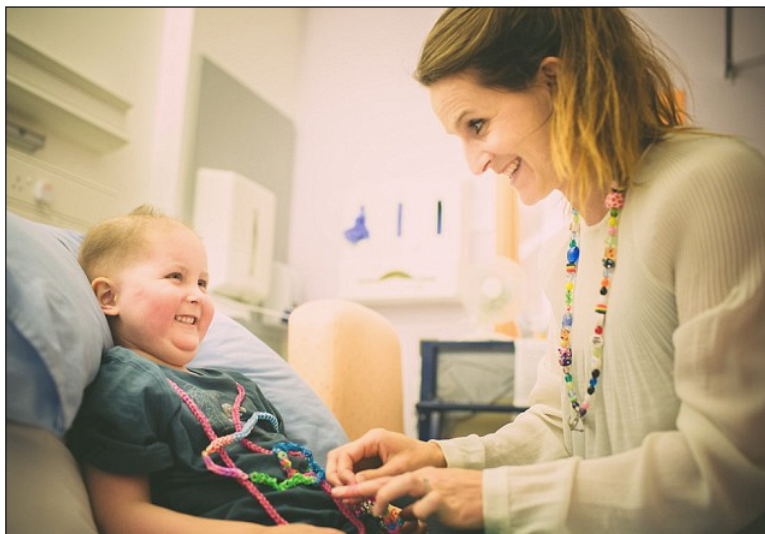
Sally and 43-year-old Andrew, a teacher, didn't feel too concerned when towards the end of last summer Skye started feeling sick in the morning.

**Help Skye Hall from Abingdon in Oxfordshire Loom to the Moon**



**19 August 2014**

# Daily Mail Online cont..



It was during treatment, in a pressurised oxygen tank with a special helmet on, that the five-year-old, pictured with his mother Sally, came up with the idea Loom To The Moon



Skye has faced chemotherapy and radiotherapy, which doctors say have taken their toll on his body, affecting the white matter in his brain. His mother Sally said: 'Basically, the side effects of his treatment are killing him. Consultants know how toxic treatment for brain tumours is, but they don't have access to anything else because of a lack of funding'

Their local GP prescribed acid reflux medicine, but after a few weeks he was vomiting regularly.

'I took him back to the GP and asked for a referral to the paediatric unit of our local hospital,' said Sally. 'Not for one second did I think it was anything sinister, but Skye was due to start school in a few weeks and I wanted to get it sorted.'

'The GP said it would take two weeks and I said, "No, we need to go today".'

While Andrew stayed home with Jesse, Sally took Skye to their local hospital, the John Radcliffe in Oxford.

He had a CAT scan and Sally was told it was clear.

'We went to sit in the waiting room and I overheard the doctor say, "But I've told the mother he's OK",' she said. 'Instinctively I knew they were talking about us.'

Sally's worst fears were confirmed when the doctor called her back into the room and explained that Skye had a medulloblastoma, a malignant and aggressive brain tumour.

'Skye was with me at this point, so I had to play my reaction down for his sake.'

'But my heart just stopped. The world went silent and slipped into slow motion.'

'A brain tumour is the kind of news you wouldn't wish on your worst enemy, let alone your treasured, beautiful 4-year-old.'

'But I just remember thinking, "Don't break down for Skye's sake". A role I've been playing ever since.'

'I phoned Andrew and just blurted out the news which was a horrible way to do it but what else could I say?'

'He rushed Jesse to his Granny's house then came to the hospital.'

'As a nurse entertained Skye, we sat in a small stuffy room while a consultant drew us diagrams of our beautiful son's head and explained where the tumour was.'

## WHAT IS MEDULLOBLASTOMA?

Less than one per cent of cancer funding goes towards research into brain tumours, the number one cancer killer in children.

More than 300 children a year in the UK alone face the devastating news that they have a tumour in their brain.

A medulloblastoma is a type of brain tumour, which is rare in adults but more common in children.

The malignant tumours form from primitive or poorly developed brain cells.

Most start in the lower back part of the brain. Less than 90 children a year develop medulloblastoma.

However it is still the most common form of cancerous brain tumour in children, representing 20 per cent of all childhood brain tumours.

They are most common in children between the ages of three and eight, and are slightly more common in boys than girls.

Symptoms include:

- nausea and vomiting
- lethargy and irritability
- headaches
- clumsiness
- difficulty with school work
- changes in personality and behaviour
- walking abnormally

If the tumour spreads to the spinal cord, symptoms can also include:

- back pain
- difficulty walking
- problems with bowel and bladder control

Source: The Royal Marsden Hospital



# Daily Mail Online cont..



During his radiotherapy treatment, Skye had to be screwed to the table by a plastic mask that covered his entire face and throat, pictured, for 45 minutes, twice a day, to help him lie still enough

During his radiotherapy treatment, Skye had to be screwed to the table by a plastic mask that covered his entire face and throat, pictured, for 45 minutes, twice a day, to help him lie still enough



Skye, pictured before treatment with his little brother Jesse, told his parents that he would learn to walk again by his fifth birthday, after an operation left him bed-bound

Skye was admitted to hospital immediately. A few days later – the week he should have been proudly joining his friends on the first day of school in those shiny black shoes – Skye had brain surgery lasting six and a half hours.

'Just before the operation Skye asked the nurses if they wanted to see his new shoes and told them he was starting school soon, which of course, we all knew he wasn't,' said Sally.

'A pre-op MRI scan had found the tumour was affecting other parts of Skye's brain and spinal cord.

'He woke up in so much pain he couldn't speak. In theory the operation went well but it left him unable to walk.'

Life for the family changed overnight. Jesse, who had previously never spent a night away from his parents and beloved big brother, spent most nights at his Granny's house while Andrew juggled work and hospital visits while Sally never left Skye's side.

**'He never stops smiling and loves getting mountains of loom bands in the post every day'**

*- Skye's mother, Sally Hall*

When he came home from hospital, Skye recuperated in his bedroom, which overlooked his school playground.

'He watched his friends arriving for school in their smart little uniforms and running around the playground at lunch,' said Sally. 'My heart broke for him all over again.'

A week later Skye began an 11-week course of chemotherapy.

'Trying to explain to a four-year-old that, having had the most painful operation you could imagine, he now had to have gastric tubes and daily injections was unbearable.

'He used to say, "Please Mummy, I am begging you not to let them do this". And I had to pin him down and let them because I knew – at least I thought I knew – it was for the greater good.'

But Skye's determined spark never wavered.

'He'd set himself targets,' says Sally. 'He'd say, "By the time I'm five I'll learn to walk again."

**19 August 2014**



**BLUE SKYE THINKING**  
SUPPORTING RESEARCH & TREATMENT OF CHILDHOOD BRAIN TUMOURS

# Daily Mail Online cont..



His mother Sally, told MailOnline: 'For his fifth birthday Skye was given golf clubs and he used them as makeshift crutches and walked, just like he said he would. He was so proud of himself and we just marvelled at his bravery'



Days after setting himself the challenge of creating the world's longest loom band, to stretch to the moon, Skye lose the use of his hands. His friends stepped in to help him

**19 August 2014**





# Daily Mail Online cont..

'At this point he was crawling around just as Jesse was taking his first steps.

'For his fifth birthday Skye was given golf clubs and he used them as makeshift crutches and walked, just like he said he would. He was so proud of himself and we just marvelled at his bravery.'

More treatment followed including five weeks of radiotherapy at UCLH in London and high dose chemotherapy at John Radcliffe.

'The radiotherapy was harrowing,' says Sally. 'He had to lie on a table in a huge room, all alone, with machinery that fired lasers lights at him.'

'Because he had to lie so still he was screwed to the table by a plastic mask that covered his entire face and throat, for 45 minutes, twice a day. He was just five.'

'We played him stories on an iPod and by the end of the five weeks he was reassuring other adults who were about to have the treatment they'd be OK. He just took our breath away.'

In May the family were given the good news that the tumour had reduced to an almost insignificant amount.

Skye was able to attend school for a couple of hours a day with Sally as his physical aid. He came home excitedly to tell his little brother what he'd learned that day.

But then he became weaker and had pins and needles all over.

'After more tests at the hospital we were ushered into a room,' said Sally. 'We were told his treatment had affected the white matter of his brain.'

'They told us if there were things we wanted to do as a family we should do them as soon as possible. We were utterly crushed.'

'Basically, the side effects of his treatment are killing him.'

'Consultants know how toxic treatment for brain tumours is, but they don't have access to anything else because of a lack of funding.'

Skye's combination of chemo and hyperfractionated radiotherapy has led to a condition known as Radio/Chemotherapy Neuro-Toxicity and the Milan Protocol he was following has now been suspended in the UK.

His case has just been reviewed at an international Neuro-Oncology Conference in Singapore and has caused a great deal of concern.



So far, the five-year-old, has a loom band long enough to make it 75% of the way up Mount Everest

Since then the family have been desperately searching for a cure.

'He's recently had a course of steroids to slow decline,' says Sally. 'We also found Hyperbaric Oxygen Treatment (HBOT), which is used to treat MS.'

'It's a pressurised tank where you breathe in oxygen under pressure. There's anecdotal evidence in the US it can help nerve repair and Skye is the first person in the UK to have it for his condition.'

And it's in this pressurised tank that Skye came up with the idea for Loom To The Moon.

'He has to wear a space helmet and during his 90-minute treatment we joke he's going to the moon,' says Sally.

'His school friends have been teaching him about looming so he's spent his time looming in there.'

'One day he decided he wanted to set a world record for the longest loom band that would reach to the moon, to raise money for his charity that helps fund research into brain tumours, [www.blueskyethinking.org](http://www.blueskyethinking.org).

'Days later he lost the use of his hands so he asked his friends to help.'



'Skye needs the help of everyone in the UK to help him reach the moon and raise money for research at the same time,' his mother, Sally, told MailOnline



BLUE SKYE THINKING  
SUPPORTING RESEARCH & TREATMENT OF CHILDHOOD BRAIN TUMOURS

# Daily Mail Online cont..



Skye is raising money for the charity Blue Skye Thinking, that helps fund research into brain tumours, as well as helping other children facing the disease

Word quickly spread and now, thanks to loom bands being donated from all over the UK, Skye has one long enough to reach 75 per cent up Mount Everest.

'Skye needs the help of everyone in the UK to help him reach the moon and raise money for research at the same time,' says Sally.

'My grandma's put down her knitting needles and has taken up looming, as has two-year-old Jesse who idolises his brave big brother.'

If Skye's current decline continues his future is bleak, but he never gives up hope.

'He never stops smiling and loves getting mountains of loom bands in the post every day,' says Sally.

'I read his pre-school report the other day, which was written before his diagnosis.

'His teacher had written, "Skye makes the most of every opportunity, his unique personality has left a mark and his absence from this class will leave a hole." They were so right.'

- **Blue Skye Thinking** is a charity which supports research and treatment of childhood brain tumours. For information on [#loomtothemoon](#) visit Skye's Facebook page.

Read more...

19 August 2014

## Skye's the limit as loom band appeal heads for stratosphere



Top from left, Annabel Lally, Megan Davies and Jasmine Crowford with their 46-metre loom band

First published Tuesday 19 August 2014 in [News](#)

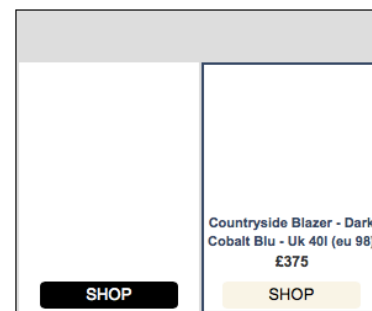
ALL across Oxfordshire, groups of children are working to fulfil Skye Hall's dying wish to make the world's longest loom band.



The five-year-old, who has only weeks to live, has been battling a brain tumour for a year.

His parents have launched the Loom to the Moon appeal, to try to make the world's longest loom band.

The craze sees children use plastic tools or their own fingers to weave small, coloured bands (looms) into bracelets, necklaces and charms. More than three million looms have been sold since the toy hit the shelves in 2011.



The idea for the challenge came when Skye, who lives in Abingdon, was making loom bands while receiving treatment in a hyperbaric oxygen chamber for hours at a time.

The staff at the treatment centre joked that they were sending him to the moon every time they locked the door and counted down for the pressurization to start.

His mum Sally, 36, said: "And, typical Skye, he turned to me and asked how many loom bands it would take to get to the moon. We were giggling and saying 'Loom to the moon' over and over again, and it all started there."

The Loom to the Moon appeal has more than 9,600 likes on Facebook, and the family has received more than 6,500 metres of loom bands – equivalent to three-quarters of the height of Everest.

Mrs Hall, who is also mum to Jesse, two, said: "It's completely amazing how this has taken off and how many people want to help Skye."

#### RELATED LINKS

- [Loom bands help to fulfil Skye's wish](#)



# Witney Gazette cont..

"In just days we've had metres and metres sent into us. It's completely mental."

Megan Davies, 10, from Blackbird Leys, is working on her long loom band after spotting the appeal on Facebook.

Megan has been working on her giant band with friends Annabel Lally, 11, and nine-year-old Jasmine Crawford at Blackbird Leys Adventure Playground.

She said: "I don't really have much time at home so I thought I'd bring it here."

"We've done 46 metres so far."

Annabel, from Blackbird Leys, said: "It's nice because then Skye knows that there are more people out there that are actually helping him."

Rose Hill resident Jasmine added: "It's lots of fun because we can talk and do it together."

**Oxford United** are also pitching in, and encouraging fans to get involved.

Peter Rhoades-Brown, the club's business development manager, said: "I know Sally and there are people in the club who know Skye's dad, Andy."

"At the next Oxford United event we'll have an area where fans can give their loom bands."

"It actually doesn't take that long – my family have made 15 metres in quite a short time."

"If we could get a loop of the pitch in yellow and blue that would be amazing."

To learn more about Loom to the Moon, like the Facebook page at [facebook.com/loomtothemoon](https://facebook.com/loomtothemoon). Post your bands to 59 Hendred Way, Abingdon, OX14 2AW

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## Loom to the Moon for Skye



PUBLISHED  
09:36 22nd August 2014

### Help us help a brave little boy

We'd like to help Skye Hall to Loom to the Moon as United welcome Portsmouth on Saturday afternoon.

Skye is a brave little boy from Abingdon who has been battling cancer since last year. Just weeks before he was due to start school he began to feel sick in the mornings and was diagnosed with a brain tumour.

Skye's friends have kept him up to speed with the latest schoolground craze of looming and he has, until recently, been kept very busy looming while receiving oxygen treatment, when he is shut in a chamber for 1½ hours three times.

Skye is the first child in the UK to be given this type of treatment for severe nerve damage caused by the radiotherapy and chemotherapy and the staff at the MS centre have always joked with Skye that they were sending him to the moon every time they locked the door and counted down for the pressurization to start.

Always up for a challenge, Skye asked how many loom bands it would take to 'ping' to the moon – answer: billions! He then decided he wanted to set a world record challenge! Sadly however, he has recently become virtually paralyzed from the shoulders down and now needs the help of every looming enthusiast to reach his goal.

Oxford United fans can help Skye reach for the moon. If you can loom then help us by looming as far as you can reach and bring them along to Saturday's game against Portsmouth.

Bring them in to the game and we will collect them at a special collection point in front of the South Stand, situated between the new matchday shop and the revolving doors.

We will then see how far they stretch across the pitch on Saturday and then take them along to Skye and his family. Any colour looming is good but yellow and blue would be perfect...

For further information on Skye and Loom to the Moon visit  
<https://www.facebook.com/loomtothemoon>

22 August 2014



## UPDATE: Brave Skye Hall's younger brother pays moving video tribute to the five-year-old + video



Tributes pour in for brave Skye Hall after his family say he died peacefully on Friday

First published Sunday 31 August 2014 in [News](#)  
Last updated 16:31 Monday 1 September 2014



TRIBUTES to brave youngster Skye Hall from Abingdon have been posted on social media sites after the five-year-old's family said he passed away on Friday.

A post on their website Blue Sky Thinking tonight said: "Our dear boy Skye died peacefully on Friday 29th August".

And in a moving tribute to Skye, who had battled with a brain tumour for a year, his younger brother Jesse is seen in a video next to Skye.





# Oxford Mail cont..

It asks people to 'keep on looming' and help Jesse get the Loom Band World Record in honour of his big brother Skye.

In a final message to his fans Skye is seen to say: "Remember to make the most of what you've got."

The family launched Skye's Loom to the Moon appeal which came from when Skye was making loom bands while receiving treatment in a hyperbaric oxygen chamber for hours at a time.

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Skye's nursery teacher Buzz McKenzie from Long Furlong Primary School said: "We were all saddened by the news of Skye's death. Skye was a pupil at Long Furlong and was popular with all who knew him.

"He was an exceptional boy who took an interest in everything; he had a unique outlook, a positive attitude and was an inspiration to others.

"Everyone who taught Skye has their own special memories, and he will live in our hearts forever."

Tributes have been flooding in on the family's Facebook page Loom to the Moon.

Antony Gibson posted: "Heartbroken that the world has lost one of it's brightest stars so soon, he was such a joy and inspiration and lit up every life he touched.

"Our loom band is underway and will be wrapped round the didgeridoo which has been played under the stars in Australia as well as England, creating a primal sound which connects us all with the earth and sky, ancestors and stars. Sleep peacefully in the heavens, beautiful brave boy."

**PROMOTED STORIES**

[Ever struggled with the Wi-Fi password in an unfamiliar office? \(HP\)](#)

[Edward Herrmann](#)  
8:55 AM

Georgina Creighton wrote: "Sally, Andrew, Jesse and Skye my heart goes out to you all. Together you have created something amazing. I cannot bear to think how hard it is for you three but you should all be so incredibly proud. RIP you beautiful little boy."