



# Larwood Academy Trust

**Executive Headteacher:** Mr Sean Trimble | B.Ed (hons) MA NPQH |

WEBB RISE, STEVENAGE, HERTFORDSHIRE, SG1 5QU  
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**Larwood School**

**Deputy Headteacher:** Mr Pierre Van Der Merwe | BA, NPQH |

**Brandles School**

**Headteacher:** Mr David Pearce | BA (hons), PGCE, NPQH |

## OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES DURING EXCEPTIONAL TIMES LARWOOD ACADEMY TRUST COVID 19 RESPONSE-UPDATED-OCT 21

### NB-THIS DOCUMENT IS LAIBLE TO CHANGE AND REVISION AT ANY TIME

The Covid 19 pandemic spread quickly across the UK during March/April. Lockdown procedures for the country were introduced towards the end of March and all schools found themselves in an unprecedented place. Very quickly, we have had to adapt to keeping staff and pupils safe and well, whilst a dangerous and relatively unknown virus swept across the country. As a Trust, we quickly agreed to and adhered to the following:

#### ***'First do no harm'.***

Taken from the Hippocratic Oath, this has allowed us to be cautious yet caring, maintain the well-being of our communities and steer our own course whilst being inclusive of appropriate and comprehensive evidence. This does mean that we may choose, at time and with good reason to not follow such evidence, if it presents as a strong possibility to do potential harm. Our stance is to be prepared to be wrong (not following guidance for example when it is first released) if it means that we end being right (less/no harm to pupils/staff/families and Trustee's).

The following sections provide details how we will work in light of Covid 19. This may last for some time and could evolve with time.

**We continue to use the above as our guiding principle, but we are also aware of the evolution of the pandemic and the need for adaptation, continued resilience, and new practice. The latter must be robust enough to serve a number of differing scenarios.**

### **HAVING PUPILS IN OUR SCHOOLS.**

This was **initially** done slowly but surely and at approx. 10% of full capacity. Various models may be used, and they include a Build Model/ Year Group Model/ Split Day Model and Day Rotation model. Classes have been measured and we take into account the challenging nature of our pupils, as well as some not being able to socially distance very well. Our approach also includes:

- ***Building pupil and staff capacity as the infection rate slows*** and being cognisant of the R0 factor across time. Therefore, pupil capacity may need to be reduced if the R0 factor becomes high again. Government advice and statistics will play an important part in this factor.

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- **Having clear and sustainable ways of entering/exiting the building.** Instead of using the main entrance, pupils and staff will enter/exit at the nearest classroom door. Signing in and out will be conducted in a different way.
- **Hand washing on entrance and before exit,** as well as frequently during the day. This is supervised for all pupils no matter what age.
- **Combining an element of physical attendance with virtual/online learning** for as long as there is a need to socially distance.
- **Reduction in the length of the school day.** (10-2.20). This enables our pupils, with a majority travelling by taxi to travel at quieter times and therefore have less chance of sitting in traffic or being involved in an accident. Travel time effects behaviour! It also helps to minimise the time spend in school, being in contact with doors/books/ computers etc. and allows extra time to clean thoroughly on a day-to-day basis.
- **Different approaches to lunch and playtimes.** This currently means no large group playtimes, but frequent breaks by supported by staff and allocated space/resources.
- **A different approach to our curriculum.** We are not currently following the National Curriculum guidelines, but we are still maintaining focus on core skills, physical activity, and mental well-being.
- **Being mindful of transport arrangements** and communicating any issues quickly to aid health and well-being for all involved.
- **Revising the day-to-day practice that classroom-based staff practice so that all concerned can be as safe as possible in the circumstances.** A set of 'rules' will be released for staff and pupils.

## SUPPORTING STAFF

From the onset of this issue, we have prioritised the health and wellbeing of all those in our community. This remains at the forefront of all of approaches. Just like our pupils, our staff have had and will have a range of concerns and anxieties in relation to this issue. Senior leaders recognise that we are not experts in this matter or situation! Therefore, we will listen to staff, communicate frequently, and take on board advice from other groups, to ensure we have the best possible range of solutions in the situation that we find ourselves in. This may include medical groups, colleagues within the DFE, local authority experts and unions. However, we will make decisions that are best suited to our context and that allow for quality educational provision, whilst keeping as safe as possible.

We are fortunate in that we had quick and easy access for staff to speak to an online doctor before this pandemic, as it is a standard part of our package of benefits for all staff. We also have existing contacts for any counselling or financial support that staff may have at any time, but also with reference to this situation.

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We have ensured that any staff that may need to shield, be it for direct or family related concerns has been able to do so and we will continue to support this for as long as it is necessary to do so. We have also enabled staff with children that need parental supervision, are able stay away from work, undue pressure from attendance at work. A degree of flexibility is needed with this matter from both staff, and us as employers, using family and school context as key drivers. It was also noted early on that we did not see the sense in making our staff's children go to school and mix with others and then send them back home to potentially spread the disease.

Therefore, as matters progress we fully expect staff to be available for work (depending on circumstances outlined above) and may rota them on or use them more frequently when safe and appropriate to do so.

PPE. Although there is continued debate about the availability, standard and use of PPE, we want to ensure staff have access to this if they want to use it. Therefore, gloves and a mask would be available if staff want to use them. As we have taken measures that include social distancing for pupils and staff and we continue to emphasise and enforce frequent hand washing, we are meeting the need prescribed to enable a high degree of safety.

I am actively chasing for the availability of testing to also help with supporting staff.

### SUPPORTING OUR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

We will do the following whilst we are experiencing this situation:

- Provide educational provision that meets need and context (physical or online)
- Adapt and evolve as the situation changes
- Maintain and extend where appropriate high levels of communication to families to check on how they are and provide advice, guidance, and support.
- Signpost to other services where helpful
- Liaise with other services to ensure care and support beyond our remit and expertise (counselling for example)
- Consider our practise in light of new information for Covid 19 and react with care and thought rather than simply follow and apply

### STAYING SAFE

We have already made the recommended changes to our Keeping Children Safe in Education policy, to take into account the Covid 19 issue and the majority of learners now accessing materials online.

Staff have been provided with access to and have had to attend online training for the new world that we find ourselves in.

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Our practice will still maintain high levels of confidentiality, data protection and seeking the very best practice for all concerned.

Our day-to-day physical protocols have already been revised at both schools. Staff will need training and information about these revisions and SLT will then ensure that staff follow them, for their own Safety. 'Old habits die hard' and we will all need to remind each other about social distance and ways that we mix and integrate whilst Covid 19 is such an issue/.

### COMMUNICATING WITH OTHERS

This is always essential, but particularly when such a demanding and challenging situation has thrust upon us. Weekly updates for staff and governors have now become the norm, alongside a weekly update for parents. There may be a need to increase this frequency as matters progress, but so far, both parent and staff feedback indicate high levels of satisfaction with communication.

### WORKING DIFFERENTLY

'If always do what we have always done, we always get what we have always got.' A personal mantra of mine that has served me well! Having used this to critically review what and how we operate, it is even more important to apply this now!

New 'rules' for staff, pupils, everyday procedures including entering the building and moving around etc. have to be implemented. Both schools have potential plans for staff and pupils that include expansion but will also be mindful of health and well-being.

Any change will be done slowly and with care to avoid school based spikes in infection and potential harm to pupils/families and staff/families.

### WORKING WITH TRUSTEE'S

As with all matters, our work and communication with Trustee's must continue. It may be that this will be different in terms of how we communicate (virtually rather than face to face), and with a revised set of temporary key drivers. However, we have planned for this to allow to the continuation of challenge and support as directed but within contextual demands.

### TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS

*Pupils that are moving on:*

Where possible, visits, following social distance may be able to take place. If schools have very few pupils and the pupils/parent does not interact/hand wash on entry and exit and keep distance, this may be feasible. If not, video presentations of tours/classrooms/dining areas/toilets etc. will need to be made, and then visits may have to be postponed. Depending on how the pandemic continues. This may have a delaying effect to entry.

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The usual contacts and meetings with parents will either have to be conducted using strict socially distanced protocols or by telephone or virtual meeting. The usual approach to providing resources and topics for this movement can be provided, and as much support from secondary colleagues is being sought and encouraged.

*New pupils starting from Sept 2020.*

Much of what has been stated above will also apply here. Parent meetings will take place in a different format if need be, and pupils will be allowed to visit, following the protocols needed at the time of the visit. Supportive materials for new pupils will also be supplied and consideration made in relation to how the school's website can also be used to help with this transition.

If we return in September to a continued model of part time education, then a phased inclusion of new pupils will also be used at the time.

### THE NEW RULES OF OPERATION DURING THE PANDEMIC.

We have always had rules and 'normal' operational procedures. These have now been revised to allow us all to stay as safe and healthy as possible during the Covid 19 pandemic. They are not a choice and are designed to limit risk for you, our pupils and all our families.

Therefore, YOU MUST FOLLOW THEM!

#### **Staff Procedures for entering and exiting the building:**

***Identified risk of spread of Covid 19 via collection of adults in small spaces and many adults touching the same items as part of the process. This could lead to a variety of symptoms, some of which may be mild but also could mean hospitalisation/death in some cases***

- All staff to wash hands on entry to the building
- Staff do not need to sign in, as we will capture this information via the fob system.
- Staff must use their own fob to enter the building. Do not follow someone else through a door if open without registering your fob
- Staff to exit using the same door/entrance as they arrived
- Staff must fob out on exit-otherwise we will need to check the building to see if you are still in the building
- You are strongly advised to wash hands as soon as you get home

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### STAFF PROCEDURES WHEN YOU IN THE SCHOOL BUILDING

***Identified risk of spread of Covid 19 via collection of adults (children) in small spaces and many adults touching the same items as part of the process. This could lead to a variety of symptoms, some of which may be mild but also could mean hospitalisation/death in some cases***

#### **Generally:**

- Follow the direction of travel using the signs and the doors that are open. This will help to avoid 'pinch points' and the need to touch doors to open them
- Do not enter the front office unless essential. Speak to EOB via the glass window. This will help keep a 2m distance between and help the flow of movement in the admin corridor.  
**Reduce all non-essential movement around the school.**
- Keep travel around the school to minimum. This helps maintain the 2m distancing in corridors etc.
- Make sure pupils wash hands regularly ie at least once per hour.
- **Make sure you wash/sanitise your hands regularly ie at least once per hour**
- If you can go outside to get to another area of the school, then please do so
- **Keep windows open even if it is a small amount and keep doors open when possible. If you do need to close due to pupil behaviour then regularly purge the air, by opening the doors/windows fully. As a minimum this should be every hour.**
- Classrooms will be organised so that pupils and staff can maintain social distance. Do not adjust these arrangements as they are there for your health and well being
- Any incident will be dealt with in the same manner part from no restrictive physical contact will be used. If in doubt call PV or IR.
- Pupils are to only use designated toilets
- When getting pupils to move and there may be a possibility of others moving radio ahead to let all parties know that you are moving
- **Wear a mask when in the classroom or moving around the school. You may also use a face shield, but a face shield alone is not adequate. All staff have been allocated a face shield and face masks are readily available at the entrances to school. You may choose to use your own, but you will need to be satisfied that it does the job required-the ones that we provide are medical grade.**

### **CORRIDORS**

- **Always wear a mask when moving around the school**
- Follow the one-way signs around the building and avoid using the corridors if possible
- Upper School-(HP/NG/SJ/RK/MT) classes all always enter and exit classes from the outside door throughout the day, therefore avoid using the very narrow corridor in that area. This should be fine during the summer months

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- For the 'top end' there is a one-way direction of travel and a 'waiting area', where staff will get pupils to stop and then check to see if it's okay to proceed. These pupils can also use the outside route to move to the playground via the flats and the back of Fox.

### THE STAFF ROOM

- ✓ **Wear a mask when moving around the staff room. If you are taking a break/sitting down/having your lunch-you can remove your mask**
- ✓ **Use the hand gel when you first enter the staff room**
- ✓ **Only sit in the designated areas that are not taped. This keeps you 2m away from other staff**
- ✓ **Change the sign if you enter the staff room toilet. This is a confined space, and it will avoid two people coming into close proximity by mistake**
- ✓ **If someone is in the kitchen area, wait by the sign to enter the area. When you do, place the chain across the entrance gap**
- ✓ **Before you do anything in the kitchen area, including touching anything wash or gel your hands. It is by the water cooler. This will add another layer of protection for you and other staff.**

### TOILETS

Only use the toilet that has been allocated to you. Staff have been allocated toilets based on reducing the numbers using each one and where they are located. Do not use toilets in other areas of the school as this will help with potential spread of Covid. Wash/sanitize hands before and after use.

### WHAT TO DO WHEN A MEMBER OF STAFF FEELS UNWELL

If you are feeling unwell before schools starts (high temp/coughing etc) THEN DO NOT COME INTO WORK!

Phone Pierre as you would do normally and contact your Doctor/use Perkbox or Medicash online support.

Get tested ASAP! This is open to all staff. Follow the instructions already published by Sean via email. If negative, then return to work. If positive you need to self-isolate for 7 days. Your family members in your house need to self-isolate for 14 days.

If you become unwell whilst at work, tell Pierre or a member of SLT ASAP and then isolate leave the building as soon as you can. You must avoid being near others if this happens. Contact your Doctor and get tested ASAP.

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### WHAT TO DO WHEN A PUPILS FEELS UNWELL

(Parents will be reminded to not send in pupils if they are unwell in any way)

Check how the pupils feels via conversation. As we are all using social distance, you have no need to be close to them.

Contact Ian if it seems that the child has possible CV 19 symptoms or may need to go home unwell.

Ian will go to the end room in Fox and open the door (old dining area for pupils not in the main hall).

ESCORT THE PUPIL TO THIS DOOR BY GOING OUTSIDE OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING AND NOT VIA CORRIDORS AND FOX. This will be the area where the pupil will remain (door closed) until they can go home. Ian will supervise this by standing outside with external door being open.

When possible, we would get all pupils and staff in that class tested ASAP. The class would also be deep cleaned ASAP. The idea of test/track and trace would be implemented to help the spread of the virus. By limiting movement and numbers on school, this should be easy to then follow up with.

Please then consider where the pupil has been and what they may have touched. If this situation happens first thing in the morning, then some basic cleaning should suffice. If it is later in the day, a class may need to be moved and the area closed off and cleaned ASAP.

Wearing the supplied gloves and if safe to do so please wipe clean and wipe down at areas where possible.

### THE KITCHEN AREA

- Staff will enter the kitchen directly and phone in/out as a way of signing in and out during Covid 19
- **Kitchen staff to wear masks at all times, apart from if they are having a break and away from others**
- Staff will continue to maintain excellent hygiene practice which must always include washing hands on entry and wearing gloves
- When there is more than one staff in the area, they will need to work differently, always based on the need for 2m social distancing until further notice. This will be revised by Ian with the staff based on health and safety practice for current times.
- Disposable plates will be used to assist with this process until further notice
- The serving hatch forms a natural barrier and staff will not help themselves to food but will be served by catering staff

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### OUT

#### Outside:

- ✓ Please wear a mask if you feel you need to. It is recommended but not compulsory
- ✓ Play equipment needs to be sprayed with disinfectant after use by a pupil or after a session has completed.
- ✓ The above also applies to the large equipment and apparatus

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