



Larwood Academy Trust

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

Chair of Trustees: Cllr Sandra Barr | B.Sc (Hons) Dip.soc.pol |

WEBB RISE, STEVENAGE, HERTFORDSHIRE, SG1 5QU

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Larwood School

Brandles School

Deputy Headteacher: Mr Pierre Van Der Merwe | BA, NPQH | **Headteacher:** Mr David Pearce | BA (Hons), PGCE, NPQH |

Friday, 15th January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Another week has passed and we seem to be getting into some form of new routines for the vast majority of families. Your support with this process has been essential and my thanks for your help. We all appreciate that this continues to be far from ideal.

What's working well?

The following seem to be going well so far:

- Many pupils/families online and accessing the live lessons
- The use of the system by pupils to join meetings (lessons) make comments and join in where there can and it's appropriate to do so
- Pupils in school based classes are using technology to join the online classes when they are running
- We are delivering live lessons! There seems to be a lot of discussion about schools choosing to not use these and as we have noted there are positives and negatives to any type of learning. However, we value the way that live lessons create interaction and that is just as important as anything else right now. Of course there are other ways of learning that we are also using to supplement the live lessons as well.
- The vast majority of pupils are being respectful and behaving well in both circumstances with support from yourselves at home and staff at school
- The adaptation of points, medals and shirts is meaningful for many of the children

What are some of the issues we have faced, what can we do about them and what next?

- Technology is wonderful thing as long as it works! It may fail for teaching staff and it may fail at home for all sorts of reasons. When it does, please do not panic and go back to paper based learning or an alternative activity of your choice.
- Supervision. Please ensure that your child is being supervised whilst the lesson take place. This may be as simple as being in the same room as them or you may choose to help and learn at close proximity. You know what system is best for your child. Please do not leave them to their own devices
- We understand that this may not work for some of our pupils. Alternatively, possibly they may get tired of being in front of screen for large periods of the day. If this is the case, please let us know and staff will adapt the format of learning to help you and your child.

Registered office:

Larwood School, Webb Rise, Stevenage, Hertfordshire. SG1 5QU, UK. Company Number: 10359418



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- At some point next week, we should receive home based Covid test kits for staff and will be able to put them to use at least by the week starting 25th Jan. This is good news in that it will highlight any staff who has the virus. There will not be any testing for pupils, unlike secondary schools and it does not mean that staff will become immune to the virus.
- Data shared by the government indicates record levels of deaths and high, but stabilising rates of infection. Public Health are indicating that the next few weeks are still going to be highly challenging.
- For those pupils accessing the lessons at school, they need ear phones to hear and provide some privacy, whilst in the class with others. We are trying to order some, but the combination of the situation and Brexit have really made this challenging. Therefore if your child has some, they can bring them in and use at school. It will need to be of the Jack Pin type rather than the latest connection format from Apple. In the meantime, staff will bring in spares from home, which can be cleaned and then passed onto pupils who may not have any.

Please note that just like the rest of the country we have experienced a greater number of pupils and staff feeling unwell and needing to access Covid testing. Our current approach remains the safest and will be reviewed again during the next couple of weeks.

As always, please keep in communication with us. Even if you are not accessing the live teaching and you are doing some other forms of learning, it is our duty to know that you and your child are okay.

Yours Sincerely

S D Trimble
Executive Headteacher

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