



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

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

Brandles School

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

Friday, 5th February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Please see attached notes with the continuation of weekly communication. I hope this letter finds you all well. Based on the various reports I have received during the course of the week, the time of the term and the situation, I understand that the week has presented many with a variety of challenges. Our continued approach of keeping good quality communication going is essential during such times and I appreciate that so many of you are keeping us up to date.

Please note the following:

Autism re-accreditation at Larwood

During the start of next week, we will be holding a series of meetings to hopefully gain our National Autism accreditation award. This would be valid for another three years and will be conducted online due to the situation. So much has changed with our practice since the last accreditation process both in terms of our provision and application of support. I am sure it will be a very positive experience for us all. Please note that we had the option of deferring this process due to the pandemic but we choose to carry on.

March 1st

As already communicated, this is the date where we hope to make some changes in terms of our number of children in school each day and week. The national and local overview of infection/death rate and hospitalisation now seems to be under better control. Please note the following which is valid on Thursday 4th Feb:

- All indicators for Stevenage are better than they were last week, which seems to generally match most areas of the country i.e. going down.
- Stevenage is still above national average for rate of infection at 318/100k of population as opposed to 250/100k of population for the rest of the UK.
- Hertfordshire has been identified as having an outbreak of the South African variant which was identified as being within Hoddesdon.
- We will have complications that will mean it is highly unlikely that all pupils will return at once. This includes potential staffing issues for those with young children and accessing mainstream placement, (Government have widened the criteria and most mainstream schools cannot offer everyone a place full time), possible ongoing issues with staff having to self-isolate due to personal or family reasons, and the state of the virus at the time. However, it is highly likely that all pupils will be able access some physical learning every week if need be.

Registered office:

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



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- Final decisions on this matter will not be made until after we return from half term week. As we have consistently seen during the course of the pandemic, much can change in a short period of time.

We continue to work towards this date as change in our provision, which should equate to more pupils physically being in school at this time. At this stage, we are making plans that would last for a two-week period (March 1st – March 12th) and this would then include any relevant information from the announcement planned for March 8th by the Prime Minister.

Thank you to all of your comments following the phone calls made by Mrs O'Brien indicating your preferences, thoughts and worries for this next stage. They have certainly helped us with our planning.

Vaccination for Staff

During the course of this week, I received notification that Hertfordshire are trying to arrange for school-based staff such as teachers and Support Staff to have vaccinations sooner than the planned age related roll out program. This was great news and if it can take place, will be really helpful for our approach in making changes after March 1st. Please note that if jabs take place during the half term break, it is recognised that approx. 3 weeks are needed for immunity to build up. Therefore using this timeline that would be after the week ending March 12th.

Curriculum Changes for next week.

In light of the some of the challenges with working online, you will note from conversations with teaching staff that next week will be different! We hope that this helps to break the possible monotony of looking at a screen. Please let us know what you think.

Yours sincerely

S D Trimble

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