



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 |

Wednesday, 24th February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome back to the second half of the Spring Term 2021. I thought I would write to you earlier in the week to remind you, and confirm our plans for the next few weeks, and particularly after last night's statement by the Prime Minister.

First and foremost, we are now confident that a return to school for all pupils is appropriate on March 8th. We are now in a very different position when compared to the start of the Spring Term and this includes:

- An R rate which is below 1 and approx. 0.6-0.9
- An infection rate of approx. 130/100k of population. This is certainly equitable with great parts of the Autumn Term
- Weekly testing of staff using Lateral Flow Tests before they come into school. This takes place twice per week.
- The vast majority of staff have had their first dosage of Covid vaccination just before or during the half term break.
- Our school based protocols, as advocated by Government guidance, remain in place with frequent hand washing, keeping distance and the wearing of face masks. Such measures are far from ideal but have served us well so far.
- Our previous planning had included a growing number of pupils back after March 1st.

Therefore, based on all of the information above, we are confident that we can increase pupils numbers to around half of the school roll next week and then have all pupils back the following week. Wherever possible, all staff will be back on site from next week. Therefore, across the Trust we have a similar 'roadmap approach' to the next few weeks and the phases are as follows:

Phase 1-Week beginning Monday 1st March and ending Friday 5th March

At **Larwood**, we will return to having all classes open and approx. half of the school population in school. Therefore, some pupils will learn online at school and some will learn in this way from home. All pupils, will access some time at school during this week, with parent support.

At **Brandles** we will ensure that all pupils are back in for at least two full days during the week. A staggered start will allow us to complete two lateral flow tests on all staff and students. When the pupils are not in school, they will continue to learn online at home. Travel arrangements and student timetables will be sent out in the next couple of days.

Registered office:

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



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NB-During this week, we may have some staff with school placement issues/care situations that need care and finalisation before March 8th.

Phase 2-Week beginning Monday 8th March and ending Friday 12th March

Both schools will welcome back all pupils during this week. The school day will revert to the usual timings for both schools.

All pupils will return at the usual time of 9.00am and go back to classes as expected. Class/lunchtime bubbles will continue to operate as they did last term.

Phase 3-After March 12th and until the end of the term

At this point in time, those staff who have had the vaccination will have reached the point of highest immunity possible after one dose. This is not a guarantee against getting Covid but it does seem to mitigate the nasty effects it may have for most people. Therefore, from this point in time, we will start to discuss what we may be able to safely do over time that may help us return to a greater degree of normality. It is highly unlikely that any changes will be made before the start of the Summer Term and any changes will be based on the state of the pandemic.

Although we remain a great distance away from normality and where we would all like to be, it does seem very likely that we can edge closer during the next few weeks/months. I am sure we can agree that this is really helpful for us all and I look forward to the time ahead. I think it is fair to say that most of us have enough of 'lockdowns' and restrictions but respect the need to support the NHS and the countries approach to keeping us all safe.

Finally, thank you for your continued support during the very challenging times faced recently. As always, please do keep talking to us and if we can help, please be rest assured that we will do as quickly as we can.

Yours sincerely

S D Trimble

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