



Larwood Academy Trust

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

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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



18th September 2020

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s)

This is my first formal letter of the new academic year (excluding the one sent just before the start of the year) and I had hoped, I would be writing about a variety of topics. However, I am sure you can guess what will dominate the body of the letter! My apologies but this just cannot be avoided.

We have engaged with pupils with learning and the various activities that should take place each day. Lessons have been adjusted but generally speaking, curriculum content is being covered as it should be. As already shared, I think most pupils are happy to be back, and there is work to be undertaken with regards to the various anxieties generated before now and with the return to school. We always invest time in supporting pupils with the various needs they may have, but now we are investing even more time, due to the situation. Just as so many other aspects of life, we face constant change and directives with many areas of education at the moment.

Thank you for your support so far in getting pupils back to school and helping us to try and settle back to some form of routine. It remains challenging but across our schools we have done the following to help matters:

- Comprehensively risk assessed the various situations, processes and events we do to see if/how they can work
- Spoken to pupils frequently to remind them about how we must now work together and why it is important to follow rules etc.
- Reviewed and enhanced cleaning protocols where needed but also ensured that personal hygiene remains an essential part of day to day, or even lesson by lesson life
- Adapted our curriculum and teaching practice to help with the situation
- Where we have experienced the possibility of a pupil or staff member having the symptoms of Covid, we have followed the recommended guidance. Nobody has tested positive so far.

I think it is fair to say we are pleased with where we are at the moment, but we are not complacent. The current testing fiasco is a huge concern. Staff, parents and pupils have passed on the issues they have faced with trying to get a test. We have passed on home test kits where appropriate and will continue to do so where anyone is being advised to travel great distances for tests. I know this is not how the tests were meant to be used, but I believe that this is appropriate. If you have symptoms and you cannot get tested; you have no idea if the virus is present, we have no choice but to insist upon a 14 day self-isolation period. Both schools in our Trust will request more tests as soon as we can, but currently we can only do this every 21 days. It is possible that we will run out based on current predictions.



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Please note that you will continue to experience other changes due to Covid 19. Parent's evenings, Educational Health Care plan reviews etc. will also be held in different ways. We continue to not let many visitors into the school for obvious reasons. Please also see the additional guide about what to do if you think your child may have Covid symptoms. This has been prepared by Mrs O'Brien at Larwood.

As always, we remain focused on the most important part of the job-your sons and daughters and their day-to-day experiences. None of the above is their fault and therefore we must continue to ensure our provision and activities provide the enjoyment, learning and progress that school should. It may be different but we like being different!

Many thanks

Yours sincerely

S D Trimble

Executive Headteacher