



VOLUME: NINE

ISSUE: FIVE

Larwood Lowdown



Being reflective as the term and year draw to a natural conclusion, I had to revisit what I wrote last year for The Larwood Lowdown:

Summer 2020

'The end of the strangest year ever! I hope that my title is correct! That being that we do not have a repeat of the circumstances that led to it.'

Well, it's important to admit when you are wrong and last year, writing the above is a good example of just that! I recently wrote an article for The Comet and when I did I simply thought of you; our parents and carers. However, the sentences could also have been directed to our staff and pupils throughout The Trust, alongside colleagues and all that work closely with us. The message was direct and purposefully simply: **THANK YOU!**

Thank you for sticking with us through some incredibly difficult times. In similar ways to last year, this year has presented with huge challenges and we really do appreciate your support. You have had to deal with matters that are just not part of our normal day to day life. Yet, you have managed to deal with these as best you can and done a brilliant job!

Thank you for the rapid response to change. The pandemic has resulted in, at times, one week being very different to the next due to circumstances beyond anyone's control. Most of us have a tolerance for change and it can vary between us. It can also vary depending on what else is going on in our lives. Yet, when it's happened, you may have moaned quietly/loudly, shared concerns with friends and neighbours/teachers but then got on with it!

Thank you for your kind words and support during the year that has passed. They mean the world to us and our staff. We have all felt the strain that the year has created, but the way we have worked together to solve the many barriers we have faced, really has resulted in some outstanding collaboration.

Thank you to the amazing staff across The Trust that have flexed, learnt to adapt time and time again, and kept going with smiles on their faces.

Most importantly, **thank you** to the amazing young people that come through our doors, day after day, and simply try their best. The changes that you have had to deal with have never been your fault and I am so proud of all of you in the way that you have dealt with everything that has taken place.

So this year, I must be right in saying no more strange years like the last two! Maybe.....

Have the best possible summer break that you can and I look forward to seeing you on Wed 1st September for the first day back for pupils here at Larwood.

BACK
SCHOOL

**WEDNESDAY, 1ST SEPTEMBER 2021
@ 9AM**

Mr Trimble

S D Trimble

Executive Headteacher

Larwood Academy Trust



Achieve

Miss Hanam

'and it was all yellllow!'

What a fantastic year for Miss Hanam's class! All 9 boys have ended the school year by successfully earning a coloured shirt and their gold medals. All of their hard work and determination has certainly paid off. We have had an extremely busy summer term! You may know that we absolutely love cooking and baking and we have some ambitious future bakers and chefs in our class. We have been learning to make Jam Tarts, mini quiches, ice cream sandwiches, milkshakes and thoroughly enjoyed making our very own delicious ice cream!

Team work and communication is an area we have been particularly focusing on this term and all the boys have been consistently using kind and supportive words towards each other and ensuring they are going out of their way to show consideration and thoughtfulness to all. We have grown and learnt so much this year! The majority of the boys will be going to Year 6 in September and cannot wait to be excellent role models to the newer and younger pupils at Larwood School. Have an amazing summer everyone we look forward to continue sharing our journey with you next year.



Stevenage Sporting Futures



Over the course of time that schools have been shut, Stevenage Sporting Futures Team have been highlighting different activities and tasks that children can complete from home during quarantine. We will be continuing to do this throughout the rest of the academic year giving children ideas of how they can stay physically active at home as well as activities that can be completed in school. Go check out some of the activities that we have posted online. We hope this is a useful resource for you all throughout the remainder of the academic year. Please find the links to our website and social media pages below:

Facebook: Stevenage Sporting Futures Team <https://www.facebook.com/stevenagesportingfuturesteam>

Twitter: @stevenageSFT

Website: <http://stevenagesportingfutures.co.uk/covid-19/>

Adam Baker - Stevenage Sporting Futures



Believe



Miss Powell

'FLY!'

This half term seems to have flown by and we can't believe that we're in our last week of the school year! In class, we've spent a lot of time creating memories and thinking about transition. We've enjoyed picnics, making fruit salads, visiting our new secondary schools and seeing up close the lifecycle of a butterfly. We spoke about the symbolism of looking after and giving the caterpillars the resources that they need so that they can flourish when released into the wild and compared this to our year six spreading their wings and being ready to leave for secondary school. It has been an absolute joy to have each and every one of our class this year and I'm sure Friday will be difficult for many. We'd like to take this opportunity to say how proud we are of them all and wish you all a safe and happy summer. We hope to hear about all of the positives of our class in the Autumn term when they've settled into their new classes.

Miss Powell & Miss Hipkin

Mrs Osborne

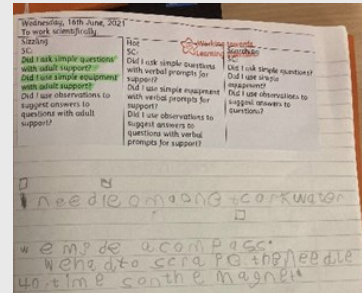
'Head of State!'

Another busy half term and lots of learning completed. Well done Guys! Our topic in class this term continues to be 'The Monarch'.

The children have continued to learn about punctuation and in literacy have been using commas in lists. The 'hands on literacy' activity for this term has been to create puppets and backdrops for a mini-theatre where they can recreate the play. Children have performed their interpretation of A Mid-Summer Night's Dream to each other.

During skills lessons on a Thursday afternoon, children have used a variety of skills, creating montages of the Queen, sewing book marks and creating castles from Lego. We have also been into the garden and watered fruit and vegetables they planted last term.

As part of Science, a visitor brought animals into school and children were able to learn facts about and handle them. They also took part in a variety of experiments, including making a compass, learning about hygiene and building and flying rockets.



Lowdown



Expect

Mrs Kamene

'Yum, yum! Down into my belly! Yum, Yum, Yum , YUM!'

The children in Mrs Kamene's class have been tending their vegetable patch well. They have been watering and weeding them regularly. As a result of their invested effort, we have already reaped the rewards with lovely sweet strawberries and our tomatoes should be ripened by the end of term.



The children experienced the truly amazing life cycle of a butterfly. They saw the 4 stages in the metamorphosis of butterflies: from eggs to caterpillars then to chrysalis, and to the final stage of the cycle when the butterflies emerged from the chrysalis and grew to adult. We now have to release the butterflies!

Miss Trott

'Skills Life'

For the second part of the summer term we tried to do as many 'hands on activities' as possible. We created our leavers performance to 'Hard knock life', we made homemade ice cream, smoothies and pizzas, we celebrated Canada day with Miss Trott-trying different Canadian treats and learning how to play hockey. We even got to cuddle a Meerkat and watch our caterpillars change into beautiful butterflies and release them into the world.





Enjoy

AN OPPORTUNITY TO WIN £100 OF SUPER MARKET VOUCHERS SEPTEMBER 2021 TO JULY 2022

100% pupil attendance
could win you £100 of
supermarket vouchers

98% + pupil attendance
could win you £50 of
supermarket vouchers

95%+ pupil attendance
could win you £25 of
supermarket vouchers

All qualifying names will be put into a
hat and picked by Mr Van.

#AttendanceIsImportant

Be an Attendance Hero!

Congratulations to:

Harry 100%

Phoebe 99.4%

Hamza 95.7



LISTENING, SUPPORTING AND NON- JUDGEMENTAL

Family Lives operates a free 24/7 telephone helpline offering advice, information and support on any aspect of parenting and family life as well as extended support for complex and difficult issues. There is also an option to chat online with a parent support worker. **HELPLINE: 0808 800 2222** **WEBSITE: www.familylives.org.uk**
The website provides advice and a range of resources that aim to ensure that families get the support they need.

STAY CONNECTED

Larwood



Home

#LARWOODLIFE #STAYUPTODATE #CONNECTED



School Website: www.larwood.herts.sch.uk

Telephone Number: 01438 236 333



Email: admin@larwood.herts.sch.uk

School App: App Store - e4Education



Facebook: Larwood School Academy

YouTube: Channel - Larwood School

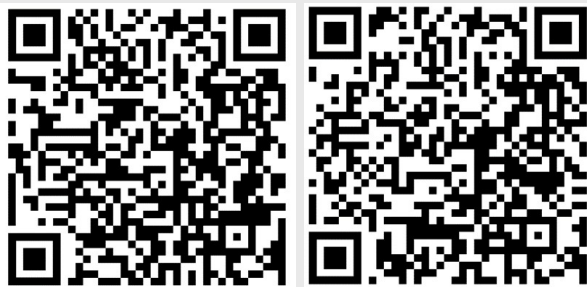


The Larwood Lowdown

effective
communication

We're officially
GOOD
and well on our way
to **OUTSTANDING**

Larwood



Mr Rooke

'QR me hearties!'

As the summer term approaches and the year comes to an end Mr Rooke's class have been reflecting over the year and what a wild ride it has been for us all! In the final term we have really pushed ourselves to make sure we are ready for next year recapping over previous learning, as well as expanding our knowledge of our topic area of "Rotten Romans." (QR code 2) A personal highlight was hiring the class as city planners. Investigating the area of our school and it's journey from the field it was, to the Larwood school we all know and love. We challenged the pupils to plan their own towns. They worked to a set budget and had to prioritise the important buildings and businesses to make their towns work (QR code 1). It has been a fantastic term and we want to wish everyone a wonderful summer holiday.

Kind regards Mr R Rooke & Miss Gosnel

Mrs Wood

'Work, work, work, work, SUMMER BREAK!'

Our last half term together as a class, we have covered some exciting topics which the boys have enjoyed. In literacy we have learned all about the Queen and our fantastic finish is our garden tea party. For science week the class enjoyed all the different experiments we did. Most of the class liked making ice-cream in a bag and watching the fire changing colour. We had the Mayor of Stevenage come in and visit our class and the boys asked some lovely questions and enjoyed her visit. For Friday reward afternoon we went to the park for the first time, which was very exciting, and the boys all behaved themselves. We are looking forward to our last week where we will be doing cooking, going to the park, coming to school in our PJ's and Sports Day. Every boy in the class has made progress this year socially, emotionally, and well as across the curriculum. It has been a pleasure working with all these wonderful boys and their families during another challenging year. I would like to wish you all a wonderful safe Summer and best of luck to the boys in their new classes for September.





Miss Kimpton

'by order of the Queen'

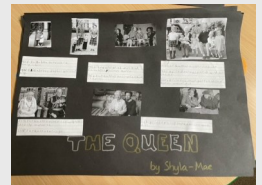
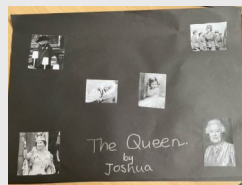
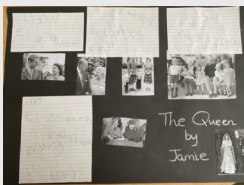
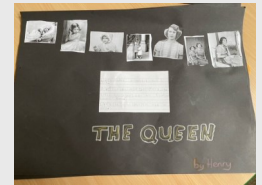
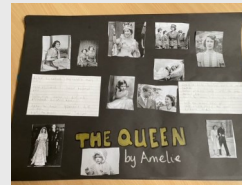
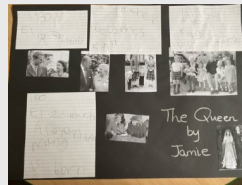
Project Read

Over the last year the library has been undergoing an extensive remodel. It is now complete. The space is colourful, fresh, and full of wonderful books, magazines, comic, audio books and a set of Kindles. The space is open for the classes to use, and the children have started to enjoy the space. We will be having an official launch of the library, and this will include the unveiling of its new name. This will be happening in September, and information about this will be shared when we return to school in the autumn term.



My class

We have had a wonderful year and completed some amazing work. This term we have been learning about the Queen. We have researched her life before she became the Queen and her life afterwards. The children have worked very hard



on writing what they have learned. I have, over the term posted many pieces on to Pobble. We have learned about the 4 main residences of the Queen. Each child picked a castle/house/palace and researched it, drew it, and wrote about it. It was very interesting learning about the different places the Queen likes to visit. In History we have looked at the Queen's family tree and talked about different family members, we talked a lot about Prince Philip and the role he played in her life. It has been very interesting learning about our monarch.

Due to the new housing project being built next to our school, we have a new address:

LARWOOD ACADEMY TRUST
LARWOOD DRIVE
STEVENAGE.
SG1 5BZ



Larwood School children are **NOT OLD ENOUGH** to use this social media platform!

WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TIKTOK

TikTok is a video-sharing social media app available on iOS and Android which lets users create, share, and view user created videos much in a similar manner to Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat. It's main draw, however, is that users can record and upload bite-sized looping videos of themselves lip-syncing and dancing to popular music or soundbites, often for comedic effect, which can then be further enhanced with filters, emoji's and stickers. TikTok has been designed with the young user in mind and has a very addictive appeal. At the beginning of 2019 it skyrocketed in popularity to become the iOS store's most downloaded app with over 33 million downloads. Estimates suggest that it now has anything between 500 million and over 1 billion monthly active users worldwide.

INAPPROPRIATE MUSIC

TikTok revolves around creating music videos through lip-syncing and dancing. Inevitably, some of the music featured by users will contain explicit or suggestive lyrics. Given the undeniably young user base, there is a risk that children may look to imitate the explicit language they hear or the suggestive actions they see when viewing others user's videos on the app.

MATURE CONTENT

On the iOS store, TikTok is listed as 12+. On the Google Play Store it is rated as 'Parental guidance recommended'. When signing up for the app, it's possible to lie about your age without any form of verification. As children scroll through their feed, most of the videos they're likely to come across are light hearted or funny takes on dance routines which are designed to make people laugh. However there has been a slew of videos which have been reported for featuring drug and alcohol abuse, self-harm and sexual content, including young teens dressing overtly sexually and behaving suggestively. Given the deluge of material uploaded to TikTok every day, it's impossible to moderate everything and it can be quite common to come across explicit content on the 'for you' feed when logging into the platform.

TIKTOK FAME

TikTok is very image focused and there is a notable preoccupation with appearing cool and attractive. Many teenagers now attempt to go viral and become what's known in-app as 'TikTok famous'. TikTok (and its predecessor musical.ly) has spawned its own celebrities – social media stars Loren Gray and Jacob Sartorius have been catapulted to fame through their initial exposure on the app. Obviously, most budding influencers looking to become the next big thing will be disappointed, but this may have the knock-on effect of making them go to more and more drastic lengths to get noticed.

ONLINE PREDATORS

As a social network, TikTok makes it easy to connect with other users. This includes the ability to comment on and react to other user's videos, follow their profile and download their content. Be aware that by default, any user can comment on your child's video if their account is set to public. Most interactions are harmless enough but as an app, TikTok is prone to predators because of the abundance of younger users.

ADDICTIVE NATURE

Social media is designed to be addictive and TikTok is no different. It can be fun and hugely entertaining. However, it is also because of this that it can be hard to put down. In addition to the short, punchy nature of the looping video format, the app's ability to keep you guessing what will come on screen next makes it easy to turn a five-minute visit into 45-minute visit.



IN-APP PURCHASES

Aside from the content, there's also the option to purchase in-app extras called 'TikTok coins'. Prices range from £0.99 for 100 coins to an eye-watering £93.99 for 10,000 coins. TikTok coins are used to purchase different emoji's to reward content creators that a user finds funny or entertaining. In the iOS version of the app you can disable the option to buy TikTok coins but this sadly doesn't seem to be a feature in the Android version.

WE KNOW THAT SOME LARWOOD CHILDREN ARE ON TIKTOK!

Get them off it!

TALK ABOUT ONLINE DANGERS

Assuming your child is above the age limit to use the app, make sure you also take the time to talk to them about what they are seeing on the app. Have a dialogue, get them to give you their opinion on what is appropriate and model the correct behaviour for them. Go over why they shouldn't give out private information or identifiable photos and be positive and understanding of them. In the long run, getting them to think critically about what they're seeing goes a long way to keeping them social media savvy.

ENABLE RESTRICTED MODE

In the digital wellbeing section there's the ability to turn on restricted mode using a PIN. Restricted mode filters out content that is not age appropriate although it should be noted that this isn't always 100% fool proof. When enabling restricted mode, parents should still be vigilant to what their child is watching and take note that the algorithm moderating content is not infallible.

MATURE CONTENT

With the proper privacy settings in place, TikTok can be a safe space for your child to express themselves. However, just in case something does manage to slip through, make sure your child knows how to recognise and report content that isn't appropriate and get them to come to you about what they have seen. TikTok allows users to report offenders and comments within the app. You can also block individual users by going on their profile.

USE PRIVACY SETTINGS

Undoubtedly, the easiest way to safeguard your child on TikTok is to make sure their account is set to private. This means only those users your child approves can view, like, and follow their content. Setting the account to private may clash with your child's goal of social media superstardom, but it will keep their account secure from strangers. This setting can be enabled under the privacy and safety menu by pressing the ellipsis in the 'me' tab of the app. To be extra safe, there are additional controls available to toggle such as who can send comments and messages, among other options.

EXPLORE & LEARN YOURSELF

Understanding and learning the app yourself is a great way to get to grips with TikTok. You could then even use the app with your child and watch some videos with them. If you are the parent of a teen, even if it does not make you popular, keep a close eye on what they're viewing and sharing. That said, it's a brilliant chance to turn it into a bonding opportunity with your child also. You could even unleash your inner performer and make videos with them while (more importantly) keeping them safe online.

MODERATE SCREEN TIME

As entertaining as TikTok is, you can help your child moderate their time on the app by making use of the digital wellbeing section. Under the screen time management option, you can limit the daily allotted time allowed on the app in increments ranging from 40 to 120 minutes. You can also lock this preference behind a PIN number which has to be inputted in order to then exceed the daily time limit. This way your child can get their daily dose of memes without wasting away the day.



SAFETY TIPS FOR PARENTS



School

Mr Jacobs

'Time Capsule'

The boys have recently joined in with the school project of creating pieces of Art that illustrate their experiences during lockdown or their emotions when we came out of lockdown. Everybody's piece of work has been placed into a Time Capsule, and buried on site near the Stevenage Trig point, located on site. School council representatives of each class joined the Mayor of Stevenage and representatives from the building company building adjacent to the school to bury the capsule. The capsule will remain buried for at least 25 years and I am confident the work will help explain to future pupils how we felt and coped during lockdown.



The boys are looking forward to enjoying some of the fun activities often experienced at Larwood but due to Covid 19 have yet to experience. It will wonderful to see them enjoying the local park and café in the blazing sunshine promised ahead of this report. Once again, children at Larwood have played their part in helping keep our environment clean. Mr Jacobs recently enjoyed litter picking that resulted in two large bags of rubbish being collected from the pathway that surrounds the school. The class were shocked at the behaviour of others and were passionate about making a positive change to their community.

Mrs Sandra Barr

'Our Chair of Trustees has been inaugurated as Mayor of Stevenage!'



Mrs Sandra Barr, our Chair of Trustees, has been inaugurated as Mayor of Stevenage with Miss Louisa Barr (daughter) as her Mayoress. Mayor Sandra Barr has very kindly shared with us part of her Inaugural speech:

I should very much like to introduce you to my three mayoral charities for the coming year.

My first is Leyden House, Stevenage Day Centre for Adults with Learning Disabilities. This is a centre of excellence for the most vulnerable and hidden residents in this town. They deservedly won Covid pride of Stevenage 2020, and are always struggling for extra funding to enrich the lives of the clients, who are amongst the poorest members of our community.

My second charity is **Larwood Academy School**, this is a special school for children with severe emotional, behavioural & mental health issues. They also have an outstanding outreach program open to all the primary schools in Stevenage, thus helping to keep the children of our town, who are feeling the stresses of modern life, post Covid, in mainstream school, trying to avert crisis situations in their educational life.

My third and last choice reflects my great love for the arts and particularly dance for children. I believe that dance, as well as being a great class leveller, is good for the body and the soul and once again so needed for our young people again in the new post Covid time.

Well done and congratulations to you both from us all at Larwood!





Government legislation introduced in 2014 led to an increased emphasis on promoting British values to all pupils, as part of our spiritual, moral, social and cultural development program. Having placed a strong emphasis on moral values and being a responsible member of the Larwood school community, we had already established a strong base in this area. During the 2014-15, we have reviewed where we believe our strengths and weaknesses are within this program and this has helped to clarify what we need to do next, alongside what we need to continue to maintain. Such provision may be via the formal curriculum or via more informal opportunities such as play, lunchtimes, additional events including charity based days and trips and visits.

How we do this, what are our strengths and what needs more development?

Influencing decisions making through democratic processes.

This is promoted via the school structure that enables pupils to have a voice and make choices as part of the day to running of the school, as well as long term change and decisions that may affect them. We do this by:

- Promoting class debate around subjects and choices
- Electing school council members and having pupils speak to members of the Leadership Team/Chair of the Governing Body about ideas and choices
- Pupil opinion is sought regularly and in a variety of ways. This includes how they are taught, what food is available, play equipment, where trips may go to and how they are helped to improve their work and behaviour
- The school curriculum looks at how some people and countries replicate our beliefs and how some don't

We know that we need to continue to develop the idea that although many aspects of change can be managed via opinion, sometimes, a decision has to be made on the evidence available and that lots of people may have differing opinions. This can cause anxiety and confusion during periods of change.

The law and how this protects people, with clear reference to well being and safety

We make it clear that there are laws (rules) that work at school, in the community and across the country. Alongside these there are also consequences and rewards. Again this is embedded via our day to day interactions, as well as assemblies, PSHE, and curriculum. We promote this by:

- Having clear behaviour management policies for staff/parents etc. and ensuring that pupils are clear about our rules and sanctions. The behaviour ladders and reward ladders are displayed throughout the school and referred to regularly.
- Assemblies promote and remind pupils about such values and our points system and consequences are applied fairly and consistently.

- The curriculum enhances reference to laws where relevant and helps pupils to understand the rules that they have to follow whilst not at school.
- Assemblies promote and remind pupils about such values and our points system and consequences are applied fairly and consistently.
- We have an excellent relationship with our local Police and Fire service colleagues. They visit to speak to pupils both during the day and in boarding about general and specific issues.
- The curriculum enhances reference to laws where relevant and helps pupils to understand the rules that they have to follow whilst not at school.

The curriculum enhances reference to laws where relevant and helps pupils to understand the rules that they have to follow whilst not at school.

Individual liberty and mutual respect

This is closely related to law and our ethos and values are driven by the idea of mutual respect that allows us to have the freedom of choice when following rules and laws. We do this by:

- Promotion of rules and laws alongside consequences, that allow schools, communities, families and countries to work, play and enjoy various environments.
- Actions have consequences. Assemblies, lessons, play. Trios and everything that we do is underpinned by a points system that is supported by a culture of working together to get things right.
- Making the right choice can be difficult but rewarding in many ways.

We will maintain our day to day interaction with pupils to reinforce the idea that all people should be respected, that laws are there to serve us all and we all have the right to be safe.

Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

As our intake varies greatly, both during the year, and from year to year, we ensure that curriculum provision, assemblies, PSHE and a range of activities support and extend knowledge and understanding this area. Views are discussed from a historical (For example, World War 2) and topical context. Where views are expressed that need deeper discussion, they take place with support and guidance and visits are arranged to different faiths that help to break down perceived barriers and perceptions.

We continue to be very aware of perceptions that exist with regards to different cultures that may not be particularly prevalent within the Stevenage and North Herts area, as well as maintaining a close eye of the political climate and some view that may be generated via such debates.

And Finally.... Some jokes from the children

What did the sink say to the toilet? **You look really flushed!** - Thank you, Laurie

What day of the week are most twins born on? **Twosday** - Thank you, Laurie

What do you call a haunted chicken? **A poultry guise** - Thank you, Dexter

Why was the skeleton so cruel? **Because he was bad to the bone!** - Thank you, Hayden

What did the science book say to the maths book? **You've got problems!** - Thank you, Anon

Thank you, Mr Dennis for remembering all of these for the Lowdown! They're all very funny!



Keeping our Children Safe **Keeping our Children Safe** Keeping our Children Safe **Keeping our Children Safe**

Larwood School recognises that the welfare of the child is paramount. The school takes its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the young people in its care seriously, and is proactive in ensuring this. Governors, staff and volunteers at Larwood understand the importance of working in partnership with children, their parents/carers and other agencies in order to promote children's welfare. We constantly review the way that we work and look to improve upon this whenever we can.

Our Designated Senior Person (DSP) for child protection is Mrs Bianca Osobu: Assistant Headteacher

Supported by our other DSPs:

Mr Sean Trimble: Executive Headteacher

Mrs Sian Ford: Family Support Worker

Marcus McKechnie: LASA - Lead Behaviour Support

Our Safeguarding Governor is Mrs Sandra Barr - Chair of Governors.

