



'Partnership in Learning'

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### COVID-19 Weekly Update

Dear Parents,

As we approach the end of another month I am sure, the focus for many of you is turning to preparations for September. We have another 'bumper' bulletin this week as I attempt to outline where we are at with transition planning; summer arrangements and September opening.

Unfortunately, as we are still reliant on Government guidance to inform our decision making (details below) there are still many unanswered questions at this stage. The staff and I are hoping that school life will return to as close to 'normal' as possible in September.

Rest assured that I will keep you fully informed as soon as we are in a position to provide any definitive answers. In the meantime, thank you as always for your patience.

#### **Government Announcement on Schools**

As referenced in the bulletin last week, Gavin Williamson (Secretary of State for Education) led the Government's briefing last Friday. Unfortunately, nothing said within it has changed the current situation in terms of regulations on schools and as such we will run 'as is' (with the inclusion of the transition sessions outlined next) until the end of this academic year.

It was heartening to hear, however, that the Government have a big plan to aid 'catch up' when the children do return to school. Like you, I look forward to finding out what this entails over the coming weeks and months.

#### **Transition Opportunities (Current Years 3, 4 and 5)**

I mentioned last week that we are exploring ways of providing some form of 'face to face' time between the children in year groups outside of Year 6 and their next teachers. I am pleased to confirm that this will happen. In collaboration with the Infant School, we have managed to arrange two marquees (each big enough to hold 15 children) to be erected on the school field from Monday 6<sup>th</sup> July to Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July.

This increased capacity will enable us to facilitate a range of transition activities for our new Year 3 (current Year 2) children during afternoon sessions (when the infant School will be using the marquees) and to run transition slots in the mornings for our new classes.

We will of course ensure that all social distancing; cleaning etc measures are observed during these sessions (and attendance remains optional). Following an intense period of planning, we are delighted this means we are able to provide a 'face to face' slot of at least one and a half hours for every child with their new teacher before the summer holiday; while **also** maintaining the consistency of the current provision until the very end of this academic year.

More specific details including; dates; times; drop off/pick up arrangements etc will be sent on Wednesday of next week (1<sup>st</sup> July 2020) – please watch this space. The staff and I are really looking forward to seeing everybody!

### **Next Academic Year**

The process of planning for September continues. Although we do not know for certain at this time what school in September will look like, the Government outlined in a communication yesterday, that their indication is to provide more information “over the coming weeks” to help schools prepare for a full return in September.

We are excited at the prospect of being able to welcome everybody back and hope that (i) this happens and (ii) that the Government provide this information to us in good time so that we can in turn provide it to you. I will, of course, keep you updated as soon as I can.

### **INSET Dates for the Next Academic Year (2020/2021)**

One thing we can confirm are the first two planned INSET dates for next academic year (with the remaining three dates to follow). These will be:

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Please note that this means that School will not start for the children after the summer holiday in any form until **Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020** at the earliest.

### **Summer Holidays**

Unfortunately, we are unable to facilitate childcare on site this summer. The Stay and Play Club have taken the very difficult decision that, given all the current restrictions and regulations, it would be unviable for them to operate. As such, the school site will be closed completely to children from Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> July until Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020. The Stay and Play Club, like everyone associated with LJS, are very much looking forward to being able to return to ‘business as usual’ as quickly as possible.

### **Food Parcels – Current Arrangements (*Ongoing Reminder*)**

A reminder that eligible families whose children are not on site can still collect their weekly food parcels between **12:30pm and 13:00** each Monday.

If you are eligible and would like to start collecting food parcels, or should your circumstances change and you become eligible for this provision, please contact the school office ([adminoffice@lymington-jun.hants.sch.uk](mailto:adminoffice@lymington-jun.hants.sch.uk)) so that we can ensure one is made up for you.

Alternatively, if you require additional support in this area, the **Lymington and Pennington Food Bank** are open and may be in a position to help. Contact the school as above in the first instance and we can look in to the referral process for you.

### **Food Parcels – Summer Arrangements (*New Information*)**

As a result of the National campaign fronted by Manchester United footballer Marcus Rashford, the Government have announced that they will be providing support for families whose children are eligible for free school meals throughout the summer holiday period. We are currently looking in to what this will look like, and how families will access it, given that the school will be closed.

As soon as the Government have decided, we will let those families affected know. If your circumstances have changed, and you are now eligible, please let the school know (using the contact information above) as soon as possible so that we can include you in the related communication.

### **Transition between Schools**

*Year 6 to 7 (Ongoing Reminder)*

We continue to liaise with Priestlands regarding the children who will be starting there in September. Rest assured that there are mechanisms in place for us to handover key information regarding the children's attainment (this will generally be as of March 2020); information regarding friendships etc as usual. More information, including virtual tours, is available on the Priestlands' website at: <http://www.priestlands.hants.sch.uk/Year-6-transition>. These virtual materials will be shared with the children on site over the next few weeks.

***(Updated Information)***

Following a period of extensive planning, we were delighted to be able to reveal the details of our Year 6 Leavers' session to take place during Friday 10<sup>th</sup> July. Specific information has been sent out to the families of children in Year 6, which will be followed up by telephone calls from staff over the coming days. If you have missed the call, please contact the school as soon as possible as we need to find out certain information, including food choices.

***Year 2 to 3 (Updated Information)***

Virtual Events

We will be holding our 'virtual' welcome evening for new parents next Wednesday (1<sup>st</sup> July) at 5pm (see separate letter for meeting link and instructions).

We have uploaded a virtual tour to our Twitter account (accessible: @LymingtonJuniors or via the link in the top right hand corner of the school website) which is intended to 'walk the children through' the route they will take on their first day with us. Please view and share.

'Actual' Events

As outlined above, the Year 3 staff will be using the opportunities presented by the Year 2 children being on site within the marquees to spend time with them over the last two weeks of the academic year. Those children starting with us in September not currently in the Infants have been invited to join us at different times.

**Children on Site – Warm Weather**

Please ensure that the children currently on site come in to school each day fully prepared for the weather conditions. As these can vary significantly day to day, please take time to review the conditions each morning and apply sun cream/provide hats and water bottles as required. Thank you.

**Final Reflection**

The past few months have taken us all out of our comfort zones in a variety of different ways. This has been extremely challenging at times. When we look back on how we have coped with things, I am increasingly inclined to think that the best any of us can hope for is to be left with a sense of pride. Pride in the challenges we have overcome and the ability we have shown to put the needs of others ahead of our own whilst doing so.

Thank you to our children, family members and wonderful staff who have achieved this. I for one am proud of you all!

Best wishes and be safe everyone.

Dan Twyman  
Headteacher