

WHOLE SCHOOL

Letter from Mr Williams

Dear parents and carers

I write this as we approach the end of the first two weeks back in school and, in most respects, we could not have reasonably hoped for a better start.

Above all, we have been absolutely delighted with the response of the students. They have settled back into things remarkably quickly, coping with the changes to systems with real maturity and putting up with any inconveniences with good grace. Thank you, parents and carers, for all you have evidently done to help prepare your children for school again and for your support in ensuring they are doing what they need to do. Taking into account students who have no choice but to self-isolate whilst they or family members are waiting for tests, attendance has remained very high – the equivalent of at least 98%.

I must also thank Mr Thompson for all the work he did over the summer to finalise very fiddly, but all-important, details of things like one-way systems and new lunch queues; in practice, these have generally worked as intended and school has felt as calm, orderly and purposeful as ever. Indeed, I am very grateful to all staff, who have put any worries they may have had to one side and got on with their jobs with plenty of energy and good humour. It really has been lovely to be back. Whilst many may be loath to admit it, we are confident that most students are very happy to be back too!

Of course, not everything has been perfect. We are still learning as we go along, listening to feedback, tweaking systems where we can and working hard to reinforce key messages. The balancing act between keeping people as safe as we reasonably can versus the need for high quality education and sensible, sustainable ways of working will be one we shall have to keep up for the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, as I say, the situation in school has been remarkably positive.

There have also been challenges. The most significant has been having to deal with our first confirmed Covid cases: please see my separate [letter](#) on this.

The next biggest challenge for the school relates to staffing. We have higher numbers of staff unable to come into school at the moment than we usually would – primarily because they need to wait for the results of Covid tests when they or someone in their household has displayed symptoms. As many of you know from experience, it is not easy to get tests and sometimes there are long waits for results. Most of the time, teachers can work from home and deliver virtual lessons in these circumstances but that is not always the case and, even where they can, it is far from ideal. Hopefully, the situation regarding testing will improve soon so that teachers can return to work sooner but, like all schools, we are all going to have to be realistic about this; there is likely to be significantly more disruption to teaching and learning as a result of staff absence than there would be in a normal year.

Finally, although much of our communication at the moment is still related to the situation with Covid, I want to finish by pointing out that the day-to-day experience in school is not being dominated by this. Students and staff have resumed the usual positive relationships straight away; lessons are going ahead as normal in the vast majority of cases; lots of work is being completed; rewards points are being given out; laughter and happy chatter remain the predominant noise at social times; assemblies (albeit virtual ones) are going ahead; Year 7 and Year 12 students seem to be settling in as quickly and positively as they ever do; and we are even re-starting many extra-curricular activities shortly. As I say, it's lovely to have all the students back.

Kind regards

Gwyn Williams

COVID-19

Please [click here](#) to read Mr Williams' letter.

A reminder that all students should be bringing their own face masks to school each day. Please also remind your children to wear their face masks when travelling on buses.

Students should also be bringing their own hand sanitiser to school each day. Please support us by reminding them to use it regularly.

If you're unsure as to whether you should keep your child off school, please refer to this [schematic](#).

School shop

Please note that the school shop is running a limited service and is providing essential items only. If you need to visit, please phone ahead and make an appointment (01925 750700). Face masks must be worn in the shop.

Visitors

Please note that we are discouraging visitors to school and Student Services is now only open to students. We are also unable to accept any forgotten equipment from parents or carers. If your child has forgotten their lunch or medication, these items can be dropped off at reception. If you have a query, please call Reception on 01925 755458.

LHS Chromebook scheme

When we originally launched the Chromebook scheme we said on the flyer that if we had enough students sign up, we may be in a position to have students bring them into school for lessons. Whilst we did have quite a number of students sign up, it was unfortunately not quite enough to be able to do this effectively, so for now the Chromebooks will just be for home use. We are not ruling out completely the possibility in the future of them being used in school, and we will let you know if that changes. This said, we do think they are still a useful investment if your child does not already have their own up-to-date laptop or computer at home, especially in the event of any more online learning from home.

If you missed out on the first two ordering windows, there will be a further 3rd opportunity in the coming days to order a Chromebook, either outright or over the number of months your child has left of compulsory schooling (i.e. before they finish in Year 11). If your child is eligible for Pupil Premium, Free School Meals or if you would not be able to buy one without financial assistance, please get in touch with your child's Head of Year and we will try our best to help. The deadline for this 3rd ordering window will be **10th October**. All information will be sent via the School Gateway app and will also be placed on the website. Please email ithelpdesk@lymmhigh.org.uk if you are having any trouble accessing messages on the School Gateway app. The portal will open at some point next week and we'll let you know when via the app and our website.

Extra-curricular sport

Extra-curricular sports clubs will commence next week. For further information, please [click here](#).

Sports Honours Boards

Lymm High School has Honours Boards that display the names of all students who have, over the years, represented their county or country at sport. Recognition is also given to those students who win individual county/regional competitions or are placed (top 3) in national competitions. We update the boards every two years; therefore, any student from Years 8–13 who has achieved county honours in the period of time from September 2018 to the present day should be recognised on these boards. We have made the amendments that were flagged up over the summer and request that parents check for a final time before

these details are added to the Honours Boards. You can see the updated [boards here](#). If you notice an error, please ensure you inform us by Wednesday 23rd September. If your son or daughter meets the criteria, please email the following details to Mr Hampton, Head of PE (jhampton@lymmhigh.org.uk).

- Student name
- Current Year group
- Sport
- County or Region e.g. Cheshire or North of England
- Age Group represented (e.g. U15's)
- Year(s) (e.g. 2018–20)

Virtual Open Evening

This year we will be holding a virtual Open Evening for new students and their parents/carers on 8th October. If you would like to attend, please register your interest by [clicking here](#).

Upcoming Early Closure

Polite reminder that school closes to students at 12.15pm on Thursday 8th October. This was originally for Open Evening, but the time will now be used instead to ensure all teachers can have meetings with Year 11 parents, given that their last parents' evening was cancelled just before lockdown. Buses are aware of the early close so will collect students at 12.15pm.

Free School Meals and Pupil Premium

If you are currently in receipt of any of these [benefits](#) or your financial circumstances have changed recently, your child may be eligible for Free School Meals (FSM). FSM provides daily credit of £2.30 directly on your child's account and they will not be aware of this unless you choose to tell them. [Click here](#) for the FSM application form. Please send it to the email at the bottom of the form or ring the FSM team on 01925 446226. Being eligible for FSM also means your child is eligible for Pupil Premium which offers more support with their academic progress, uniform, trips and much more – please contact your child's Head of Year for more information. Your child is also eligible for Pupil Premium if they fall into any of these categories:

- Have previously been eligible for Free School Meals during some time in the last 6 years;
- Have been in care of a Local Authority for 1 day or more;
- Have a parent serving in the Armed Forces, or a parent that has done so in the last 6 years;
- Ceased to be looked after through adoption;
- Ceased to be looked after through a Special Guardianship Order;
- Ceased to be looked after through a Residence Order; or
- Under a Child Arrangement Order.

Cashless Catering

We politely remind all parents/carers to top up your child's cashless catering accounts via Parent Pay each week to ensure your child is able to purchase food during their lunchtimes.

Snacks at break

Students are able to bring in snacks and drinks as there is no service from the canteen at break time. However, please avoid sending students in with nuts and nut-based snacks. Several of our students have severe allergies. Thank you for your cooperation.

LHS Lottery

Congratulations to **Mrs Cordwell** who was this week's school lottery winner! You could be a winner too!

If you have not signed up for our lottery yet, please head to our dedicated lottery website [here](#). Tickets are only £1 each week. If you sign up this half term, you could win a family ticket for four to the Harry Potter Studio Tour. Your support would be hugely appreciated.

LOWER SCHOOL

Welcome Letters

Welcome letters for Years 8 and 9 have been added to the [parent communication](#) section of the Lymm High School website this week. Please ensure you read these as they contain important information and key dates for your child's specific year group for the upcoming academic year.

UPPER SCHOOL

Welcome Letters

Welcome letters for Years 10 and 11 have been added to the [parent communication](#) section of the Lymm High School website this week. Please ensure you read these as they contain important information and key dates for your child's specific year group for the upcoming academic year.

Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) evenings

Year 11 IAG will be recorded and made available for Year 11 parents on Wednesday 23rd September.

Year 10 IAG will be recorded and made available for Year 10 parents on Thursday 24th September.

Year 11 Parents' Evening

Year 11 Parents' Evening will be held virtually on Thursday 8th October. More details on this will be discussed at the IAG.

Careers webinars

Young Professionals have two webinars coming up that might be of interest. They both have the backing of some very reputable companies and will provide an opportunity for networking and making contacts. Parents and guardians are also welcome to join.

Get into Accounting with PwC:

- 29th September, 4–5pm
- Careers in Accounting (workshops, Q&A + an overview of PwC opportunities)
- What it's like working for a Big 4 firm
- <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/H2C65G8>

Get into Technology with PwC:

- 30th September, 4–5pm
- Careers in Technology (workshops, Q&A + an overview of PwC opportunities)

- Cyber security, AI, robotics and all things tech!
- What it's like working for a Big 4 firm
- <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/HJSDMV>

Duke of Edinburgh 2019–20 cohorts

The DofE 2019–20 cohorts missed out on their Bronze, Silver and Gold expeditions in the summer term when school closed. We were hoping the situation regarding the pandemic might improve sufficiently to allow some form of expedition to take place but this is looking fairly unlikely. Therefore, we are going to refund all remaining monies for our 2019–20 DofE participants, which is essentially the cost of the expeditions. These refunds will take us a while though as we have such high numbers on DofE now, so please can we ask for your patience and understanding whilst we process this carefully. We expect to have refunded all relevant students over the next four weeks. Please expect the following amount to show back in your Parent Pay account (Bronze: £181, Silver: £297, Gold: £355) – you then need to log on to Parent Pay and ‘withdraw’ the refund back into your own bank account, which is normally a very straightforward process. We are not ruling out the possibility of potential expeditions in the future for this group of students, and if this happens, we will let you know full details. In the meantime, please ensure your child’s other three sections are complete and the assessor reports uploaded – DofE are offering a Certificate of Achievement to all participants who have completely signed off these three sections. These will be emailed directly to students by DofE in due course. For more information, please click here: <https://www.dofe.org/dofewithadifference/certificate-gas>

SIXTH FORM

Assessments

Year 12 assessment week commences 28th September.

Year 13 Assessment week commences 5th October.

Careers webinars

Young Professionals are hosting an accounting and technology webinar this month. Please see the notice in Upper School above.

Sixth Form Hockey Training

Mixed hockey for all Sixth Formers starts on Monday 21st September. This will take place every Monday after school from 3.15 to 4.15-ish.