

Whole School

Letter from Mr Williams

Dear parents and carers

Well, it's been another extraordinary week! I do hope you are all safe and well, and that the first week of the latest lockdown hasn't been too challenging for you all. It is obviously extremely frustrating to find schools largely closed again and I feel desperately sorry for the students, especially those in exam year groups who I know will be feeling especially unsettled at the moment.

We are doing all we can in school to remain positive and focussed on providing the best experience for students that we possibly can. As I said to staff in our meeting at the beginning of the week, as well as to students in assembly on Tuesday, I have been thinking of the famous prayer that asks God to grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change and the courage to change the things that we can. It seems to me that this is more apt than ever; we just need to live with the fact that much of the current situation is beyond our control but, equally, do all we can to make the best of it.

Kind regards
Gwyn Williams

Remote learning

Aside from a few problems with Zoom log-ins in the first couple of days (and many thanks for your patience with this), the switch to remote learning seems to have gone as smoothly as we could have reasonably expected. Attendance to lessons has been exceptionally high and we have been really impressed by the organisation and attitude shown by students. Thank you also to the many of you who have been in touch to express appreciation to teachers for all their hard work at the moment.

I don't think it can be repeated too often, but I urge you as parents not to put too much pressure on yourselves regarding home learning. There will be days when it feels extremely difficult, if not impossible, to motivate your child. You may feel as if you are the only ones in that situation but, trust me: you are not! The fact is that there is no substitute for young people being in school and no form of remote learning can provide a truly adequate substitute. We recommend that you just focus on providing them with a quiet place from which to access lessons and gentle encouragement in keeping them going. It is tempting to forget, but it is not easy for the children to maintain 100% concentration all day long either.

Please also encourage your children to have cameras on during lessons – it makes a huge difference in helping teachers ensure students are fully engaged in learning.

Laptops + internet access

We have now telephoned anyone who told us in the most recent survey that their child does not have a suitable device to access remote lessons (n.b. a mobile phone isn't really suitable). However, if your child does not have the equipment to access lessons, please email Miss Dixon on ndixon@lymmhigh.org.uk and she should be able to help.

Similarly, if finances are such that you are struggling to pay for reliable WiFi, please also contact Miss Dixon.

Critical workers

Please remember to communicate with us via keyworkers@lymmhigh.org.uk if you are a critical worker and intend to send your child in to school. We have been in touch with the parents of all vulnerable children and most are now in school but, again, please use this email address for anything related to vulnerable children.

Tutor time and lunch time changes

We have been really impressed with how students have attended their lessons and form times this week. Thank you for your support in ensuring your child has been logged on. Form time is an important part of the school week. Not only does it provide social interaction with other classmates, it ensures that contact is maintained with the student's form teacher for the dissemination of school information and the provision of pastoral support. In addition, students will receive a combination of assemblies and we will continue to run our Life programme sessions. For these reasons, form time remains compulsory for all students.

At the same time, in an effort to reduce the time spent each day sat at a computer screen (for both students and teachers), we are making some changes to form time and lunch breaks for all year groups for the periods of lockdown. These are:

For Years 7–11:

- There will be no form time on Tuesdays, Thursday and Fridays: Lunch will run from 12.10–1.20pm.
- On **Mondays and Wednesdays**, form time will operate from 12.45–1.20pm. On these days lunch will run from 12.10–12.45pm.

Students can access their form sessions by logging onto their form group Team on Microsoft Teams.

For Years 12 and 13:

- Year 12 students will have form time each Monday and Wednesday from 12.10–12.45pm.
- Year 13 students will have form time each Tuesday and Thursday from 12.10–12.45pm.

Sixth Form students can access their form sessions by logging onto their Year group Team on Microsoft Teams.

Summer exams

As I said in my letter to Year 11 and 13 students earlier this week, we do not yet know any details regarding the awarding of grades this summer. I wish we could say more about the exact process to be followed but all we know is that Ofqual are launching a consultation on Monday to run for two weeks and that we can expect some kind of plan to be announced by the end of February.

It does now seem clear that it will involve teacher assessment in some form or other. This means it is really important that students continue to engage with online lessons, take part in discussions and complete all work set. Please also be aware that it is highly likely that we will run formal assessments once we are all back in school to help inform any teacher judgements and that these assessments are likely to include topics studied during lockdown.

Bus pass reimbursements

For customers paying by direct debit instalments for the Under 21 annual Touch & Go bus pass, the lockdown announcement came after the January direct debit payment had already been made. Warrington's Own Buses is therefore pausing the next scheduled direct debit payment. Customers will still be able to use their passes to travel on buses, but there won't be any charge during February.

Customers who have paid for an annual Under 21 Touch & Go bus pass can request a refund for the month by completing [this form](#) by 12th February. Passes will still expire on the original end date, and again can continue to be used on buses to travel throughout the lockdown period, in line with Covid-19 journey restrictions.

Further information can be found on the bus company's [website](#).

PE & Sport

Please note that no live lessons will be taking place for PE online. Instead, each week, PE tasks will be set on Show My Homework.

LHS Lottery

Congratulations to Ms Greenwood 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. Your support would be hugely appreciated.

LOWER SCHOOL

KS3 exams

The Key Stage Three exams in English, Maths and Science will go ahead in the week commencing 18th January. They will obviously have to be done online and we will be in touch nearer the time about the exact process.

In the meantime, students should revise as they would have done otherwise. Please [click here](#) for a link to the revision booklet that was sent out before Christmas. As you'd expect, the format of the exams will have to change but the content will remain the same.

Please do not allow your child to get too worried about these assessments. We are going ahead because, however imperfect, they will help teachers to assess what students have and haven't learnt so far this year which, in turn, helps their planning going forwards. We also know that most parents and carers will appreciate some indication of their child's progress. However, none of this means that any child needs to worry about doing them.

Year 9 Choices

The Year 9 Choices process is still proceeding from 18th January. Please [click here](#) to read a letter about some updates to the timelines.

UPPER SCHOOL

Year 11 Mock exam results

These will be issued as planned – we hope by the end of next week or, if not, soon after. It is really important to understand that mock exam results are absolutely not the only piece of evidence teachers will use if they do have to form judgments for exam boards. It is equally important to stress that we know many students will improve on their mock grades by the end of the course and that some students had to sit mocks remotely, sometimes in conditions that were far from ideal.

Year 13 finance session

Year 13 will have a student finance session delivered during their form time on Thursday 14th January. We are also holding a session for parents at 6pm the same day. Please [click here](#) to read a letter from Mrs Jennings.

Year 13 mock exams

These were scheduled for the week commencing 22nd February but we will not run the exams that week, even if we are back in school (which is the current plan). Instead, we will organise formal assessments at an appropriate time. In an ideal world, we will run exams later in the year that are as close to the real thing as possible, including having given students plenty of time to revise, so that teachers can get an accurate picture of progress by the end of the course. In the meantime, it is vital that students continue to take a full part in lessons and complete all work set.