

Dear parent / carer,

I hope that your week has been good and that the easing of the lockdown restrictions has meant that things have improved for you and your family without impacting on your safety. At a personal level, I have to say that I was delighted to get my hair cut on Wednesday for the first time in four months.

As we are approaching the end of the academic year there are some important logistical messages that I want to communicate in this letter today.

UNIFORM - from 1st September our expectations on uniform will return to those as shown on our website <https://longbenton.org.uk/parents/uniform> for which we work alongside the local supplier Emblematic www.emblematic.co.uk. The latest Department for Education guidance states that uniform does not need to be cleaned any more frequently than was the norm before lockdown. Uniform includes:

- School blazer with badge
- Plain black V-neck jumper (optional)
- Plain white shirt with collar
- Black trousers (but not jeans or leggings) or black skirt
- Black or white socks or black tights
- Black flat-heeled shoes
- Striped clip on tie, colour of your choice

YEAR 11 and YEAR 13 RESULTS DAY These will be hosted in school following socially distanced one-way protocols in the school dining hall. If anyone would prefer to have results posted then they should hand in a SAE to the school office.

- **Year 13 results** will be available from 8am on Thursday 13th August. Any not collected by 2pm on Friday 14th will be posted out.
- **Year 11 results** will be available from 8am on Thursday 20th August. Any not collected by 2pm on Friday 21st will be posted out.
- **Sixth Form enrolment morning** for Year 11 pupils wanting to continue as part of the NE12 Sixth Form will be between 10am and noon on Friday 21st August.

YEAR 11 PROM These are “extraordinary times” which have seen holidays cancelled, big birthdays celebrated in isolation or other special events in their lives cancelled. We have held off as long as we could before having to cancel the event, but we have now reached that conclusion. Nobody knows when venues would be able to host such events, indeed St James’s Park have informed us that “Unfortunately, we do not have a date on when we will be able to open”. By the time that they do, our Year 11 will have moved on in their lives be that to be in the NE12 Sixth Form, apprenticeships or to go to College. I really feel for the young people who have looked forward to celebrating the end of their time together in this way, but these are circumstances well beyond our control.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson is to address all school leavers on Friday 10 July at 10am, which will be broadcast on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#). I have no idea what his message will be but sincerely hope that it is one that shows faith and belief in our young people and their potential to go on to achieve great things.

STAFFING UPDATE This is the time of year when we thank staff for their service to our school community and wish them well in the next phase of their lives.

RETIRING Two colleagues are joining me in retiring this summer and I want to thank them personally for all that they have done for our school community and to wish them the very best for their future.

Mrs Baldwin – I have been at LHS a long time, but Mrs Baldwin is our longest serving member of staff having joined the school in 1987, meaning that she has spent almost her whole teaching career in our school. She will have taught French to many of our parents as well as their children. What she has contributed to our school community in that time has been incredible and she is going to be a great miss. We wish her all of the very best in her retirement.

Mrs Brolly - I have known Mrs Brolly for the past fourteen years when she was a highly successful Curriculum Leader for English at Marden High School. In 2014, when she decided to step back to work part time, I was delighted to welcome her to LHS and have managed to cajole her into being with us since then. Our pupils and English department have been extremely fortunate to have benefitted from having had such a talented, experienced teacher.

STAFF LEAVING

As happens at this time in the school year, some colleagues are moving to pastures new and I would like to thank them for all that they have done for our pupils.

Ms Newton-Scott (DT) is leaving to join Whickham School and Mrs Kaye-Murphy (PE) is joining Seaham School - both have been with us for about 12 years and are moving to schools that will significantly shorten their commute.

Several colleagues who have been with us since September 2019 move on at the end of the academic year with our thanks and best wishes: Miss Metcalfe (cover supervisor); Mrs Adair-McAuley (PSHE); Dr Finn (science); Miss Cartwright (PE) and Mrs Thompson (maths).

We have a full specialist staffing compliment for September, and we look forward to welcoming new colleagues to the school then.

END OF TERM ARRANGEMENTS

The end of term will be 1:30pm on Thursday 17th July. Please note that this applies to the children of Key Workers and that the school will be closed completely on Friday 18th July. Pastoral leaders will be having a well-earned break and will not be contactable for the duration of the summer holidays. In case of emergency parents should email the school via the school website. Should you or your child need additional support do consult information on the school website which can be found here

<https://www.longbenton.org.uk/students/useful-links>

The Educational psychology helpline is also open throughout the school break 0191 6438739 and further information can be found on their website here

<https://nteysis.org.uk/well-being/>

START OF ACADEMIC YEAR SEPTEMBER 2020

As parents will be aware, the school is currently working through government guidance around a full time return to school for all pupils from September. **Arrangements for the first week in September will follow before the end of term next week.**

LEADERSHIP OF THE SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER

As many of you know, after attracting a very strong field from national adverts, the governors appointed Mrs Holbrook to the position of headteacher from September 2020. Mrs Holbrook has been deputy headteacher at LHS since September 2016 so knows the school extremely well. She is being joined by Mrs Gammack as deputy headteacher. Mrs Gammack is a highly experienced school leader coming to us from St Thomas More HS. These are exciting times for the school, and they will bring about a transformational step change at LHS, while valuing and nurturing all that we have that is special to us.

As we look towards the school summer holidays starting in a week's time, I hope that you and your family are able to relax and enjoy some quality time together after what has been a very difficult few months for many. As headteacher I have always worried about the safety and well-being of our pupils over the summer break and that is particularly so at this unique time. In addition, there is an appendix at the end of this letter from Nexus reminding us safety on the metro and the track infrastructure. Please take time to reinforce this message with your child within a context of them considering their safety when they are out and about over the summer break.

Best wishes,

Paul Quinn

Headteacher

APPENDIX - MESSAGE FROM NEXUS ABOUT METRO TRAVEL

"I am really hoping you can help and appreciate how difficult things are at the moment. Unfortunately I have received numerous reports of children and teenagers putting themselves in grave dangers and causing anti-social behaviour across Tyne and Wear Metro.

In recent weeks during the lock down, there have been multiple incidents of children and teenagers, messing around on the Tyne and Wear Metro system and also trespassing onto the tracks. The railway is not a playground and we need to treat it with the respect it deserves

The school holiday period, is traditionally the time when Metro can see a rise in instances of trespass on the system, but this has become increasingly concerning during the pandemic.

Whilst it is not suggested that children attending your school are taking risks or committing crime on the railway, we are contacting all schools within the area for any help with this matter. I am hoping that your school could mention this in either your newsletter or on your website to warn parents about the dangers of venturing on to the Metro tracks, and what may seem like harmless fun is in fact very serious and against the law.

Children of school age can be fascinated by trains. The varied and interesting noises, people and environments – combined with the feeling of movement and speed – make the idea and experience of rail travel a great adventure.

The reality is a risk of being hit by 1,500 volts of electricity. Metro trains traveling at speeds of up to 50mph and mainline trains much faster - and a train cannot swerve to miss someone in its path."