



Lyttchett Matravers Primary School and Preschool

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Headteacher: Matt Vernon

Deputy Headteacher: Laura Dominey

Assistant Headteacher: Amy Foster



Thursday 3rd September 2026

Dear Parents / Carers,

I wish you all a very warm welcome back to LMPs following the summer break. The first few weeks of the new academic year are such an exciting time to be in school as we look ahead to a fresh year.

Over the past couple of training days, key school priorities have been shared with the staff for this year as we aim to build on previous years' successes. This is very much a case of refinement of our offer in order to strengthen our provision's ability to educate our children academically and their wider development. For example, this year we will be redeveloping intervention processes for children who find the acquisition of foundational maths knowledge challenging. Staff have also completed statutory training, including in relation to safeguarding.

Another priority is for the children to continue to live and breathe the school's Learning Muscles. From next week, we will have a Learning Muscle of the month and be encouraging the children to demonstrate this within their activities. Where they do, they will receive a special sticker, the designs of which were the competition winners from last year. Over the course of the year, we hope that all the children will collect all 8 stickers as well as the final one to award them for completing the challenge.



The children in Years One to Six will be bringing home their planners this week: please make sure that they look after them as they will need to last the year! The design and expectations for use are as they were last year.

With warmest wishes as always,

Mr Vernon, Headteacher



Developments over the Summer Holidays

As always, the summer presents a time to ensure that the school building is in the best possible shape ahead of the new year. During the holidays several projects have been completed:

- Alterations to the EYFS playground
- Redecoration of several areas of the school, notably toilets in Years One and Two
- Cladding to the outside of the Year 6 classrooms
- Deep cleans to all areas of the school site
- Renewed utilities for preschool

Additionally, our amazing PTFA have taken the next step in the redevelopment of the barn in the Key Stage One Playground which is going to be used as a multi-use space, including as an outdoor classroom, for SEND intervention and for specific playground activities. In order to maximise the use, we required storage space for a range of resources. This has now been built, thanks to the efforts of the PTFA, including paying for the materials, and to Frogman Carpentry and Landscaping for the free labour to complete. THANK YOU!



Walking To School / From School

Following review last year, please be reminded that only children in Years Five and Six are allowed to walk to school and home from school on their own. We will only allow children to walk at the end of the day with written consent from their parents / carers. All children in Year Four and in younger year groups require collection from school by a nominated adult or sibling of at least secondary school age if Parents / Carers consent to this.

Parents / Carers in Years Five and Six should provide consent for their children to walk by completing the form that was emailed on 2nd September to families in these year groups.

Mobile Phones

Our school does not allow for mobile phones to be used by children at any time when on school site.

- Only children in Years Five and Six are permitted to have mobile phones on site when they are walking to / from school independently.
- These phones should be turned off when on school site, including at the start of the day.
- All phones must be handed in to the class teacher who will return the device to the child at the end of the school day.
- Phones should then only be turned on when the child has left the school site.

Uniform

The updated uniform policy, as communicated last year, has now been placed in draft form on the school website. This will be presented to the school's governing body on Monday 21st September for ratification.

[Policies | Lytchett Matravers](#)

Awards

We are delighted to have maintained several awards from last year:

- Platinum School Games Award – this is the highest level that can be achieved.
- Music Mark Award – for demonstrating effective music provision.
- Eco-schools award – for consideration for all things green!

Dorset Minds Event

Dorset Minds are doing The Dorset Mind BIG Walk again this year on Sunday 27 September 2026, and are inviting everyone to come and take part.

The BIG Walk is a chance to get outdoors, connect with others and support the charity.

There are two different events:

- **30K Coastal Challenge**
Take on our flagship coastal route from Sandbanks to Hengistbury Head and back.
- **5K Wellbeing Walk**
A shorter, accessible route from Sandbanks to Branksome Chine Beach, suitable for all ages and abilities.

Event details

 Sunday 27 September 2026

 Start: Sandbanks

 Meet from 7:45am | Walk starts at 8:30am

 £10 per adult | Under 16s free with a registered adult

Entry fees include a donation to Dorset Mind, helping continue to provide vital mental health support and wellbeing services across Dorset.

<https://dorsetmind.uk/get-involved/fundraise-for-us/the-dorset-mind-big-walk/>

Attendance

Last year, our overall attendance improved by 0.7% to 95.4% overall. Whilst this sounds like a small increase, this equates to over 500 more days attended by children. We are now focussed on our next goal: achieving 96% for the year! Please help us to do this by being positive about children attending school unless they are physically unable to do so or if there are exceptional circumstances.



Where a pupil has had 15 sessions of absence in any academic year, it continues to be our responsibility to report this directly to the Local Authority. Please also be reminded of the following information about applying for leave for children during term time. We do not authorise absence due to family holidays unless in exceptional circumstances. We have attached the form to submit for any planned absence from school.

*Parents / carers must ask permission for their child to be absent during term time. Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional** circumstances only and this is not the norm. It is important to note that Headteachers can determine the length of the authorised absence as well as whether the absence is authorised at all.*

If leave is taken without permission, parent/carer(s) risk being issued with a Penalty Notice or the Local Authority may decide either to prosecute for the original offence, failure to secure regular attendance or comply with a school attendance order.



Parent(s) / carer(s) wishing to apply for their child to have leave from school should complete the leave of absence form and return it to Mrs Batten in the school office for consideration.

1

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for an unauthorised term time holiday the fine amount will be:

£80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.
Increasing to £160 if paid between days 22-28.

2

**Second Offence
(within 3 years)**

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child, payable within 28 days.

3

**Third Offence and any further offences
(within 3 years)**

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and local authorities will need to consider other available measures to address the absence concerns. This may mean that cases are presented before a Magistrates' Court. If convicted, sanctions can include a fine of up to £2,500 and a prison sentence of up to 3 months, and you will have a criminal record.

Cases found guilty in the Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

Should the request not be approved, but the leave still taken, or where no application is made and the absence is therefore unauthorised, the Headteacher will decide whether grounds are met to refer to Dorset or BCP Councils for prosecution (dependent on home address of the pupil). Further information can be found on the council websites as well as within the school's attendance policy. A Penalty Notice could be issued in lieu of a prosecution by either Council on your return, incurring a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days. If this is a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160. If a limit of two fines within a three-year period has been reached, other action such as a parenting order attendance contract or prosecution will be considered.

If the Penalty Notice is not paid, the relevant Council will consider prosecution proceedings under s.444(1) or 444(1A) Education Act 1996. If convicted, sanctions can include a fine of up to £2,500 and a prison sentence of up to 3 months, and you will have a criminal record. Please note that Penalty Notices can be issued per parent, per child.

Who may be fined?

Penalty Notice fines are issued to each parent who allows their child to be absent from school.

National Threshold:

All schools in England must consider a Penalty Notice when a pupil has 10 unauthorised absences in a 10 school-week rolling period. For example, a 5-day holiday would meet this threshold.

