

Lytchett Matravers Primary School and Preschool

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Friday 6th February 2026

Dear Parents / Carers,

Even though weather watching is a national British pastime, I am sure that headteachers are amongst the top scrutinisers of radar maps, precipitation percentages and other weather reports in the country when warnings are issued about extreme weather. The last couple of weeks have certainly thrown up some challenges with so much rain falling and I would like to thank everyone for their efforts in your resilience to bring the children to school – we still managed over 95% attendance for the last 2 weeks. I extend the same gratitude to the staff.

I know of families who took each other's children to school when the roads were flooding and those who walked further distances to enable attendance. Equally, many teachers described wading through depths on the roads unsure as to whether they would make it through. As well as highlighting the grit of the community, this also highlights the draw of coming in to school that is shared between children and adults: it is a genuinely warm and enjoyable place to be.

This strength of community was also highlighted in the Families Evenings last week. Thank you to everyone for coming in and discussing the progress of your children so openly. It was wonderful to see the enthusiasm for supporting specific elements of catch up, such as times tables and handwriting, when provided with additional resources to use with the children. The power of this collaboration will certainly be impactful.

This will be the last newsletter before the half term break. Please remember that the staff have training on Monday 23rd February and the school will be closed to children until Tuesday 24th February. Staff will be focussing on adapting learning to engage all learners positively during their training, as well as completing specific curriculum tasks.

With warmest wishes as always,

Mr Vernon
Headteacher



Preschool

The children in preschool are taking full advantage of the new wet weather gear that was purchased to support their outdoor play. It has been wonderful to see them outside in all conditions.



STARS Holiday Clubs

STARS holiday club will be running at LMPS this Easter on the following dates:

30th March – 2nd April; 7th April; 9th – 10th April.

Further details will be provided nearer to the time including information about how to book: free places will be available for children accessing means-tested free school meals.



Local Support

The children and families team from Dorset Council offer a range of support to families, including through the local family hub. Please follow the link below for further information:

[**Family Hub - Dorset Council**](#)

Snacks For Breaktime

Please remember that where children bring in snacks to eat at break time, these need to be either a piece of fruit or a plain biscuit only (not chocolate). We have reminded the children this week but would also appreciate this message being reinforced at home.

Parking Around School

We only allow families with direct permission to park on school site – no other cars are permitted to park within the school car park, which is closed on entry and exit times to school for safety reasons.

We also ask that all members of the community are on high alert when driving in the local area at drop off and pick up times. Small children can be missed when in front of the bonnet of a car, for example, especially if the car is a larger model.

Online Safeguarding

The online safety hub is a central location for information, support and guidance on all areas of online safety. Recent updates include advice on online gaming and how to spot hoaxes.

<https://hamwic.onlinesafetyhub.uk/>



The screenshot shows the Online Safety Hub website. At the top, there is a search bar with the placeholder 'G... Search'. Below the search bar, there is a navigation menu with links to 'About', 'Staff', 'Parent', 'English', and 'Log in'. The main content area features a grid of recent posts. Each post includes a thumbnail image, the title, and a brief description. The titles include 'Online Bullying FAQs', 'The Digital iBewegon: Safe Online Gaming for Children', 'The ABC Model for Digital Safety and Wellbeing', and 'Taming the Tech Tadpoles'.

INSED 2026-2027

A reminder that our INSED days for next year will be on the following dates. Following the parent survey to gain information about where to place training days to support holidays to be taken outside of term time, we have opted for two days after the Summer Term half term break.

Tuesday 1st September 2026
Wednesday 2nd September 2026
Monday 4th January 2027
Friday 5th March 2027
Monday 7th June 2027
Tuesday 8th June 2027

There will be one more INSED date to add to these six, which we will communicate once confirmed with Hamwic Education Trust.



Attendance

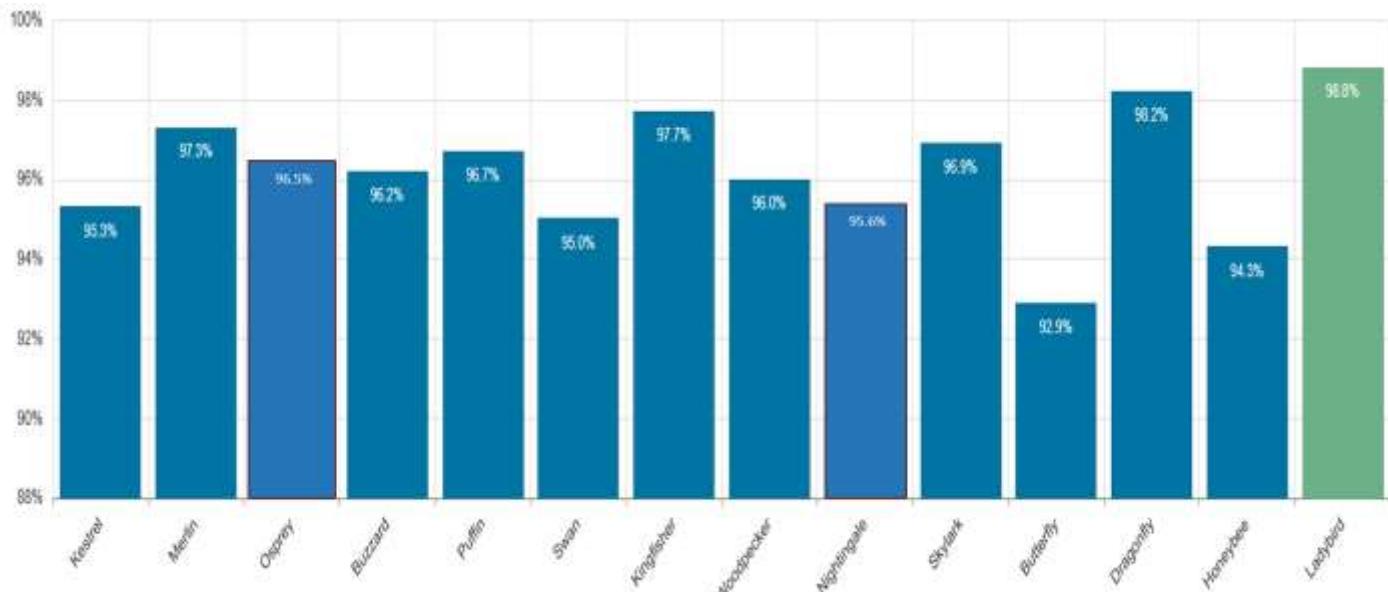
As a school, we want to protect against the spread of any viruses within the community in order to make sure everyone stays well. For this reason, we follow NHS guidance in relation to asking for a 48 hour window where a child has had vomiting or diarrhoea:

[How long should you keep your child off school - checklist poster \(text version\) - GOV.UK](#)

However, if there is evidence that a child has been sick or had an upset stomach that is not as a result of a viral infection, then a child can come back to school providing that permission has been provided by a member of staff. For example, children with intolerances to food who are building tolerance to this food and then are ill as a result can come to school. The same would be true of a child over-indulging and being sick as a result!

Please remember that we are not able to authorise holidays during term time and that any authorising for absence during term time would be due to the need for this leave to be exceptional. We have attached the form to this newsletter.

Over the last two weeks, Ladybird class had the highest rates of attendance – congratulations and keep it up!



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'.

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.



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.