

Lytchett Matravers Primary School and Preschool

Wareham Road, Lytchett Matravers, Poole, BH16 6DY

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Headteacher: Matt Vernon

Deputy Headteacher: Laura Dominey

Assistant Headteacher: Amy Foster



Friday 13th March 2026

Dear Parents / Carers,

We know that coming into school can be challenging for some and that more of our pupils are suffering from anxiety in relation to school attendance. Whilst the reasons for this are wide ranging, we have a duty to support in whatever way we can to support well-being for all.

Alongside wide-ranging pastoral support that is already in place at LMPS, we are also considering other avenues of potential support, one of which is the introduction of a well-being dog.

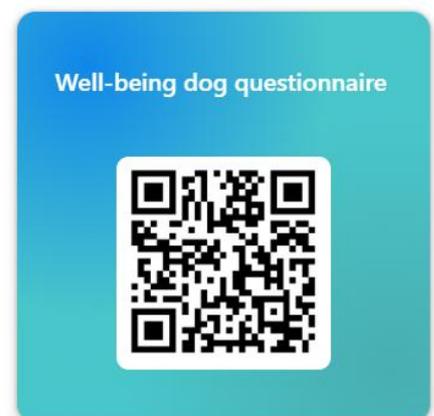
Introducing well-being animals into school environments has been shown to create a calmer, more supportive atmosphere for children. Animals, such as trained therapy dogs, can help reduce stress and anxiety by providing a comforting presence during the school day. Many pupils find it easier to regulate their emotions when interacting with an animal, making them more receptive to learning and better able to cope with challenging situations.

Well-being animals also encourage positive social interactions. Students who may struggle with confidence or communication often find it easier to engage when an animal is present, helping them build relationships with peers and staff. This can be particularly beneficial for children with additional needs, who may respond more readily to non-verbal, non-judgemental companionship.

For children with social and emotional health needs, short, structured interactions can act as a reset for students, allowing them to return to lessons more focused. Additionally, many schools have successfully used reading-to-dogs programmes, which help improve literacy by giving children a relaxed, pressure-free space to practise. This can be particularly beneficial for older pupils who have found reading a challenge and who potentially have a low self-perception of their learning capacity.

I would like to gain an understanding of what the school community views would be in relation to the potential for a well-being dog being introduced to the school. Therefore, please complete the following short online survey to share your views and opinions. Any introduction would be in keeping with all health and safety policies, risk assessed and pupils would never be obliged to interact with any animal on site.

[Well-being dog questionnaire – Fill in form](#)



Do be assured that any well-being dog would only be introduced after the following actions had been taken:

- formal dog training completed to confirm safe interactions with children and staff.
- Relevant liability insurance being held.
- A dedicated base being set up to ensure the dog is comfortable and well cared for.
- A specific policy in relation to the well-being dog being ratified by school governance.
- A specific risk assessment being verified from Hamwic Education Trust

With warmest wishes as always,



Mr Vernon
Headteacher

Mrs Moors

We know how pivotal Mrs Moors has been in establishing the amazing preschool that we have at LMPS through her hard work and dedication for over a decade! Sadly (for us), she has now decided to spread her wings and join a nursery supporting children with complex special educational needs. We know how much this provision will benefit from Mrs Moors' involvement and wish her every success for the future. Mrs Foster will now be taking more of a prominent position in preschool as part of her leadership of the Early Years Phase.



Mr Bilby

Mr Bilby has taken the decision to scale back his music teaching for personal reasons. Therefore, from next term, he will no longer be teaching music to whole classes of children. We thank him for injecting such enthusiasm and joy into our music curriculum and look forward to continuing to work with him as a peripatetic teacher and (hopefully) within upcoming productions and performances.

Miss Storey

Miss Storey has been a positive, dependable and compassionate support for many of our children in her role as a teaching assistant, both in Year 4 and in the Early Years. Miss Storey leaves us to start a new life with her partner away from Dorset. We wish her all the best for her future!



PTA Event

Please support our PTFA and community by attending one of the Easter Egg hunts at the end of the term! Booking is available through the link below:

<https://www.pta-events.co.uk/lmpsptfa/index.cfm?event=event&eventId=114680>

Free Session about Anxiety Based School Avoidance

On March 26th, from 7-8pm, there is a free online talk being held about Anxiety Based School Avoidance. We have reattached a flyer to the newsletter with further information.

Phones / Smartwatches

Please be aware that our policy in relation to student phones is that any child bringing in a phone should do the following:

1. Turn the device off when entering school site.
2. Hand their phone in to their teacher to be locked away until the end of the day.

3. Do not turn their phones on again until they are out of the school site.

We will remove phones from children if these rules are not followed and ask for parents to collect the device directly from the school.

Our uniform policy is clear on the school's position on smart watches in school:

Smart watches are not allowed in school due to their value and being a potential distraction from learning, as well as due to the potential safeguarding risk that they pose.

To clarify, smart watches are any watches which have the capacity to link with a mobile phone to communicate through messaging, voice calling or access to online content. We do allow pupils to wear watches without connectivity, for example those with a focus on tracking health and fitness.

[Microsoft Word - LMPS Uniform Policy September 24.docx](#)

Admissions Policy

Our admissions policy for September 2027 entry has now been published on the website, without significant changes to the admissions processes for children to our school:

[Hamwic Dorset Admissions Policy 2027 - 2028.pdf](#)

Life Bus Visit

The children have really enjoyed their Life Bus sessions this week where they have extended their personal, social and health education. Harold came out again to say hello to us all and check up on how we are doing!

Kids Golf

We are delighted to announce that we are once again partnering with the Mike Dodd Golf Academy at Sturminster Marshall Golf Club for 2026! Following our previous successful collaborations, the club has secured funding to bring golf coaching directly into our school. We are thrilled to continue providing our pupils with the chance to discover this fantastic sport, helping local youngsters build confidence, focus, and coordination.

Mike Dodd Golf Academy is offering several ways for both students and parents to get involved at the club:

- Free Taster Sessions: A no-pressure introduction to the game.
- 4-Week Introductory Courses: A structured, paid program to help develop fundamental skills on the green.

Please find the attached poster which contains full details, including dates and times for the 1-hour free sessions and the upcoming 4-week courses. The club is open to complete beginners or those looking to sharpen their swing! We have also attached a letter about an upcoming event for mums!



Holiday Football Club

BRS are holding an Easter Camp at Hillside First School and St James School during the holidays. We have attached further information to the newsletter. The link for any bookings is:

<https://brs.wufoo.com/forms/m1rlgeq21tuo43s/>

Holiday Activity Fund Places

Holiday Activity Fund places are available for a variety of clubs during the Easter holidays, please follow the link below for further information and to get a code if your child accesses means-tested free school meals that will provide access to free spaces:

[Easter in Dorset - Holidays, Activities and Food](#)

We are excited to welcome back Stars Holiday Club to LMPS this Easter, as well as Total Sports, and this relationship is due to continue during future holiday periods in order to support access to provision during the holidays in the village. We have reattached further information.

Advanced Notice – Phone Lines

From the start of the summer term, phone calls to **both** the school and preschool will need to use the same number: (01202) 622378. When calling this number, you will be provided with options in order to direct your phone call to the appropriate section of the school.

A separate number will be used to contact wrap around care (Early Birds and After School Club): (07769) 264332.

Swanage Railway

There is a special Easter event on Swanage Railway this Easter! → → →

Attendance

The class with the highest attendance over the past two weeks is Merlin – congratulations for getting back to the top!



Welcome to the Holiday Activities and Food Listings for Dorset

[Share on Facebook](#)

[Share on Bluesky](#)

The Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF)

