

Lyttchett Matravers Primary School and Preschool

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Friday 7th November 2025

Dear Parents / Carers,

We regularly conduct attendance reviews as a school to analyse any trends in absence data as well as to initiate support for any families where their child(ren)'s attendance is below national expectations.

A key area that has come up from our reviews has been the number of absences from taking unauthorised holiday during term time. Aside from the legal requirement to ensure that children receive a full education through regular attendance at school, the impacts of removing children from schooling during term time are well documented and clear, for example:

- Pupils with **95–100% attendance** were **1.3 times more likely** to meet expected standards in reading, writing, and maths than those with 90–95% attendance at the end of primary school.
- Missing **just 10 days** in Year 6 reduced the likelihood of meeting expected standards by **25%**.

Low school attendance also negatively affects social development. It limits engagement in group activities, reducing social interaction and emotional growth. It can be challenging for children to return to school following absence, both in terms of having missed key foundational knowledge taught during their absence and due to the emotional challenges of returning when other pupils have been present in school.

Despite this significant impact, the draw of taking holidays at a time when they are both cheaper and destinations are quieter is understandable. I have had discussions with partner schools, including Lyttchett Minster, about altering term dates to enable an offset which would provide access to holidays off timetable from the standard holiday dates. Unfortunately, the practicalities of this are that with most staff's children not attending our schools, it is impossible to implement unless there is a whole council approach.

In looking at other options to support, we are now considering placing INSED days into 2 day groupings, one of which would be in September 2026, in order to enable access to cheaper travel before most schools have broken up. Please complete the form linked below to provide your feedback in relation to this so that we can work together to come up with the best possible solution to support positive attendance for all.

[INSED dates 2026-2027 – Fill in form](#)

With warmest wishes as always,

Mr Vernon, Headteacher



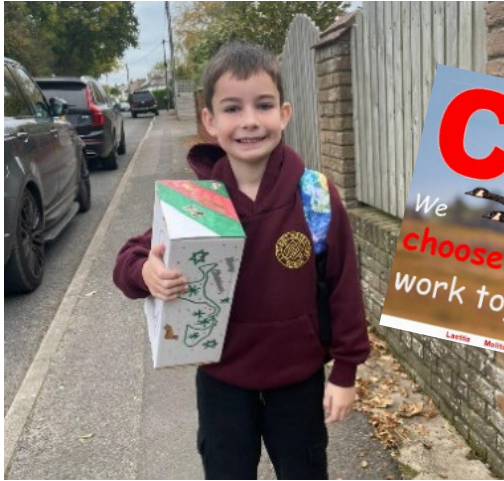
Trip payments

Thank you to all for returning the form sent in the last newsletter in relation to payment for trips. We received a large number of responses from across the year groups within the school. You will find a summary below and actions that will now be considered.

Area	Findings / Action
3. How easy do you find it to pay for trips on the MCAS App? (0 point) 4.58 Average Rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Maintain payment system
4. Over the course of the year, what is your consideration for the amount that you are being charged for school outings (not including residential)? (0 point) - I feel that the trips are far too expensive. - I feel that the cost of trips is a little high. - I feel that the cost of trips is proportionate. - I am willing to contribute more to the cost of trip	90% of families consider that the costs of trips are at least proportionate.
5. Do you feel that the school would support if a member of the community was in a position of financial hardship? (0 point) - Yes - No - I am not sure	Some families not aware of financial support available. School to communicate clearly on letters in relation to financial support that could be available.
6. If you have paid for a residential or are going to this year, what do you think about the payment plan? (0 point) - It is reasonable and supports payment - It should be more spread out with additional, smaller payments - It should be reduced to less, larger payments - Not applicable	Of those paying for residential, payment plans are supported. We will now consider broadening payment schedules as well as setting these up further in advance of trips being organised.
7. We are considering setting up a monthly payment schedule for each year group to cover the costs of trips / events run by school for the year (not including residential trips). This would be worked out by dividing the total cost over the year and dividing it into 10 monthly payments from October to July. Which of these options would you prefer? (0 point) - Keep the payments as they are currently operating - Pay in 10 monthly instalments for all trips.	The majority of families would like to maintain payments as they are currently requested rather than putting in place monthly payments.
8. How would you rate your child's enjoyment of trips and events? (0 point) 4.65 Average Rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	We are thrilled that children are enjoying their trips and events so much! We will continue to organise engaging and exciting experiences.

Christmas Charity Boxes

Well done to all of the pupils in Year 2 who created Christmas Charity Boxes to provide a little joy to children in the world who are most in need. 13 LMPs pupils put together a box and demonstrated our learning muscle of 'We choose kindness and work together'.



LMPs Showjumping Team

The team had another super day at the NSEA show jumping event on Sunday 26th October. The girls were again complimented on their turnout!

They competed against children from Bryanston (they had 3 teams!), Clayesmore, Dumpton, Hazelbury Bryan, The Levels, Salisbury Cathedral, Sherborne Abbey, Stalbridge Primary, Winterslow Primary and Woodford Primary.

One child achieved individual 1st place in the 40cm (13 competitors) and another 3rd place (6 competitors) in the 40cm lead rein, along with the achievements of our final competitor this gave our team 1st place overall! One of the children then came also came 3rd in the 50cm class against 14 competitors. Well done girls!

The next big event will be the regional championships at Moreton in January.



Pantomime Star

Congratulations to our Year 5 pupil who successfully auditioned to be in the Bournemouth pantomime at the Pavillion Theatre this Christmas. We have no doubt that she will shine on stage - Oh yes she will!



Golfing Achievement

Over the last few months, a pupil in Year 5 took part in a challenge by Golf England to find the best player in the county by age group. The challenge involved testing all key areas of golf, including putting, chipping, pitching and driving. Not only did she qualify for the Dorset county final, she won it! Congratulations!



Children In Need

School Council have voted to support Children In Need next Friday, 14th November. Children can come to school in non-school uniform on the day in return for a cash donation (this can be whatever you are comfortable to donate).

For children at Preschool who don't attend on a Friday, they are welcome to bring a donation in on another day during next week if you wish.

Attendance

Attendance over the last week has been a mixed bag with many classes dropping their % as a result of unauthorised holiday absence. Huge congratulations to Merlin – 100% can't be beaten!

