

Dear Parents, Carers, Staff and Students,

15<sup>th</sup> January 2021

As we approach the end of our first week back from what was quite a fragmented Christmas holiday, I wanted to thank each and everyone of you for the support, patience, goodwill and kind thoughts that have been clearly evident in these challenging times. I can fully appreciate the difficulties of following the DfE guidance of keeping your children at home whilst trying to juggle the 100 other things you must do and can only commend your resilience. I would also like to thank you for getting your children online and into the lessons being provided. Although not as good as the real thing and your children being sat in front of their teachers, they are a very good substitute and better than what we were able to offer less than six months ago.

This week we have managed to provide over 40 laptops to students who did not have access to a device, started the process of developing a testing centre at Lacon Childe, distributed exercise books to most students, provided in school support for a reduced number of students, entered into discussions regarding the supply of laptop and other devices to local children and started the consultation period for the establishment of a Specialist Provision Hub from September.

### **Donate a Laptop Scheme**

As you will be aware, we were provided with laptops from the DfE which we have distributed to students as well as many school devices that we use in school to support learning. We are very much aware that there are still students locally who have no access to a suitable device. We were approached by Matt Yarranton, BLISSTECH Solutions, who recognised the need for some type of provision locally and wanted to be proactive in resolving the issue. Through his company and with the full support of our school, he has developed a 'Donate a Laptop' Scheme, which we hope you are able to support in one of two ways: either by donating a laptop or similar device, or by donating money to cover basic costs of adapting the devices for children's use. Full details of this can be found at <https://blisstech.co.uk/donate-a-laptop/> or on the Trust website: <http://www.sget.org.uk>

Lacon Childe School will act as a drop off and distribution centre for this initiative. Devices can be brought into school between 9am and 3pm each school day. Devices that are refurbished and given to families will be their responsibility for maintaining, neither BLISSTECH or Lacon will be responsible for the upkeep or repair of these devices once they have been accepted by the family.

We really hope that you can support this venture in one way or another. Lacon Childe School will coordinate distribution and would like to hear from any family who would benefit from receiving a device to support learning. Please contact [admin@laconchildeschool.co.uk](mailto:admin@laconchildeschool.co.uk) with your details. We are really excited about being involved in this fantastic opportunity for our families and hope that you are able to support us in making it the success we know it can be.

### **Specialist Provision Hub**

We are now in the consultation phase for the development of a much needed Specialist Provision Hub in this area. We would like to improve the educational provision for those students who find school a challenging place and work closely with them, their parents/carers, and external agencies to ensure they have a positive experience of education. Details can be found on the school website <http://lacon-childe.org.uk/announcements/send-resource-provision> . This will support the provision

already consulted on at Cleobury Mortimer Primary School to provide high quality specialist provision from students throughout their educational journey. This is provision that we have wanted to make available for a long time and finally we have the resources to make it happen.

### **Coronavirus Testing**

All schools have been asked to provide a voluntary testing facility for staff and students. Yesterday we had four members of the military in school to explain and demonstrate testing. We will begin a small-scale voluntary provision next week; however, to increase the testing capacity, we will need a small army of volunteers willing to administer the tests. This would involve undergoing basic online training followed by practical training. If you would be willing to volunteer for a period over the next 6 months, we would really like to hear from you. Please contact Mrs Broad at school: [sue.broad@laconchilleschool.co.uk](mailto:sue.broad@laconchilleschool.co.uk) with your details and availability and she will get back to you. No experience necessary but would be helpful.

Further details about testing, consent forms, frequently asked questions and Privacy Notice has been sent to all parents and will be uploaded onto our website as soon as possible. I must emphasise that this is not mandatory, purely voluntary, and no staff or children will be tested without consent.

### **Exercise Books**

We have been distributing exercise books to parents all week, yet we still have many in school that have not been collected, especially for Year 7 and 8 students. We are therefore going to extend a collection service on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January : 9am - 10am and 2pm - 3pm. This is a final attempt to get all exercise books to our students. Please contact school if this continues to be an issue.

As we work our way through the current situation, one that we wanted to avoid at all costs, please continue to support your children in these very testing times. We are all trying to do our best and will inevitably make mistakes along the way. Have patience with each other and the school, and we will come through this stronger than ever. I look forward to the day when we can all meet, share lockdown stories and reflect on the positives that have come from this experience, as well as the real challenges. Please try and support the Donate a Laptop Scheme which will support our local children in these unprecedented times.

Take care, stay healthy.

Regards:

Darren Reynolds : Headteacher.