

11 September 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

What an amazing first week! The school has been full of excited chatter and students are looking incredibly smart in their new uniforms. Our new Year 7 students have fitted in wonderfully and are now looking more confident and as though they have always been here.

During assemblies with Mr Wood and myself, have reinforced our high expectations with a particular focus on 'Minutes Matter' and the purposeful, calm and focussed starts and ends to our lessons. Our high standards represent not just our commitment to our students' success but also our care. Every student has the right to learn in a disruption free classroom, to feel safe and to be ambitious about what they can and will achieve. The recent sporting endeavours of former Lacon Childe students Charlie Brown (Olympic Modern Pentathlete) and Billy Loughnane (Champion Apprentice Jockey) have provided our inspiration and have encouraged us to 'aim high'.

Unfortunately, one member of our teaching staff, Mrs Howard, has been unable to return to school as a result of injury. We wish her a speedy recovery and are pleased to inform you that we welcome back Mrs Hillhouse to cover for Mrs Howard in her absence.

Year 7 Castles Visits

It may only be September, but it is never too soon to get our students out and experiencing new things. Year 7 will be visiting Goodrich Castle in Herefordshire later this month. Here they will be able to see an excellent and impressive example of a castle that has changed significantly over time and understand how it can be used as evidence as well as appreciating the nation's history. The visits are planned to take place on Wednesday 25th and Thursday 26th September and Year 7 parents/carers have received information on Arbor.

Arbor

Thank you for your continued patience with our new system Arbor, we are still experiencing a few niggles.

1. Homework - Homework will be set from Monday 16th September (Week A) using Arbor. Year group homework letters with further information will be sent out this Friday. Homework tasks on Arbor can be found in the Assignments section (below Guardian Consultations and above Accounts).
2. Trips – To pay for trips you need to go to the Activities box on the front page. Click on Trips and then select the trip you wish to pay for. Press the Sign-Up button and then press Pay.

L@fter Transport

As our PE extra-curricular clubs have begun our L@fter transport service has also resumed. If your child would like to use this service, they need to book on the bus at Reception by breaktime on the day they wish to use it. You will be able to pay for this service via Arbor shortly as soon as we are able to set this up. Unfortunately, if we do not have enough students book on, we will have to cancel the bus, but we will always let your child know if this happens. Wider clubs and activities will be starting in the coming weeks, and we will update you with a revised timetable later in September.

Lockers

The school have lockers to hire through a company called Secure Locker Rental. Please see attached the poster on how to order one.

School Photographs

As you know we have had school photographs today for Year 7, 9 and 11, including friendship groups and family photographs. Your child will be given a card tomorrow containing information on how to order your photographs. Please be advised that if you order within 14 days you will receive free of charge delivery to the school. If after this date, you will need to pay a postage charge and they will be delivered to your home address.

Year 10 GCSE Information Evening

Please see attached a letter regarding our Year 10 GCSE Information evening being held in school on Thursday 19th September 2024.

Attendance matters

Today, in the second week back after the summer holiday, nearly 5% of our students are absent from school. 7% of Year 11 students, those in the most important examination year of their lives, are absent. We have become used to these statistics and sadly, these patterns of absence are now considered normal in schools. Indeed, our attendance is in line with national and local averages.

Totals and averages mean little other than to illustrate the problem we face in school. What matters most, is your child's attendance. We appreciate the cost of living crisis and as a school we are doing everything we can to support our students. However, missing two weeks for a family holiday taken in term time will mean that your child has missed 50 hours of learning new things which they will never be taught again but will face questions on in an exam in the future. Having broken attendance (a day off every week or fortnight, on random days) means that students will miss five hours of new learning each time but will struggle to understand the work they do the following week because lessons are taught in sequences which rely on prior knowledge.

We have highlighted the significant correlation between absence and exam results on previous occasions. Put simply, students who miss school regularly, reduce their lifetime learning potential because they achieve worse exam results than their peers, and develop poor habits to take into the workplace where high levels of absence, poor punctuality, or an indifferent attitude to responsibility can result in dismissal.

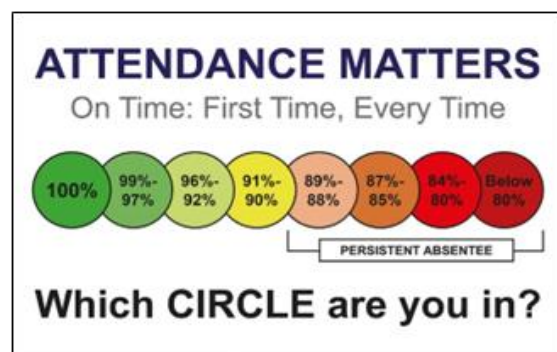
As a school we are very worried about this situation, and we are not alone in our concern. Both Ofsted and the Government agree and have highlighted the issue in recent weeks. Please can I ask that if your child is absent from school regularly (students should have full attendance most weeks) you seek to address this and ask us for support if you are struggling with your child. We want to work alongside you to support your child and we can only do this if you speak to us.

As part of our drive to support families and further improve our safeguarding practices, we have appointed a new family liaison officer, Mrs Stokes. Mrs Stokes knows our students well and is a trained safeguarding lead. Mrs Stokes will often make home visits to students who are not in school if any of the following apply:

- we have not seen the student in school for two consecutive days;
- we are unable to contact parents/carers after two days;
- we have no information as to the whereabouts of the student;
- there is involvement from Children's Services with the family.

Please be welcoming to Mrs Stokes should she have to visit your child when they are absent. She is here to help and make your child's return to school seamless. Please share openly any concerns or difficulties with her and she will ensure she communicates that information with the relevant staff.

For all students attendance is an issue, but for those students in Year 11, this is an urgent situation which needs to be rectified immediately. Thank you for your continued support. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Mr Wood on kristien.wood@laconchilleschool.co.uk



MyVoice

MyVoice is a reporting system that we use in school to enable our students and parents to report any safeguarding concerns they may have. This platform provides a secure and quick way to reach out to us and alert us of any concerns they have. We understand that students don't always feel comfortable speaking to an adult in the first instance and so MyConcerns is available 24/7 for students. Any report made to MyVoice will send an automatic alert straight to our safeguarding team. A member of the team will be able to read and take the relevant action in a timely manner. Parents/carers can use this [link](#) and QR code to the right to report a concern.



We will be speaking to our new Year 7 students about MyConcern and reminding our existing students about how they can access the support they need. Students should use this [link](#) or QR code to the left.

Please contact Mrs Guise, our DSL, or the admin team if you have any queries or issues regarding safeguarding or support.

Shropshire Council Preparation for Adulthood Survey

Shropshire SEN department would like your feedback on the Preparation for Adulthood process for students with SEND.

Shropshire Council in partnership with Health, Parent Carer Council (PACC) Schools & College representatives are reviewing Shropshire's SEND 'Preparation for Adulthood' process. We are keen to hear from all SEND young people, parent carers and practitioners to help us understand the current landscape/practice and gaps with supporting transition from year 9. The survey closes on 30th September 2024. [Parent Carers](#) Find out more information: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/preparing-for-adulthood-survey/>

Letters

- Year 7 Sparx Maths new parent letter
- Year 7 YL Welcome letter
- Year 8 YL Welcome letter
- Year 9 YL Welcome letter
- Year 10 YL Welcome letter
- Year 11 YL Welcome letter
- Open Evening Poster
- Locker Poster
- Lunchtime and Afterschool Sports Clubs
- Family Drop-ins Poster

Thank you again for all of your support. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me on rachel.croxtonbroome@laconchilleschool.co.uk

Yours sincerely,

Rachel Croxton-Broome
Head of School

Ruth Allen
Consultant Executive Headteacher

Dates To Remember:

Friday 13th September
Monday 16th September
Thursday 19th September
Thursday 19th September
Sunday 22nd September
Wednesday 25th September
Thursday 26th September
Thursday 26th September
Monday 30th September
Monday 30th September

Yr7 - Yr9 Flu Vaccinations
Jeans for Genes Week
Book Fair
Yr10 GCSE Information Evening
Borders Classic Bike Show
Yr7 Castles Trip (Clee/Mortimer)
Yr7 Castles Trip (Stretton/Wrekin)
Yr7 Welcome Evening
Yr6 Open Day / Open Evening
Yr11 Revision Timetable begins

Love Lane, Cleobury Mortimer, Shropshire DY14 8PE

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The Shropshire Gateway Educational Trust

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