

LGS Headlines

18 December 2020



Dear Parents

Here we are at the end of what has felt like a very long term.....

I would like to thank you for your support throughout these very challenging few months and to commend your sons and daughters for their attendance, their commitment to their studies and their resilience in putting up with all the restrictions and control measures we have in place. They have done incredibly well!

The delivery of the normal curriculum is very important and we have worked hard to ensure that your sons and daughters have had the best possible experience in the classroom under the circumstances. However, in common with most schools, so many of the additional things we would normally do at this time of year have had to be cancelled, postponed or adapted. This is sad because those activities add so much to our provision and support our school ethos of being confident and well rounded, independent and creative, responsible and caring. However, I would particularly commend the PE department for events such as their Santa Dash take on a cross country run and the Music department's 'Christmas Baubles' online concert featuring recorded performance by students in Years 7, 8 and 9 and a virtual choir with Castleview Primary School.

I wish I could provide a little more clarity about the start of the Spring term in January. Unfortunately, the latest Government announcements about Covid testing and a staggered return to school have only just been made as this newsletter has been put together. As a senior team we will be looking carefully at what we have to do, and will ensure that you have confirmation of the plans as soon as possible. In the meantime, I have written in this newsletter about what the start of the new term is *most likely* to look like and given you an idea of the plans for Covid testing which you will have seen announced in the media.

This has been a very demanding term for everyone. Our staff have worked incredibly hard over this term to adapt to new ways of doing things and rise to the challenge of providing remote education to students at home alongside the face to face teaching. I would like to thank them on your behalf for all their efforts, and wish them a relaxing break.

Unfortunately we are not where we wanted to be as a country at this stage, and the latest restrictions imposed on us over the next few weeks may feel dispiriting. Nevertheless I hope that there will be positive aspects to the school holiday and that families will be able to enjoy spending time together.

With my best wishes to you and your families.

Mr J Constable - Headteacher

**To contact us during the Christmas holiday please email
school@lgs.slough.sch.uk.**

Your query will be passed on to the most appropriate member of staff.

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www.lgs.slough.sch.uk

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Updates

Goodbye to staff

At the end of this term we have said goodbye to two colleagues.

Mrs Gill Howarth has been working with Langley Grammar School for 5 years, leading the Day a Week School provision.

This was a project which has run in Slough for around ten years through which very able pupils in local primary schools came in to the school for one day each week to take part in a special timetable which aims to stretch and challenge them.

Sadly we are no longer able to run the Day a Week School under the current restrictions.

Mr Simon Cook has retired from the school after 27 years. He joined in 1993 as Head of Information Technology and took on a variety of roles in the school over the years including Assistant Headteacher, pastoral lead and Designated Safeguarding Lead.

When Mr Cook joined LGS it had just 600 pupils, one building, and about 40 computers, and he has been instrumental in building up the school's IT provision. Many of the systems and processes we take for granted now in the school are things Mr Cook introduced or was very influential in developing, and he has made a very significant impact on the school over those years. We wish him well in his retirement.

We are sure you will join us in wishing Mrs Howarth and Mr Cook well for the future.

Message from the Board of Governors

I am sure you will agree 2020 has been an unprecedented year: the continuing building works, moving to the new block and then a pandemic on top bringing the closure of the school.

During the summer break Mr Constable & his team assessed the risks and put measures in place to ensure the school could reopen safely this autumn term, scrutinised & approved by the Governors at every stage.

Even so this term has not been short of challenges for staff & students alike with 'bubbles', Covid cases and more remote working for some.

The Governing Board would like to thank Mr Constable, the teaching & support staff for their hard work and how they have adapted to a continually changing situation to keep the school running as near to whatever is now considered normal as possible.

On other non-Covid related news, a new community Governor, Mr Anil Nanda has recently been appointed. He is an ex-pupil of LGS. We welcomed him to our Full Governors Meeting on 15th December.

Elections for new parent governor will now take place in the New Year and we look forward to welcoming the newly elected members in the future.

Claire Fitzgerald
Vice-Chair of Governors



Covid response

What have Covid case rates been like?

Over the last few weeks we have seen a number of positive Covid-19 cases in school. For most of the term these were isolated cases, almost certainly the result of community transmission, and with no obvious further infection taking place in school.

In the last two weeks of term that has changed and we have seen a small number of cases which have clearly been related. The reasons behind this are unclear; however, we know that case rates in Slough in particular have been high, that infection rates have increased among teenagers across the country, and there have been media reports to suggest that there is a variant of the virus which is less virulent but perhaps more contagious.

Contact tracing and self isolation

What we *do* know is that we have a well-developed contact tracing system which has minimised the number of students out of school.

We have been able to identify close contacts from lessons very accurately and this has meant that have not had to send students home unnecessarily.

The maximum number we have had to send home from any one confirmed case is around 40 students, and unlike many schools we have not had to send whole or half year groups home at all.

We have also been very fortunate in terms of staff absences. The number of confirmed cases in our staff has been tiny compared to many other schools, and relatively few have had to self isolate because of other members of their household.

Virtual PTCs

We have run PTCs and pastoral reviews using the SchoolCloud software. This has generally been a positive experience, convenient for parents and allowing staff to conduct conversations in a more confidential way, and parents to make appointments at more convenient times. The fixed times and countdown clock do concentrate the mind though!



Our current intention is to continue all PTCs in this fashion next term and we would be interested in parents views on whether this format should be retained when the pandemic is over.

Remote education

When students have had to self isolate they have been entitled to receive remote education from the first day of their isolation. Remote education consists of a mixture of independent tasks set by the teacher combined with live streaming of lessons where this is helpful to the student at home.

The technology used to live stream lessons is simple but effective. Teachers use iPads on tripods which they can move around the room as required, even allowing students to do group work with a student at home.

Students at home are invited to join the lesson via Microsoft Teams and play as much of a part as appropriate to the activity. Feedback is very positive from both students and staff.





Illness during Christmas holiday

Possible Covid illness?

If any member of your household shows symptoms of Covid-19 you should self-isolate and the affected person should get a coronavirus test.

The main symptoms associated with Covid-19 are:

- High temperature
- New continuous or persistent cough
- Loss of taste or smell

The period of self isolation is for 10 days for the person who is unwell. Everyone else in the household should self-isolate for 10 days from the day the affected person first showed Covid symptoms.

For further advice and guidance please go to <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19>

Notifying the school about positive Covid cases

If your child had Covid-19 symptoms within 48 hours of being at school and they later receive a positive test result.....

- ⇒ E-mail school@lgs.slough.sch.uk so that we can carry out contact tracing and inform any students and/or staff members who may be close contacts.
- ⇒ If you need to e-mail to report a positive test result please use the subject title 'positive test result' and include your child's name, year group, the date they tested positive, the date they first had symptoms and the date you have been told as a household to self-isolate until.

What if my child tests positive for Coronavirus during the school holidays?

- ⇒ Where a student tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms more than 48 hours since being in school (ie from Sunday 20th December onwards), parents should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.

Contact tracing during the holiday period

During the first part of the Christmas holiday, we may have to undertake contact tracing if we are informed about any positive Covid-19 cases within our student community. The Public Health England guidance is that anyone who develops symptoms, or receives a positive test result while asymptomatic, is assumed to be infectious for **two days before** and **ten days after** developing the symptoms or taking the test.

It is therefore possible that you may be contacted by the school if your son or daughter is identified as a close contact of anyone who develops Covid-19 symptoms and subsequently tests positive at, or just after, the end of term. Any student identified as a close contact in this way needs to self-isolate for 10 days in line with Government guidance.

Any such notification from the school will be via text message and email sent through the InTouch system.



What will next term look like?

What is happening at the start of term?

On Thursday 17th December the Government announced changes to the arrangements for the start of the Spring Term in January. Given the very short notice, we have not yet been able to make final decisions.

However, this is the **most likely** pattern for the start of the Spring Term. Please note this is **not yet finally decided**, and confirmed arrangements will be sent to you and to students before Christmas.

Monday 4th January	Additional non-teaching day for staff and site preparation
Tuesday 5th January	Year 11 and 13 students return to school for face to face teaching Years 7-10 & 12 remain at home and have remote education provided
Monday 11th January	All students in school for face to face teaching

What about Covid testing?

The Government has announced two mass Covid testing programmes to be rolled out in schools in January, using the lateral flow test technology which provides results in a short time.

- ⇒ A mass **screening programme** to detect positive Covid-19 cases at the start of term. As many students as possible would be given two tests three days apart, and asked to isolate if either shows a positive result.
- ⇒ An ongoing programme of **in-school testing** where students are identified as **close contacts** of a positive case. Students would have daily tests for seven days after identification and would only need to self-isolate if a test returned a positive result. This is intended to reduce the number of students who need to stay at home to isolate with the resulting impact on their learning.

The announcements about these programmes have only just been made. While the principles are undoubtedly good, then logistical challenges are huge and there is very little detail as yet. We will update about how these programmes will work when we know more.

Will all the current arrangements in school stay the same?

The Public Health England system of controls remains in place next term. We will therefore continue to operate all the control measures as we have done through this term.

This includes wearing masks around the site, using hand sanitiser, and maintaining social distancing between staff and students in the classroom. Other arrangements such as the staggered break and lunchtimes, exit times and separate year group social areas will also remain in place until there is any change in the Government guidance.

We are hoping to be able to go back to running extracurricular activities in the early part of the term. The Government is also expected to review its guidance on educational visits in February and it may be possible to run some of your normal activities later in the year.



Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Congratulations to ...

...former students (who left in summer 2020)
who have gained their full **Gold Award**:

*Monique Sahnian
Vishesh Vinod
Atharva Palve
Sneha Muralidharan
Mohammed Chaudhry
Janmeet Singh*

....and to the following Year 11 and 12 students
who have completed their **Bronze Award**:

*Roshan Muppalla
Neil Sorthia
Mia Scully
Adeena Anwar
Omar Mubarak
Mujahid Hussain*

*Rebecca Wright
Manpreet Basra
Vashika Yarlventhan
Aswathy Sajina-Suresh
Zainab Shaik
Yuvraj Gill
Husayn Sacranie
Avnika Heer
Vedant Dubey
Faiz Aslam
Ahmet Kucuk
Snigdha Hanumanthu
Myat Win
Jigar Shah
Yana Arora
Keziah Cherian
Ateeb Rehman
Amolika Bansal
Shankar Raj
Aryan Masson*

Congratulations to ...

....Year 10 and 11 students who have gained a
Certificate of Achievement after completing three
of the four **Bronze Award** sections.

*Arun Nagra
Kavinaya Punniyaseelan
Dhruv Sharma
Saboor Kakar
Neha Pothineni
Jiya Phull
Haaris Khan
Shaan Sidhu-Tung
Alihussain Bhurawala
Mathichudar Manivasagam
Priya Brana
Yaman Hafdh
Rudhresh Kannan Narayan
Soorya Ramkumar
Gaurav Mishra
Eesha Vaddiparty
LovinJose
Saarujan Sitparan
Nitya Kasarla
Darshana Prasanna Kumar
Ashmeet Jadhav
Naina Jaiswal
Jodhviir Sekhon
Mayurigaa Srirangathan
Jack Ettridge
Aarya Sisodia
Aaryan Khanna*

*Ashvin Siventhiran
Daanish Ansari
Mya Chhokar
Catherine Oo
Phillip Alvarez
Rafay Muhammad
Srinidhi Sathishbabu
Sidakveer Kang
Sruthi Aji
Rocco Dhonsi
Shruthi Venkatesh
Ishir Sharma*



Building update

Progress on the new building

The construction company continue to make good progress on the new building. We were also very pleased that we have now been able to use the newly landscaped area in the centre of the school. This has provided some welcome additional social space as well as providing more direct routes between the buildings. Thankfully, no more 'food trek' round the site to gain access to the Food & Textiles building..!

The photographs below show how things have developed since the last newsletter in October.





Building update

More pictures below of the central space and the new main building...





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