



Larwood Academy Trust

CEO: Mr Sean Trimble | B.Ed (hons) MA NPQH |
Chair of Trustees: Cllr Sandra Barr | B.Sc (hons) Dip.soc.pol |

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Larwood School

Brandles School

Acting Headteacher: Mr Pierre Van Der Merwe | BA, NPQH | **Acting Headteacher:** Mr Paul Smith | BA (hons), AVCM |

December 1st 2021

General information for all parents and carers about changes to the catch-up procedure

Dear parent/carers,

I am writing to ask for your support in ensuring every student has the best chance of getting the best education possible. We have incredible staff here at Brandles, but students will not benefit from their expertise if they choose to miss lessons for no valid reason.

This year, one of our focusses has been on behaviour and culture in order to ensure our students will leave school with the necessary social skills to be able to be independent in society, continue to further education such as college, or go on to employment.

We are already seeing amazing progress for students. But we feel we need to do more to encourage a minority of students who *choose* not to go to lessons, in making the right choices. A small number of students occasionally *choose* to walk round the building, rather than be in the lesson. This often disrupts other lessons and prevents support staff from doing their jobs. Unfairly, it also means Teaching Assistants are diverted away from supporting all students in the lesson, by having to “keep eyes on” the student *choosing* not to be in the lesson *for no valid reason*.

I’m sure you will agree that the best place for students to be is in the classroom (providing they can cope). Of course, there are planned interventions that mean sometimes students are not taking part in the usual lesson and are receiving dedicated support, and there are times when a student is in crisis, and they need to have some time out of lesson. This is understandable in an SEMH school.

Of further concern, is the learning that any student *choosing* not to go to a lesson will miss. They fall behind and this makes them even less likely to want to attend the lesson next time.

We do have a system in place which involves students using some of lunchtime to catch-up the work, but we have realised that we need to make some changes to ensure this process is more effective in ensuring students attend lessons. We also recognise the need to change the way that catch-up after school works.

We are asking for your support with this modified approach that we believe will encourage students to make the right decision and be more resilient when faced with challenges.

What if my child misses **one** lesson in a day?

- If a student *chooses* to miss **only one** lesson in a day, a phone call will be made home to inform parents/carers that the student will catch-up the missing lesson at **lunch the following day**. Please can parents/carers speak to their child about the need to do the catch-up and the inconvenience of you having to collect them after school **that same day** if they don’t.



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What if my child misses the catch-up the following day?

- If the student does not do the catch-up at lunch that following day, a senior member of staff will call home to arrange for the student to stay behind for half an hour after school THAT SAME day. Parents and carers will need to support us in collecting the student as the taxi will be cancelled. We hope that we will not need to keep a student after school because parents will either talk to their child about making sure they do the catch-up, or ideally not missing lessons at all!

What if my child misses **more than one** lesson in a day?

- A senior member of staff will call home to explain the student will need to stay behind THAT SAME day for 1hr. This is important to maintain the learning that would have taken place in the lessons that day. Again we will ask parents/carers to make arrangements for their child to be collected.

Please can I reiterate that we are an SEMH school, and often there *are* valid reasons why a student may not be coping in a lesson. This process would not apply in that case. This is only for students *choosing* to miss lessons.

We will be explaining this change to all students very carefully over the next few days so they have time to ask questions and process the change. The revised system will come into effect from next week, on the 6th December.

Please contact Mr Grover or Mr Russell (Behaviour and culture leads) if you have any questions or comments.

Kind regards

Mr Smith