

21 September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Keeping Your Child's School Account Safe

We are adding an extra layer of security to students' school Microsoft accounts - the account your child uses for school email and Teams. This letter explains what is changing and what you need to do.

In short

- **Year 8:** this is happening now. **Year 7:** this will be enabled 25/09/26.
- We recommend using a **text message code** sent to a mobile phone. It can be your child's phone or your own.
- It is easiest to set up together at home, with the phone to hand. Your child signs in at www.office.com and follows the steps on screen.
- There is nothing to buy and no app is needed. If you have any problems, contact details are at the end of this letter.

What is changing?

From time to time, as well as entering their password, your child will be asked to confirm that they are the person signing in. You may already be familiar with this from online banking or other websites. It is often called two-step verification or multi-factor authentication (MFA).

Your child will continue to use their normal school username and password. Most of the time, particularly when using school computers, they will not notice any difference. When the extra check is needed - for example when signing in away from school - a 6-digit code is sent to the registered phone, and your child types it in to confirm it is them.

Why are we doing this?

Student accounts contain schoolwork and personal information, so it is important that we protect them if a password is accidentally shared, guessed or stolen. An extra check makes it much harder for somebody else to get into the account, even if they know the password.

When will this happen?

Year 8: this is being introduced now. **Year 7:** this will be enabled 25/09/26 - there is nothing to do until then. Your child may be asked to set this up the next time they sign in to their school account.

Keeping codes safe

If the registered phone is yours, your child will need you to pass the code on. A code should never be shared with anyone else. If a code arrives when your child is not signing in, please ignore it and let us know, as it may mean somebody else is trying to get into the account.



What do we need to do?

We recommend a code sent by text message (SMS). It is simple, no app is needed, and any mobile that can receive texts will work - it does not have to be a smartphone, and a parent's or carer's phone is fine.

1. Your child signs in to their school account at www.office.com. A message will say that more information is required. Select **Next**.
2. If the next screen asks you to get the Microsoft Authenticator app, select **I want to set up a different method** near the bottom, then choose **Phone** from the list and confirm.
3. Choose **United Kingdom (+44)**, type in the mobile number, choose to receive a code (rather than a call) and select **Next**.
4. A 6-digit code is sent to the phone by text message (if the phone has WhatsApp, Microsoft sometimes sends it there instead). Type the code in, then select **Next** and **Done**.

What if we do not want to use text messages?

An alternative is the free Microsoft Authenticator app on a smartphone. If you choose this, add the account by scanning the square barcode (QR code) shown on the computer screen, rather than using the sign-in option inside the app. For most families, a text message is the simpler choice. If you do not have a mobile phone you can use, please contact us.

What if my child forgets their password?

Once this is set up, students will also be able to reset their own password from the Microsoft sign-in screen, rather than always needing to contact the school. They will be asked to type in the full number of the registered phone, and a code is then sent to it, so that phone needs to be to hand.

Need help?

If you have any problems during setup, or if the phone number later changes, please contact the school's ICT Services team: ithelpdesk@lymmhigh.org.uk

Yours sincerely,

ICT Services

Lymm High School