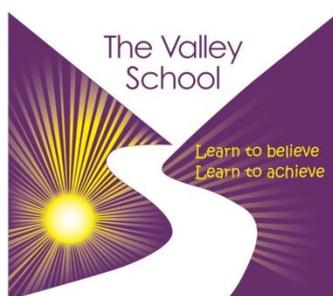


Headteacher:
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Friday 24th January, 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

REF: THE VALLEY SCHOOL OF THE FUTURE

I am writing with an update on how far we have progressed on our journey to having a permanent and well-designed set of buildings for Valley School pupils and staff. I am very disappointed that the timescale we were given permission to share with you, that we might have a new home as early as September 2020, turned out to be highly ambitious and unrealistic. Even today, we are still several key meetings away from a firm decision, but I have confidence that these meetings will have taken place by the end of this school year.

Given that such a significant building project is very involved and lengthy, I believe it is reasonable to assume that there could still be 2 years ahead of us, once those decisions are made.

Our buildings continue to fail and to deteriorate, so we have agreed to embark on a programme to address roofing, heating and drainage, so that our pupils can learn and our staff can work in an acceptable environment during this delay. Money for this refurbishment is being provided by the Local Authority and, whilst it is a substantial amount of money, is not enough to risk them cancelling more exciting plans for the future. However, the work is extensive and difficult to manage

In order to allow the refurbishment to take place safely and to meet the needs of our current pupils, I regret to say that we have made the difficult decision to extend the half term holiday for a further week. I understand that this puts pressure on you and your family, but it will be safer and less stressful for our pupils to do this.

On our website, you will find a new section for families, which has links to a range of places that welcome children like ours. Before the half term break, it will also have some shared activities during the closure week, so that you can get to know other families and engage in some new experiences. Class teachers will provide learning activities and details of websites that may be useful for your child.

We are taking the opportunity to focus on rehearsals for the school show "Alex in Wonderland", as we have hired facilities for the first 3 days of the closure week. Transport will be provided and specific dates and details will be issued in due course.



Staff will be fully deployed during the week and will undertake training, planning and research activities. They will be visiting other schools and colleges to look at good practice and working together for our pupils. We will have no access to the school site, but we will be able to retrieve emails and answerphone messages.

I understand that this is not helpful for you and will put you under pressure due to your own commitments. However, I firmly believe that it is the best way to make sure that the building work takes place safely.

Thank you to those who attended the meeting yesterday and for your support and understanding. If you were unable to attend the meeting, please do not hesitate to contact me if you need greater clarity.

Pupils were all told today, so are aware of the change in holiday dates for them.

Yours sincerely,

Corina Foster

Corina Foster
Headteacher