

Headteacher:
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Friday 1st October 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Covid and Staffing

Initially I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support during our latest Covid situation at The Valley School. We are all finding it extremely frustrating and it just does not seem to be going away.

Today (Friday) we have found ourselves with approximately 25% of our staff out and the situation does not look much better for Monday. The staff that are in are desperately trying to cover as much as we can, with staff teaching all lessons in a day, covering break and lunch, and still having to plan for similar the day after. I would like to publicly thank them all for stepping up and being so amazing.

We also appreciate how well the students have just accepted the situation and generally been extremely accommodating with the changes of staff, lessons and Covid protocols. Well done to all of them!

Form Out	Date
8HN 8WH	4/10
9CG 9KU	5/10
9MC 11HA	6/10
7HU 7JD	7/10
11HD 11RI	8/10

Unfortunately, we are going to have to continue to rotate classes out for the next few days. With an increase of the number of staff out, we are having to work with two classes out a day until next Friday. We are hoping that by Monday 11th October we should be able to return to normal practice. Please see the table showing our programme of rotating classes out.

In school, we are continuing to maintain County outbreak protocols within school; wearing facemasks (if able to), staying in year group bubbles and no changing for PE. We are providing work for students to complete whilst they are out of school which will be available through the school website.

We appreciate that this may cause an inconvenience to you and your family and we are sorry that we have had to take these measures at this time.



Rewards

We are launching our new rewards system on Monday, which is very exciting for all concerned. The students have the chance to earn up to £4 per week which they can use to buy things from the school tuckshop or Amazon, or trips out to local eateries. Any Amazon purchase would have to be age related and appropriate.

In addition to this, we are offering students the chance to have a dress down Friday and a fun afternoon if they achieve 16 points a day, totalling 80 points a week. Fun activities have been discussed with the student council and they have suggested, trampolining, various sports, art club, technology club, film club with popcorn, to name but a few.

To help motivate the Year 11 students we are proposing that they can finish early on a Friday (straight after lunchtime registration 1:35pm) as their Friday afternoon reward. This would only be allowed with your permission through the return of the permission slip attached.

If they achieve the rewards threshold but you would like them to stay in school, they can access the fun activities instead.

We are very keen to develop the Year 11s independence over the next few months before they leave us, and believe that controlled freedoms are the best ways to achieve this.

Open Mornings

With our current situation regarding Covid, and no sign of this improving in the short term, we have no alternative but to postpone our open mornings until after half term. We are determined to run them as soon as possible as we recognise how important it is for new parents to look around The Valley School and experience it for themselves.

Parent Governors

We are always on the lookout for new parent governors. If you feel that you can give a few evenings a year to support the school and play an important part in new staff appointments, policies and be a critical friend, your interest would be gratefully received.

Picking up students at the end of the school day

As the weather deteriorates, we are finding that parents picking up their children are remaining in their cars. Although this is understandable, it is almost impossible to determine which child should be taken to which car by a hand being waved from the driver's window.

Please could you step out of the car so your child and/or us can identify you and ensure that they are delivered to you promptly and safely.

Parents' Evenings and Reports

As explained in a previous letter, every parent will receive either a written report, parents' evening or data report for their child every term. By splitting these up you will receive quality information about your child at regular intervals throughout the year and the workload will be manageable for staff. Key dates for your diary this term are 26th November when the Year 8s will receive a data report, and the Year 10s will receive a full written report, and Thursday 2nd December when Years 7, 9 and 11 will have a parents' evening.

Again, I would like to thank you so much for your continued help and support during this difficult time at The Valley School. We hope to ride out this current wave of Covid cases very soon.

Keep safe and well

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Pearce', followed by a long horizontal line that tapers to the right.

David Pearce
Headteacher