

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Headteacher:
David Pearce



The Valley School
Broadhall Way
Stevenage
Herts SG2 9BN
Tel: 01438 747274
admin@thevalley.herts.sch.uk

Friday 7th January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you have had a lovely, relaxing Christmas and wish you all a Happy New Year. It has been a really positive start to the year with only a few students and a couple of staff testing positive for Covid. We are really hopeful that this term will reflect more normal practices.

Covid update

The latest guidance indicates that all staff and students are encouraged to lateral flow test daily from Sunday evening of this week until further notice.

Confirmatory PCR tests following a positive lateral flow device (LFD) test result are to be temporarily suspended from Tuesday 11 January. This will mean that anyone who receives a positive LFD test result and are asymptomatic (no symptoms showing) will be required to self-isolate immediately and will not be required to take a confirmatory PCR test. However, if you are symptomatic (showing symptoms) then you will still need to continue to obtain a PCR test following a positive lateral flow device test result.

Just a reminder about the letter that was sent out earlier in the week regarding Covid-19 vaccinations. We are facilitating this at school on Tuesday 11th January for students aged 12-15 who have already received their 1st vaccination and now require their 2nd but also for students who have not yet had their 1st vaccination and wish to do so. We require electronic consent forms to be sent directly to the Immunisation Service by Monday noon at the very latest.

Student absence

Please could I remind you to ring the school office (01438) 747274 before 8am if your child cannot attend school that day. It is essential that you explain the reason why.



Taxis

If your child uses a taxi service to bring them into school, you will have found that there have been some changes at the start of this term. We hope that any teething problems have worked themselves out, but if you need any clarification about services or need help or support please ring the school office on (01438) 747274.

Rewards

Please remind your children that they have the potential to earn four reward points every lesson based on the following criteria:

- Being in the right place at the right time
- Being properly equipped to learn – including school uniform
- Completing work set
- Helping others or doing something beyond expectations

These rewards accrue money that students can spend on Amazon or similar sites, trips to cafes or restaurants or anything else agreed by the Heads of Year. Achieving sixteen points a day also gives students access to a rewards afternoon on Fridays.

It is so important we help students remain focussed and engaged with school through positivity rather than relying on punishment or consequences. Please note a student could fail to gain seven points a day by not attending in uniform.

Mobile phones

As a school, we believe that mobile phones have been fully integrated into peoples' everyday lives, and to stop students using them and/or banning them completely from school would be failing to prepare them for life after The Valley.

We do however, recognise the potential of phone abuse and these devices being used inappropriately. The statutory DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021' emphasises the importance of "restricting access to mobile devices in school" in acknowledgement of the fact that children have "unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet" which may facilitate abuse.

Consequently, we have clear guidance on when and where mobile phones can be used in and around the school site. If students choose to ignore this guidance then consequences will be implemented. Repetitive refusal to follow the school rules about mobile phones will result in us asking you to ensure your child does not bring the device into school, but this goes against everything we are trying to achieve and would be a last resort.

As always we appreciate your continued support. Wishing you a relaxing weekend.

Yours sincerely



David Pearce
Headteacher