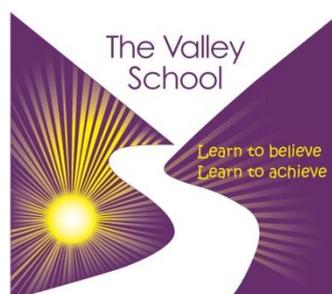


HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Headteacher:
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Friday 17th December 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Wow! What a first term as the new Headteacher at The Valley School. It has certainly been one of the most unpredictable and thus demanding of my educational career, with the ebbs and flows of this awful virus.

On reflection, despite everything, I can honestly say that The Valley community has been amazing. Governors, staff, students and parents have risen to every challenge, being flexible, resilient and cheerfully optimistic throughout.

It has been a great pity that many events have had to be postponed this term, from our Christmas Extravaganza to our Year 6 into 7 Transition Evenings. I am hopeful that we can resurrect these and add more over the next couple of terms.

Although more limited than we would have liked, we have been successful in other projects however. Just this week our Enterprise Classes led a Christmas Sale project raising £110. Not only was Ms Heller instrumental in supporting this, but she has also worked with the Year 10s and 11s to put together thirty-five Christmas boxes that will be delivered to local families throughout this morning. I would like to thank 'Happy Days Children's' Charity for their generous donations to facilitate this initiative.

The feedback from The Valley's first data report to Year 8 students and our new Parents' Evening portal have been extremely positive as has the receipt of a weekly Headteacher's letter. We are always willing to review our practices, and if there is anything further we can do to improve communication please let us know.

After some feedback from Year 7 parents and staff, we have been persuaded to revise our reporting schedule for this year group. Please see the change below.

Year	Autumn Term	Date	Spring Term	Date	Summer Term	Date
Year 7	Parents' Evening	2/12/21	Data Report	27/01/22	Full written report	13/05/22



We do have a few goodbyes at the end of this term. Mrs Nelson is leaving us and considering either retirement or changing direction to be outside the classroom. Mr Coughlin is excited about embarking on a new entrepreneurial venture – we hope he makes millions! Ms Jordan is becoming a Family Support Worker and Ms Rich is training to be a Midwife. We wish them every success in their future endeavours.

Conversely, we are also welcoming new staff to The Valley School. Miss Jeeves joined our Year 9 Team as Head of Humanities and Culture Capital a few weeks ago. Mrs Adamson is also joining the Year 9 Team in January and Mr Perrin and Mrs Gordon will be starting as Learning Partners at the beginning of the New Year.

Covid testing on return to school (Reminder)

Our test site at school will be fully operational on Tuesday 4th January 2022 to test our Year 7 students, on Wednesday 5th January 2022 our Year 8 & 9 students will be tested and then on Thursday 6th January 2022 our Year 10 and 11 students will be tested.

To accommodate this process we are acting on advice from the Local Authority and staggering the return date for our students as follows, regardless of whether your child is testing or not:

Tuesday 4th January 2022 – Year 7 students only in school

Wednesday 5th January 2022 – Year 7, 8 and 9 students in school

Thursday 6th January 2022- Year 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 students in school

Students on bespoke timetables will attend school with their year groups.

Without the staggering we would not have enough staff to complete the testing and deliver lessons.

The testing is recommended by Public Health England but it is not compulsory. If you already consented in September for your child then we will use this consent for January. If you have not consented and you wish to do so then please click on the link below to complete a google consent form. If we do not receive a consent form from you, then this will be your confirmation that you do not wish your child to be part of the testing programme.

<https://forms.gle/im9MysgYvXE6Ja516>

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The Orient Gene Rapid Covid-19 Lateral Flow Tests are quick and easy and only require a double nasal swab. Staff can oversee the swab process. Staff will not administer tests.

Year 11 Travel Training

After the February half-term 2022 those Year 11 students that would benefit from it will have the opportunity to participate in some Travel Training sessions with Hertfordshire County Council's Travel Training Team. This is designed to support students in developing their confidence and independent Travel skills prior to them leaving us in September. Further details will follow in the New Year.

Stevenage Tickets

We have been very fortunate to have received six match day tickets kindly donated by Stevenage Borough FC. The tickets are for Saturday 15th January when Stevenage will be playing against Sutton United. Three students who have shown a keen interest in football and have worked hard in PE this term have been chosen to support their local side, accompanied by a responsible adult.

Year 7- Brandon Kemp

Year 9- Oscar Neal

Year 11- Lucy Orchard

We would like to give a special mention to Mrs O'Brien for her hard work in securing the tickets for the school and allowing our youngsters to experience a live football match, possibly for the very first time. We hope to share pictures of them at the game when we return to school in the New Year.

All from The Valley School wish you a very happy, safe and relaxing Christmas and we look forward to seeing all the children back for a far more 'normal' New Year.

Yours sincerely

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

David Pearce
Headteacher