

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Headteacher:
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Friday 14th January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

It is really pleasing to write this letter without the content being dominated by Covid. As school returns to a more normal footing it is great to see students really engaging with their teachers and enjoying their learning.

The Year 7s have been immersing themselves in their Titanic project and exploring the history, culture and tragedy of the whole event. The imagination of staff and how they have brought the learning to life has been amazing. This has included rubber dinghies in the classroom, students saving themselves on upturned tables and using a bucket of ice water to bring the concept of hypothermia to life.

I hope the students have been going home and sharing their experiences with you around the dinner table.

Visit from our School Improvement Partner

Declan McCarthy came in to school to work with our leaders and help us prepare for Ofsted. As much as we would like to bury our heads in the sand and pretend it does not exist, we know Ofsted is not going anywhere and it is important that we prepare properly for it.

Three of our leaders volunteered to experience a 'Deep Dive' which involves the inspectors grilling them on the curriculum and the teaching and learning that happens in their subject areas.

Declan is a practising Inspector and really put Mr Elliot, Miss Heller and Mrs Wharton through their paces. Despite the experience being quite stressful, all three were amazing and the feedback was extremely positive. It was nice to hear that he thinks the school is in a position to receive a very favourable outcome when our next Ofsted Inspection comes.

We all learned a lot from the experience and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all involved, but particularly the three leaders who volunteered.



EHCP Day

I would like to take this opportunity to remind parents that we are holding our Education Health Care Plan Day on Thursday 10th February. Arrangements are different than in previous years as we are freeing up staff who really know and work with the children to conduct meetings with you. We will also have College staff for Year 11s and other external support teams on site to facilitate the day.

To ensure we have appropriate staff available your child will only be on the school site for his or her meeting and will learn from home for the rest of the day.

We appreciate that this is not ideal, but recognise how important Education Health Care Plans are and want to invest the appropriate amount of time and staffing into it. We can only do this by trading off teachers attending meetings rather than teaching lessons on that day. This is a pilot and we will canvas your feedback after the event.

Year 10

This weekend is an exciting opportunity for three of our students and a member of their family to watch Stevenage FC against high flying Sutton United. Stevenage achieved an important win at home last weekend and hopefully they can follow this up with another in front of The Valley School members.

The PE department are very proud of the efforts of these learners and enjoy every opportunity of celebrating their achievement through opportunities such as this. We hope to be able to offer similar experiences to students again in the very near future.

Enterprise

We would firstly like to thank all students, parents and carers for their involvement in the Christmas Enterprise Sale. The Year 10 students work hard to plan and implement the event in school and the response was incredible. The Year 10 team have completed the calculations and we have made over £100 profit this year already.

We are in the planning stages of our next event which will be Valentines and we look forward to sharing our ideas. Please watch this space for information about up and coming events.

As always, we appreciate your continued support.

Wishing you a relaxing weekend.

Yours sincerely

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

David Pearce
Headteacher