

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Headteacher:
David Pearce



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

Friday 8th July 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

We come to the end of another busy week, which has seen further rewards trips enjoyed by our year groups. It is important to stress however, that these trips are not at the expense of learning, but go a long way to facilitate the positive and productive learning atmosphere that pervades the school.

We recognise that some of the strengths of the school are the amazing relationships and levels of trust that are built between the staff and students, and these trips and visits go a long way to forge them.

New Build Update

At last we have some really good news to share with you about the construction of the new school. We already have builders on site preparing their site office. The hoardings will be going up over the next few days and machinery put into position.

Construction work will begin in earnest on 1st August 2022 with the completion date of the foundations scheduled for 1st November 2022. The framework will start being raised 'above ground' throughout November 2022.

If everything goes according to plan we have a completion date of 9th October 2023 and the children hopefully will move in after the autumn half term of that year.

There will be viewing panels and a viewing platform so the students can watch the works as they happen. There will also be a time-lapse camera which will document the build's progress. As a school we will exploit every learning opportunity possible from the project.

Chessington Trip

Despite the Challenges faced at Chessington World of Adventure yesterday, the Year 10 students had a lovely day. We didn't get to experience any of the rides but we had a great time walking around the zoo and sea life. We then enjoyed a nice ice cream in the shade. It was a pleasure to spend a lovely day out and about with them all. We look forward to going again as the park have revalidated our tickets; the new visit date to follow.





8HN McDonald's trip.

On Thursday 8HN, went to McDonalds as part of their rewards trip. We walked from The Valley School to Roaring Meg McDonalds using our road safety skills, the students enjoyed walking while singing songs. Once at McDonalds the students were able to order their own meals and pay by card. They enjoyed sitting in class and chatting about the world around us. It was an enjoyable trip for everyone.

Year 10 Reward Trip to Thorpe Park

Yesterday the Year 10's went on a reward trip to Thorpe Park; they used their money from the points system and also used the profit of the work they have completed in Enterprise. The students have worked really hard this year in running events including a daily tuck shop. They had a great day out and they behaved brilliantly.



Stevenage FC Family Open Day

This is a reminder that On Sunday 10th July at The Lamex Stadium from 10am to 1pm Stevenage FC are having an open day. The event is free and it will have a kid's zone, a players' training session and a meet and signing session with the players. If you choose to attend, please can you take some pictures so we can share them and continue to build a strong working relationship.



Work completed in the sensory room

We have been really pleased that we now have full use of the sensory room, which had to be closed a few months ago due to the Covid Pandemic. We were lucky to receive a substantial donation from an anonymous donor to do it up and kit it out.

The picture shows a sensory piece of art completed by Becci in Year 9.



Prizes and Awards Day - Thursday 21st July

Thank you for your support and cooperation with regards to our awards day on Thursday 21st July. As you know, due to the capacity of our hall, the plan is for our Years 7 & 8 to attend between 9am and 11am and Years 9, 10 & 11 to attend between 11:45am and 1:15pm. We have so many awards to give out (over £4000 worth) sponsored by the construction companies ASHE and MACE. We are very much looking forward to sharing this occasion with you.

Please note that parental parking for the day will be at the Football Academy car park, to avoid congestion with Taxis.

There will be staff to meet and greet you and guide you to the hall.

Please note that we are keeping a very close eye on the weather forecast. If the heat wave extends to the Thursday then we will have to postpone the event until the Autumn Term. With hundreds of people in the hall and no air conditioning it would be unbearable and possibly even unsafe. We want the event to be remembered for the celebration of achievement, not how many people fainted through heat exhaustion. The decision about how we will proceed will be made next Friday as all transport will have to be notified. If we are in the unfortunate position of having to postpone we will revert back to a normal school day with an earlier finish.

School Uniform Change (Please do not buy new uniform until it needs to be replaced)

After receiving a couple of emails about the change in our school uniform, I thought that it would be appropriate to write to all parents to explain the rationale for the change and why we felt it was inappropriate to put this information out for consultation. I hope you received this letter sent out yesterday.

Essentially the change in uniform will make it 25% cheaper than if we continue as we are, is smarter, more mature and reflects our move away from a primary school ethos towards a type of school that better reflects the age and aspirations of our young people.

If we put this to a vote and our more affluent parents chose to still keep the purple shirts, this would be at the detriment to our poorest families.

I recognise my responsibility in poverty proofing The Valley School and ensuring no students are disadvantaged through financial hardship. I can assure you that if there was an agenda to introduce a more expensive uniform, then that would absolutely have been completed through consultation with parents.

The hoodie is also a poor garment for school wear. It is not only a casual item, encouraging students to wear other casual clothing to go with it, but it is not waterproof, the hood is uncomfortable under a coat, and when the hood is worn up it is hard to identify the student, particularly from a distance.

With regards to the colour white, I am sure that we all appreciate that shirts do not get any more dirty and unhygienic depending on colour. In fact, lighter shirts are more hygienic as the lack of cleanliness is more obvious, encouraging them to be washed more often.

The uniform will be:

- A white shirt or blouse (this can be a polo shirt if students prefer, but it must have a collar).
- Black trousers or skirt
- Grey jumper or cardigan
- Black footwear.

I hope this all makes sense and clears up any issues and concerns.

Hirings

If you are a member of a club or society that are looking for a space to perform, practice or rehearse then please contact our Business Manager Paula Frost by calling (01438) 747274.

We have a hall and a gym which we would like to hire out at £30 per hour each. The money accrued would be directed back in to the school to improve the learning experiences of our young people.

Wishing you a relaxing, safe and enjoyable weekend.

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