

The Valley Newsletter

24 November 2023

We have had a very tough week with illness hitting a large number of staff and students. On three days we have had seven or eight staff out, which is a huge percentage when factoring in the size of the school. I would like to say a massive thank you to everyone who has worked so very hard to 'keep the school going' in very challenging circumstances. For those who are unwell, we hope you get better soon.



Stevenage Christmas Tree Trail

Year 7 students have been busy creating reindeer with handprints in their Art lessons to decorate a tree. This will form part of the Stevenage Christmas Tree Trail and can be seen in one of the shops in the Westgate Centre in central Stevenage. Each tree represents a song, ours is one we are learning in lessons to sing in the Performing Arts Showcase on 7 December. Can you guess what it is? Thank you to The Stevenage Creative Network for offering us this opportunity.



Sky Class Make Jungle Scenes

This week Sky class has been very busy making 3D jungle scenes. We have practised our fine motor skills, cutting and colouring. We learnt how to curl paper strips with a ruler and make tube tree trunks using brown paper.



Students have thought carefully about placement of their animals in the jungle, some have worked out how to make their monkeys swing from the trees.

EHCP Annual Reviews

EHCP Annual Review Meetings

In response to feedback we have made changes to the annual review process. Year groups will be reviewed on the following dates:

Y11	5 th December 2023
Y10	28 th February 2024
Y7 & Y8	13 th March 2024
Y9	9 th May 2024

EDUCATIONAL HEALTH & CARE PLAN

The reviews will be held remotely on SchoolCloud, which is the same platform we use for parent consultations. As usual, you will receive a paper copy of an amended plan 14 days before the review date, in order for you to prepare for the meeting.

If you have any questions, please contact senco@thevalley.herts.sch.uk

Year 8 Cinema Trip



Gold and Red class took a trip to the cinema on Tuesday to see Haunted Mansion. The students did so well and the trip was enjoyed by all. They represented our school amazingly and were the best behaved students out of the whole cinema! Well done Year 8!

Friends of Valley School

Friends of Valley School Fundraising

As previously advised we had a FoVS fundraising meeting last Wednesday, 8 Nov, and were thrilled to welcome some New Year 7 parents.

We are focusing our fundraising activities in the wider community rather than within the school community however, we would like to ask parents to investigate if their companies offer match funding opportunities.

Match funding is an arrangement between a company and their employee. Not all companies offer matched funding but those that do will pledge a sum of money relating to the amount their employee has raised for or donated to the charity of their choice. We would be grateful if parents / carers could reach out within their places of work to ask if fund matching is available to them as this could be a great way to increase our fundraising.

How match funding works

A parent who works for a company that offers match funding, volunteers to work on the refreshment stall at the PTA summer fair. The profit made by the stall is £100. The parent's employer will then match this amount with a further £100.



Some organisations will match fund on a pound for pound basis, while others will stipulate what they are prepared to give. It is likely that an upper limit will be applied along with certain criteria such as the recipient organisation being a registered charity.

Some companies will also pledge time and resources instead of money, so enabling their employees to support a cause during their working week, or offering a tangible service such as the opportunity to print posters, programmes, newsletters and so on.

Alternatively, a parent may opt to make a cash donation to the PTA, which again could be matched by their organisation.

S'mores and More Student's Enterprise Event

From Tuesday 21st November students will have the opportunity to use their reward money to buy s'mores and paracord bracelets whilst out in the woods at break time. They should also look out for exciting news about the assault course challenge and survival goodies that are coming up soon.



Festive Showcase

Jingle All The Way

You are warmly invited to attend our Festive Showcase. This will be held from 5.30pm on Thursday 7 December in the school theatre. The performance will consist of some KS3 classes singing, songs from our school bands, some instrumental music, a special performance from the Performing Arts Club and a short pantomime from our Year 11 Performing Arts students.

All KS3 students have been learning the songs in their lessons and it would be fantastic to have as many as possible participating. KS4 Performing Arts students and Performing Arts Club have been rehearsing hard this half term and are all performing. If your child has instrumental sessions with Matthew and Jim and is in a school band, they have been rehearsing hard and have some fantastic songs to share. Participating students will need to be back in school by 5.15pm. They should wear something festive; reindeer antlers and Father Christmas hats are particularly encouraged! Please give consent for your child to participate via Arbor. There is no charge for tickets, but do indicate how many you require.



Staff Governor Opening

Are You Interested In Being A Staff Governor?

We are looking for staff who are interested in becoming a Staff Governor. If you would like to contribute to the strategic leadership of the school, have an interest in why decisions are made, and would like to play a part in shaping the future of The Valley School, then please contact Liz Ellis (Chair of Governors) l.ellis@thevalley.herts.sch.uk.

There are five Full Governing Body meetings a year and five Sub-Committee meetings. The Full Governing Body meet face-to-face and the Sub-Committees meet virtually.

If you have ambitions of progressing into school leadership, or just want to be more actively involved in the school's systems and processes, this may well be an exciting opportunity for you to consider. We are looking forward to hearing from you.

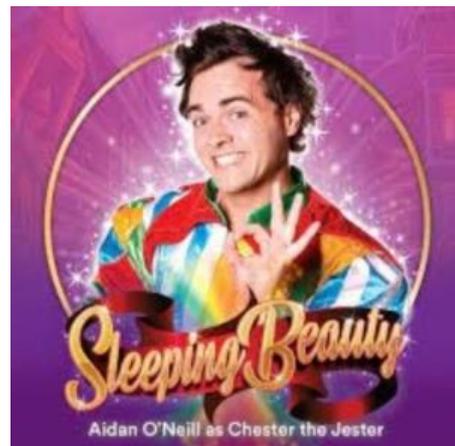


Sleeping Beauty Pantomime

Sleeping Beauty School Trip

On Wednesday 6th December we will be running a trip to The Gordon Craig Theatre, Stevenage to see their production of Sleeping Beauty. Unfortunately finish times of the show will be after taxi pick-up time (4:00pm) so students will need to be collected from the Leisure car park or school by parents/carers if they are going to attend.

We are asking for a voluntary contribution of £10.00 per student. If your child is in receipt of Free School Meals the amount will be £5:00. Please contact the office if you require any support in funding this trip. Payments can be made through Arbor. The letter for this went out on the 23rd September. The final date for confirmation has passed.



Parent Governor Opportunity

2023/24 Parent Governor

An exciting opportunity has arisen to join the Governing Body of The Valley School as one of our Parent Governors. In its strategic role, the Governing Body enjoys a close working relationship with the Senior Leadership Team in this warm and welcoming learning environment, and is involved in all aspects of school life.

If you are looking for a rewarding experience and are interested in finding out more about our friendly team and how you can support our school community, we would love to hear from you.

Please contact:

Liz Ellis

Chair of Governors

l.ellis@thevalley.herts.sch.uk

or:

iona.varol@thevalley.herts.sch.uk



HAPpy camps are back this winter!

Hertfordshire County Council is once again launching its free winter activity camps for children and young people in Hertfordshire.

Fully funded holiday activity camps return for the festive break, providing eligible children and young people with the chance to meet friends, learn new skills and enjoy nutritious food.

The HAPpy programme, funded by Hertfordshire County Council and the Department of Education (DfE) via the government's Holiday Activity and Food programme, and coordinated by Herts Sport and Activity Partnership and the Hertfordshire Community Foundation, is running approximately 100 activity camps with nearly 9,000 free places from 21 December – 3 January 2024.

At the sessions, eligible children and young people can enjoy free food, free sports and free craft activities. They will also receive advice on nutrition and cooking skills to enhance their health and wellbeing.

Ask your school office if you haven't already received your code and your child is eligible.

Free places can be booked from midday on Wednesday 22 November via the Herts Sport and Physical Activity Partnership's website: <https://bit.ly/3MHkFH8>



After School Clubs Clubs

The list of students expected to attend clubs on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday will be sent as a separate email to this newsletter. If your child is on this list then it means that we have received your permission and that arrangements regarding transport home for your child have been agreed with you. If this is not the case you need to contact admin@thevalley.herts.sch.uk so we can address any anomalies well before the evening. Students will not be able to join a club after this list has been published, until the following week, as organising transport and supervision is too complex to do well with very short notice.

Thank you for your support with this.

