
Date: Friday 30th January 2026

The Valley Newsletter

It has been another wonderfully busy and productive week at The Valley School, with lots of learning taking place across all year groups. Our students continue to impress us with their enthusiasm, resilience, and curiosity.

While we are still waiting for the heating repairs to be fully resolved, the situation has taken an unexpected twist—rather than shivering, our Year 11 students have found themselves battling temperatures of up to 28 degrees in their area! They've handled it with good humour, and we appreciate everyone's patience as we work with contractors to bring things back to normal.

A definite highlight of the week was the Year 10 trip to Harry Potter World. The day was not only educational but filled with genuine moments of awe and wonder as students explored the magic behind the scenes. Their behaviour throughout the visit was impeccable—as we have come to expect—and they were excellent ambassadors for our school.

Mobile Phones at The Valley School – Shaping Our Policy Together

At The Valley School, every aspect of our work is guided by a simple but powerful principle: we prepare our young people for life beyond the classroom. This has always included helping students learn to use technology responsibly, confidently and safely.

For many years, our mobile phone policy has reflected this belief. Rather than banning mobile phones outright, we have focused on *educating* students to use them appropriately, recognising that phones are firmly embedded in modern life. We know that mobile devices are here to stay—they support communication, independence, learning, and daily living skills. For this reason, our approach has been rooted in teaching young people how to make positive and informed decisions, instead of allowing the negative possibilities to dictate our policies.

Recently, however, there has been increasing pressure from the Government, as widely reported in national media, to restrict



or ban the use of mobile phones in schools. These proposals are part of a broader effort to address concerns about distraction, social media use, and wellbeing. While these perspectives are important, we also know that every school community is unique, and what works in one environment may not be right for another.

At The Valley School, our responsibility is to do what is right for *our* young people. This means taking the time to reflect, consider the evidence, listen to our community, and ensure that any decisions we make remain firmly aligned with our values and our students' needs.

We want to hear from you

Over the coming week, we will be sending out a questionnaire to gather your views on our mobile phone policy. We recognise that feelings on this topic may be varied and at times strongly held. While it may not be possible to create a policy that reflects every individual viewpoint, we are committed to listening carefully and shaping a policy that reflects the thoughts and feelings of the *critical mass* of our community.

Your input will play an important role in helping us reach a balanced, thoughtful, and practical approach—one that supports learning, wellbeing, and safety, while continuing to prepare our young people for life after they leave The Valley School.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to share your perspective. As always, your partnership and support are greatly valued.



A Truly Magical Day at Harry Potter World

Year 10 stepped into the wizarding world on Monday with a visit to Harry Potter World, continuing their learning from Performing Arts and English. From the moment they arrived, it was clear this was no ordinary school trip — surprises were lurking around every corner (sadly no moving staircases... this time).

The students represented the school brilliantly, behaving impeccably and managing themselves fantastically in an environment full of loud noises, spellbinding attractions, and plenty of



Muggles from the general public. No spells were required — just excellent teamwork, resilience, and maturity.

A huge *extended* thank you (the kind that would definitely earn house points) goes to the staff who accompanied the students and ensured the day ran smoothly. Thanks to their support, everyone enjoyed a relaxed, memorable, and truly magical experience.



Music Opportunities

On Saturday 7 February there will be a 'Come and Try' session at the Hertfordshire Music Centre in Nobel School in Stevenage. Students will be able to play a variety of different instruments with a view to seeing which they might like to learn. Please do let me know if you are able to go, I would love to hear all about it.



Students Shine at the Herts Youth Inclusive Football Tournament

Several of our students took part in the Herts Youth Inclusive Football Tournament on Sunday and represented their teams with great enthusiasm and sportsmanship.

Aiden played for Welwyn Pegasus, who performed brilliantly and secured first place on the day.

We were also delighted to see more of our students representing Bedwell Rangers, who achieved an impressive second place finish.

Well done to all the students involved.



Immy Soars to Success in Trampolining Qualifier

We are delighted to share some exciting news about Immy and her exceptional progress in trampolining. Over the weekend, she travelled to Penarth, Wales, to compete in the *Central Zone Schools Finals Qualifier*, an event that brings together talented young trampolinists from across the region.

Immy performed with incredible composure, strength, and technical skill throughout the competition. Her routines were executed beautifully, earning her an impressive **second place**. This fantastic result means she has now qualified for the **Finals**, a remarkable achievement and a clear reflection of her dedication and hard work.

We are immensely proud of Immy and everything she has accomplished so far. We can't wait to see her compete in the Finals — whatever the outcome, she has already made The Valley School proud.

Well done, Immy — keep bouncing to new heights!



Year 9 Craft Stunning Secret Boxes in DT

Our Year 9 students have been hard at work in Design & Technology, and their latest project has been a true showcase of creativity, precision, and problem-solving. They have been designing and constructing their very own *secret boxes*—and the results are fantastic!

Each student has explored inventive ways to incorporate hidden features, with some boxes including false floors to create cleverly concealed compartments. Many have also added mini treasure-chest style padlocks, making their boxes not only imaginative but secure and functional too.

A special mention goes to Jack and Sam, who are the first to complete their projects. Their craftsmanship, attention to detail, and determination throughout have been excellent. Both boys are rightly proud of their finished pieces—and so am I!

Well done, boys, and well done to the whole group for such impressive work!



NSPCC Number Day – Friday 6th February

On Friday 6th February, our school will be joining thousands of others across the UK to celebrate **NSPCC Number Day**.

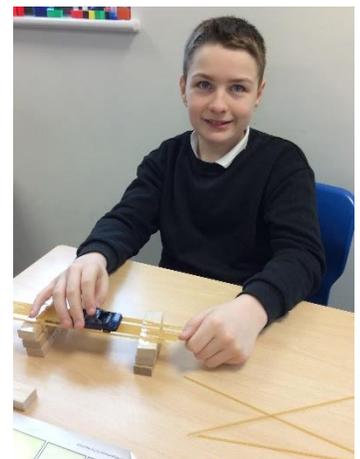
Throughout the day, students will enjoy a range of fun maths activities and numerical games, including taking part in a nationwide **Times Tables Rockstars competition**.

We'll also be **Dressing Up for Digits!** Students are invited to wear clothing featuring numbers — anything from sports tops to creative homemade outfits.



Year 7 Engineering

Year 7 students put their engineering skills to the test this week as they investigated a range of materials to build model bridges. Each design was assessed for strength, sparking thoughtful discussions about which materials are most suitable for real-world bridge construction.





Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing

Supporting the mental health and emotional wellbeing of our students is a key priority at our school.

For children and young people with **special educational needs**, mental health can be influenced by a range of additional challenges, including anxiety around routines, social situations, sensory sensitivities, academic pressures, and the social and emotional changes that come with adolescence. We recognise that every student experiences and expresses emotions in different ways, and that mental health is just as important as physical health.



This week's assembly focused on **healthy relationships**, supporting students to develop an understanding of what positive and respectful relationships look like. The assembly explored themes such as boundaries, kindness, trust, and recognising when a relationship feels safe and supportive. These discussions play an important role in helping students build confidence, resilience, and positive social connections.

We would like to thank parents and carers for the ongoing support you provide at home. Open conversations, reassurance, and consistency can have a significant impact on emotional wellbeing. If you have any concerns about your child's mental health or would like further support, please contact the school's Family engagement lead – Mrs Roberts or our pastoral team.

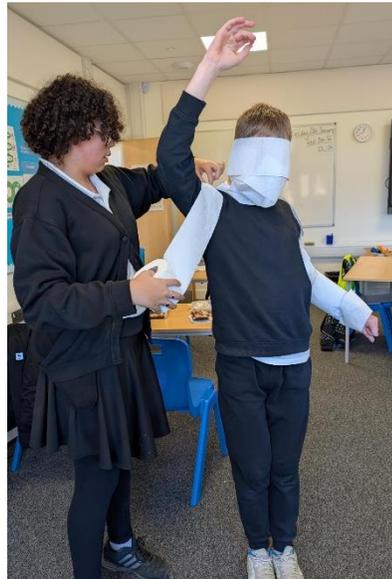
Together, we continue to work towards a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where every student feels valued and able to thrive.

Year 8 Step Back in Time with Ancient Egypt!

This term, Year 8 have been diving into the fascinating world of **ancient Egypt**, exploring everything from mighty pharaohs to the mysteries of the afterlife.

This week's focus has been one of the most memorable yet: **mummification!** Students have been learning how and why the ancient Egyptians preserved bodies, discovering the beliefs and rituals that made this process so important in their culture.

To bring history to life, the students took part in a hands-on activity where they **transformed one another into mummies**—and even the staff joined in the fun! With plenty of laughter, creativity, and lots of bandages, our corridors briefly resembled the chambers of an ancient Egyptian tomb. It's been a brilliant opportunity for Year 8 to deepen their understanding through practical learning, teamwork, and imagination. We can't wait to see where our ancient Egypt journey takes us next!



After-School Clubs

After-school activities began again on Tuesday 13th January. The activities start at 3.15pm and go on until 4.15pm. Parents will need to collect students at 4.15pm from reception.

The clubs on offer are as follows:

Tuesday

KS4 Trampolining Club (max. 14)

Performing Arts Club (max. 30)

Thursday

Art and Craft Club (max. 14)

The list of students expected to attend clubs on Tuesdays and Thursdays 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.