

Valence Nev

The End of another term

Dear Parents and Carers

It doesn't really seem possible that we have virtually reached the half-way point in this school year. Time is simply flying by and with next term being only five full weeks Easter will be upon us very quickly.

School closes on Friday 9 February for the holiday week and reopens on Monday 19 February.



Last week I wrote about the visit by Roger Gough, Leader of Kent County Council. I wrote to him following his visit and said amongst other things:

Valence School enabling independence

'I hope that you found the visit informative and helpful – clearly we are proud of what we do and believe our pathway approach (including our residential provision) to be both helpful in avoiding out-county placements but also ensuring pupils have rich curricular experiences and the best possible educational outcomes. We want to continue to support Kent in any way we can with specialist placements going forward. Times are tough financially both for the Council and the school – I know we are all trying to implement changes that will improve the situation but given the needs of Valence pupils doing more with less is going to be very challenging for us. Fortunately, we have very experienced and qualified governors and despite my

retirement I am confident they will govern and steer the school in a successful way going forward.'

In his personal reply to me he said:

'I would like to thank you for making me so welcome when visiting Valence School last week. You were kind enough to write to me the day after my visit; in truth, I was the one who should have been writing a letter of thanks. You were very generous with your time, and I was delighted to have such a comprehensive tour of the school and to meet many staff and students. It was particularly valuable to see the development of the various pathways for students across different age groups. I also appreciated the chance to discuss – in some depth - wider issues with which I am very familiar from my time in the education portfolio.'

I have always sought, in the time that I have been at Valence, to build relationships with officers of the Kent LA but more importantly with Members of the County Council. In the challenging times we all face it is even more important that such relationships are promoted and nurtured.

I am delighted to promote the Friends of Valence Musical Bingo event which will take place on Saturday 23 March between 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. Details are on page 6 of the newsletter.

We are in Children's Mental Health Week and it is very encouraging to read the article on pages 2 and 3 of the newsletter. Good mental health is important for us all and it is very encouraging to see how our children and young people engage with work around promoting good mental health. This aspect of our Student Council's work is really positive and I would like to congratulate and thank the students involved.

With best wishes for the coming week.

Roland Gooding

Westerham, Kent TN16 1QN t 01959 562156 f 01959 565046 e valence@valence.kent.sch.uk www.valenceschool.com







Kent



Children's Mental Health Week

This week is Children's mental health week. In 2022, 18.0% of children aged 7 to 16 years and 22.0% of young people aged 17 to 24 years had a probable mental disorder. New data released shows more than half (55%) of children and young people in the UK say they face barriers in seeking mental health support.



Zones of regulation – At Valence we use zones of regulation

as a whole school approach to identifying and understanding emotions. This helps make the complex skill of regulation more concrete for learners and those who support them. The way in which zones is used varies across key stages and pathways. From daily 'check ins', class room displays and behaviour support, zones is a key part of our wellbeing ethos. For further information about how we use zones, please speak to Steve Jones or a member of the speech and language team.



The student council – Last term members of our student council met with Sarah Haigh from Kent children's services. She came to Valence to ask questions about accessibility and mental health services. In particular she was interested in how having a disability created barriers in accessing valuable services. The students spoke honestly and passionately about their experiences and gave creative ideas about how KCC and other services could be more inclusive. Sarah was so impressed she has arranged another visit next term and has some exciting projects for the student council to get involved in.

Independence Lessons

Simmonds students have been following the theme of mental health week in their independence lessons. As part of their health and wellbeing topic they have discussed mental health. Students looked at a range of strategies to help their mental health and used these to create a mental health 'toolbox'. This gave them a range of strategies to use in each of the zones either at school, in the REP area or at home.





The students showed a particular interest in meditation and mindfulness techniques, so we decided to practice a few of these at the end of our lessons. They experienced methods such as guided imagery, grounding techniques and breathing exercises that could help them manage challenging emotions and maintain focus throughout the day.

Over the next few terms, we are hoping to collaborate with local therapist, Zoe Channon to explore new ways of using mindfulness and meditation to benefit all of our students at Valence.

Steve Jones – Independence and wellbeing.



Word Book Day 2024

It's that exciting time of year again, World Book Day 2024! Book tokens will be handed out Friday 9th



February so please check bags as they can be spent from half-term onwards. It lands on Thursday 7th March and we have a range of thrilling activities to celebrate the day. Here are some of the ways we will be celebrating at Valence-



Costumes...

Dress up as a book character of your choice, there is no theme, but creativity is encouraged! There will be certificates for the best dressed students and staff.



Book cover display...

Tutor groups will be set the challenge of turning a part of their classroom (door, wall, window) into a book cover of their choice. This will be a school wide competition taking place from 19th February. Start thinking and sharing ideas with your class and Tutor!



<u>'Baby picture pair-up' and 'don't judge a book'</u>

At the start of each lesson your teacher will read an extract from their favourite book (childhood or currently), you will then have to guess which book it's from out of an option of three book covers! At lunch time the teachers will share their baby photo and you have to match their photo with their associated book cover.

Finally, not forgetting, certificates, book tokens and lots more...

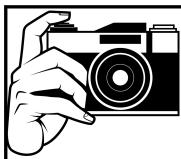


Photo Competition

Our school is in a beautiful estate with stunning views and wildlife. I am putting together an album of photos in the Valence grounds through the seasons.



Remember any student sending me a photos will get 5 merits.

Well Done to Lisa Hylands for getting a photo of our resident Squirrel.

Please email your photos to dbeaney@valence.kent.sch.uk

Debbie Beaney



Next parent coffee morning presentation

Friday February 23rd 10.30-11.00 Communication / AAC

This is a chance to find out how we work with young people with additional communication needs, including Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) and a range of strategies and tools to help those with additional communication needs at Valence.

Whilst you don't need to book and can just turn up we do of course need an indication of numbers for coffee and refreshments and any handouts that might need to be available.

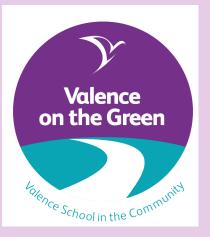
If you could therefore let our receptionist Karen know that you are intending to attend a session

Friday sessions start at 9.30 arrival for coffee, with any planned information session to start at 10.30. For the Friday mornings we will also ensure parents can stay on site if they are then collecting their children after lunch.

We look forward to welcoming you back into school and provide that valuable opportunity for parents to meet together and share ideas and experiences.

<u>Welcome</u>

Welcome to the school community shop in Westerham. Some of you have visited us already and have seen what a lovely space it is. It is the perfect mix of donated items, individual hand-crafted items from local makers and the cafe area. We have the



most delicious home-made cakes from Bakes by Briley a small local business.

We always welcome donations and these can be taken into school or delivered directly to us in the shop.



We hope you can pay us a visit. We look forward to seeing you.

Join Friends of Valence for a singalong afternoon of bingo... hear the tune, mark your card! Cash prizes to be won, raffle and refreshments available.

Friends of Valence presents

23RD MARCH 2024

2PM-5PM

Location: Valence School Hall

Adult entry £5, child entry free. £1 per bingo card. To purchase tickets and arrange payment please email friends@valence.kent.sch.uk. Limited spaces so book early to avoid disappointment! (Advance booking only)

Senior Staff On-call Rota from 9th February 2024

Contact details:	
Roland Gooding	07896 905605
Lisa Kavanagh	07912 124724
Matt Strange	07894 483673
Jo Chivers	07896 905095

Day	Date	Time	On-call	Overnight
Friday	09/02/24	09:00 To midday	Jo Chivers	Closed for Half Term
		Midday to 4pm	Lisa Kavanagh	
Monday	19/02/24	07:30 To midday	Matt Strange	Lisa Kavanagh
		Midday to 4pm	Lisa Kavanagh	
Tuesday	20/02/24	09:00 To midday	Lisa Kavanagh	Roland Gooding
		Midday to 4pm	Roland Gooding	
Wednesday	21/02/24	09:00 To midday	Roland Gooding	Matt Strange
		Midday to 4pm	Matt Strange	
Thursday	22/02/24	09:00 To midday	Matt Strange	Jo Chivers
		Midday to 4pm	Jo Chivers	
Friday	23/02/24	09:00 To midday	Jo Chivers	Closed Weekend
		Midday to 4pm	Lisa Kavanagh	

Watch out for the daffodils at school,

they are just coming through

