

# Valence News



Dear Parents and Carers,

## A New Chapter Begins for the Historic Rockery in the Primary Playground.

Exciting things are blooming in the primary playground at Valence, as a new community project takes root to restore and rejuvenate the historic rockery—originally created within the 18th-century landscaping work inspired by the famed Capability Brown.

The original house at Valence boasts a rich history dating back to the 1700s, with various landscaping features believed to reflect the naturalistic style that Brown championed across England. In recent years, significant progress has been made to bring parts of the gardens back to life—including the reinstatement of the picturesque waterfall, a feature that had long been dormant.

This new project sees the next stage in that vision: returning the rockery to its former glory. What makes this endeavour particularly special is the partnership between local organisations.

Today, students from Radnor House School visited the site as part of their Make a Difference Day, joining forces with Westerham Heights Garden Centre to begin the revitalisation. Under the guidance of Simon Scott, owner of the garden centre and passionate horticulturist, 15 enthusiastic students spent the day clearing, planting bulbs and succulents, and helping to shape the early design of the rockery’s rebirth.

Simon, who has been generously donating his time and expertise, took charge of the planting session—offering advice on plant selection, placement, and long-term care. His ongoing involvement will be invaluable as the rockery continues to take shape over the coming seasons.

A special thank you to both Simon and Radnor House School for helping kick off this exciting project. Their collaboration is laying the foundation for what promises to be a beautiful transformation.

Our own students have also played a vital creative role. Hedgehog Class, whose classroom overlooks the rockery, have been learning about the plants to be used and choosing where different plants should go. The students are already looking forward to seeing the results of everyone’s efforts in full bloom come spring.

This restoration project is a beautiful blend of history, education, and community spirit—and marks the beginning of a multi-year journey to bring the historic rockery back to life, in line with the original vision of the landscape’s first designers.



**Matthew Strange, B.Ed (Hons) NPQH | Principal**

**Valence School, Westerham Road, Westerham, Kent. TN16 1QN**

**Phone: 01959 562156 | Mob: 07894 483673**

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



Leading Parent Partnership Award

## Simmonds Independence

It's been a busy and exciting start to the school year for our Simmonds Independence students. They began the term by exploring different ways they might live independently in the future and how home adaptations can support them both now and later in life. Students also discussed key household responsibilities such as managing bills, keeping their home clean, and staying safe.

To bring their learning to life, students took part in a series of practical roleplays to develop their communication skills in real-life scenarios. These included making a doctor's appointment over the phone, making a complaint in a restaurant, and giving instructions while cooking.



Midway through the term, students took a well-deserved break from their AQA learning to enjoy a wellbeing woodland walk. They completed a series of challenges including identifying natural items that showed signs of the changing seasons, and spotting "what didn't belong" ... with a few unusual objects hidden along the trail! While this was a chance for fun and relaxation, it also supported important life skills such as observation, communication, and teamwork.



In the second half of the term, students have been exploring how technology can support independence by using the class Alexa and discussing how environmental controls might help them in the future. They also got hands-on with household tasks, tackling some messy clean-up challenges in Cedars 4!

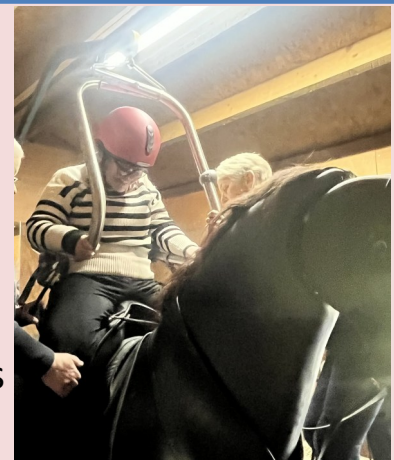
The term will finish with practical sessions on household hazards and first aid, led by members of our nursing team. Looking ahead to next term, students will be focusing on financial independence, with plans for a banking and money workshop and a trip to Bluewater to practice real-world money handling and spending.



## I AM FAMOUS

Thursday was the official opening of the new hoist at Emma's riding club Arrow Riding Centre, a riding school specially devoted to students with special needs and disabilities. The hoist has been installed so that riders with physical disabilities are able to mount the mechanical horse Jeremy and ride him.

The opening was filmed by KMTV and the ribbon was cut by the CEO of RDA (Riding for the Disabled Association). Emma demonstrated how the hoist worked and what a lesson on Jeremy looks like. When asked she said 'I'm famous!' KMTV came to film it)





*Join us for the*

*Valence*  
CHRISTMAS

FAYRE

DECEMBER | **7th** | 12PM-4PM

£30 PER STALL  
ONE TRESTLE TABLE PER STALL  
NO POWER POINTS AVAILABLE

PLEASE EMAIL  
FRIENDS@VALENCE.KENT.SCH.UK

VALENCE SCHOOL, WESTERHAM, TN16 1QN



**FRIENDS OF VALENCE  
FIREWORKS DISPLAY FOR STUDENTS  
STAFF AND FAMILIES**

**SAVE  
THE  
DATE**

**17:30 - 19:30 THURSDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2025**

## Senior Staff On-call Rota from 10th October 2025

**Matt Strange**                      **07894 483673**  
**Lisa Kavanagh**                    **07912 124724**  
**Jo Chivers**                            **07896 905095**

Date	Day	Time	DSL	DSL
10/10/25	Friday	09:00 To midday	Lisa Kavanagh	Closed
		Midday to 4pm	Jo Chivers	
13/10/25	Monday	07:30 To midday	Jo Chivers	Lisa Kavanagh
		Midday to 4pm	Lisa Kavanagh	
14/10/25	Tuesday	09:00 To midday	Lisa Kavanagh	Jo Chivers
		Midday to 4pm	Jo Chivers	
15/10/25	Wednesday	09:00 To midday	Jo Chivers	Matt Strange
		Midday to 4pm	Matt Strange	
16/10/25	Thursday	09:00 To midday	Matt Strange	Lisa Kavanagh
		Midday to 4pm	Lisa Kavanagh	
17/10/25	Friday	09:00 To midday	Lisa Kavanagh	Closed for Half Term
		Midday to 4pm	Matt Strange	

**IMPORTANT  
REMMINDER**

**Please email the nurses  
[nurses@valence.kent.sch.uk](mailto:nurses@valence.kent.sch.uk) to notify us of any  
 medication changes (additions, removals, dose  
 changes) not individual nurses to ensure these are  
 actioned in a timely manner.**

*Amanda Harris*

**Deputy Lead Nurse**