

Valence News



As we reach the end of Term 5, there is a real sense across the school that both staff and students are ready for a well-earned break after another busy and productive period.

As we reach the half term break, we extend our sincere thanks to Pauline Headley as she retires after 18 years of dedicated service leading the Finance & Business function at Valence School. During her time here, Pauline has overseen extensive developments across the site, including new residential bungalows, the refurbishment of Lawn House, the addition of the sports annex, the extension of the sports hall, the creation of Cedar’s classrooms and new Science & Technology facilities, improved reception access, new care suites, and the transformation of key spaces into high-quality learning and working environments. Her work has made a lasting impact on the school and will continue to benefit students and staff for many years to come.

Today also marks a proud moment for the Valence community as Tim Longthorne represents the school at the Duke of Edinburgh’s Gold Award and 70th Anniversary Celebration in the gardens of Buckingham Palace.



This year is particularly significant as Valence celebrates 10 years of delivering the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award, with over 100 students achieving Bronze and Silver awards during that time—an incredible milestone that reflects the determination, resilience and ambition of our young people. We are extremely proud of the staff team involved and all our students who have taken part in the programme. It look like Tim enjoyed the cakes too!



As we head into the May Bank Holiday weekend, it looks set to be a very warm one. We wish all our families a restful and enjoyable half term.

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

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Leading Parent Partnership Award

News from Independence and Wellbeing

Simmonds students have been working hard on their independence skills over the past few months. For some, this has involved consolidating their skills in preparation for transition from Valence, while others are just beginning their AQA units and starting to collect evidence for their portfolios.

Last term saw students returning to the Valence shop for work experience. This not only gave them a real-life insight into working in a shop but also helped to develop valuable skills such as communicating with unfamiliar people, money handling, organisation, enterprise, and teamwork. Students also got creative back at school by designing and making Easter-themed items to sell and display in the shop.



This term has seen the return of a firm student favourite in independence: food and cookery. Students have the opportunity to research, design, shop for, and cook their own meals, following the entire process from start to finish.



Unlike their regular cookery lessons, this unit focuses on developing the key life skills involved in the process rather than placing emphasis on the finished product itself. This is important in building resilience and allowing mistakes to happen in a safe and supportive environment. We view cookery mishaps as part of the learning process rather than a disaster, with students given opportunities to reflect and review at the end of the unit.



Students in H6 have also been developing life skills during study time through their enterprise project. Harvey and Mason have designed and launched their own staff bakery. From ordering packaging and designing a logo, to costing recipes, advertising, and selling products, this has been a valuable experience in enterprise and entrepreneurship. These were the only photos taken, as the bake sale sold out in less than ten minutes and raised over £60!



Over the summer term, the boys hope to organise another bake sale, while other students are preparing to launch their own products, including handmade candles and items to be sold through the Valence shop.

V A L E N C E S C H O O L

ART EXHIBITION



**PRIVATE VIEWING
FOR FAMILIES/ FRIENDS**

**15
JULY**

VALENCE SCHOOL
LARGE PLC

**FOR A PLACE ON THE
GUESTLIST**

**& TO FIND OUT MORE
INFO**

EMAIL:

SDARR@VALENCE.KENT.SCH.UK

FREE ENTRY

News from Simmonds 1

Simmonds 1 students have been really enjoying their learning. Here are a few of our recent highlights...

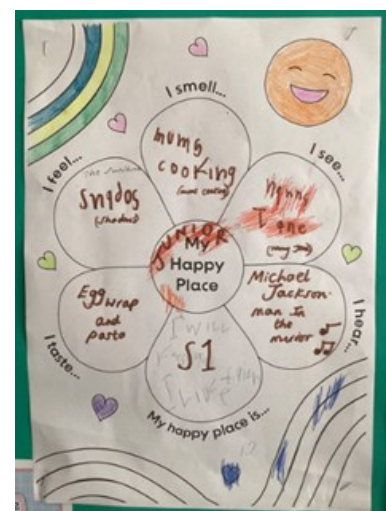
We really loved our art sessions at Sevenoaks School, where we were working with clay.



We had a fabulous time creating an Under the Sea scene all together, as well as getting to dance with jellyfish, on our Simmonds Arts Day.



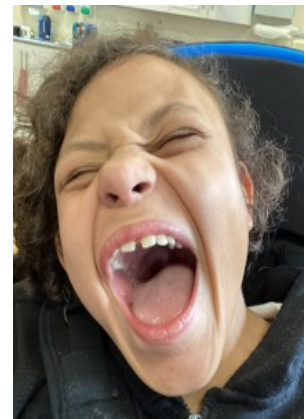
During Mental Health Awareness Week, we were thinking about what is good for our emotional wellbeing, and we tried meditation.



We've also had a lot of fun learning about dental health.

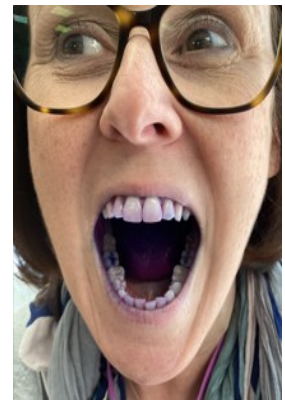
Open wide to brush all those teeth!

Make sure you remember to brush the top AND the bottom teeth!



Mary chewed a disclosing tablet to reveal all the plaque we can't see... it looked horrible!

But she then brushed ALL her teeth really well, for 2 minutes... her top and bottom teeth, the front surface and the inside surface... and then she had VERY clean teeth. Much nicer!



**Festival of
Motoring
28th June**



Reminder for Parents/Carers: Free School Meals – please apply!

Just a quick reminder to apply for **Free School Meals**, if you think you might be eligible. Even if your child already gets a meal at school, registering really helps. It means:

- your child can get **free, nutritious meals**
- the school receives **additional funding**, which helps pay for resources, staff, and enrichment activities that benefit all pupils

Applying is **quick and confidential**. If you're unsure whether you qualify, it's still worth checking – many families are eligible and don't know it. Thank you for your support – it really does make a difference to our school community . If you need help applying, please speak to Reception.

Senior Staff On-call Rota from 22nd May 2026

Matt Strange	07894 483673
Lisa Kavanagh	07912 124724
Jo Chivers	07896 905095
Kate Bayman	07827 961903

Date	Day	Time	DSL	DSL
22/05/26	Friday	09:00 To midday	Lisa Kavanagh	Closed for Half Term
		Midday to 4pm	Matt Strange	
01/06/26	Monday	09:00 To midday	Matt Strange	Lisa Kavanagh
		Midday to 4pm	Lisa Kavanagh	
02/06/26	Tuesday	09:00 To midday	Lisa Kavanagh	Matt Strange
		Midday to 4pm	Matt Strange	
03/06/26	Wednesday	09:00 To midday	Lisa Kavanagh	Kate Bayman
		Midday to 4pm	Kate Bayman	
04/06/26	Thursday	09:00 To midday	Kate Bayman	Lisa Kavanagh
		Midday to 4pm	Jo Chivers	
05/06/26	Friday	09:00 To midday	Jo Chivers	Closed
		Midday to 4pm	Lisa Kavanagh	