

# Valence News

## You'll never walk alone

Dear Parents and Carers

As I write this final piece for this school year I am filled with so many emotions — ones of joy at what has been achieved before lockdown but also ones of sadness that those people leaving us are not able to say goodbye in person. On Wednesday morning I spoke to the Year 14 leavers and they shared their thoughts about Valence. One student told me that coming to Valence had changed his life and I cannot think of any better recommendation for the School than that.

When I chose this title for this final newsletter I didn't know what I was going to write but I did know that it was the right title. Liverpool for so many decades was a divided city between Catholic Christians and protestant Christians brandished in the enmity between two football teams — Everton and Liverpool - the history of it is very sad indeed but also full of hope because in Liverpool you indeed will now never walk alone! The street that connects the Metropolitan Catholic Cathedral with the Anglican cathedral, the largest in the UK is called 'Hope Street.' And that is what I want to focus on: Hope, as the song says it must be in our hearts because with it we will never walk alone! During this last four months so many people have found it hard to have hope as they faced the consequences of Covid-19. Many people have understandably been frightened by the disease as it has taken so many lives and others now face uncertainty as jobs are being lost. One of the things that is most important to remember is how people have pulled together through the crisis —the thousands upon thousands of acts of kindness, support for neighbours and the vulnerable and a shared commitment to stand together. That has been so true at School as people have done their utmost to make both on-site and off-site provision for our students. The values that underpin the work of the School have shone through and I think we can be very proud about what has been done and what has been achieved since the

middle of March.

Valence is a strong community and made more so by its people — students, staff and governors as well as families and volunteers. I hope that those leaving us at the end of this year will take a bit of Valence with them. We say goodbye to Julius Croft, Jay Bonner, John Martyn, Matthew Skinmore, Myles Miller and Ryan Knot. As they move on to different colleges in September we congratulate them on all their achievements and wish them every success and thank each of them for the contributions that they have made to the School. I have promised those students who are leaving that we will, at the earliest safe opportunity invite them back to School so we can say a proper goodbye. That of course will be many months away but it is something to look forward to.

There are three staff leaving us, the lowest number throughout the 28 years I been at the School. Ingrid Hillier, a specialist teacher is leaving and we thank her for all the support she has provided to children and young people in mainstream schools. Lewys Steward, our Sports Coach who has successfully completed his teacher training during this year, is also leaving us. Lewys has made an outstanding contribution to P.E. and sport in the school as well as contributing to the wider work of the School. We will miss him but wish him well as he embarks upon a career in teaching. Finally, Jo Bleasdale, Assistant Principal is also leaving us and is moving to Gloucestershire where she will be taking up a Headship in September. Jo has made an enormous contribution to the life and work of the School and has made an outstanding contribution to the School's leadership. She has worked tirelessly for the children and young people and ensured we have developed a curriculum that is well matched to the students who have the most complex learning needs. Her work promoting our communication and work with parents and the achievement of the Leading Parent Partnership Award in March leaves us a lasting legacy on which we

can build. We wish her every success in her new school.

As we conclude this extraordinary year I would like to express my appreciation to all our staff and in particular for the way they have risen to the challenges created by the Covid-19 crisis. People who work at the School have really 'walked' together during this time, always with the needs and interests of the children and young people at the centre of everything they have done. May I especially thank Lisa Kavanagh and Matt Strange who have worked incredibly hard to ensure we have responded to the Covid-19 crisis and all other leaders in the School who have worked tirelessly week in and week out. Special thanks to Brian Davies and Paul Myers, Chair and Vice-chair of governors who have met with senior colleagues 2 or 3 times each week since the middle of March and to all governors for their outstanding commitment to the School and our students.

Of course, it is our students who are always the stars of the show and it is to them that I want to express both my admiration for the way they have coped and responded over the last few months but also to thank them for their continued enthusiasm and hard work. The contributions that have been published in our bulletins and newsletters are truly heart-warming.

Lastly, I would like to thank all of you. You have been so understanding during the Covid-19 crisis and have worked with us so well— thank you!

As we break for the summer let us have hope in our hearts and when we return in September let us recommit ourselves to the values of the School which have been so evident during the current crisis.

With my thanks and appreciation and every good wish.

*Roland Gooding*

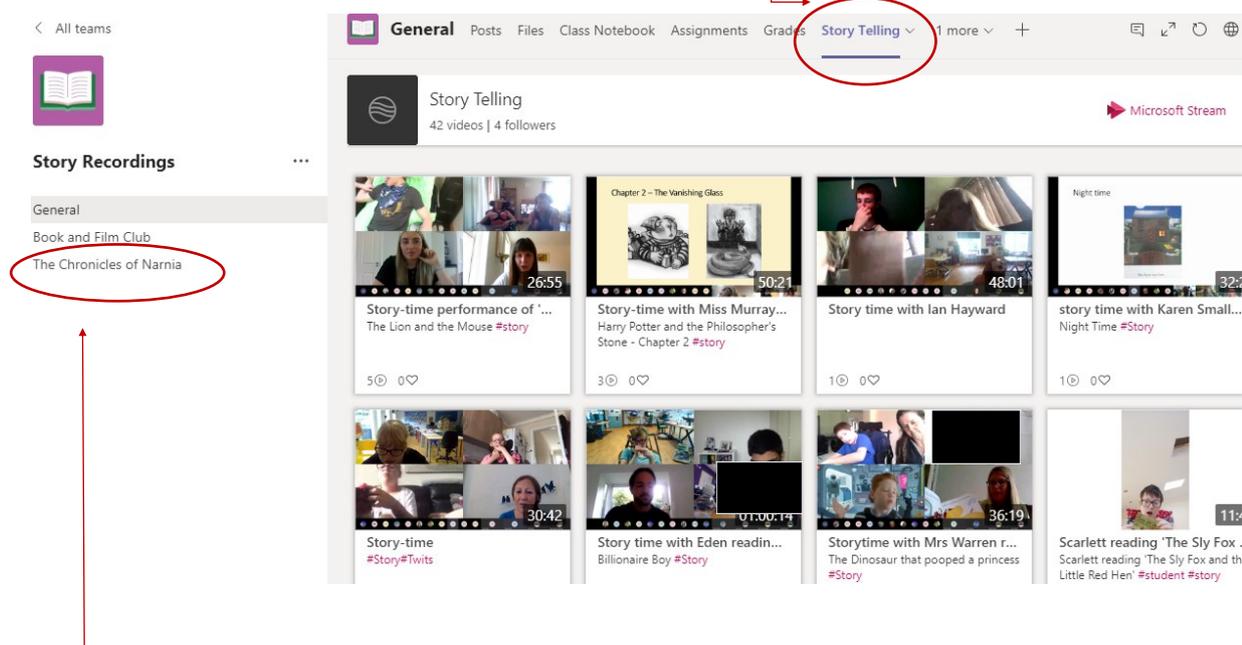
Principal Tel: 07896905605

# Listen to Stories at Home!

Thank you to everyone who has attended the virtual story-time sessions this term, it has been wonderful seeing you all. I hope that you have enjoyed the stories we have shared and will continue to read over the summer holiday.

All students are part of the 'Story Recordings' group on MS Teams, which means they can watch any of the story-time sessions we have recorded at home. There is also a selection of other stories (recorded by teachers) on there for you to listen to. Karen Wimble has kindly recorded herself reading all seven books in the Chronicles of Narnia, so that would be a wonderful place to start!

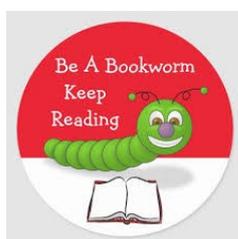
Click on the 'Story Telling' tab at the top of the page to find story-time recordings and more.



Click on the 'Chronicles of Narnia' page to be find recordings of all seven books.

If you need any assistance accessing this page in MS Teams please email Steve Eales: [seales@valence.kent.sch.uk](mailto:seales@valence.kent.sch.uk) for technical support.

Please do continue to email your book and film reviews to Miss Murray over the summer holidays.



## **September**

**Term commences for all current students on Monday 7 September unless we are still in discussion with you about your son/daughter due to their particular needs. New students will commence week beginning Monday 14 September but will be contacted about which day they will start. Full boarding provision is being made from 7 September.**

**There will be various assessments that will be taking place from the beginning of term but you will be communicated about these separately if they apply to your son/daughter.**

**Any queries during the holiday please call the School. You may have to leave a message but we will get back to you.**

### **Developing Pressure Areas**

**KCHFT colleagues have asked if we could circulate information to parents suggesting that they remain vigilant for any signs of developing pressure areas given that students and their equipment needs may have changed over recent months.**

**We have included the guide to the newsletter page on the website .**

**We advise parents to contact their GP or community Therapy team (details previously provided) during the holidays, if they have concerns.**