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...*Changing lives*

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to the start of a new and exciting year. As the new Head of Academy I wanted to say how pleased and honoured I am to take this post. During my time at The Vale I have watched the Academy grow and intend to continue to develop it even further. With this in mind, here are a few changes for this year:

Miss Grainger will be working, part time, alongside Mrs Rowse in Year 1.

I would ask that children bring an empty named water bottle to school. They will fill this when they go in to class each morning. Snacks for playtimes and lunchboxes are to contain healthy foods – no chocolate or sweets. There are some exciting changes coming to school dinners so please watch this space.

Please do not send footballs to school. Each year group will have their own football, which is the correct size and suitable for the year group.

As we all know, living in the UK we can experience several types of weather a day. With this in mind, please send your child with a waterproof coat as we will be trying to get outside as much as possible. And if by chance we have still have some hot sunny days to come, please apply sun cream before sending your child in the morning.

Last year our attendance was below our target of 96% all year. I am hoping that this year we can stay above this. As we follow the government guidance for attendance, the policy for unauthorised absences remains the same as last year: holidays will not be authorised during term time and a fine will be issued. If families are having regular long weekends etc then when they reach 10 sessions then a fine will be issued. If your child has a medical appointment then please bring the appointment letter to the office or send it in to the class teacher for us to photocopy.

The newsletter will now be going out via the School Gateway app on a Friday. I am aware that some people have not yet downloaded the app, instructions on how to do so are attached. I am hoping that by the end of this half term we will be a 'Green School' and be completely paperless and cashless as the Gateway app and Parent Pay app have the options to be able to respond to letters to give permissions, pay for school dinners etc. We will send more information out later. Have you also followed you child's new class on Twitter? All our Twitter pages are private, which means you have to request to have access. The Twitter handles are: Thevaleyear\_\_ and add the relevant year group.

Shining Star Assembly will be on a Friday afternoon at 2:55pm, this will hopefully mean that more parents can attend.

I will be holding a Parent Voice meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> September at 2:30pm for anyone that would like to come and have a chat about any ideas for the future of the Academy. I look forward to seeing you there.

At the end of last year I mentioned to some parents and grandparents that I would like to start a parents association and had a very positive response. As a result, we will be forming an 'Our Friends and Family



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Association' of The Vale (OFFA). This will be a group that will help organise extra activities for the Academy for example selection box bingo at Christmas, after school discos, refreshments at sports day etc. You would have to be able to commit to attending meetings at least once a half term and supporting at an event at least once a half term. The first meeting will be 11<sup>th</sup> September, if you would be interested in being part of OFFA then please come along.

If you cannot make the Parent Voice or OFFA meetings, then please drop me an email or ring school to arrange an appointment if you would like to see me with any questions or ideas you might have.

This year I will also be bringing in another layer to our reward system. This is called 'Evergreen'. At the end of each half term, every child that has been green on the traffic light for the half term will take part in a reward activity on the final Friday afternoon of the half term. Also each week we will be acknowledging children as they learn their timetables, when they know a particular times table in order e.g.  $1 \times 2 = 2$ ,  $2 \times 2 = 4$  they will receive a bronze award, when they know them out of order e.g.  $4 \times 2 = 8$ ,  $9 \times 2 = 18$  they will receive silver award and then when they know the division facts they will receive the gold award. We are also going to have 'Spelling Class of the Week' where we add the total correct spellings for the entire class, the class with the most will receive the award. And finally we have a 'Green Cup' where any member of staff in school can put forward a child in school that has stood out for a particular act of kindness.

As always, thank you for your continued support.

Miss Taylor  
Head of Academy