

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to you for the first time in my new role as Acting Headteacher. I am extremely proud to have been asked to fulfil this role at Test Valley School, a school I have known and loved for 7 years.

We have experienced significant challenges over the last few years but the school continues to go from strength to strength. I am grateful to my predecessors for their contributions to the school.

Last term was particularly challenging. Levels of staff and pupil absence were higher than at any time during the Pandemic. This resulted in partial school closures with pupils being asked to work at home from time to time. A significant number of lessons in school were supervised by cover teachers. Whilst this situation was seen in many schools across Hampshire and beyond, it was far from ideal as we tried to ensure the best possible education for our pupils. The leadership team is extremely grateful to all of our colleagues and to our pupils and their parents for their ongoing support during this time. Despite the challenges we faced, significant advances were made.

Looking to the future, this is an exciting time for Test Valley School. The governors are working hard to secure the long term future of the school. You will hear more about these plans over the next few weeks.

This is an extremely important term for the school and for our pupils. Year 11 pupils begin their GCSE exams in a few weeks and we have been very impressed with their attitude towards their studies so far. We ask pupils in other year groups to be considerate towards Year 11 by moving round the school quietly during exam times and we have amended our lesson timings slightly to help them to do so. As the weather is getting warmer we are opening up the school field for use by pupils at break and lunch time – there is nothing better than seeing the whole school on the field enjoying the sunshine on a warm Summer's day.

Tomorrow, we will welcome back all our pupils for the start of the Summer Term. It is important that they quickly fall back into the routine that provides the stability they need. In the final Parents' Bulletin before the Easter break we asked that you took the opportunity to ensure that your child was properly equipped with the resources they need in lessons. We also asked that you ensure that your child returns to school with the correct uniform. This includes the correct footwear, tie and blazer (for pupils in Yrs 7-10) or jumper (for pupils in Yr 11). Further, the only acceptable jewellery is a single earring in the lower lobe of each ear. One of our first tasks will be to check that your child's uniform meets the requirements tomorrow. If you are in any doubt, please refer to our website at <https://www.testvalley.hants.sch.uk/school-uniform>.

We thank you in advance for supporting us this term. I would ask that you get in touch with us as soon as possible if you have any concerns about your child's education. It is also nice to receive the many positive emails you send, please do continue to tell us when we are getting it right too.

With grateful thanks

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