# THAMES VALLEY SCHOOL

NEWSFLASH | 20TH NOVEMBER 2026

Liberty Academy Trust

Thames Valley School






## OUR VISION

Our vision is to create a world that works for autistic children and young people, by providing an exceptional educational offer, so that they achieve success now and are well-prepared for adulthood.

**COURAGE**
**DETERMINATION**
**TEAMWORK**







# A MESSAGE FROM OUR SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

## Mrs Buley



A huge well done to our Year 11s who have now finished their Autumn examination period! They have shown remarkable resilience throughout this time, sitting both mock and real exams over the last three weeks. Pupils have had the opportunity to again practice their access arrangements as well as teachers using these as an important tool for planning the next stages of learning. We look forward to sharing the results with Year 11 families in the coming weeks.

Christmas has come early to Thames Valley School as our office team have begun spreading a touch of joy and decorated our first Christmas tree of the season! Thanks to kind donations from our local community, pupils will also be able to support in decorating the wider school as we get closer to the festive period. Plans for our annual Christmas Fayre are also underway, and we are grateful to you for sending in your children with more donations as part of this. Following a parent survey at Hill Brow, we will be hosting two separate events this year with Hill Brow's Christmas event happening on 8th December and Tilehurst's taking place on 11th December. Please do RSVP to office@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk if you plan on attending.

Next week, we are holding Coffee Afternoons at both Hill Brow and Tilehurst with a focus on Supporting Communication, Learning and Independence. This is a great opportunity to meet our SaLT and OT team and learn more about the support available in school as well as practical strategies to support your child at home. If you would like to attend, please let the office know, using the email above.

Next week, we are welcoming some of our Liberty Academy Trust Colleagues into school - Miss Galloway, Director of Education, Mrs Law, Director of Safeguarding and our CEO Dr Crossley will all be spending time with staff and pupils.

Wishing you a lovely weekend,
Mrs Buley

# HILL BROW

# CHRISTMAS FAIR

## Date: 8 December

## Time: 13:30–14:55

**Parents/ Carers encouraged to attend.**
**Please confirm your attendance by emailing office@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk by Friday 2nd December.**









# Christmas

## FAYRE

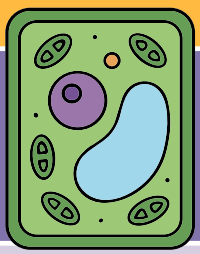
| DECEMBER | 11TH | 1.30-2.45pm |
|---|---|---|

## TILEHURST

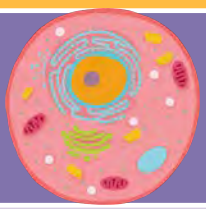
Tilehurst Christmas Fayre will be held on Friday, 11th December. There will be plenty of festive fun, games, refreshments, and hopefully a very special visitor from the North Pole!

Please email **Office@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk** to confirm your attendance by **Friday 4th December**.





# Taurus

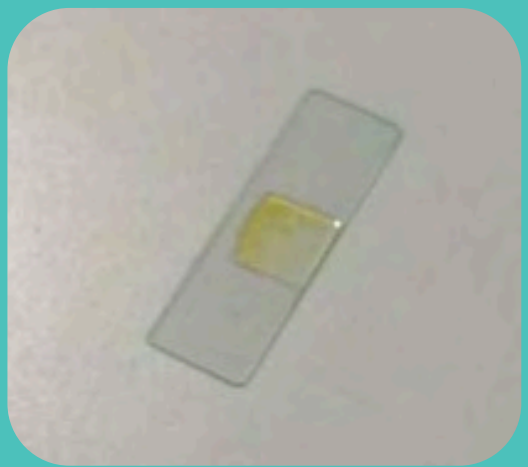


## Science

This week Taurus had the chance to use microscopes to take a closer look at onion cells (plant cells) and cheek cells (animal cells). They were fascinated to see what these tiny cells looked like up close and enjoyed spotting the similarities and differences between the two. It was great to see everyone getting hands-on, developing their scientific skills and discovering just how much is happening in the world around us that we can't see with the naked eye!









# Taurus





## PE

Taurus class had a visitor in PE this week, giving the children the exciting opportunity to try out Table Cricket! This was a fun new experience for everyone, with lots of enthusiasm and teamwork on show. The children enjoyed practising their batting skills, learning how to play the game and working together as a team. It was fantastic to see everyone getting involved, trying something new and having lots of fun along the way!





# HERCULES CLASS UPDATE

## What have we been up to?

Pupils in Hercules have been working really hard across all their lessons to work towards their own academic and personal aspirations. They are working within their lesson structures and developing their regulation strategies to support their learning throughout the each and every school day!

## Subject Highlights

### English

Pupils have been reading and analysing Face by Benjamin Zephaniah.

### Sports Leaders

Over the last few weeks, pupils have been leading PE sessions for other year groups across the school as part of their portfolio

### Art

Pupils are researching how pottery and narratives have been shown in art across time!

### RE

Pupils have completed their first module for their Entry Level Certificate and are preparing to sit their first exams!

## Upcoming Events

- Wednesday 25th November – Parents are welcome to attend a Coffee Afternoon from 2:15pm.
- Pupils are excitedly organising their stall for the Christmas Fayre on Friday 11th December.
- Pupils should expect Core Subject, Option 2, and Key Vocabulary Homework tasks set next week!

## Reminders

Please ensure your child brings a refillable water bottle each day.

As the weather starts to colder and wetter, make sure they have suitable clothing and coats.

Please email michael.villar@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk if you have any other questions!

## Science, Stories and Artificial Intelligence

This week, pupils across the school took part in another engaging The Day session, exploring big questions in science, literature and technology while developing their discussion and debate skills.

KS2 pupils read 'Do We Really Know How Magnets Work?' and explored the Word of the Week, "Physicist." Pupils learned that, despite centuries of scientific research, magnetism still contains mysteries that scientists are working to understand. They discussed how magnets are used in everyday life, from compasses to medical imaging, and considered the importance of curiosity and scientific discovery. During the debate, many pupils felt that schools should spend time investigating unanswered scientific questions because this inspires future innovation and encourages children to think like scientists.

KS3 pupils explored 'Odyssey Film Misses Homer's Humour' and the Word of the Week, "Chronology." They learned about Christopher Nolan's film adaptation of The Odyssey, the ancient Greek epic following Odysseus's ten-year journey home after the Trojan War. Pupils examined differing opinions about the film and debated whether adaptations should remain faithful to their original stories. Most agreed that filmmakers should respect the source material while still allowing room for creativity and modern storytelling.

KS4 pupils studied 'Hired! Scotland's First AI Teacher' and the Word of the Week, "Literacy." They discovered how Jamie Laycock, the UK's first specialist AI educator, is helping students understand both the opportunities and risks of artificial intelligence. Discussions focused on AI bias, fake images, privacy and the importance of independent thinking. During the debate, most pupils agreed that schools should teach AI literacy, although many felt that AI should support learning rather than replace critical thinking and human judgement.

Through reading, discussion and debate, our pupils continue to develop the curiosity, confidence and critical thinking skills needed to navigate an increasingly complex and rapidly changing world.

Have a wonderful weekend!

Miss Eirini Akrivopoulou
Head of English

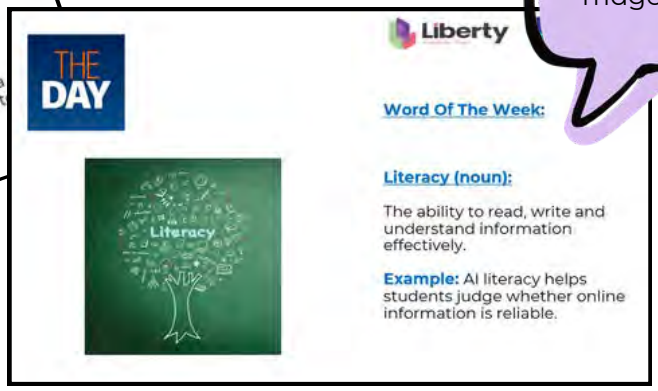
**Pegasus**

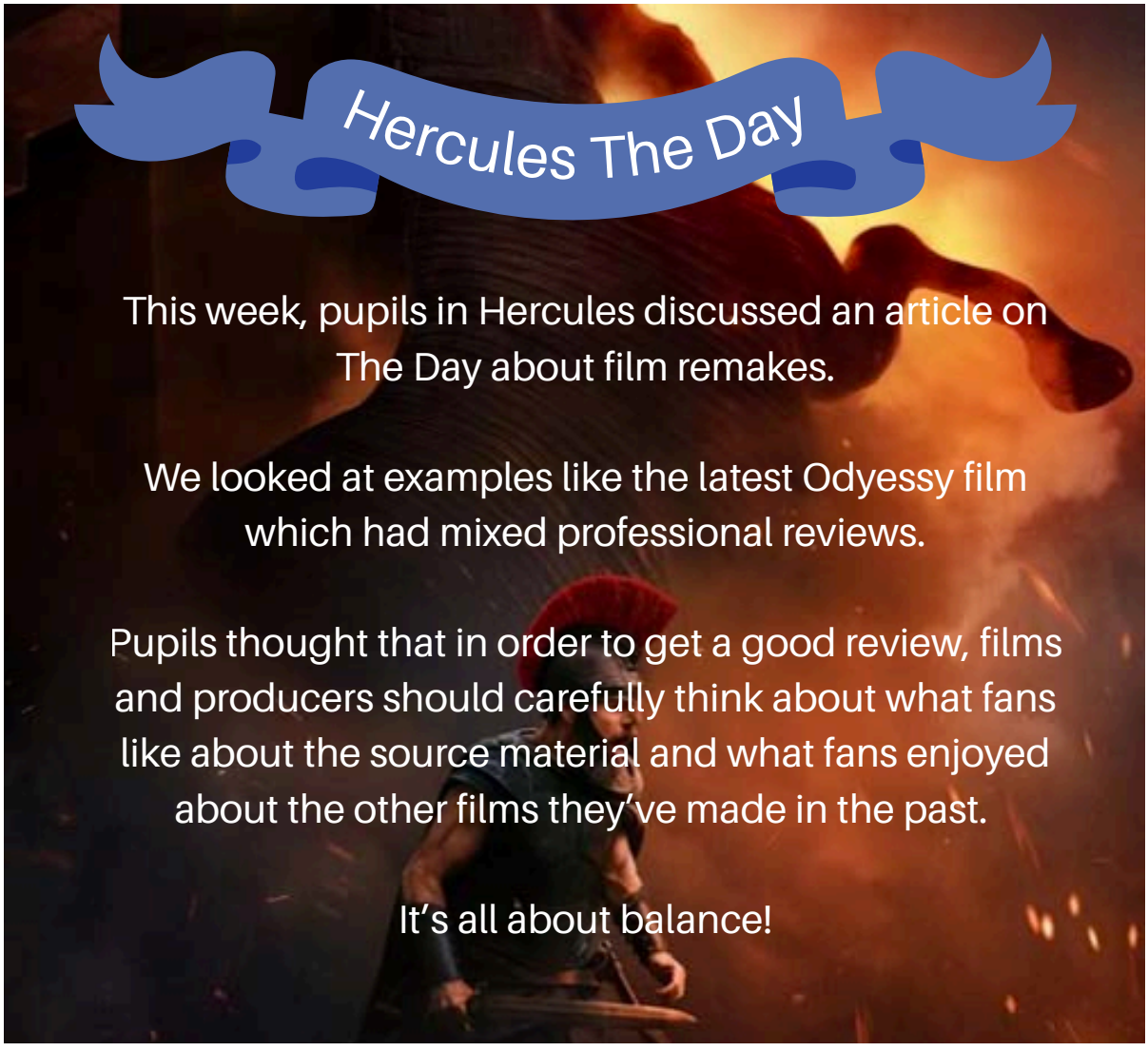
They knew that opposites attract




They were able to explain about scrap yards collecting magnets.
They didn't know that fridges use magnets.



# Transdisciplinary Team

## LEGO THERAPY PRINCIPLES

**Building friendships, confidence, and creativity one brick at a time! At Hill Brow and Tilehurst, some pupils take part in a weekly Lego Group, where collaborative challenges and imaginative play help develop important social and communication skills. Take a look below to see how it all works.**



**The engineer is in charge of giving the instructions.**





**The supplier is in charge of finding the right pieces to give to the builder.**





**The builder is in charge of putting the model together.**





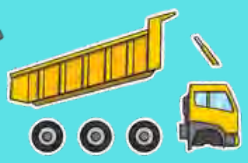
**The observer (adult in the session) watches out for any difficulties or mistakes and helps fix them.**



**These principles can be used to build a Lego model or you can put other things together too!.**









# Speech and Language Therapy Newsletter

Welcome to our Christmas Speech and Language Newsletter!
Over the next three weeks, we'll share a fun Christmas activity each week, with simple ideas to help you support your child's speech, language and communication skills at home.

## *Let's decorate a Christmas Tree!*



### *Sequencing and narrative skills*

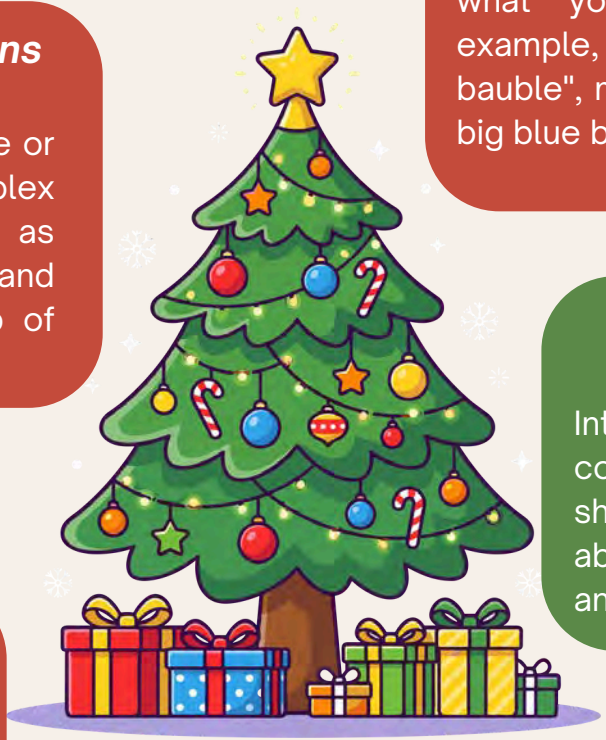
Encourage children to explain the process of decorating the tree in detail, using sequencing words and complex sentences. Ask them to describe what they did, why they made certain choices and how the finished tree came together.

### *Making longer sentences*

Model and encourage longer sentences by expanding on what your child says. For example, if they say "blue bauble", model "I'm hanging the big blue bauble."

### *Following directions*

Give your child simple or more complex instructions, such as "Find the red bauble and hang it near the top of the tree."



### *New concepts*

Introduce new words and concepts such as sparkly, shiny, bigger, smaller, above, below, between and next to.

### *Making choices*

Offer choices between decorations, colours or shapes. Encourage your child to communicate their preferences, e.g. "Would you like the star or the angel?"

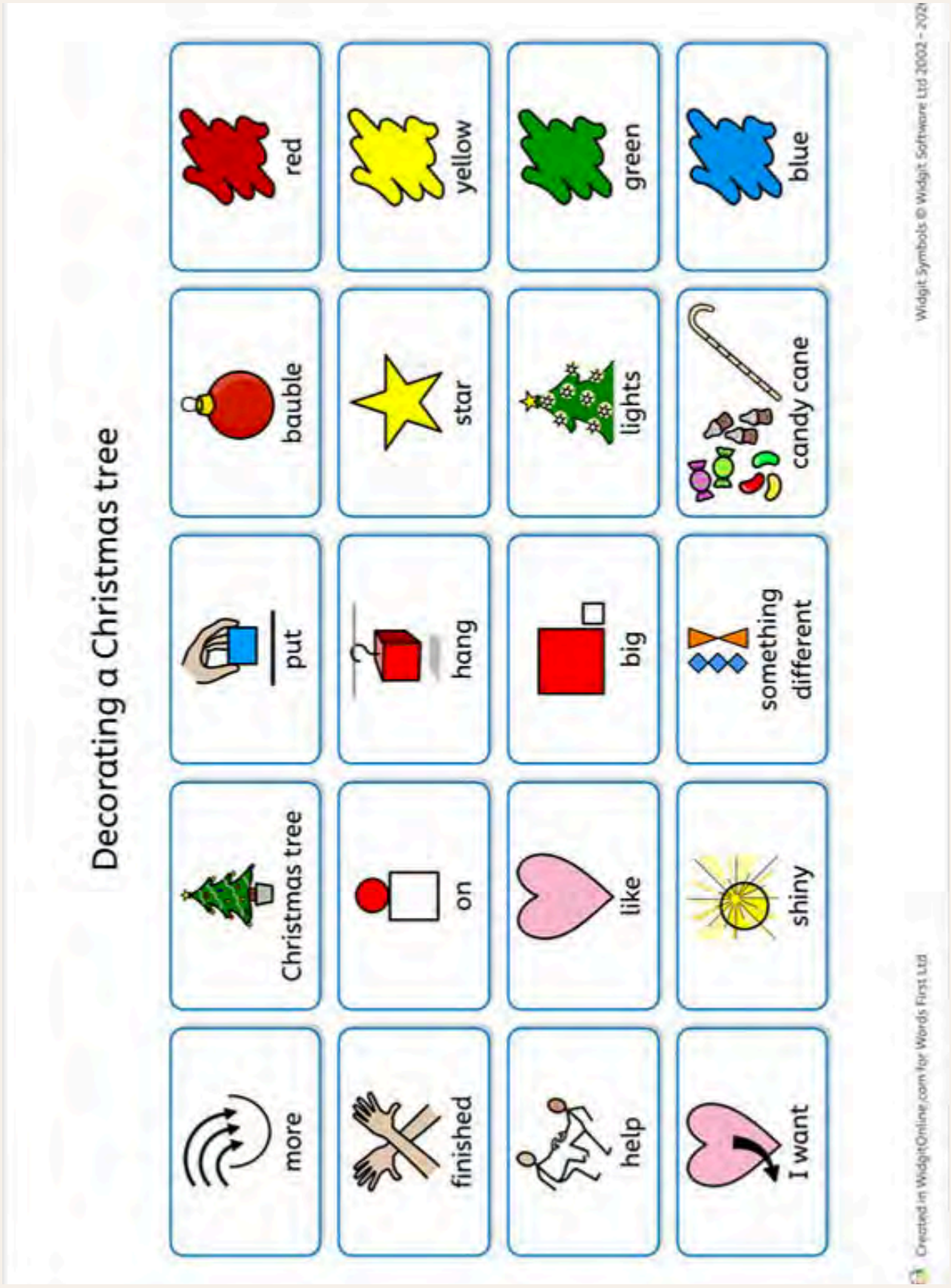
### *Problem-solving skills*

Introduce challenges, such as deciding how to arrange decorations, choosing a theme or working around limited space. Encourage children to suggest solutions, weigh up different options and justify their decisions using phrases such as "I think... because..." and "We could try... instead."

# Speech and Language Therapy newsletter

Print and use this communication board!

**How to use:** Say the word and point to the symbol on the communication board at the same time (Example: When hanging a bauble, point and say ‘red bauble’. Then hang it on the tree).



# Pupils Of The Week - Tilehurst

## Thoughtful

**Alfie A** has been awarded for consistently demonstrating kindness, thoughtfulness and consideration towards his peers.

## Value

**Zayn Aslam** has been awarded for showing positive engagement and valuing his learning and demonstrating a positive attitude towards Computing and Science lessons.

## Safe

**Haddy S.J** has been awarded for showing improved self-awareness, using her communication tools effectively in class, transitioning confidently between activities and building positive relationships through thoughtful communication with her peers.

**A huge congratulations to these pupils from all the TVS staff.**

***A special mention to Year 11 for completing their mock exams with determination and a positive attitude. Your hard work, resilience and effort are something to be proud of!***

# Pupils Of The Week - Hill Brow

## Thoughtful

**Arunvir D** has been awarded for for consistently showing kindness and thoughtfulness towards others, encouraging positive behaviours and following class expectations.

## Value

**Stavros L** has been awarded for his positive engagement in PE and interactive sessions, showing growing confidence, enthusiasm and enjoyment when participating in activities.

## Safe

**Amiya Y** has been awarded for consistently demonstrating safe behaviours, following class routines and setting a positive example by encouraging others to make safe choices.

**A huge congratulations to these pupils from all the TVS staff.**

# Upcoming events

**Thursday 10th December** - Tilehurst Christmas lunch and Jumper Day

**Tuesday 8th December** - Hill Brow Christmas Fayre 1.30-2.55pm

**Friday 11th December** - Tilehurst Christmas Fayre 1.30-2.45pm

**Tuesday 15th December** - Hill Brow Christmas lunch/Jumper Day

**Friday 18th December** - Last Day of School (Pupils finish at 1pm).

**19th December - 2nd January** - Christmas Holiday



# Information












A huge thank you for your generosity! All our Harvest donations have gone towards supporting the Southcote Family Church Pantry, which is open every Tuesday from 2.30pm to 4.45pm.

# Information

Thames Valley School

Liberty Academy Trust

## Staff Vacancy

**Job Title:**
Cleaner
(Maternity Cover)

**Start Date:**
January 2027 or Sooner

**Location:**
Thames Valley School
Tilehurst RG30 4BZ



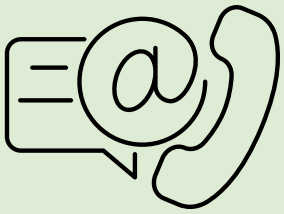

**Job Details:**
Fixed Term contract
2 hours per day (flexible between 3-6pm)
Monday - Friday
Term Time Only, plus Deep Cleans

**How to Apply:** Click here to submit an application form

**#COURAGE** **#DETERMINATION** **#TEAMWORK**

**Liberty Academy Trust**

# Contact Details



**Thames Valley School - Tilehurst**
A: Conwy Close | Tilehurst | Reading | Berkshire | RG30 4BZ
**T: 0118 9424750**
E: office@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk
W: www.thamesvalleyschool.org.uk

**Thames Valley School - Hill Brow**
A: Hill Brow | Hartland Road | Reading | Berkshire | RG2 8JD

*for any Hill Brow queries, please email office@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk and our receptionist will pass onto the appropriate person to make contact with you.*
*Thank You*

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# Reporting Absences - Pupils

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To report a pupil's absence, please contact school office on 0118 9424750 (option 1) or email attendance@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk

For Medical appointments, please provide evidence of the appointment this can be sent via email or a screenshot attachment.

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Liberty Academy Trust