

September 2023

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Transition Week

It has been fantastic to welcome our pupils into school this week and we have been so pleased to see them all. This week, they have been busy participating in 'Transition activities' such as voting for their form's School Council representative, meeting new members of staff and venturing around the school on a treasure hunt. Pupils have also been refreshing their knowledge of the 'Zones of Regulation' and making personalised versions and discussing our 'TVS Principles.' From next week, pupils will commence their subject timetables, which you should have received individually.

Transdisciplinary Team

As part of our Trans-Disciplinary Team, this academic year, we are happy to announce that we will continue to work with Anastasios Kofonikolas as our Occupational Therapist who will also be increasing his time within the school to four days a week.

In October, we will also be welcoming a Speech and Language Therapist to the team who will be based at TVS four days a week. I look forward to providing you with more information regarding this closer to half term.

We will also continue to work with Kathryn Courts, Music Therapist, and ClearSky who provide us with Creative Arts Therapy to expand our offer further.

Introduction from Gemma Buley—Interim Head of School

Welcome back to our previous families and a big welcome to our new parents and carers! We hope that you had a relaxing break together and were able to enjoy some of the British summer.

I hope that this newsletter will provide you with some useful updates and dates for your diary as we look to the year ahead. After receiving a variety of feedback on the previous newsletter, this academic year a newsletter will be sent home on a half termly basis, with a weekly update provided by a member of the Senior Leadership or Middle Leadership Team. You will also hear regularly from your child's form tutor, and keyworker, to ensure that you are informed of their progress and so that we can work collaboratively to enable every pupil to reach their full potential.

An updated contact list will also be included in this newsletter to enable you to directly communicate with a specific member of staff where needed as well as an outline of individual roles so that you can reach out to the most appropriate individual if required.

I am looking forward to working with you all over the coming term!



Staffing Updates

Over the summer, Mrs Mariani (Business Support Assistant) and Mr Lewis (Learning Mentor) have left the school for new opportunities and we thank them for their hard work whilst working with us, and wish them well in their new ventures.

We are pleased to announce a number of new staff who have joined us this September, as follows:

Miss Eirini Akrivopoulou - Head of English, Pyxis form tutor

Mr Tim Shephard – PSHE and Catering Teacher and Careers Lead, Lupus form co-tutor

Mrs Aleksandra Avromova – Science Teacher, Draco form co-tutor

Mrs Elizabeth Dyer – Learning Mentor, Year 7

We are also thrilled that some of our agency staff from last academic year are now employed by the school on a permanent basis:

Mr Jamei Moyad – English Teacher, Orion form tutor

Miss Hannah Irwin – Learning Mentor, Year 11

Mrs Sujata Banti – Learning Mentor, Year 7

Miss Justanya Ociepka - Officer Administrator

Miss Lily Dixon – Assistant Therapist

I'm sure you will wish them all well as they begin their journey with us and we look forward to you meeting them all in person, soon.

Sensory Corridor and Soft Play

Mr Holder and Mrs Saunders have also been busy over the summer break, starting our plans for our new sensory spaces. As part of these plans, the soft play facilities have been removed and an additional space has been allocated as a 'quiet room.' Over October half term, our sensory corridor will also be transformed to include updated equipment and immersive wall panelling to provide enhanced experiences for the pupils.



Family Partnerships

As a school, we are committed to improving our partnerships and collaborative work with families. In this newsletter, there is a calendar of events and opportunities to meet with school staff, spend time on school site and discuss your child's progress. To support with this, we will be working towards achieving the 'Leading Parent Partnership Award' where we will receive support from a specific advisor from the organisation. This will help to guide our practice moving forwards and create stronger links between home and school. As part of our commitment to working closely with you, we have planned the following events and sessions.

Save the Date

Welcome event for new parents and carers

We will be holding a 'Welcome' session for all new parents and carers on **22nd September 2023** at **2pm**, in person, at Thames Valley School. This will give you the opportunity to meet members of staff, some of our current parents and carers and ask any key questions you may have. We would really like the opportunity to meet you all and, if you are able to attend, please do confirm your attendance by emailing office@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk

Save the Date

Curriculum Information Session

On **28th September 2023**, we will also be holding a Curriculum Information session for parents and carers, to talk to you about our curriculum intent and offer at Thames Valley School in more detail. If there are any key questions you would like answered during this session, please send these through in advance so we can ensure this is covered, although questions will also be welcomed on the day. We are pleased to offer two opportunities to attend this event, **either 2pm at Thames Valley School, or 5pm via Microsoft Teams**. If you wish to attend, please confirm your attendance by emailing office@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk

Save the Date

TVS Satellite Site

Dr Nicola Crossley, CEO of Liberty Academy Trust will be holding a face-to-face parents meeting at Thames Valley School to discuss the satellite consultation and answer any questions you may have.

Date: Tuesday 19th September 2023
Time: 5.30—6.00pm
Venue: Thames Valley School

If you wish to attend, please confirm your attendance by emailing office@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk

CLASS NAMES

In the July school council meeting, our representatives discussed different themes for class names including: historical figures, autistic heroes, trees and plants, famous people who have had a positive impact in the world, constellations and many more suggestions.

Each class voted and the majority chose constellations!

Name: _____ Date: _____

Tutor Group Names Vote!

How I feel about changing the names of the tutor groups:

☹️ ☹️ 😊 😊 😊

Tick the theme you would like for next year's tutor group names:

- Historical Figures
- Autistic Heroes
- Trees/Plants
- Famous Figures (who have had a positive impact on the world)
- Famous Landmarks
- Constellations

Suggestions for my tutor group's new name:

Dinner Money

As a school, we have invested in the online school dinner module of MyChildAtSchool (MCAS). You will be asked to order the school meals and pay online for these via the MCAS app.

This decision has been taken to help parents order meals and the safer and more convenient method of online payments.

We plan to go-live 18/09/2023. More information will be sent separately prior to the launch date.



Introducing the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

Liberty **Staff Profile** Thames Valley School

Name: Mrs Buley

Role: Interim Head of School & SENCo



Bio:
After working as a specialist teaching assistant and then qualifying and teaching in mainstream settings, leading on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, I have worked at Thames Valley School for the last 5 years, carrying out roles such as Primary Lead Teacher and Autism Lead Practitioner, whilst completing my National SENCo Award. I am passionate about supporting Autistic young people to reach their full potential, completing training through the National Autistic Society and Autism Education Trust as well as being trained in Safeguarding to Level 3. I am currently working towards my National Professional Qualification for Headship.

Fun fact:

- I ran 100 miles in 22 hours.
- I have seen 71 musicals so far this year!

Liberty **Staff Profile** Thames Valley School

Name: Miss Archer

Role: Designated Safeguarding Lead



Bio:
I have worked with children & young people in schools for 20 years! As part of this, I have supported in a variety of specialist settings including alternative provision, as a behaviour specialist, working with young people, professionals and families. I have a Degree in Youth Work and a Foundation Degree in Supporting Young People which has supported me in connecting with a wide range of pupils, across the local area. I am trained to Level 3 in Safeguarding and am a qualified Team Teach Tutor. I am currently working towards receiving the Trauma Informed Practice Diploma.

Fun fact:

- I enjoy going to different festivals - this year I went to Victorious!

Liberty **Staff Profile** Thames Valley School

Name: Mrs Saunders

Role: School Business Manager



Bio:
I have worked in the education sector now for 19 years and have solely focused on the successful management of the financial and operational side of schools/Trusts.

I am a qualified accountant with an MBA in Education Leadership, a fellowship member of the Chartered Management Institute (CMI), qualified Prince2 Project Manager and certified in all aspects of Health & Safety.


Fun fact:

- I was the South of England's under 11's jive champion!

Liberty **Staff Profile** Thames Valley School

Name: Mrs Dudgeon

Role: Deputy Principal



Bio:
I have worked in teaching and leadership in schools for over 18 years and have been a school leader for over 12 years. I have worked in London boroughs, inner city London, Hampshire and Southampton. My experience includes working in mainstream schools, establishing integrated resource bases into mainstream schools for pupils with additional needs, in particular autism, working in all-through schools and teaching and leading in SEND provisions for autistic pupils. This is the third specialist school that I have been fortunate enough to work in. I have education leadership qualification including Leadership Pathways.

Fun fact:

- I previously held the Guinness World Record for the largest human collection of Smurfs.

Liberty **Staff Profile** Thames Valley School

Name: Miss Mallon

Role: Assistant Principal



Bio:
I have been volunteering and working for various SEND and social inclusion groups for 15 years. I have worked with local councils on peace projects and redeveloping community spaces, which inspired me to study primary teaching with a Special Educational Needs specialism. During this time and after graduating, I worked in children's residential homes and learning resource centres. I started my teaching career in a specialist behaviour school, being part of a team that transformed the school into an autism specialist provision. I am currently working towards achieving my National professional qualification in Leading Teaching.

Fun fact:

- I have collected a quarter for each state in America!

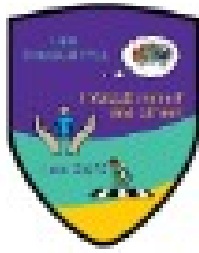
Staff Responsibilities (by area/subject)

- Mrs Buley—SENDCo, Admissions, Teaching & Learning, Behaviour, Complaints—gemma.buley@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk
- Mrs Dudgeon—Assessment, Data, Exams, Online Tutoring, KS4 options, Pupil Premium—jemma.dudgeon@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk
- Miss Archer—PSHE, Alternative Provision, Team Teach, Safeguarding, Medications—becca.archer@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk
- Mrs Saunders—Compliance, Finance, Health & Safety, IT, HR—lisa.saunders@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk
- Miss Mallon—Primary School, Curriculum, Homework, PE/Music/Drama, Enrichment—ciara.mallon@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk
- Miss Johnston—Assistant SENDCo, CAMHS referrals, Wellbeing, Therapeutic Assessments, DLA—christina.johnston@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk
- Mrs Ralph—Student data and administration, Attendance - tina.ralph@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk

Reporting student absence continues to be made to the TVS school office via either the automated telephone service (01189424750) or by emailing office@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk

Points of Contact

Subject	Contact Name	Email address
Primary Phase Lead, Phoenix Form Tutor	Miss Ciara Mallon	ciara.mallon@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk
Scorpius Form Tutor	Mrs Anastasia Thomas	anastasia.thomas@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk
Head of English, Pyxis Form Tutor	Ms Eirini Akrivopoulou	Eirini.Akrivopoulou@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk
English, Orion Form Tutor	Mr Jamei Moyad	Jamei.Moyad@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk
Maths Teacher	Mrs Jemma Dudgeon	Jemma.Dudgeon@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk
Maths, Taurus Form Co-Tutor	Mr Julian Richens	Julian.Richens@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk
Science Teacher	Mrs Jemma Dudgeon	Jemma.Dudgeon@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk
Science, Draco Form Tutor	Miss Aleksandra Avramova	aleksandra.avramova@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk
Art and Design, Aquila Form Tutor	Miss Laura Pirkl	Laura.Pirkl@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk
Computing, Taurus Form Co-Tutor	Miss Sharon Eden	Sharon.Eden@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk
Humanities, Lynx Form Tutor	Mr Michael Villar	Michael.Villar@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk
Catering & PSHE Teacher, Careers Lead, Lupus Form Co-Tutor	Mr Tim Shephard	tim.shephard@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk
Lupus Form Co-Tutor	Miss Christina Johnston	christina.johnston@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk
Draco Form Co-Tutor	Miss Phoebe Edmond	phoebe.edmond@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk
PSHE Teacher	Miss Becca Archer	Becca.Archer@thamesvalleyschool.org.uk



THAMES VALLEY SCHOOL PRINCIPLES

Thoughtful

Helping other people

Understanding when someone else might need space

Listening to others when they are speaking

Value

Showing respect or appreciation

Accepting and listening to others

Celebrating yours, and others', achievements

Safe

Following reasonable staff instructions

Understanding other people's boundaries

Using my Zones of Regulation

POSITIVE APPROACHES



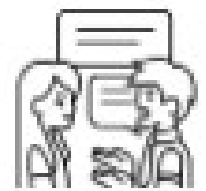
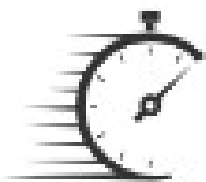
Immediate

Frequent

Enthusiastic

Eye Contact
(if wanted by the child)

Describe



At TVS, we ensure that we focus our support using positive approaches, following the above principles.

Staff will ensure that they positively engage or praise our students immediately, frequently and with authentic enthusiasm. During the interaction, staff will engage with eye contact (if appropriate for the individual) or another body signal to show active listening, and then describe the reason why the student is receiving praise.

SHIELD REWARD SYSTEM

To offer further clarity on our reward system, we have reintroduced this to pupils during this week's transition activities. They have participated in a form time activity and relevant visuals have been provided to support understanding.

In each lesson, pupils will have the opportunity to earn a minimum of a thoughtful, valued and safe shield.

This will allow the pupils to earn more shields to trade in for a variety of rewards. As a school we will be offering small tokens, activities at school and much more.



Safeguarding Team at Thames Valley School



Everyone has the right to feel safe at ALL times.



Children's Social Care – For reporting concerns **READING** Single point of access – Tel: 0118 937 3641
Email: Childrensingletpointofaccess@reading.gcsx.gov.uk

To report and incident to the LADO – Local Authority Designated Officer – Tel 0118 937 2685
Email: LADO@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

Key Dates for Parents & Carers (2023-24)

Month	Date	Time	Description
September	4 th & 5 th		Inset Day
	15 th		TVS 10 th Birthday Celebration
	19 th	5.30pm -6.00pm	TVS Satellite Site – meeting with Dr Nicola Crossley, CEO
	22 nd	2pm – 3.00pm	Welcome Event – for new parents and carers
	22 nd		Jean for Genes Awareness Day
	28 th	2pm at TVS, 5pm virtual	Curriculum Information Session
October	6 th		School Photo's – H Tempest Ltd
	10 th		RE Day - Judaism
	12 th	3.30pm – 5.30pm	Parents Evening & Macmillan Coffee Afternoon
	18 th	1.00pm – 3.00pm	Pumpkin Carving & Pizza Making (with parents)
	19 th – 27 th		Half Term
	30 th		Inset Day
November	13 th – 17 th		Key Stage 2 SATS Mocks*
	13 th – 30 th		Year 11 Mocks*
December	15 th		Christmas Event (TBC)
	18 th – 20 th		Mid-year Pupil Reports
	21 st – 2 nd		Christmas Holidays
January	3 rd		Inset Day
	15 th – 19 th		Key Stage 2 SATS Mocks*
February	12 th – 16 th		Half term
	March	4 th – 22 nd	
4 th – 8 th			Key Stage 2 SATS Mocks*
13 th			Parent Evening
29 th – 12 th			Easter Holidays
April	22 nd – 12 th		Year 10 Mocks*
	26 th		Proposed Sports day (TBC)
May	10 th		Year 11 Last Day Before Study leave (TBC)
	10 th		Year 11 GCSE's & Examinations Start
	13 th – 16 th		KS2 SATS Week
	27 th – 31 st		Half term
June	21 st		Year 11 Leavers Assembly (TBC)
	28 th		Summer Event
July	4 th		Parents Evening & End of Year Reports
	24 th		Inset Day
	25 th		Summer Holidays Start

