



Stour Valley Community School
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Headteacher Mrs Rachel Kelly BA (Hons)

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Dear Parents and Carers

My first term at Stour Valley is coming to a close and it has certainly been a busy one. In the first part of this letter I will write about a few of the term's highlights and then give you news of some staff changes from January 2019.

Open Evening

We held a very busy and successful Open Evening for Year 6 students and their families on Thursday 11 October. Over 200 families attended on that night to look around our school. The following Monday - Wednesday we also did tours during the school day for Year 6 parents. Initial numbers are looking healthy for the September 2019 cohort.

War 100 Project

The history department organised Remembrance activities such as the 'War 100' project where students studied one of the conflicts from the last 100 years – the Falklands War, the Suez Crisis, the Rwandan Genocide, the Irish War of Independence, the Battle of Britain, Stalingrad and created artwork to reflect and remember those involved in their chosen conflict. This artwork was displayed on a large installation at the back of the school hall. We also had a beautiful large net canopy displayed in the Heartspace, where staff, students and parents had written messages, names or signed a 'poppy' that were attached to it. It was a very visual and thought-provoking display.

We also held two assemblies to mark the event where students read excerpts and poetry from WW1 and veterans joined us to be a part of the commemoration. Some of our students took part in the Remembrance Sunday service and ceremony in Clare on the 11th and were at Clare Castle Country Park for the lighting of the commemorative beacon. We are very proud of all the students who took part.

School Trips

There have been a number of trips out this term. In September some students from Years 7–9 went to Clare Castle Park to join in with the Suffolk Archaeological Dig. In October Year 9 went to The Suffolk Skills Show. This show brings together employers, schools, colleges and training providers in order to offer students the chance to work out which careers are of interest to them and match their strengths, then find out the best route to get the right skills for the job. In November a Year 8 STEM trip was organised to the IMAX cinema in Ipswich to see 'A Beautiful Planet'. The film is a breath-taking portrait of Earth from space, made in cooperation with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). It features stunning footage captured by the astronauts aboard the International Space Station. Also in November there was a Year 10 Food trip to Jimmy's Farm. December saw Year 7 going to the panto (oh yes they did!) to see Jack and the Beanstalk at The Mercury Theatre in Colchester. There was also a trip to the Houses of Parliament in December. Thank you to all the staff who have organised these trips. It is wonderful to see how we enrich our curriculum offer at Stour Valley in this way.

Year 11 Mock Examinations

Year 11 students have just finished three weeks of GCSE mock exams. Their behaviour and conduct in the exams was exemplary and they are surely all looking forward to a well-deserved Christmas break before the studying towards those final examinations will begin in earnest in the New Year.

Christmas Concert

The Christmas concert was a real highlight of the term. Miss Garrett came into her own with her Christmas jokes and revealed that this was the 35th Christmas concert of her teaching career. Wow! The students were an absolute credit to themselves, their parents/carers and the school. We saw a real variety of performances and a lot of talent. The concert ended with a High School Musical number – a taster of what is to come in the Spring Term for our whole school production.

Staff Changes from January 2019

Computer Science

Mr Lee is returning to Stour Valley to lead Computer Science once again. Mr Harris has been Acting Head of Computer Science this term and we would like to thank him for all his work this term. Mr Harris will continue to teach Computer Science and Maths.

Year Leader for Year 8

Mr Lee is taking on an additional role from January as Year Leader of Year 8. He will replace Mr Nunn, who has been promoted to Assistant Headteacher from January 2019. Mr Nunn will be responsible for Safeguarding, Behaviour and Attendance across the school.

New Assistant Headteacher

We will be welcoming a new Assistant Headteacher to join our senior team. Miss Normansell is relocating from Worcestershire and will join Stour valley to lead on Teaching and Learning across the school.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your on-going support and remind you that school finishes at 2pm tomorrow, Wednesday 19 December and we return on Monday 7 January.

On behalf of all the staff and governors, I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy New Year.

With best wishes and kind regards

Rachel Kelly, Headteacher