Stour Valley Community School
Cavendish Road, Clare
Suffolk CO10 8PJ
01787 279342
info@stourvalley.org
www.stourvalleycommunityschool.org

Headteacher Mrs Rachel Kelly BA (Hons)

2 October 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you have all had a lovely summer and that your children are looking forward to returning to Stour Valley Community School tomorrow. We are very much looking forward to welcoming everyone back and getting the new academic year underway.

There are a few important things I would like to remind you of as we begin the year.

Mobile phones and smart devices

As communicated in my letter at the end of last term, we are introducing our new mobile phone and smart device policy from tomorrow. **Mobile phones and other smart devices are not permitted to be used or carried around by students during the school day.** All students who bring a mobile phone into school must place it in their locker at the start of the school day, where it will remain securely stored until the end of the day.

If you paid for a locker over the summer but your child has not yet received their key, their tutor will give this to them first thing tomorrow morning during tutor time.

If your child is going to bring a phone into school and you have not yet purchased a locker, please arrange this through ParentPay as soon as possible.

You can revisit the full details of the new policy here: Mobile_Phones_Smart_Devices__Student_Lockers_-_Letter_from_Headteacher_July_2026.pdf

Planners and timetables

All students will be issued with a new planner during tutor time tomorrow. Their timetable will be stuck into their planner, so please encourage your child to bring their planner home and familiarise themselves with their timetable and lessons.

Timetables are also now live on Edulink for students and parents to view. If you are unable to access Edulink and are concerned about whether your child needs to bring their PE kit tomorrow, please be reassured that **only Year 8X have PE tomorrow.**

A reminder that students should be in school by 8:15am for an 8:20am start.

Key Staff changes

There are also a number of changes to our staffing and leadership responsibilities this year.

Mrs Jamieson will be on maternity leave this academic year. During her absence, Mr Sims will take on responsibility as our Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Teacher for Children in Care, alongside his role as Raising Standards Leader for Year 11.

We are delighted to welcome Mr Kerley as an Assistant Headteacher, with responsibility for Attendance and Behaviour, as well as Raising Standards Leader for Years 9 and 10.

Mrs Cullen will be taking over from Mrs Chester as Assistant Headteacher, SENCO and Inclusion Lead, while Mr Craig will be our Raising Standards Leader for Years 7 and 8.

We wish Mrs Jamieson all the very best for her maternity leave and look forward to working with all our new and existing colleagues in their roles this year.

We are also pleased to welcome the following new colleagues to Stour Valley:

- Mrs Carlton – Head of Art and Photography
- Miss Thorne – Teacher of Art and Art Technician
- Mrs Bream – Teacher of Spanish
- Mr Stirling – Design and Technology Technician
- Mrs Hearn and Miss Abrey – Student Support Officers
- Mr Hisscott – Site Operations Manager

We look forward to the contribution that all of our new colleagues will make to the school this year and wish them every success in their new roles.

Attendance

One of our major priorities this year will be student attendance. There is a very clear link between regular attendance and positive outcomes. For example, among our Year 11 students, those with attendance of 95% or above are nearly twice as likely to achieve a grade 5 or above in both English and Maths compared with those whose attendance is below this level.

For all our students, regular attendance is important not only because it enables them to build the knowledge and understanding they need to be successful across their subjects, but also because it strengthens their sense of belonging to school and their wider community.

As a school, we make no apology for wanting every student to make the very most of their time and opportunities at Stour Valley Community School. We recognise that some absences cannot be avoided, and we will always approach individual circumstances with understanding. At the same time, we want to work closely with you to support good attendance and reduce avoidable absence wherever possible.

This year, we will be introducing a new system called Studybugs, which will work alongside our existing systems to help us monitor attendance and communicate with families. Through the Studybugs app, you will be able to notify us of an absence and respond to any queries we may have. We hope this will make

communication quicker and easier and reduce the need for email correspondence. The system will also provide guidance from appropriate sources, including the NHS, when you are reporting particular illnesses.

If you would like to set up a Studybugs account, please follow the link below:

Studybugs – Parents

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. The partnership between school and home is incredibly important, and we look forward to working with you throughout the year to ensure that every student is able to thrive, achieve and enjoy their time at Stour Valley.

We look forward to welcoming everyone back tomorrow.

Yours faithfully

Rachel Kelly
Headteacher