17th November 2017

Dear Parents

**RE: Communication at Valley**

Firstly, I would like to thank the parents who came along to the recent Parent-Governor Forums. I updated those who attended on the progress that had been made against last year’s School Development Plan and outlined the priorities for this year. Parents were also updated on Valley’s performance in the 2017 national tests and this information is available to view on the website.

The Parent-Governor Forums are very informal information sessions where parents can learn more about the decisions that are made at Valley Primary School and also provides an opportunity for you to offer vital feedback on specific aspects of school life. Please do come along to the next information session on 11th January 2018, where parents will be updated on the new Sex and Relationships Policy.

During the Forums, a discussion was held relating to communication. While some parents state that there is not enough communication from the school, others comment about being bombarded with

e-mails, text reminders and Parentmail messages. As a result, parents told me that very often important communications get lost in the sea of other messages.

For the remainder of this term, we will now trial a new format to remind parents of weekly events and reminders at Valley. Every Friday, a diary sheet will be sent out via Parentmail with the next week’s events and reminders. This sheet will also be posted on the parent notice boards located at each of the school playground gates as well as on the school’s Facebook page and Twitter feed.

Communication is a two-way process and I would like to use this opportunity to kindly request that parents acknowledge the deadlines that are set in the various school communications. Whilst we all lead extremely busy lives, for many months now, deadlines for responding to school communications have been missed which has led to staff spending an inordinate amount of time during their working day having to make follow-up phone calls to parents to confirm a response. Only recently, six hours was spent contacting 32 parents regarding the Year 6 residential deposit. Last Wednesday, last minute phone calls had to be made to confirm permission for the boys’ after-school football match as well as rearranging transportation to and from the away venue.

As a school, we must make every effort to give parents sufficient notice of sporting, music and other fixtures but, in return, responses will have to be received by the set deadline in order to decide if off-site events can go ahead.

As many of you may already be aware, the school has a Twitter account and Facebook page and these platforms will now be trialled to inform parents of school events and all non-urgent messages.

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The links for both of these are below:

Twitter: @ValleyPrimary Facebook: @valleyprimarybromley  
 <https://twitter.com/ValleyPrimary> <https://www.facebook.com/valleyprimarybromley/>

You will also recall that I recently asked parents to inform their child’s Class Teacher first thing in the morning of any changes to the end of day collection arrangements. At present, the Administrative Team can spend a large proportion of the afternoon delivering in excess of 25 messages to classrooms relating to changes to pupils’ collection arrangements. I kindly ask that it is only ***emergency*** changes to routine that are phoned through to the office.

Finally, to help our Key Stage 2 pupils develop greater independence and to prepare Year 6 pupils for secondary school, it is our expectation that the pupils themselves take responsibility for remembering their PE kit, sports kit and musical instruments. Please encourage them to double check they have all their necessary belongings before leaving for school each day.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Jackson

Headteacher