

Wednesday 6 September 2023

Introduction – Executive Headteacher

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to introduce myself to the school community as your new executive leader. I will be working alongside Mr Summerton, the Headteacher, to support the school's strategic leadership moving forward.

I am currently Executive Headteacher of St. Mary's Church of England Primary School in the city centre as well as Mason Moor Primary School in Millbrook. Both schools, over the course of a single year, have improved rapidly – with end of key stage 2 results the best on record!

A little about me: I was born and raised in Manchester and feel very proud to have come from a working-class background, where I was the first in my family to go to university. I am keen for pupils to know about my roots and to appreciate that hard work will pay off in time. Further, I am also dyslexic and so struggled with reading and writing at primary school to such an extent that I was behind academically. This inspired me to work towards the SENCo accreditation when I became a teacher – SEND is a passion of mine and one I am proud of at the other schools.

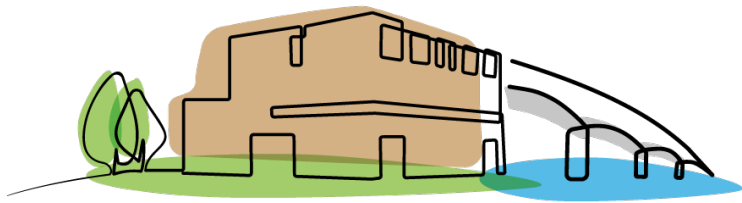
When asked by Southampton City Council to consider working at the school, I had a tour with the leadership team and found the children to be extremely polite, inquisitive, and lively! It is my hope that these attributes will lay the foundations which will enable us to build a strong working relationship this year and to move Valentine Primary School forward.

You will notice that we have updated the logo. This is integral to our new year and a fresh start. A logo of two-halves – showing our recent addition to the building alongside the historic waters that surround us in Southampton. Please, do not panic about uniform updates and changes – this will be a gradual process that will evolve over time. Though you will notice our signage changing over the coming weeks and your child will notice that their exercise books bear the new logo too!

Other changes will be communicated soon, but some for you to know about now include:

- **A new behaviour policy and simplified expectations**

Pupils will notice that the way staff log positive (and occasionally negative) behaviours will be visual to help support them in understanding **why** they are being praised or sanctioned. We will have a same-day policy for dealing with negative behaviours – which will include a 30 minute after-school detention for serious indiscretions of behaviour code. This is in-line with government guidance and supported by the DfE (Department for Education's) behaviour handbook.



VALENTINE

PRIMARY SCHOOL

- **A new curriculum for all pupils**

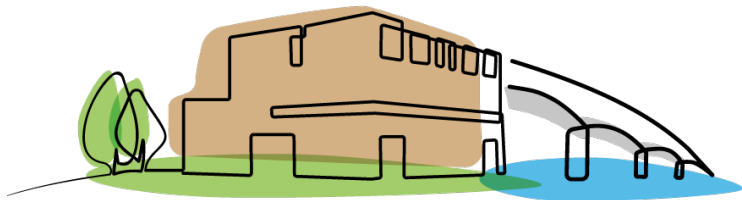
As a new member of the St. Mary's and Mason Moor family, Valentine will adopt the same curriculum – which is written for Science, Geography, History, Art, DT, PE, Music and PSHE. The curriculum is an exciting vehicle that enables pupils to learn and do more. This will culminate in exciting days for you to come and view your child's work as well as home-learning projects that can win prizes!

As a parent you will be able to keep abreast of learning in the classroom from our weekly newsletter. In addition, a new website (going live in September/October) will contain all of the knowledge organisers across the curriculum – which means you'll have access at home to your child's learning.

In the coming weeks, we will hold our first Parent Forum – which is a monthly meeting with the leadership team – for you to listen to what we have been doing as a school as well to ask questions and provide feedback.

We have made some changes to our parental complaints policy – available from the website – which means we handle initial concerns and wider complaints differently. It is important that we are transparent and committed to seeking a resolution to issues presented, therefore we ask that this is followed. Please see the parental complaint escalation below:

Parent expresses dissatisfaction and want to talk to the school	Speaks to Class Teacher	Class Teacher records concerns on the proforma – issue is hopefully resolved.
Parent makes a formal complaint to the school	Escalated to Year Leader	YL investigates and responds with a letter to the parent outlining the steps taken to move forward.
Parent is still unhappy with the outcome from the Year Leader	Escalates to Deputy Headteacher	DHT invites the parent in – recorded on the proforma - responds with a letter to the parent outlining the steps taken to move forward.
Parent unhappy with outcome from Deputy Headteacher - escalates to Headteacher or Executive Headteacher	Headteacher or Executive Headteacher meets with the parent and those involved to seek resolution. A written outcome to the parent follows.	
Escalates to Chair of Governing Body	In extreme circumstances, the CoG or a representative will meet with the parent. A hearing will take place with a written outcome.	



VALENTINE

PRIMARY SCHOOL

During meetings with ANY staff member, we will record your concerns and comments as well as the next steps we've agreed on a form. You will be asked to sign this as an statement of fact and this will be stored on the school's system.

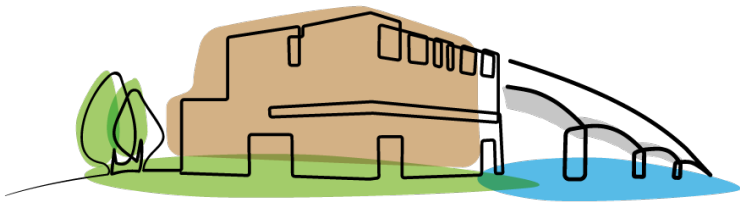
During the INSET days, staff have received training on new systems, procedures and expectations ready for the children to return. In addition to the curriculum updates, senior leaders have updated the values we share for the children – which are listed below:

Valentine Primary School's mission statement:

Valentine Primary School is devoted to nurturing each child's ability to articulate ideas and understanding, through oracy, instilling a lifelong skill for success. Our curriculum extends beyond the academic, fostering the talents of the whole child. We have created an environment that enables focused learning, free from distraction. With a commitment to communication, holistic growth, and intellectual stimulation, we empower pupils to express themselves confidently, embrace diverse challenges, and thrive as well-rounded individuals. Our mission is to prepare them for a dynamic world by providing a platform for their character, emotional, and social development.

Our 'I DREAM' values:

I		Independent Being independent learners empowers us to explore, discover, and solve problems, fostering lifelong skills for personal growth.
D		Determined Being determined learners fuels our resilience, pushing us to overcome obstacles and achieve goals with unwavering dedication and success.
R		Reflective Being reflective learners allows us to learn from experiences, to make better choices and continuously improve.
E		Enquiring Being enquiring learners' sparks curiosity, driving us to ask questions, seek knowledge, and develop critical thinking skills.
A		Ambitious Cultivating ambition in class ignites a desire for mastery, pushing us to pursue excellence, take risks, and to be the best we possibly can be.
M		Motivated Being motivated is essential for success, it fuels perseverance, focus, and the drive to overcome setbacks on the path to achievement.



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PRIMARY SCHOOL

Before the end of the week, parents and carers will receive a calendar for Autumn and Spring Term alerting you to assemblies, workshops for parents and events being held at the school. Put a copy on your fridge and make sure that, if you can, you attend as much as possible.

I am really looking forward to working with you at Valentine Primary School this year and seeing your child flourish at this wonderful school.

Yours sincerely,

DJ Constable-Phelps .

Mr D Constable-Phelps
Executive Headteacher

