

MCi/jbr

28th June 2010

Dear Parent/Carer

Along with this letter your child's Mini School will have enclosed the latest report which will be the Term 6 report and so the final one for the 2009-10 academic year. I am sure that families and students will be able to look at the assessments made for each subject from Term 2 through to this latest Term 6 assessment and form a judgement as to how close these assessments are to the targets which were set at the start of the year. This is something that each Mini School tracks very carefully on a student by student basis.

With this letter you will also find issue 3 of our '*Pent Valley Together with the Community*' flier. Again I will remind all readers that if they are involved in any community activities and want to use our flier to promote or advertise their work we would be more than happy to receive details of this for inclusion in a future copy.

New Behaviour policy - In the last letter I explained that we have been reviewing our behaviour policy by consulting with staff and students. An important part of this was us finding out from parents what their views were too. I explained in last term's letter that due to the low response rate we had decided to extend our consultation through to Friday 14th May 2010. I want to thank parents for the additional responses received as a result of this extension. Overall these responses along with those received from students and staff were compiled at the end of last term and launched as our new **Personal Responsibility** charter which has now been issued to each student on a laminated card which carries the following statements

Respect	Treat all members of our community fairly
Empathy	Be considerate towards others
Success	Work to the best of your ability
Preparation	Bring correct resources for learning
Environment	Look after our school
Communication	Use appropriate language and be polite
Technology	Use technology creatively and responsibly

Part of this work has been an increased emphasis on students taking responsibility for their own actions. Alongside this there is also an increased role for all teachers to take direct action when a student either breaks one of the aspects from the charter or indeed performs well against it. This has included encouraging all teachers to make contact with home and speak with parents and carers directly. This has been as a direct response to parents' comments asking to be informed at a much earlier stage especially in relation to inappropriate behaviours. One of the consequences of this changed emphasis though will be that families will begin to receive many more contacts from school. In order to manage this increased level of communication we have asked teachers to ensure that if they are telephoning families they do not do this after 6.30 pm.

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With e-mail communications we have asked that no e-mails are sent to either families or students between the hours of 9pm in the evening and 7am in the morning. At this early stage in term 1 I can confirm that there has been a large increase in numbers of telephone calls being made to parents and carers and feedback from families has been very positive

OFSTED Inspection - Last term on the 6th and 7th May we had an inspection of the school. Overall the report which has now been published was very positive indeed and has recognised the tremendous improvements in the school since the last inspection in 2007. The vast majority of the areas the team inspected received a judgement of **GOOD** with one area being judged as **OUTSTANDING**. All the remaining areas were judged as being at least **SATISFACTORY**. A very pleasing aspect of the report was that no aspect or area of the school was judged as weak or inadequate which are also judgements which OFSTED can make. A full copy of the report is enclosed with this letter along with a letter which the inspectors write directly to the students themselves. I would encourage families to read through the report and letter so that all can appreciate the improvements which have taken place over the past three years and which all have worked so hard to achieve. Of course our expectation is that by our next OFSTED our report will be even more positive.

Incident at school - Parents and families will have probably become aware of an incident which occurred in school on Wednesday 16th June towards the end of the lunch break. The incident has received both local and national press interest. Unfortunately on this afternoon a very small group of students started to make racist chants towards some of our non English students. There was no physical aggression but the chants were offensive and racist. Unfortunately one of the non English students returned the insults again making racist remarks. As is often the case in schools when such events take place a large crowd of students assembled as this was a very unusual event for us at Pent Valley. As the crowd was very large, staff started to disperse the crowd and as this coincided with the end of lunch it became easier to move all the students on. Unfortunately a small number of students did not follow the initial instructions to move to lessons. As a result of this incident all the students involved in racist remarks or chanting were excluded from school. We used our CCTV to ensure that the correct students were identified. During our investigations it was also reported to us that comments were being left on a 'Facebook' page which were also of a racist nature. This resulted in us involving the police as the publication of racist materials is an offence. These students have also been excluded and the police have agreed to also take action. Although this was a very unfortunate incident I do believe it gave us the opportunity to again stress how as a school we will not tolerate or accept racism in any form. Indeed as a school we pride ourselves on how we have built up a very diverse student community which completely reflects the Folkestone community which we serve. This is a strength that the OFSTED inspectors also recognised. The aspect that we are most proud of is that despite this very inclusive approach we have still achieved the best examination results, best attendance and lowest exclusion rates of any of the High schools and academies in Shepway and in fact now wider afield too.

Punctuality to school - I want to remind families that we expect students to arrive to school by 8.45 am at the latest in order for them to arrive to their lessons at 8.50 am for a prompt start. All of this term we have been taking the names of all students who arrive after 8.45 am and persistent offenders have received letters home and these letters will outline the intention to consider making referrals which may lead to families having to pay fines.

Yours faithfully

MR M CITRO
Headteacher
PENT VALLEY TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE