

Ref: RH/PSH

18 May 2016

Dear Parent/Carer

The Vale Academy honours those who fell at the Somme. To mark the centenary of the Battle of the Somme, The Royal British Legion is calling on communities across the country to commemorate those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

As part of the nation's Remembrance of the Battle of the Somme, The Vale Academy is inviting students and parents to take part in its commemoration event at the academy on Friday 1 July. The event will run from 7.15am. Students will need to arrive by 7.15am and assemble near the staffroom. Parents are welcome to join us, but cars will need to be removed from Westmoor car park by 8.20am. The event is at this time to coincide with the time 100 years ago when the soldiers went 'over the top'.

The Battle of the Somme took place from 1 July to 18 November 1916 and has come to symbolise the enormous losses and dreadful conditions of the First World War.

As the nation's custodian of Remembrance, The Royal British Legion is asking the country to commemorate the sacrifices of those who fell at the Battle of the Somme by holding their own Remembrance event.

Almost every community across the UK was deeply affected by the loss of men who had gone to fight at the Battle of the Somme, especially areas which saw heavy losses from the Pals battalions. The Pals battalions were groups of friends, teammates in sports clubs and colleagues, who had joined together, fought together and often died together.

Local men fought in The Lincolnshire Regiment and in The Grimsby Chums. Your family may well have relatives who fought at The Somme and who you would like to remember.

The Vale Academy Remembrance event is one of many taking place across the country and will be a chance for people to acknowledge the sacrifice of those who died. If you would like to take part in our event please complete the attached slip and return it to the Main Office by Friday 10 June.

Yours faithfully



Mrs N Williams
Principal

The Somme Commemoration – 1 July 2016

Name Form

I would like to attend the event starting at 7.15am.

I would like to buy breakfast in the canteen after the event. Yes

No

Please return to the Main Office

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SOMME 100

- The Battle of the Somme is synonymous with the nation's Remembrance of the First World War and the futility of trench warfare.
- Fighting at the Battle of the Somme began on 1 July 1916 and lasted four and a half months.
- In total 60 nations from across the British Empire and Europe were involved in the fighting across a 25 kilometre front.
- There were almost 60,000 British and Imperial casualties on the first day of the battle, of which nearly 20,000 were killed.
- At the start of the battle most of the British Army had been an inexperienced mass of volunteers. Going over the top at the Somme was the first taste of battle for many men as a large number were part of "Kitchener's Volunteer Army", which was formed by Pals battalions, mainly recruited from the North of England.
- The Pals battalions were made up of groups of friends, teammates in sports clubs and colleagues, who had joined together expecting to fight alongside each other. The heavy losses in one battalion had a profound effect on Britain and were felt locally and nationally.
- Of the approaching half a million British and Imperial casualties suffered in the 141 day battle, a third died. When the offensive finally came to a halt on 18 November 1916, the Battle of the Somme had claimed a million casualties; 430,000 from Commonwealth countries.