

## *Summer Term 2021*

### *This term in school...*

*Welcome to my Headteacher's Letter. Sent home termly it will let you know what's happening in school: at a leadership level, for the whole school and in the classroom.*

As we approach the end of the year, I would like to use this term's letter to share staffing information for September 2021. Welcome to new Year 3 parents who will be reading my Headteacher's Letter for the first time.

As I come to end of my eighth year as headteacher at Amherst, I reflect on it being like no other in my career. For those of you that read my summer term letter in 2020 will notice I said the same words at the end of last year!

I would like to share the staffing structure for next year and which teacher will teach your child. You will notice that we have four new teachers joining us in September.

Miss Apps is leaving Amherst at the end of this year to take up a part time position at Sussex Road Primary School in Tonbridge. Miss Apps has been at Amherst for thirteen years. As you will know if your child has been taught by Miss Apps, she is an amazing teacher. She cares deeply about each child in her class and goes above and beyond to make their year with her a success. We will miss her so much and wish her every success in her new job. Good luck Miss Apps!

Miss Parish and Mrs Davies will be commencing their maternity leaves next year. Miss Parish and Mr Barratt's baby is due any day now. Mrs Davies' later in September. I am sure you will join me in wishing them lots of luck as they begin their journey as parents for the first time.

Mrs Holmes (Inclusion Manager) has relocated to Canterbury and will be leaving us at the end of the year. Mrs Holmes has worked at Amherst since September 2014. She has been a fantastic Inclusion Manager supporting so many children and families over the years. We will miss her greatly and wish her every success with her new life in Canterbury.

We have been busy recruiting since February and I am excited to share with you the new additions to our teaching team.

Miss Harvey will be entering her fifth year of teaching. She has a keen interest in English and RE. She has recently completed a leadership role within her school to lead a project based on assessment for learning.

Mr Brown will be starting his teaching career at Amherst. He has completed his training at Lady Bowell's School. He is a keen runner and member of Tonbridge Athletics Club, representing Kent at a national level.

Miss Smith will be starting her teaching career at Amherst. Miss Smith has already been working at Amherst this year as a TA in Year 6. She qualified from The University of Winchester in 2020.

Mrs Bourke will be starting her teaching career at Amherst. She has completed her training at Green Street Green Primary School. She has a keen interest in children's literature and previously worked for two years in children's publishing. She is a keen singer (Grade 8) and a qualified dance teacher.

We have appointed Mrs Billing as our new Inclusion Manager. Mrs Billing has over ten years teaching experience and has completed Level 7 Post Graduate Diploma SpLD in 2020.

I look forward to helping all our new staff make a positive start in September and ensuring their first year at Amherst is a successful one.

### **Staffing structure for 2021/22**

#### **Year 3**

Miss Wonnacott - Year Group Leader – teaching Hazel Class

Mrs Wheeler – teaching Maple Class

Mrs Bourke – teaching Beech Class

#### **Year 4**

Mr Clarke - Year Group Leader - teaching 3W

Miss Foinette (Mon – Wed) and Mrs Siddorns (Thurs and Fri) – teaching 3A

Miss Smith – teaching 3S

#### **Year 5**

Mrs Archer - Year Group Leader – teaching 4SF

Miss Jones (Assistant Headteacher) – teaching 4W

Miss Steptowe – teaching 4C

#### **Year 6**

Mr Barratt - Year Group Leader – teaching 5A

Miss Harvey – teaching 5J

Mr Brown – teaching 5B

Paired teaching or catch up programmes will be provided by Mrs Carver (Monday) and Mrs Fox (Thursday). PPA and Early Career Teacher mentor cover will be provided across the school by Mrs Wisdom (two days), Mrs Huntley (2 days), Mrs Fox (one day), Mrs Lester (two days) and Mrs Rawlins (one day). Mrs Carver will provide PPA and Assistant Headteacher release time for 5J one day a week.

When I look at our teaching team for September, I am immensely proud that our three new Year Group Leaders (Miss Wonnacott, Mr Barratt and Mrs Archer) started their teaching careers at Amherst. It has been wonderful to see them develop as teachers and now progress to a leadership role within the school. One of my main strategies to running a successful school continues to be to recruit and retain outstanding teachers. Our middle leadership structure is an excellent retention tool and provides those teachers with leadership experience and opportunities. If they decide to progress further in school leadership their experience gained at Amherst puts them in a strong position to do so.

I would like to take this opportunity to praise the Year 6 children and staff for putting together such an incredible production of Aladdin. The show was filmed on Tuesday evening and we can't wait to share with Year 6 parents the end product. I am always amazed at the depth of talent and confidence that the children demonstrate. Despite not having an audience, they still created a wonderful atmosphere. It was great to see so many children enjoying performing and working together as a team.

Thank you to our incredible PTA team that have now raised just over £150,000 to enable our Grand Designs building project to become a reality. We have recently had planning permission approved and now move to the next phase of going out to tender. The new building will provide much needed additional teaching space during the day and a permanent home for our Breakfast and After School Clubs. Thank you to all parents that have contributed so generously through the wide range of virtual events that have been held over the last 18 months. Your support for current and future Amherst pupils is greatly appreciated.

At the time of writing this letter there is still much uncertainty about the COVID procedures and protocols that schools may need to follow in September. Schools will most likely find out from the DfE in late August.

My hope is that September is very much back to normal. We will know a little more on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> July. Regarding Sports Day, we will wait to see what changes are planned for 19<sup>th</sup> July and then review our options about parents attending. We will communicate more when procedures are confirmed.

If I do not see you before the end of term, I hope you all have a wonderful summer holiday.

Best wishes

Mr Reid