

Summer Term 2022

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.

Welcome to new Year 3 parents who will be reading my Headteacher's Letter for the first time. As we approach the end of the year, I would like to use this term's letter to share staffing information for September 2022.

As I come to end of my ninth year as headteacher at Amherst, I reflect on what has been another highly successful year. I was pleased that our recent Ofsted inspection recognised our many strengths. The strong sense of community and focus on ensuring we 'Inspire Every Pupil' is key to our success.

Amherst School is a warm and welcoming community where leaders do whatever it takes to help every child flourish. Pupils love their time at school, not least because of the enormous range of opportunities on offer.

Pupils describe the school as a special place to be. This environment helps pupils to become remarkably confident and self-assured. Their exceptional behaviour and attitudes reflect the school's values of trust, kindness, determination, politeness, fairness and cooperation.

Leaders have planned a broad and varied curriculum. Pupils develop a love of learning due to engaging experiences within and beyond the school.

As a leadership team, we will continue to move the school forward incorporating any suggested areas to develop further. As always, we will do things carefully and thoughtfully ensuring improvements to our curriculum have longevity and integrity.

I would like to share the staffing structure for next year and which teacher will teach your child.

Staffing structure for 2022/23

Year 3

3W - Miss Wonnacott - Year Group Leader – teaching Dragonfly Class

3H - Miss Harvey – teaching Grasshopper Class

3CL - Mrs Carver (Mon – Wed) and Mrs Lester (Thurs and Fri) – teaching Bumblebee Class

Year 4

4C - Mr Clarke - Year Group Leader - teaching 3B

4SF - Miss Foinette (Mon – Wed) and Mrs Siddorns (Thurs and Fri) – teaching 3W

4DB - Mrs Davies (Mon – Wed) and Mrs Barratt (Miss Parish) (Thurs and Fri) – teaching 3MW

Year 5

5A - Mrs Archer - Year Group Leader – teaching 4C

5J - Miss Jones (Assistant Headteacher) – teaching 4S

5S - Mrs Stafford (Miss Steptowe) – teaching 4SF

Year 6

6B - Mr Barratt - Year Group Leader – teaching 5A

6A - Miss Apps (Mon – Thurs) and Mr Hafford-Robson (Friday) – teaching 5J

6SB - Mr Brown – teaching 5S

SENCO

Mrs Billing – Mon, Tues, Thurs and Fri am

Paired teaching or catch up programmes will be provided by Mrs Carver (one day). PPA and Early Career Teacher mentor cover will be provided by Mr Hafford-Robson (two days), Mrs Fox (two days) and Mrs Rawlins (one day). Mr Hafford-Robson will provide PPA and Assistant Headteacher release time for 5J one day a week.

I am delighted to be able to welcome back from maternity leave Mrs Barratt and Mrs Davies. They are two highly experienced teachers who will provide high quality teaching and learning as a job share in Year 4.

I am pleased that Miss Apps, who is currently teaching 3B for Term 6, will be continuing to teach at Amherst next year in Year 6. For those of you who are not aware, Miss Apps taught at Amherst for many years up to July 2021. It is great we have her back!

We are in the fortunate position to be retaining or welcoming back existing staff in September. Recruitment and retention is a challenge locally so I am pleased to have such a strong teaching team in place. Staffing is always a key priority, as your child's teacher is the person who will have the most impact on their social, emotional and academic progress.

We have a range of staff leaving at the end of term. Mrs Wisdom has worked at Amherst for 17 years and has been a wonderful teacher. For many years, she was a key member of our Year 3 team and provided classes of children with an excellent start to their time at Amherst. She has led Art and DT providing much skill and expertise. In recent years, she has delivered PPA cover and additional cover when needed. We will miss her greatly but wish her lots of luck in her new job. I am not quite sure who now is going to be able to paint the summer production scenery to such a high standard!

We also wish the best of luck to Miss Smith who is relocating to Canterbury to continue her teaching career. Miss Smith has completed an excellent first year and I am sure will be a great success in her new school. Mrs Holden (TA) will be leaving to take up a teaching post at St. John's Primary School. This an exciting return to teaching for Mrs Holden and we wish her every success in her new role. Mr Easton (TA) is leaving to train to become a teacher. Mrs White (TA) to begin a new career in catering.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the children for their amazing efforts regarding the British Heart Foundation Swim. Currently we have raised a staggering £10,058.75. We have calculated that the children collectively swam 168,990 metres or 105 miles. This is equivalent to swimming the English Channel 5 times! Thank you to all parents and extended family for being so generous with your donations. Well done to Mrs Warne who led this event in school, providing such strong drive and enthusiasm to ensure the sponsored swim was a success. A great team effort.

I look forward to seeing many of you when attending this year's summer production 'Matilda'. The children having been working so hard and can't wait to perform. The PTA Summer BBQ on Saturday and Sports Day on Wednesday 20th July will be other highlights to look forward to.

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

Best wishes

Mr Reid