

Summer Term 2025

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 2025.

As I come to end of my twelfth year as headteacher at Amherst, I reflect on what has been another highly successful year. Our vision is to *Inspire Every Pupil* and I have observed many examples this year of children being highly engaged and enjoying their learning.

At this time of year one of my favourite jobs is to proof read the children's school reports. I take a day to work from home so I can focus; during recent years I have spent the day sitting in a field, which my mother in law owns in Underriver. I now thoroughly look forward to my report reading day and view it as relaxing rather than a chore. I enjoy the simplicity of sitting on a deck chair, reading reports in a beautiful setting. Another element of enjoyment from this task is reading the Year 6 children's reports. I am always amazed and so proud of their achievements during four years at Amherst. Starting Year 3 may seem a long time ago for the children but I remember their first year clearly. For some children the progression they have made academically, socially and emotionally is remarkable. It is always a team effort between home and school to enable all children to achieve their full potential.

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

Staffing structure for 2025/26

Year 3

3B – Mr Barratt - Year Group Leader – teaching Bramble Class

3WH – Mrs Wheeler (Mon – Wed) and Miss Huntley (Thurs and Fri) – teaching Hawthorn Class

3FB – Miss Foinette (Mon – Wed) and Mrs Barratt (Thurs and Fri) – teaching Elder Class

Year 4

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

4SL – Mrs Lester (Mon – Wed) and Mrs Stafford (Thurs and Fri) – teaching 3WH

4HR – Mr Hafford Robson – teaching 3CL

Year 5

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

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

5CS – Mrs Carver (Mon – Wed) and Mrs Siddorns (Thurs and Fri) – teaching 4C

Year 6

6A – Miss Wonnacott (to become Mrs Adams from September) - Year Group Leader – teaching 5J

6N – Miss Nicholl – teaching 5HR

6DT – Mrs Thomas (Mon - Wed) and Mrs Davies (Thurs and Fri) – teaching 5A. Mrs Thomas is returning from maternity leave in January 2026. Mrs Fox will be teaching 6DT (Mon – Wed) for the autumn term.

Inclusion Manager

Miss Watson – Mon, Tues, Thurs and Fri. Miss Watson will be teaching 5J on Wednesdays.

PPA cover will be provided by Mrs Fox, Mrs Carver and Mrs Lester.

Recruitment and retention are a challenge 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 several staff who are leaving and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their hard work.

As mentioned in a previous newsletter Mrs Billing has been appointed as the Assistant Headteacher and SENCO at Bishop Chavasse Primary School in Tonbridge. This is an exciting promotion for Mrs Billing and we are proud to have grown another leader to contribute to the local community. Mrs Billing has been a fantastic Inclusion Manager and it has been wonderful to observe her skills and knowledge develop and grow over the last four years. We wish her every success in her new role. I know she will be amazing!

I am pleased to be able to inform you that Miss Watson (current Year 6 teacher) has been appointed as our new Inclusion Manager from September. Miss Watson will be Inclusion Manager four days a week the same as Mrs Billing but will also teach 5J one day a week. I am excited to support and observe Miss Watson become an excellent Inclusion Manager over the coming months. Mrs Billing and Miss Watson have already begun transition work which is one of the advantages of appointing an internal candidate.

Miss Apps has made the decision to stop teaching at the end of the year. She is an amazing teacher and many children have benefitted from her care, guidance and expertise over the years. We hope that we might still see Miss Apps again in the role of a supply teacher if cover is needed. We wish her every success and happiness in this post Amherst chapter of her life. She will be greatly missed.

Mrs Stafford is returning from maternity leave in September and Mrs Thomas is returning from maternity leave in January.

I am pleased to be able to inform you that we have appointed Miss Georgie Nicholl as a full-time teacher from September. She is currently in her third year of teaching at a school in Wimbledon. Miss Nicholl is originally from Tunbridge Wells having attended Benenden School as a pupil. The children will get to meet her on transition morning on Thursday. We look forward to welcoming her to the Amherst team.

We are also saying goodbye to Mrs Tallboy, who has worked at Amherst for seven years and Mrs DeCleyne, who has worked at Amherst for one year, (both teaching assistants) who will be leaving us at the end of the year. Thank you to both of them for all their hard work and the wonderful support they have provided to many children. Both will be greatly missed. Mrs Tallboy in particular has had a huge impact on our school library which we are very grateful for. Mrs Tallboy has supported a range of children during her seven years and had a positive impact on them all. We wish them every success and happiness in the future.

I am pleased to be able to inform you that Ms Kitto and Mrs Morrish (current teaching assistants) will be leaving their role to both train as teachers at Amherst next year. We look forward to supporting and mentoring them in this exciting start to their teaching training.

Thank you to all staff – teachers, teaching assistants, kitchen, midday team, breakfast club, after school club, office/reception and premises/cleaning team who are vital to the children's success and smooth running of the school. I would also like to thank music teachers, sports coaches and volunteers that have helped contribute to our superb educational offer.

I look forward to seeing many of you when attending this year's Sports Day on Friday 4th July and the summer production 'Aladdin'. The children having been working so hard and can't wait to perform.

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

Best wishes

Mr Reid