



Alameda Middle School

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17th July 2020

Weekly Update

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of term, I would like to thank you for your support this year, particularly during the final term. It has been a difficult time for everyone and I do understand how this has resulted in particular challenges for parents juggling their own work demands with managing home learning.

Welcome Back

This week it has been wonderful to welcome back four of our excellent teachers from maternity leave. It has been great to see Mrs How, Mrs Burt, Mrs Store and Mrs Piazza. They are all looking forward to returning in September and working with the children again. We would like to say thank you to both Mrs O'Grady and Mr Farr who have done a fantastic job as year leaders this year in the absence of Mrs How and Mrs Burt.

Farewell

We also say goodbye to two of our teachers today. **Mr Farr** leaves us to take up a new post. We have really appreciated his excellent maths teaching over the last few years at Alameda as well as his work this year with Year 8 as year leader. Good luck Mr Farr.

It is also time to say goodbye to **Miss Lamacraft** who retires from teaching to run her very successful dog training business. Miss Lamacraft joined Alameda in January 1992 making her one of our longest serving teachers. She has brought a lot to the school, first as a PE teacher, then head of PE and more recently as ICT subject leader. Always full of energy and enthusiasm, I know she will be missed by staff and pupils. We all wish her the very best.

September Update

I would like to thank those of you who have written messages of support thanking us for the level of detail in the information we sent out and acknowledging the challenges faced in making sure we can open school safely for all pupils in September. Thank you also to those I have spoken to who have expressed this. We are really looking forward to being able to welcome the children back. I am aware that some families, particularly of pupils in key stage 3 have some concerns about pupils being based with form tutors. There are some parts of our plans that I want to clarify and emphasise where perhaps they were not clear enough.

- All plans are subject to change. The guidance published on the 2nd of July states this.
- Safety and the wellbeing of our school community are our main priorities and we need to establish these in order to make sure learning is effective.

- Our plans are a starting point – with safety at the centre with the aim to establish routines and expectations. From here, we will be able to adapt and introduce changes. This will include more use of equipment, practical work and a return to a more “normal” timetable.
- We have opted for bubbles based on form groups as we believe this is the safest and most appropriate thing for Alameda. The guidance states:
 - *“In secondary schools, and certainly in the older age groups at key stage 4 and key stage 5, the groups are likely to need to be the size of a year group to enable schools to deliver the full range of curriculum subjects and students to receive specialist teaching. If this can be achieved with small groups, they are recommended. At primary school, and in the younger years at secondary (key stage 3), schools may be able to implement smaller groups the size of a full class. If that can be achieved, it is recommended, as this will help to reduce the number of people who could be asked to isolate should someone in a group become ill with coronavirus (COVID-19).”*

I would like to make this last point a little clearer and to elaborate on the timetable planning a little more.

- Pupils are based in one room (minimising pupils’ movement around school is advised in the guidance). We have opted to start in September with pupils being taught for most of the time by their form tutor. Just to clarify, this is **most** of the time, not all of the time. There will be some staff movement round groups (always socially distanced) and also some staff teaching via Google Classroom linked with the form teacher. Our Year 5 team is a “primary team” and so this applies much less to them, with their main attached staff delivering PE and Google Classroom being used to support with French. Years 6,7 and 8 all have teachers experienced in leading or teaching maths, English and PE who will lead some lessons via Google Classroom with the form tutor and also rotate round groups to provide more specialist input and feedback. French will be supported via Google Classroom lessons too.
- Planning is led by subject leaders.
- This is just a starting point. While we have focused on safety, establishing routines and expectations and building relationships when we return, we also have a more traditional timetable written which we will hope to transition to over time. This will be gradual with the introduction of more teachers rotating as we review.

I wanted to emphasize the final points to clarify this. Of course, we will continue to review and fully understand the importance of ensuring pupils make good progress.

Wow awards

During recent months, with restrictions on our interactions and the passing of paper and trying to minimise movement between groups, the logistics of organising “Wow” awards have been more challenging. The pupils have, however, continued to produce some fantastic work both in school and at home. While much of this has been acknowledged through the success updates from our year leaders or some other ways, such as Instagram, I also wanted to add some “Wow” awards. You should have started to receive these.

Thomas R	Excellent 500 word story
Jake G	Excellent English work, using formal language effectively
Anabel D	Science of Christmas – holiday task
Riley S	Excellent English work about the “lost thing”
Matthew B	Excellent “Where I’m from” poem
Holly W	Excellent “Where I’m from” poem
Luke C	Excellent “Where I’m from” poem
Felicity R	Excellent “Where I’m from” poem
Holly V	Excellent “Where I’m from” poem
Izzy W	Excellent “Where I’m from” poem
Elliot W	Excellent “Where I’m from” poem
Jorja M	Fantastic information leaflet about turtles. The effort and presentation of which, in terms of handwriting and neatness was great.
Jonah F	An AMAZING design of a sustainable house – he has included sustainable materials, alternative/renewable energy resources and explained very design feature and decision he has made in terms of the science.
Austin C	An amazing sustainable house design with very modern features such as a rainwater and grey water recovery system, and an Eco-concrete base and use of solar thermal glass!
Zara C	Excellent “dragons den” style video production for a product designed to help an older person! It was beautifully presented and a creative idea.
Thomas R	Turned an investigation about how absorbent different nappies are into one about paper so he could actually do it at home! He made a detailed prediction and evaluated well, recognising the importance of repeats!
Harry B	A very unique take on a “research and present your findings” task.
Aiden G	Fantastic anti Racism piece
Ben F	Fantastic Charles Darwin presentation
Georgina M	Amazing English work. Some very creative work, and excellent understanding of tricky to understand ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’.
Austin W	Fantastic art work – picture of himself walking a beautiful dog
Alice M	Fantastic art work – study of artists Craig martin and Keith Haring
Sam R	Fantastic art work – self portrait
Ella T	Fantastic art work – anime art picture
Eve M	Fantastic art work – wonderful drawing of an eye
Lily F	Fantastic art work- study of artists Craig martin and Keith Haring
Freya E	Fantastic art work anime art picture
Elizabeth C	Excellent maths work on equations
Austin W	Study of Tensegrity Sculpture
Max R	Fantastic French video
Chloe C	AMAZING explanation of how she would stage a scene from ‘Romeo and Juliet’ – clear explanations, great understanding of stage craft, and incredible progress with punctuation and spelling accuracy.
Jago J	Excellent efforts and significant improvements in his written work in particular his work on ‘A Christmas Carol.’
Luke L	Excellent efforts and improvement is his written work especially his review of ‘The Polar Express.’
Elliot W Ella-May S	Excellent efforts and well-developed, thoughtful reading assessments based on the novel ‘Stone Cold’
Oliver B Emily C Anna H	Excellent letters about homelessness to Boris Johnson

Chloe H Jaden I Jacob P Lewis R	
Cruz C Hugo B Charlotte B Sophia B Summer D Freja G	Fantastic English and geography work. Great dancing and overall wonderful attitude towards learning and community spirit.
Luke L	Excellent restaurant design with translation into Hindi
Ashley C	For producing consistently excellent work during lockdown, with an increasing range of accurate and advanced punctuation used. Congratulations on making excellent progress, and using this time to enter the whole school writing challenge in addition to the regular work.
Adrian N	Excellent French work about monuments in Paris
Poppy P	Excellent French work about monuments in Paris
Louis D	Excellent work throughout lockdown
Zara C	Excellent "Black Lives Matter" inspired piece of writing.
Wilson W	He won the Year 8 section of the Coding competition held by Bedford Branch of British Computing Science organisation .

It is a shame that I will not have been able to invite those of you receiving "Wow" awards to come to see me to chat about your achievements and take your picture but I would like to take this opportunity to say "well done" to all of you.

I hope you were also able to see the year group award celebrations and PE awards. Well done to everyone.

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you once again for your support and to say how much I am looking forward to everyone returning to school in September, after what I hope will be a safe, enjoyable and much needed break for our staff and the children.

I would like to thank you once again for your continued support

Yours sincerely



Miss M Warner
Headteacher