

The Firs, Keeping in Touch!

Friday 19th June 2020

Well done to our returning children!

It has been fantastic to welcome our Saplings, Pine and Y1 children, who came back into school this week. I want to say a huge well done to them because everything must have seemed very different in school at first but children have been so sensible and have followed all the safety rules so well.

It has been lovely to see all their happy smiles and watch them having fun with their friends at playtime. Children have got back into their work in school, showing they have their growth mindset very much switched on! We are very very proud of all of you, well done!

Learning at Home

The learning packs for next week were emailed out yesterday and the requested printed versions will be available, outside the school today. The pack for next week is 'Summer Week 9- week beginning 22/6/20'.

As the courtyard outside school has been divided in to two, please see the information below regarding the arrangements for collecting packs and which entrance to use:

Dry weather arrangements

- Saplings packs - please enter by Service Road gate
- Pine packs - please enter by Service Road gate
- Year 1 packs - please enter by Service Road gate
- Year 2 packs - please enter by Service Road gate

- Year 3 packs - please enter by Station Road gate
- Year 4 packs - please enter by Station Road gate

Wet weather arrangements

All packs will be on tables in the Pine outdoor area.

Everyone will need to enter by the Service road gate.

Please note:

- There is a **one way system** on entry and exit
- **Please avoid** the current staggered pick up and drop of times:
 - 8:45 - 9:25
 - 3:00 - 3:35

If your child is in Year R or Year 1 and has returned to school, please **do not** collect a learning pack for next week. They will be given a pack by us like this week.

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Transition Plans for YR, Y1, Y2 and Y3 Children

I wanted parents to know that in the light of the situation we are in and to try to make the eventual return of all our children as positive as possible, we will not be making any changes to the class groups children are in, as they move up into the next year group.

We hope parents will welcome the fact that children will know who they will be with next year and that this will be a little bit of 'certainty' in these difficult times. We will be able to let you know which class your child will be in and with which teacher soon and certainly before the transition activities mentioned in the section below.

Return / Visits to school for Y2, Y3 and Y4 Children

Last week I mentioned that we were deciding on a way forward, to explore what we can do to get any Y2, Y3 and Y4 children back into school for even a very short visit. I also mentioned that this is particularly an issue for Y4, given that this is their last year with us.

The priority for the Government is that YR and Y1 pupils should be in school and so we feel we should organise a short visit for Y2 and Y3 pupils that we can manage to facilitate, whilst continuing with our current provision. These visits will be in small groups of no more than 15, for approximately 1 hour on the school field.

We are also planning to conduct a video conference opportunity for each Y2, Y3 and Y4 class, where children can all get together with their teacher and for Y2 and Y3, the teacher they will be with in September too.

For year 4 however, we feel that they need a more significant amount of time in which to conclude their time at The Firs and to provide opportunities to talk to Alameda staff to support the transition process. We consider that this is very important for their well being and to prepare them for their move to their next school.

For this reason, we have decided that we will close the school to YR and Y1 pupils on the last two days of term, Thursday 16th and Friday 17th July. This will allow us to welcome back our Y4 children for two days, whilst still maintaining the vital Key Worker Provision. (Saplings provision will also be unaffected).

I hope this does not create too many difficulties and is not too disruptive for YR and Y1 parents but we really feel it is vital for our Y4 children to get a chance to be in school and we hope that it being the last two days of term, the impact on our younger children and their families is minimised.

I will be writing separately to Y2, Y3 and Y4 parents early next week, to give more details about our plans, including the dates and times of all the opportunities mentioned above.



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Sticking to drop off and pick up times

Thank you so much to all our parents for observing the social distancing and the one way systems that we introduced. We really appreciate your support with this. We introduced the staggered times to contribute to the social distancing effort and we would be very grateful if parents could try to stick to their times so that they do not arrive early, during another group's slot.

Social time indoors at lunchtime

It was hard designing the rota for lunchtime play as the need to provide bubbles with separate play areas has meant that the use of the outdoor areas needs to be rationed, with children spending some time playing outside and some time playing inside. In addition, another issue is restricting children's access to 'wet play' games in order to make cleaning of items manageable. For this reason, there will be times when the lunchtime supervisor may use a video to give the children something to watch, to break up that time when they are indoors.

As I said previously, it has been lovely to see more children back in school and we very much look forward to seeing some more of our children in the coming weeks.

Take care everyone.

Adam Campbell
Headteacher