

Kindness Respect Ambition

Alban Wood Primary School and Nursery Newsletter

Edition 3 6th October 2023

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A NOTE FROM MRS PINDER

Thank you all the parents that attended our additional provision meetings this week. It was lovely to see so many of you on Wednesday. We hope to continue these meetings each term, if they are well attended.

Next week, information regarding booking a slot to meet your child's teacher for parent's evening will be coming out.

This gives parents, teachers and pupils the opportunity to discuss progress, behaviour and attitude and to work towards the achievement of agreed targets.

ATTENDANCE 2023-24

Aim: over 96%

Rec- 95.9%

Year 1-95.7%

Year 2-98.3%

Year 3-95.2%

Year 4-96.6%

Year 5-96.7%

Year 6-97.9%

Whole School-96.1%

This week the whole school attendance is 96.1%. Our school attendance target is 96%, so as you can see, we have hit our target.



DATES FOR THE DIARY

9th Oct - Year 3 Trip to Chiltern Open Air Museum
10th Oct - Hello Yellow Day
12th October - Year 4 Tri-golf at Future Academies -
12:30pm - 3:00pm
13th Oct - Girls Football Friendly Match - 2:30pm
16th October - Harvest Assembly
16th Oct - Parent Consultation - 3:30 - 6:30pm
18th Oct - Parent Consultation - 3:30 - 6:30pm
19th Oct - ALP Wellbeing Day
23rd - 27th Oct - Half Term
6th Nov - Year 6 Health Screening
9th/10th Nov - Steve Clifford Author Visit
9th Nov - School Discos
23rd Nov - ALP Generosity Day
23rd Nov - Year 5 Fun Run at Future Academies.
7th Dec - Flu Vaccinations



Moving On 2024 or 2025



Local secondary schools will be holding their annual open evenings /events throughout September and October. I recommend that if your child is in Year 5 or 6 you consider looking around all the secondary schools in the area. More information about secondary transfer can be found at Hertfordshire Admissions. The deadline for applying for a secondary school place, if your child is in Year 6 is Tuesday 31st October 2023.

Harvest Assembly - Monday 16th October

This year we have decided again to help the Watford Foodbank who collect items to feed families in crisis in our community. The services we provide have an enormous impact on the people who use them, giving them an important breathing space at a time of great need.

We would be grateful if all donations of food are still in date!

Donations can be handed in to the class teacher from Monday 9th October to Friday 13th October inclusive.

The donations will be displayed in the hall throughout next week. It will be lovely to see the donations building up as the week progresses.

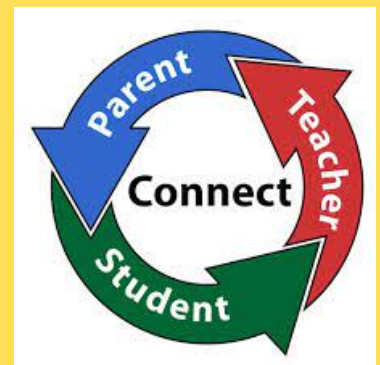
Thank you for your continued support.



Reporting an absence

My child is unable to attend school, what should I do?

Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence, preferably before 9.00am. Please make sure you state your child's name, class and the reason for absence. Please note you must call for each day of absence.



Parent Consultations

Parents' evenings are arranged termly. This gives parents, teachers and pupils the opportunity to discuss progress, behaviour and attitude and to work towards the achievement of agreed targets. These evenings are also an opportunity for you to raise questions, or give us any information which will help us teach your child more effectively.

Attendance at Parents' Evenings is monitored very carefully, as research has shown that interest shown by parents has a marked effect on pupils' behaviour, attitude and standard of work.

Alban Wood Primary School and Nursery

Holiday List and INSET Days

1 Sept 2023 - 31st Aug 2024

	Closing Date	INSET	Re-Opening
Autumn 2023		Friday 1st September	Monday 4th September
Autumn half term	Friday 20th October		Monday 30th October
Christmas 2023	Wednesday 20th December	Thursday 4th January Friday 5th January	Monday 8th January 2024
Spring half term 2024	Friday 16th February		Monday 26th February
Spring Holiday 2024	Thursday 28th March		Monday 15th April
May Day 2024	Friday 3rd May		Tuesday 7th May
Summer half term 2024	Thursday 23rd May	Friday 24th May	Monday 3rd June
Summer 2024	Friday 19th July	Monday 22nd July	

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about AMONG US

A multiplayer 'social deduction' game set in outer space, Among Us enjoyed a surge in popularity in 2020, and has since maintained a dedicated fan-base (globally, around 60 million regular players each month) thanks to its unique nature, simple premise and ease of access across numerous platforms. The game's on-screen action revolves around danger, disguise and deception – and there are certain parallels to be drawn with some of the real-life risks that parents and carers of young Among Us players need to be aware of.



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SENSITIVE PREMISE

In Among Us, up to three players are secretly assigned to be alien imposters, tasked with murdering their colleagues while the survivors try to unmask them. While the concept's not far removed from traditional games like Wink Murder or TV shows such as The Traitors, some parents may feel uncomfortable about their child playing a video game in which deception and killing are prioritised.

VIRTUAL VIOLENCE

The on-screen death of characters may be fundamental to the gameplay of Among Us, but the majority of the animations depicting this are deliberately cartoonish and only appear very briefly. However, it is worth bearing in mind that the game has a PEGI age rating of 7 – meaning that certain elements (however heavily stylised they may be) could still upset some younger players.

CHAT BETWEEN PLAYERS

With up to 15 people participating in each game online, a large part of Among Us' appeal is speculating with fellow players who the imposters might be and making accusations. This dialogue through the in-game text chat can occasionally become heated – and could, of course, involve your child being put into contact with people (including adults) who they don't know in real life.

GOING OFF PLATFORM

While Among Us provides basic ways to communicate, many gamers prefer to use external services such as Discord: a popular app which offers voice and video chat functions. These undeniably make cooperation easier, but also create a potential route for children to hear inappropriate language – or for strangers to message them privately in an environment which isn't regulated by the game itself.

IN-GAME PURCHASES

Among Us is free to download on mobile devices, and costs less than £5 to obtain on console and PC. A related longer-term pitfall, though, is that the game also includes options to pay for upgrades such as removing ads on the mobile version or adding cosmetic touches to characters (such as different costumes). It's certainly possible that a child could spend a significant sum without realising it.

Advice for Parents & Carers

CONSIDER SOFTER ALTERNATIVES

Although Among Us is hugely popular with young gamers, it's possible that some children might find the murder themes unsettling. If so, plenty of similar social deduction games are available (in both digital and traditional board game formats) which downplay the potentially grislier elements: some centre around undercover spies, for instance, and there's even a Marvel superhero-themed variant.

CHAT ABOUT CHATTING

You might feel it's prudent to talk to your child about the risks associated with voice chat while gaming, explaining in particular that strangers online aren't always who they claim to be. Keeping the conversation relaxed will reinforce your child's confidence that they can always come to you with any online concerns – not just about Among Us, but any potential future issues as well.

DISCUSS DISCORD

In general, Discord is an excellent app for keeping online communities together because of its use of dedicated individual servers, which allow comprehensive control over who can join – and who can't. Once you're familiar with the platform, you could set up a secure server for your child and their friends to communicate during games of Among Us, with no access for people they don't know.

AMONG US, AMONG FRIENDS

When your child and their friends get together, they can enjoy a private game of Among Us by choosing a 'local' lobby – that is, only people connected to the same WiFi (your home network, for example) can enter. This prevents any random online users – who may be total strangers – from joining and removes the need for voice chat, as the players are all physically in the same location.

STOP SURPRISE SPENDING

If you're concerned about the possibility of your child racking up an unexpected bill on Among Us' microtransactions, you could consider using a prepaid card with a set limit. Likewise, you could specify in the game's options that adult authorisation is required for every purchase – or you could make sure that no payment methods are enabled on the device that your child plays the game on.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Editor in Chief of gaming and esports site GGRecon and has worked in the gaming media for around four years. A regular visitor to the App Store to try out new tools, he's also a parent who understands the value of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his articles have been published on influential sites including IGN and TechRadar.

