



ALBAN WOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

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Mrs Rachel Kirk, Headteacher

WE VALUE: RESPECT, KINDNESS AND AMBITION

Monday 5th September 2016

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: Welcome Back!

I am writing to welcome you all to Alban Wood for the new academic year 2016-2017! I do hope that all of our families had restful and enjoyable holidays, and that the children are excited about returning to school. I always look forward to this time of year, seeing the children's faces full of anticipation, smart in their new uniforms and ready for new and exciting learning!

- I hope in this letter to capture just some of the exciting developments taking place this year. We certainly have much to sustain and build on, with so many successes during 2015-2016 – our Early Years Quality Mark accreditation, our Gold Investors in People award, the first year of Alban Wood Community Farm to name a few... More importantly though was our self-evaluation of the school, validated by our Hertfordshire Improvement Partner, which continues to be agreed as **Outstanding overall**, and in all separate areas of school life (leadership and management; the quality of teaching, learning and assessment; pupil personal development, behaviour and welfare; outcomes for pupils and early years provision). Our **pupil outcomes 2015-2016 were excellent** for KS2, KS1 and Early Years – a detailed letter is coming home tomorrow about these outcomes.
- Pupil, parent, staff and governor **surveys** were all completed in July 2016 – thank you so much to all of you – and I have analysed the results so that we can, as always, make best use of your feedback. A letter will come home in the next few days, but I am delighted to let you know that **100% of parents believe that teaching continues to be creative, inspiring and engaging, 98% of pupils say that learning is interesting and fun, 100% of staff would recommend our school to others and believe that we are part of a successful school, and 100% of governors enjoy their role within our school.** We were delighted to read the pupil and parent comments too: one parent writes ... *'My child is happy - I am happy! I am very happy with my child's development at Alban Wood, I am proud of the school. All staff seem very dedicated towards all children's learning and development...'* And, from one pupil ... *'It is a great place to learn with a vast amount of activities to complete'*. So, as I say, much to sustain and build on!

During **2016-2017**, there will be **three main areas** which we aim to develop as a school:

- **To establish and embed the school's best practice with assessment across all subject areas.** Last year saw new National tests for children in Years 2 and 6, and at Alban Wood we ensured that the children were prepared very thoroughly for these in order for them to achieve at their best. We will continue to build on these strengths from last year and aim to build upon work that has already begun in relation to spelling, mental maths and target learning – more information to follow in our survey letter later this week. Finally, it remains incredibly important to us as a school that our curriculum is broad and balanced, and that *all* subjects are taught and assessed at an outstanding level, so continued work will take place for assessment in all subject areas, led by our teachers across the staff.
- **To achieve a broad and balanced curriculum, which inspires pupils to achieve the highest possible outcomes in all subject areas.** Nothing is more important to us than children enjoying and progressing well in their learning. To name just a few developments within this area, this year, we hope to build on successes of our farm to develop outdoor learning further which will include a reading hut, develop a world history focus within assemblies and develop written outcomes within music.





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- **To refine coordinator team leadership and ensure that all middle leaders are empowered and accountable for the highest expectations and outcomes in all areas of school life.** This year our teams are keen to work on whole school accreditations which will continue to support practice across the curriculum as well as to further enrich it.

In all of the above, we ask for your support, and as always are open to your questions and suggestions. Specifically, there are three areas that I would be grateful if parents could get back to us on:

1) Alban Wood Community Farm. All of our animals are back from their summer holidays and I am very grateful to all of the families who cared for them so well over this period. As with last year, all of these wonderful creatures are going to need excellent care, and we are relying on family support for this each weekend. Please fill in the reply slip below if you can offer a weekend (or more!) where you could feed the animals for us on a Saturday and Sunday, and check on their wellbeing. We hope that as the year progresses we will see new animals joining us – goats, and fish in a new pond!

2) School Communication. Our school Facebook page was very successful last year, and I know that parents have all enjoyed seeing updates and especially photographs; the school website continues to have a wealth of documents and information on and is updated regularly too. Please could I ask if there are any parents who are **not happy for us to use their child's photograph on these two online spaces to let us know by Friday 9th September at the latest.** This information has gone to all new Nursery and Reception families within their welcome packs to Alban Wood. In addition to this we would like to send out more communication via email this year (we know letters sometimes get lost in book bags!). If we do not already have your email address or you have changed it please add it to the slip below and return to the school office. Thank you for your support!

3) Our PTA is a very important part of school life, organises fantastic events (Christmas Fair, Summer Fair, Easter Events and much more!) and raises such important funds for use within school (supporting the development of our farm and purchasing iPads for example). As with last year, it would be great if each class could have a parent rep (or two!). If you would like to get involved in the growing PTA please complete the slip below. If you would like to continue to be a rep from last year please also add your name.

All that remains is for me to wish you all a very happy and fulfilling year at Alban Wood! Please remember that our door is always open, so please do not hesitate to contact us should you wish to discuss anything – Mrs Martin and Mrs Jolliffe will always be happy to make an appointment for you to see a member of the Senior Leadership Team (Miss Wells, Mrs Webb or me).

Yours sincerely,

Miss Charlotte Davis
Acting Headteacher



Please return the reply slip below if you **can help with the farm** (please do!) and/or you **do not wish** your child's photograph to be used on the school's website or Facebook page and/or **you would like to volunteer to be a PTA parent class rep**.

Child's name: _____ Class: _____ Parent's name: _____

Parent's email address: _____

1) I can help with Alban Wood Community Farm, by:

- Feeding and caring for the animals at the weekend

- In another way, please detail:

2) I **do not wish** for my child's photograph to be used on the school's website.

3) I **do not wish** for my child's photograph to be used on the school's Facebook page.

4) I would like to volunteer to be a PTA class rep for my child's class.