

14 December 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

The autumn term comes to an end on Friday (17th December) and hopefully we can all enjoy some of the Christmas festivities. Once again, the national headline news has focussed on Covid-19 and the potential impact of the latest Covid variant. Thankfully, at Arbour Vale School we have other ideas, and have endeavoured to ensure we focus and celebrate the children's achievements.

The last two weeks have been somewhat hectic with Christmas celebrations, involving dress rehearsals, showtime, Christmas lunches and winning Christmas card designs.

Showtime is very important to our pupils but it is not quite the same without a live audience; however, the pupils contribution supported by staff ensured it was a performance worth videoing. I am very keen to ensure that parents have the opportunity to see the video, although this is currently proving something of a challenge, both in terms of the technology and safeguarding of children. I hope to have an update for you prior to the end of term, recognising that we might have to arrange an after school cinema on a number of different evenings, for parents to watch the video recording.

Our students take environmental green issues seriously and would no doubt impress the COP26 conference delegates. Our Christmas lunch table decoration have focussed on re-cycling resources: It is amazing how creative our students can be and all have been very competitive – I just feel sorry for the judges!

Teaching Personnel, a national recruitment agency organised a Christmas card design competition and have sponsored prizes and certificates for all participants. Arbour Vale students once again did us all proud with winning designs going to both Newbury Class and Post 16 students. The school also finished 'runners up' in the OCHAT annual Christmas card competition – a significant achievement.

The launch of the Science, Technology, Engineering (Design) & Maths (STEM) curriculum has literally 'rocketed' with a whole school, theme on 'Space'. Once again the creative minds have explored space, designing space travel and displays about astronomy and the galaxy.

This term has been extremely busy and I encourage you to visit our website www.arbourvaleschool.org for the latest good news stories and events. During the Covid-19 pandemic the website has been one of the ways in which we communicate and provide useful updates on class/school closures. Our commitment has been to remain open throughout the pandemic, but due to operational reasons, predominantly due to staff absence or government guidance, three classes during the last 2 weeks have been temporarily closed. The well-being and safety of children and staff is my primary concern and I am grateful for your support, appreciating the challenges you face with late notice to close a class. The emergency contact number to contact the school during the Christmas holiday is: **07519 130641**

Robert Warman will leave Arbour Vale at the end of this term to take up an appointment at another school. I am sure that those parents who have had children in Robert's class over the years will join me in wishing him every success for the future. I am also pleased to inform you that we have successfully recruited a newly qualified teacher, Monserrat Gonzalez to lead learning in the Eastbourne class.

There is a minor change to the school holiday dates later in this academic year, following the announcement of a national Bank Holiday to celebrate Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The school will therefore be closed on Monday 6th June following the May half term holiday week.

Arbour Vale re-opens for all pupils in the New Year for all pupils at 8.50am on Wednesday 5th January 2022. In the meantime, our very best wishes for festivities at Christmas.

Stay safe and well!

Yours sincerely



Neil Sykes
Principal