



A KELEY WOOD
SCHOOL

BACK TO SCHOOL

A guide to a smooth and safe transition





MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents & Carers,

It is such a relief to be writing to you about the (partial) re-opening of Akeley!

I should like to say how proud I am to be the Principal of this fabulous school. It is fair to say that it was only ever the buildings that were temporarily closed. I have seen a school that has continued to stay very much open – even if this was online. I have marvelled at the resilience, dedication and creativity of every member of the community at what will surely be our most daunting challenge in our lifetimes. Well done to everyone for getting to this point.

I should like to acknowledge the continued support of you the parents who have faced your own challenges at work and home. Thank you for managing new more complicated lives to help maintain the education and the wellbeing of the children.

Secondly, I should like to thank all of the staff at Akeley who have had to reinvent the way they teach their subject in a matter of days and to manage this in their own homes with all the distractions this entails. You have been awesome. Also, to the non-teaching staff who have kept the school going, kept the buildings in order and the grounds looking lovely ready for your glorious return!

The decision to re-open the school has not been taken lightly. We have consulted with all stakeholders about how best to do this to ensure the highest level of safety for your children and the adults as possible. The feedback from the pupil, staff and parental surveys has been particularly useful in guiding our thinking and planning – thank you! We have conducted a full risk assessment across all areas of the school routine and we have been working on a re-opening plan with senior leaders from across the school as well as support staff at Head Office. We feel we have left no stone unturned to introduce a raft of measures and behaviours to address the risks. The details of these is laid

out in this pack.

We have also been working imaginatively to try to replicate the normal school experience for the children. However, I would kindly ask for your patience in supporting the new routines which might not necessarily mean your children get precisely what Akeley normally offers in terms of who teaches your child, the expectations in terms of full delivery and normal school routines. These will all return in time.

It is at times like this that I am glad we belong to an international group of schools. A lot of what we have learnt about closing schools, delivering online learning and about how to open schools has been learnt from our colleagues and partners in schools in Asia especially. The best tip was to remember that the prospect of opening is often worse than the reality.

A phrase I have been using a lot recently was drawn from what I saw when the VE Day 75th Anniversary celebrations were taking place. People were asked during World War 2 to think about what their answer would be to the question: "When this is over will you be able to look back on the contribution you made and the way you behaved with pride?" I know if I put this question to anyone associated with Akeley "What did you do during lockdown that makes you proud?" they could answer resoundingly in the affirmative!

We can't wait to see you back – school buildings are soulless without humans in them.

"Be More Goose!"

Simon Antwis
Principal

RE-OPENING APPROACH & TIMELINE

In developing the plan for our return to school we have followed government guidelines, listened to your views through our Parent Survey and built on learnings from other Cognita schools across the world.

The staggered return by year groups helps us to welcome the school community back through our doors in a safe, orderly and effective manner.

The schedule for return is set out clearly below, together with new timings for the school day.

Years	Date of return	School day
Ladybirds 1 and 2	Monday 1 st June	8am - 5pm
Caterpillars and Butterflies	Monday 1 st June	8.15am - 5pm
Reception	Monday 1 st June	8.30am - 3.30pm
Year 1	Monday 1 st June	8.50am - 3.50pm
Year 6	Monday 1 st June	9.10am - 4.10pm
Key Worker Provision	Monday 1 st June	8am - 4pm
Years 2 - 5	TBC	TBC

A COMBINED TRANSITION TO TEACHING & LEARNING

As a school we are committed to balancing the needs of both the students in our physical classrooms and also those who remain in our virtual classrooms.

To do this we will:

- Continue the online educational provision for students who are not yet in the 'returning' year groups
- Provide remote resources and support for those students who have actively decided not to return to school for the time being despite being in the 'returning' year groups. This will be in the form of a "daily worksheet."
- Please note this will be on a 'best endeavours' basis. Our teachers are now spread across smaller physical classrooms (bubbles) so their capacity to also provide online teaching for these year groups is limited.



NEW GUIDANCE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

We will all have to adapt our behaviour during the school day to ensure everyone's safety.

SOCIAL DISTANCING IN THE CLASSROOM

We are following the government advice: *...early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff.*

To mitigate the risk we are following the advice that students are split into 'bubbles'.

Government guidance stipulates a maximum size of 15 per class. We have set a maximum of 15. This means that students will be assigned a class and will stay within it for the whole day, including at lunch and breaks. The teachers, learning assistants and nursery staff will also stay with them.

BREAK TIMES

We will have allocated play areas to avoid classes mixing. It's not something we do happily as playtime is a key part of learning, but it is a significant risk mitigation.

As per the Government guidance, primary age children cannot be expected to social distance. Therefore, at playtimes, they will be able to play with their friends in their bubble. We will encourage rigorous hand washing before and after playtime.

MOVING AROUND SCHOOL

Each 'bubble' will have an allocated learning space, toilets, access and play/lunch area.

We have added signage and floor markings to help everyone maintain social distancing.

PERSONAL HYGIENE

We will continue to urge children to regularly wash hands just as we did pre-lockdown. We have enough bathrooms to support this.

Extra supplies of soap and paper towels have been purchased.

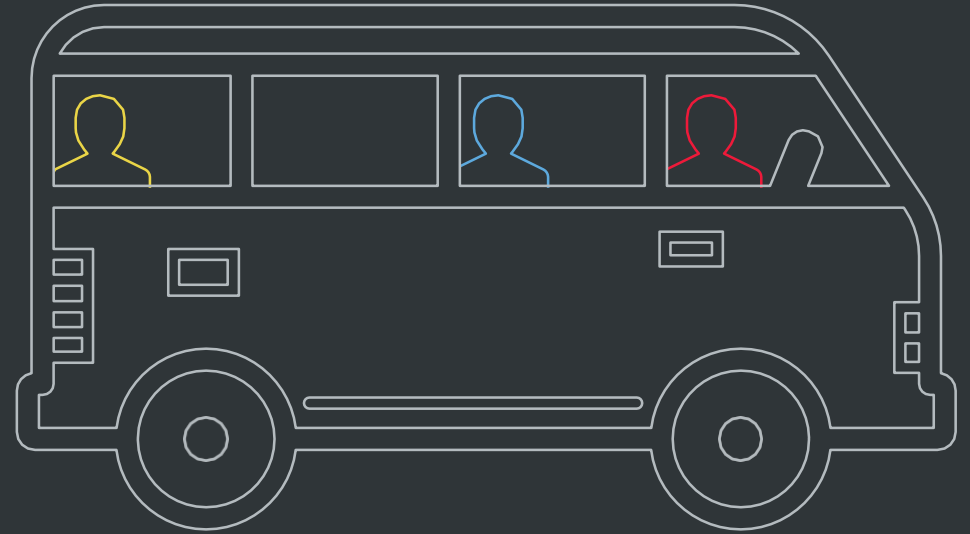
You can help by reminding your children of the need to regularly wash their hands for 20 seconds by singing happy birthday twice.

OTHER GUIDANCE

It is important that we limit equipment coming to and from school on a daily basis. The children should only come to school with their snack, lunch, water bottle and hat. Year 6 can bring a pencil case in on the first day which will then remain in school. The children will continue to access books online at home and parents should communicate with teachers through email, rather than the planner.



SCHOOL SERVICES



Transport

- As per government advice we urge you to avoid public transport, if possible. If not possible please follow guidelines around face coverings and carry hand sanitiser with you or wear gloves.
- Please follow drop off and pick up times carefully. They are designed to avoid crowding.
- We have introduced the following system to limit social contact during these times: Amended drop-off points - please follow staff guidance on drop off location when arriving at your allocated time.
- We have decided not to provide buses during this period due to the very small numbers.

Catering:

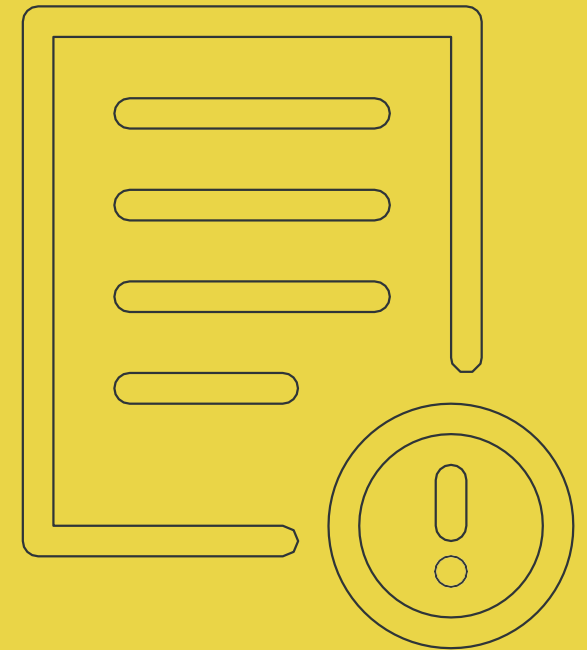
- We request that all children bring in packed lunches. Lunch will be consumed in classrooms if appropriate social distancing can't be achieved in the Hall.
- Please consider the allergies of other children and avoid packing nuts into the lunches.

Extra Curricular:

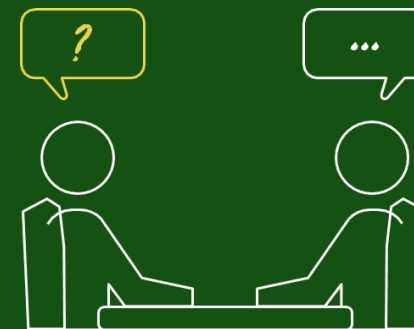
- We will not be offering before and after school care for the time being, although we are eager to offer this service as soon as is feasible
- There will be no extra-curricular clubs or events such as sports fixtures
- Extra-curricular activity is an important part of the educational experience and we hope to return to a normal schedule as soon as government guidance allows

PARENT GUIDE AT A GLANCE

1. Talk to your child about the new measures in this guide
2. Take note of any changes to the timings of the school day for your child
3. Please provide a nut free packed lunch, water bottle and snack for your child until further notice.
4. If you have decided not to send your child back, please confirm this. If you subsequently change your mind, please give us 72 hours notice.
5. Children should come to school in PE kit and bring a sunhat each day.



FAQS



WILL THE SCHOOL FEES DISCOUNT BE REMOVED?

For reception and above:

No. Although we did communicate previously that once schools re-open we would revert to normal fees we have decided to waive this for the remainder of the summer term. The exceptional circumstances, the economic situation, and the value we place on our relationship with you – our parent community – means we have decided the existing discount continues for this academic year. The fee freeze for next year remains too.

For nursery:

Fees for nursery are being **amended to a 35% discount** until 31st August 2020. This discount will be set against the net invoice value (after all other discounts) and be shown on your statement as 'Summer Term Covid discount'.

WHAT'S YOUR POLICY ON VISITORS?

During this period we will not be hosting visitors to school in order to maintain social distancing. If you feel you need to come to the school, in the first instance can you contact the School Office to prearrange.

WHAT IF I CHOOSE NOT TO SEND MY CHILD BACK TO SCHOOL?

We understand that some parents and students may be wary about physically returning to school and we will do our best to deliver a suitable level of online provision for these students. This has to be on a 'best endeavours' basis as we look to balance a lower number of staff across an increased number of classes as a result of limiting the number of students in each class.

HOW ARE YOU RECORDING ABSENCE OF PUPILS WHEN SCHOOL RE-OPENS?

If you choose not to send your child back to school for the time being, for those in the 'returning' year groups, this will be recorded as an 'Authorised Absence'.

WHAT IS YOUR CLEANING REGIME?

We have a robust cleaning regime throughout the school day with a focus on bathrooms and high-touch areas. At the end of the day we also repeat this and pay particular attention on the common areas of the school. On a Friday evening we do a weekly enhanced clean of all rooms in the school.

In the instance of a confirmed COVID-19 case we do a deep clean which includes all surface areas and carpets. In all cases we use coronavirus approved disinfectants/aerosols, and our cleaners have ordered sufficient stocks.

WILL CHILDREN AND STAFF BE EXPECTED TO WEAR FACE COVERINGS ON SITE?

No. This is the government advice: *Wearing a face covering or face mask in schools or other education settings is not recommended.*

Face coverings are primarily worn to prevent the wearer from spreading the virus rather than catching it. Primary age children are likely to be distracted and discomforted by the wearing of such an item and cannot be expected to do so safely. If a student or member of staff wishes to wear a face covering they will be allowed to do so. We request they follow guidance on the safe method of using and when removing it should be placed carefully into a sealed plastic bag.

HOW DO THE CHANGING NURSERY HOURS AFFECT SESSION TIMINGS, BREAKFAST AND TEA?

The revised Nursery sessions times are 8am – 12.30pm and 12.30pm - 5pm.

Children will need to have breakfast at home and pack a light snack for tea in their lunchboxes.

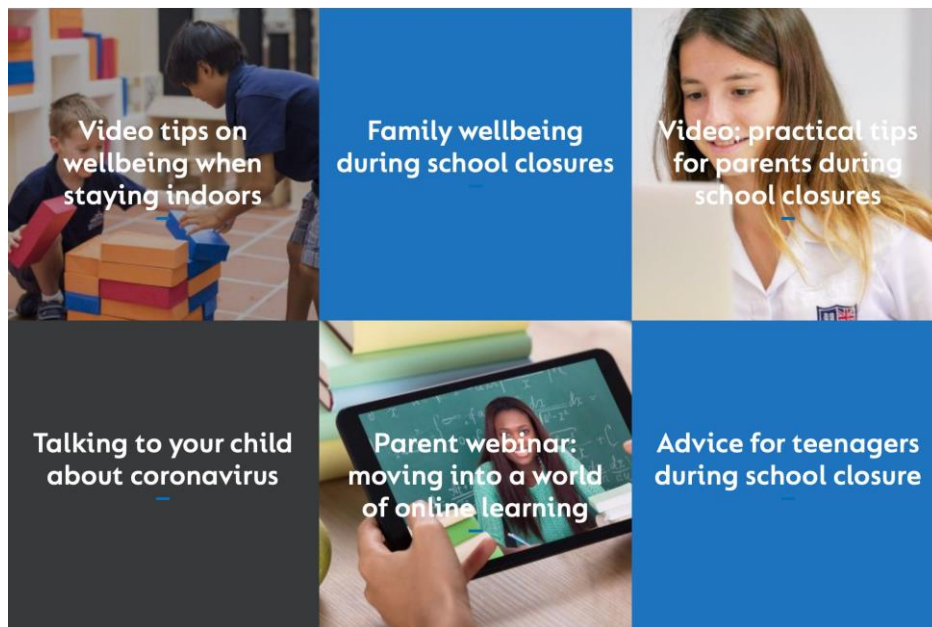
WHAT SPECIALIST TEACHING WILL MY CHILD ACCESS?

PE and Forest School will be delivered face to face. Other specialist lesson will be live streamed into class. Those at home can also access these lessons.

WELLBEING

The transition back to school will still be a challenge for all of us trying to adjust to a new way of 'being', coping with fear of the unknown and in some cases balancing a mix of online and face to face learning. The wellbeing of our students, parents and teaching staff is our highest priority and we are lucky to be part of Cognita who have been able to provide lots of resources to support our school communities since the start of the lockdown.

This includes live webinars with our education experts, podcasts, and a series of videos and resources on wellbeing in these strange times for both students and parents. Members of our parent community have even shared how they have coped with lockdown. This evolving set of content can all be found at www.cognita.com



POSITIVE FEEDBACK

It was great to hear some of your feedback about how we have been handling lockdown at Akeley. Behind the scenes we are all working hard for the benefit of your children and it is wonderful to have this recognised – so thank you!

"Thanks to the hard work of the school to provide comprehensive online learning each day."

"The online lessons have been working really – thank you."

"Online lessons and learning have been more than we could have hoped for – all children can access this learning and have become confident with this and with the routine."

"Virtual schooling has been working so very well – well done."