



A KELEY WOOD  
SCHOOL

# BACK TO SCHOOL

Our plans for September opening



# MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents & Carers,

It is such a relief to be writing to you about the full 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 will, of course, be continuing with our enhanced cleaning regime next year and you can help by making regular hand washing a part of your daily routine during the holidays.

We have also been working imaginatively to try to restart 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 the expectations of full delivery and normal school routines. These will all return in time.

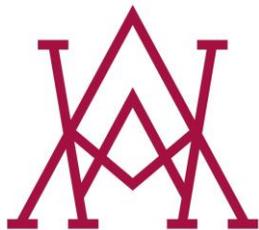
It is at times like this that I am glad we belong to an international group of schools. A lot of what we have learnt about closing schools, delivering online learning and about how to open schools has been learnt from our colleagues and partners in schools in Asia especially. The best tip was to remember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

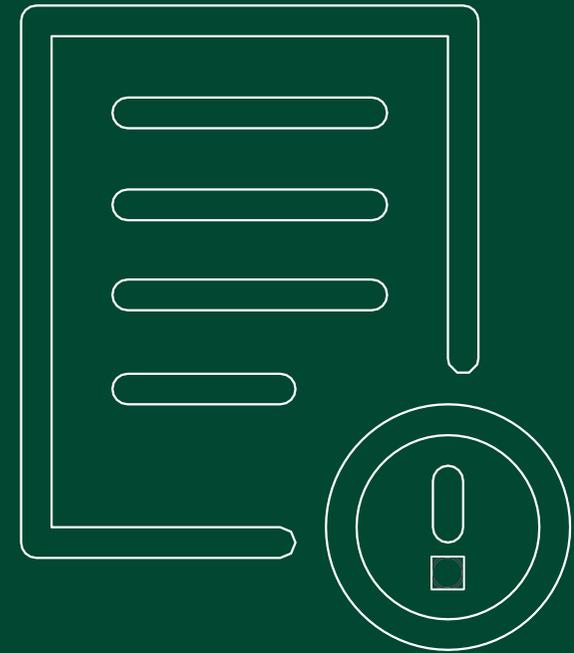
**Simon Antwis**  
Principal



AKELEY WOOD  
SCHOOL

# HIGHLIGHTS FOR NEXT YEAR

1. Back to normal - this means open and running a normal day for all year groups, within the government guidelines.
2. Catch up support - for any students who feel that they would benefit from revisiting any subject learning post lockdown.
3. Wellbeing - a focus on both students and staff to help them emotionally process the lockdown experience.
4. Safety – risk mitigation to include enhanced cleaning and hygiene measures with new procedures for confirmed cases and outbreaks
5. Growth mindset - taking the lockdown experience and continuing to innovate and grow from what we have learnt.

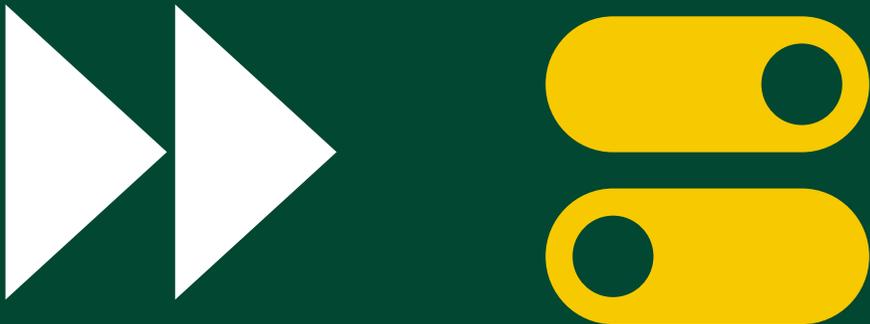


# HOW WILL IT WORK?

We have been planning in great detail and we're confident we can get back to normal.

The latest government guidelines have significantly reduced the need for social distancing and as a result schools will be encouraged to return to a full timetable for all year groups.

This is great news and to the right is a summary of what we know now. This is, of course, conditional on the continued downward trend of the infection rate.



# GUIDANCE SUMMARY

*Based on the government guidance released on 2 July this is what we are basing our planning on:*

- Primary – we will operate in bubbles of increased size as the Government guidance now suggests these can be up to 60 children. This means we will return as Year Group bubbles, except for Nursery, who will be one bubble and Year 1 and 2 who will combine to be a KS1 bubble. Art, DT, Music, Computing and MFL will be delivered remotely at first.
- Senior School - the bubbles will be increased to incorporate 'whole year' bubbles; Sixth Form will be treated as one year group. This will enable us to deliver lessons as per normal with full classes. Specialist teachers will be able to move between classes provided they maintain social distancing.
- Some of the features from this term may need to remain such as staggered timings and one-way systems, as will a focus on hygiene and cleaning. More detail will follow before the start of next term.
- Each bubble will have the following allocated:
  - Dedicated buildings / areas of each campus;
  - Dedicated dining areas;
  - Dedicated entrances and exits;
  - Dedicated one-way routes around school;
  - Dedicated indoor / outdoor social areas;
  - Toilets will be cleaned every 2 hours.
- Track and trace in schools will be a focus

# NEW INITIATIVES FOR NEXT YEAR

*As part of our drive to ensure that all students have an uninterrupted educational experience with us, we are providing every student in Year 3 and above their own touchscreen device.*

Personal devices open the door to combining online study with face-to-face teaching and learning so the best of each is adopted. It can transform many areas of the education process: student agency and digital portfolios (how can I best showcase my learning?); collaboration (how can I develop my interpersonal skills when working with others in class and around the world?); assessment and feedback (how can I learn from immediate and meaningful feedback?)

On a more practical level we need to ensure students are prepared should there be a need for remote learning next academic year; for example, due to a second peak of Coronavirus or the need to self-isolate. In addition, there may be a new scenario next year, with teachers self-isolating at home and delivering lessons remotely to students in classrooms. We need students to be on a level playing field and have access to a dedicated, suitable, safe and reliable device that can enrich their learning experience.



# NEW INITIATIVES FOR NEXT YEAR

## 1-2-1 Devices – How it will work

- The school will fund the leasing of these devices in the next school year where the device will be loaned to your child for the duration of their education at Akeley;
- This device will be dedicated to schoolwork at home and in the classroom;
- It will be set up with software to make it age appropriate and safe, allowing support to be offered remotely, and ensuring all the required educational applications are included;
- Devices will be insured so lost or broken devices are replaced quickly, and schools will have spares;
- Investment in our infrastructure will be made over the summer and year ahead;
- Teachers and students will have access to training and support materials to help them get the most benefit from the device and how it can contribute to a blended education;
- Devices will be rolled out at some point between Sept and Dec – more details to follow on the exact timings;
- The device we have chosen is a HP X360 because:
  - It's a 2-in-1 Laptop/Tablet; Flip and fold with 360° hinge
  - It's durable –it passed 19 US Military Spec durability and reliability tests
  - It has fast charging – 50% in 30 minutes
  - It has long battery life –10-14 hours for typical usage
  - It has dual web cams (screen cam plus keyboard cam for taking videos in tablet mode)
  - It has a full keyboard
  - It has a 13.3" Touchscreen: students can use their finger or a HP PRO Pen to digitally write



# NEW INITIATIVES FOR NEXT YEAR

*During the lockdown period we also took action to develop a number of other initiatives which have enabled us to lead the way in online learning and teaching and we intend to build on this next year.*

- **Wellbeing monitoring** – we introduced **AS (Affective Social) Tracking**, an adolescent mental health tracking tool that enables schools to identify pupils' hidden risks early. This equips teachers with targeted action plans to reduce pupil mental health and wellbeing risks and is part of our global commitment to putting mental health and wellbeing at the centre of a well-balanced education.
- **Inspiring Futures programme** - developed for our Year 11 and 13 cohorts to help them get prepared for the future. The programme focused on non-academic character development such as leadership, communication, teamwork, creativity and emotional intelligence. We will continue to develop this working with some expert partners to stretch and challenge all those involved in the programme.
- **Collecting the best content from our global family** - as a Group we are developing an online platform which will host bespoke content curated from our expert educationalists from across our 80 schools. It's early days for this exciting project so more to follow soon.



# CATERING

We are currently working closely with our caterer, Chartwells, in planning to return to as comprehensive a dining offering as we can in the Autumn Term. In order to ensure we adhere to all guidance there will be some changes in both the menu options and where/how we deliver our catering provision. We are currently planning: -

- No self service – to limit any risk of cross contamination, all food will be plated and handed personally to pupils;
- We will need to operate multiple sittings and are looking at multiple serving areas (e.g. additional rooms converted to dining space). There will be space between sittings in shared spaces to sanitise and clean;
- The menu will be amended to be more conducive to the plated service. We are currently finalising what this would look like and will share information with you before the start of term;
- There will be more cold options, particularly in the first half of term, to aid the amended menus. Although choice may be a little more limited, we will not compromise on quality.



# 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 / drop offs / pick ups.

Years	Date of return	School drop off / pick up
Nursery	Wed 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sept	8:00am – 6:00pm
Reception	Thu 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sept	8.15am - 3.30pm
Year 1 and 2	Thu Sept 3 <sup>rd</sup> (Y11 / 13 in for Sep 2 <sup>nd</sup> details tbc)	8.15am - 3.30pm
Year 3 and 4		9:00am – 4:00pm
Year 5		8.45am - 3.45pm
Year 6		8.30am - 4.15pm
Year 7 & 8		8:30am – 3:50pm
Year 9 & 10		8.30am – 4:00pm
Year 11, 12 & 13		8:45am – 4:15pm

# TEACHING & LEARNING

## Junior School

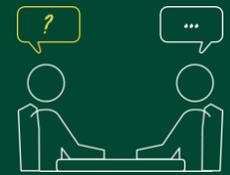
In the Junior School, we would really encourage our children and their families to prioritise their wellbeing over the Summer holidays and have a well deserved rest away from screens. However, if parents would like to focus on some additional learning, please refer to your child's O Track report targets and reach out to their class teacher who can help advise what tasks may be useful. In addition, we would also recommend keeping up with daily reading and Maths fluency.

## Senior School

All of the Senior School students will have received holiday working packs from each subject. These will include some activities to help to consolidate our on-line learning and also some activities to complete as a family, which might include watching a film or listening to some Podcasts together. Year 6 and 8 packs are ways of preparing for Year 7 and GCSE respectively. Please note that these activities are not compulsory, we are really keen to ensure that you all have some time away from screens over the summer.



# FAQS



## **WILL THERE STILL BE AN ANNUAL INCREASE TO FEES FOR NEXT YEAR?**

No. Given the exceptional circumstances, the economic situation and the value we place on our relationship with our parent cohort there will be no fee increase for the 2020/21 school year.

## **ARE SPORTS, CLUBS & TRIPS RETURNING?**

Yes, where possible. We are keen to return to 'business as usual' as much as possible, and this component of education is important.

Certain non-contact sports are approved, and clubs can generally re-start, although there are some restrictions in the latest guidance that we will work through over the summer. We are also planning to have the wrap around care offer of before and after school clubs.

Domestic trips are permitted in the Spring Term, but not residential. Non-educational overseas trips are not yet permitted. We keep a sharp eye on government advice on these topics as guidance changes frequently.

## **WILL SCHOOL TRANSPORT RESUME?**

Yes. We are following government advice closely on this and working with our transport suppliers. Risk mitigations we are investigating are the suitability of face coverings (like on public transport), cleaning regimes, and route reviews. We will use best endeavours to also maintain year group bubbles by segregating the seating on our coaches using seating plans.

## **WHAT ABOUT LOCAL LOCKDOWNS?**

We are planning in detail what happens if the school needs to temporarily close in the case of an outbreak or localised lockdown. If the call comes we can respond quickly, following a pre-agreed plan.

## **WILL THE EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAMME BE RUNNING AT THE SENIOR SCHOOL?**

We will endeavour to run as large an EC programme as normal but obviously adhering to the guidance. Y11 & 13 will be prioritised in the first instance for curriculum recovery during the usual EC slot on Fridays. We will need to maintain year group bubbles and all activities will have to be only on site.

## **WHAT ABOUT INFECTION CONTROL?**

We will continue our robust cleaning regime next year and work closely with our cleaning staff to ensure every possible risk mitigation is taken.

We are also reviewing our infection control procedures over the Summer to allow us to track confirmed or suspected cases and communicate with parents in the smoothest way possible.

## **CAN MY CHILD USE THEIR OWN DEVICE?**

As we are providing devices for all Year 3 pupils and above we have consciously and purposefully decided against a so-called 'bring your own device' policy. Research indicates that it can have a negative impact because the broad range of devices means teachers spend too much time supporting students to fix issues, a role teachers should not be doing. It also presents a security risk to the school network, will not necessarily be suitable for academic work, and will not always have replacement insurance.

## **WILL PUPILS HAVE TO WEAR UNIFORM?**

All students will be expected to wear full school uniform and adhere to usual policy EXCEPT on days when they have Games or PE lessons. On these days pupils can come to school in full PE kit.

# RETURN TO SCHOOL SURVEY RESULTS

**98%** of parents agreed that their child benefitted returning to school

**98%** of parents agreed that their family benefitted from the return to school

**95%** of parents agreed that the return to school process was well managed by the school

**97%** of parents agreed every possible risk mitigation that could have been taken was taken by the school

# THANK YOU FOR THE POSITIVE FEEDBACK

- *We just want to say thank you for your hard work and all that you do for our child and other children.... If there is anything that we can help you with, please let us know.*
- *Our safety concerns are properly addressed.*
- *We believe that the transition has been handled excellently by the school*
- *I would prefer as much normality as possible and for school to be a safe space about education, fun and being with friends.*