



Ackworth Howard Church of England (VC) Junior and Infant School

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Educating 'for life in all its fullness.'

Growth in MIND, BODY, SPIRIT

22nd June 2020

Phased Reopening of Ackworth Howard - Update

Dear Parents/Carers

From the 1st June we began the wider opening of Ackworth Howard School as part of our phased return. We have adhered to Government guidance when making plans, however, we have made decisions based on our own school setting and community in a gradual and cautious way.

I would like to thank each and every staff member who has shown commitment, resilience, generosity and good humour, I could not be prouder of them, nor more honoured to lead them. Whatever the guidance that has been received, whatever the new demands placed on them, they have risen to it, adapted their practice and kept going.

I would also like to thank parents for their unwavering support and understanding and for the parents who have been able to return their children, for trusting us to care for them as we always strive to do. You have all done an amazing job supporting your children's learning at home.

I know that a great number of children have missed attending school over the last few months and the fact that for some, this is impacting on their wellbeing deeply saddens me. Please be aware that if your child is feeling like this, you can still access resources to support positive wellbeing on our website but you can also access remote support from our learning mentor, SENDCo and many other staff who can share resources and strategies. I know that a number of parents have already accessed this support and I hope that you have benefitted from this. Our online learning platform will continue as it has and this also provides another avenue for teacher contact and support.

As a staff, we all feel concerned for the children who remain at home. We know that the vast majority have been keeping up with their learning on Google Classroom, but this can never replace the experience of physically being at school. If we were able to bring everyone back, believe me we would do it.

We do hope to provide an opportunity to bring our school community together once more by arranging a virtual sports day where everyone can take part in the activities, submit their scores and contribute to their house team totals. More information about this will follow shortly.

The Government on Friday announced their intention for all children, in all year groups to return in September. The desire to bring everyone back was pleasing to hear but we need to know what the Government is thinking and the scenarios they want us to plan for. The education secretary stated that the guidance will not be released for another two weeks. It is very important that this guidance is released asap so that we can plan and make decisions on how school will operate. This will give our school community clarity in what we need and what will happen in September. I would love to confirm today that we are able to welcome all children back from September with the full wrap around service reinstated but until the guidance is published I am unable to confirm this yet.

Thankfully, the number of new infections and deaths from Covid19 continue to fall almost daily at present, so we are hopeful that September may bring the opportunity for a normal start to the school year but we can only, like you, keep our fingers crossed at this stage.

Compassion
Forgiveness
Friendship
Trust

We understand that this situation is far from ideal and is frustrating for both yourselves and more importantly, your children. You, and they, will have many questions about the future, some of which we cannot answer ourselves at the moment.

If you would like to express an interest in your child returning to school, you are a key worker, or they are in Reception/Year 1, please email admin@howard.wakefield.sch.uk to join the waiting list.

I can confirm that the teachers for next year's classes have been allocated. These are:

- Nursery – Miss Hunter
- Reception – Mrs Tordoff
- Year 1 – Mrs Robinson
- Year 2 – Mrs Albaya
- Year 3 – Mr Nunn
- Year 4 – Miss Major
- Year 5 – Miss O'Brien
- Year 6 – Mr Barstow

The first week (Wednesday-Friday) in September will focus around transition and the children will work with their new teachers on PSHE and wellbeing activities initially in order to settle them. Transition activities will also be available on google classroom prior to the summer break.

We have been working extremely hard to transform our curriculum and are very excited to share with you the work we have been doing. I am hoping to share with you some draft documents very shortly so that you can see the kind of things we are planning. Thank you to everyone who completed the curriculum online questionnaire. Your responses were extremely helpful and informative and we have incorporated many of your ideas including the wide range of local historical events and people you suggested.

We have recently further improved our communication tools in school by setting up an email facility. This is now operating and will be used from today. We have invested further in the platform we use by increasing the number of accounts we can add to the system ensuring that second contacts can access the same communications. We hope that you find these improvements useful.

Just to remind you that school will close on Friday 17th July 2020 and will reopen on Wednesday 9th September 2020. I hope that we will be in a position to welcome you all back on this day. Inset days during the next academic year are:

- Monday 7th September 2020
- Tuesday 8th September 2020
- Monday 4th January 2021
- Friday 28th May 2021
- Monday 26th July 2021

Thank you for your continued support over the past few months as it has made a very difficult situation much more manageable and ensured we have all been able to stay safe and healthy. If there is anything else I can help you with at this stage then please feel free to contact me at school.

Yours sincerely,



Mr M Walker

Headteacher



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