

It's so good to be back!

As 2020 continues to be a year unlike any other in recent times, it has been wonderful to be able to come back together - children and staff - in our academies. We're all embracing the 'new normal' - following government guidance and reflecting this in our risk assessments and procedures - to ensure our children and staff are safe on a daily basis. Things may not be quite as they were, but the outstanding commitment and positivity of our staff have enabled children to return to learning, being with friends and feeling safe in school. During these unprecedented times, we have all felt very fortunate to be part of a Multi-Academy Trust. The collaboration and collective working that underpins our ethos has been a huge benefit and ensured that, while there have been no easy answers, support is available at every level to make the best decisions for the safety and wellbeing of our children, families and staff.

Together, we are working through the phases of **Respond, Recover, Rethink**. The **response** to the pandemic included both the initial school closure and subsequent partial, then full, re-opening. Staff have worked extremely hard to ensure this happened safely. The lessons from lockdown are learnt as part of the **recovery** phase, enabling us to **rethink** how to do things slightly differently, but potentially better than before!

Part of our 'new normal' was the introduction of 'bubbles' as an infection control measure. While these felt very strange to start with, and completely alien to what we were all used to, they have quickly become part of daily routines and, for some children, have added to their sense of safety particularly at social times on the playground.

Ensuring the integrity of our bubbles has been a high priority, achieved by keeping the movement of staff across bubbles to a minimum. To support this, the Trust-wide closure on a Friday afternoon was introduced as a designated time for Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) sessions for Teachers. This minimised the need for staff to be teaching in numerous bubbles throughout the week and provided the continuity of one Class Teacher for the children. Loss of learning time was mitigated through adjustments to timings of the school day - reducing playtimes, no assemblies, staggered start and end times to the day - to ensure children continued to receive the required teaching hours. This was introduced as a trial approach for the autumn term and was to be reviewed at half term, considering the views of our families and staff. We would therefore be grateful if you would complete the appropriate short survey below to inform our decision-making:

[Parent Survey](#)

[Staff Survey](#)

We would like to sincerely thank all our families and staff for supporting the various new procedures that we have had to implement - not being able to bring your child to their classroom or meet with colleagues in the staffroom are not scenarios we could have ever envisaged - but following these measures have been of the biggest benefit to those we do this all for..... the children!!

The Executive Team

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Cross Farm are very proud to have been able to create a sensory garden for the children, to support their mental health and wellbeing during these challenging times. The space is focussed on the five senses and has been designed to be a safe, nurturing space for children to learn away from the classroom.

The project has been supported by families who have donated items to be repurposed - such as old welly boots planted with flowers and bulbs - and funding from the Cross Farm PTA, Surrey Garden Trust, Longacres Garden Centre and local councillor, Paul Deach.

The children have also recently enjoyed a Pumpkin Technology day where, across the academy, they created Pumpkin transporters, found out about what is inside a pumpkin and even created pumpkin art work. This day is inspired by Andy Cope and his work around making Mondays amazing to support mental health and wellbeing.



At Holly Lodge, the children have been bringing history to life!

Year 4 were Ancient Greeks for the day. They held their own Olympic games and immersed themselves in Greek culture, making tzatziki and hummus and even learning to write their name in Greek.

Year 3 have enjoyed learning outdoors. They designed and then built some dens as part of their Stone Age topic.



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At Fernhill, we are pleased to announce the opening of our new Bagel Breakfast Club!

Children can enjoy breakfast and games with friends - a great way to start the day!



At Wyke, our WRAP Club (Breakfast and After School Club) have been getting ready for Halloween by creating decorations. They also looked at the work by Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama and were inspired to create their own painted pumpkins using her style of dot work.



In class this week, Wyke travelled the World! Each class learned about a country, sampling food, learning about wildlife, cultures, art work and traditions. Reception travelled to Peru; Year 1 travelled to Australia; Year 2 travelled to Italy; Year 3 travelled to India; Year 4 travelled to South Africa; Year 5 travelled to Japan and Year 6 travelled to China!

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Estates

Along with over-seeing routine maintenance, health & safety works and on-going projects across all academies, our central Estates Team also compose and co-ordinate applications for the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF). This is an annual bidding round for non-maintained schools (i.e. single and multi-academy Trusts) to apply for capital funding from the government Education & Skills Funding Agency. We have been incredibly fortunate this year to have been successful in eight of our applications for works totalling in excess of £800,000! The projects include:

Fernhill - Security & Safeguarding Works

The Grove - Roof Repairs and Fire Risk Assessment Works

Holly Lodge - Fire Safety & Compliance Works

Mytchett - Security & Safeguarding Works

Sandringham - Security & Safeguarding Works and Fire Risk Assessment Works

Wyke - Roof Repairs

These are in addition to the three successful bids last year for works at Lakeside, Holly Lodge and Wyke. The projects represent significant investment in the safety and condition of our sites, which would not have been available as maintained schools. The Trust is required to contribute less than 10% of the overall cost of the projects, which enables Trust funds to be otherwise invested in enhancing the educational experiences of our children.

As well as managing the eight projects for this year, the Estates Team have also begun the process for next years' bidding round which we hope will be as successful as this year!



We are very fortunate to have a committed team of Site Managers in the Trust. Every day they ensure that our sites are safe, secure, clean and tidy.

We would especially like to thank them for their fantastic team work in supporting each other to prepare each academy for the recent filming - they looked amazing!



One of our recent projects has been the replacement of the Nursery floor at Hale.

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The challenges and hardships brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted our capacity to support those in need in our Kite community through our dedicated team of Family Support Workers. Whether it was delivering food parcels, staying in touch by phone or visiting families, our Family Support Workers did all they could to make a positive difference to the wellbeing of families during these really tough times. Families who would like advice or support can access support from the team via their child's academy.

As we returned to all academies being fully open in September, the Team continued to evolve their support to meet the needs of our families. Targeted Family Support Work with individual families has resumed and the Team continues to receive a steady flow of new requests for support. Some of our universal offer of support has also been relaunched, albeit in a slightly different format. This includes the re-introduction of our Come & Ask sessions (see below), our 10-week Nurturing Programme for parents/carers and parent/carer workshops. Details of the next Nurturing Programme and workshops will be advertised shortly after half term – please look out for details via each academy or the Kite Family Hub webpages.

www.thekiteacademytrust.org/our-services/the-kite-family-hub-kfh/

Come & Ask Sessions

The Grove - Friday 6th November 2020
Sandringham - Monday 9th November 2020

Holly Lodge - Thursday 5th November 2020
Wyke - Weds 11th November 2020
Hale - Thursday 5th November 2020
Lakeside - Weds 11th November 2020

We are also very pleased to have welcomed Kate Beer to our team this term as our Inclusion Welfare Officer (IWO). Kate will be working alongside each academy, providing support in maintaining good attendance.



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Learning is an

Adventure

We have been delighted to see how well children in both Nursery and Reception classes have all settled well. Despite the challenges we're all facing during this difficult time, it has been a pleasure to get to know the newest members of the Kite Family, seeing them already growing in confidence, exploring, learning and making new friends.



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Joining the Kite Family



As with so many things, this is a very different year for school applications. We know that families are faced with tough decisions regarding their children's future and which school might benefit them the most. There are so many factors to weigh up....

Which schools are realistically accessible?

Which is going to support and develop their child's talents and interests the most?

This is always a complex decision as we all want to get it right for each child starting their learning journey.

This year, there is a whole new level of complication as families are not able to visit the schools that they might be considering. It has prompted new, creative ways of sharing all a school has to offer. All of our academies have produced a 'virtual tour' video to introduce our wonderful Head Teachers and to give families a flavour of the unique offering of each academy.

Click the logo below to view the academy's video



If you know of families who are looking for a Reception place for next year, or are currently in Year 2 at an infant school and looking for a Year 3 place, please encourage them to watch our videos – share the link or direct them to our websites. We would love to welcome them to our Kite Family.

If you are a parent of a Year 2 child in one of our infant academies – **we don't want to see you go!** Please consider one of our primary academies (Lakeside, The Grove, Mytchett, Holly Lodge, Fernhill, Hale & Wyke) so that you and your child can continue their learning journey within our Kite Family. Please contact the Head Teacher to find out how to apply.

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Academy Councils



Academy Councils are a key element of the governance structure of the Kite Academy Trust. The Trust Board delegates responsibility for certain functions to Academy Council Governors to support the strategic overview of the organisation and ensure each academy delivers the vision and values of the Trust to the very best effect for the children, staff and communities they serve. A Governor is a valuable 'critical friend' to the academy's leadership, asking constructive, pertinent questions, monitoring specific areas of the academy and reporting their findings to the Trust Board.

Academy Councils are made up of, ideally, four local Community Governors, two Parent Governors, one Staff Governor and the Head Teacher. Governors are highly-valued volunteers and key members of an academy's community, advocating for their academy and the Trust, building relationships and encouraging engagement with families and other stakeholders.

If you would like to contribute to the Kite Academy Trust community and support us in providing the very best opportunities for all our children, please consider becoming a Governor. There are currently opportunities across the Trust for Community, Parent and Staff Governors. Please speak to your Academy Head or contact clerk@kite.academy for more information.



We are very proud that, across the whole Trust, we have only had to shut one bubble of 30 children. As a result of the risk assessment and procedures in place, and our staff's consistent application of these, the Head Teacher was confidently able to establish those at risk and was able to quickly switch to a remote learning provision for those children sent home. We have had no evidence of any internal transmission of COVID-19 within our academies and will continue to strive to keep them as safe, secure environments for our children and staff.

The Grove Primary Academy are proud to present the children of The Grove performing 'Belong' – an original piece of music written to celebrate our return from Lockdown.

During the first 3 weeks of term, year group bubbles have learned their words, rehearsed their parts – following the current government guidelines for singing in school – and taken part in their own individual recording session. The track has then been mixed and edited by Mr Sam Young to give the overall effect of a choir singing together.

We hope that this piece of music symbolises the strength and energy in our academy and brings our community a great deal of pleasure, even during these testing times.



'Belong'

click above to listen



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Throughout the closure period and re-opening of our academies, the Kite Central Team have continued to ensure the business functions of the Trust haven't been disrupted.

As with elsewhere in the Trust, this has meant finding new ways of working. Through a blend of distanced, remote and virtual working, our IT, HR, Finance and Estates Teams have continued to provide the support that ensures staff in our academies can focus on the provision for children.

The IT infrastructure implemented during lockdown has been developed to facilitate group training events, remote learning provisions and communications with families.

The Finance Team has adapted its way of working to ensure that the annual audit is completed along with the Trust's annual accounts and financial statements.

The HR Team continues to offer support to all staff, and adapting our CPD offer to ensure staff development as well as statutory training requirements are not impacted by the pandemic. This support and development of staff has also been a focus for our Academies' Improvement & Support Team (AsIST), along with the wellbeing of all staff.



Founded by parents to address the inherent waste, product obsolescence and cost of raising children as well as to help declutter modern homes and keep things out of landfill, YoungPlanet is a platform and app designed to *'turn the stuff you don't need into the things that others enjoy'*...

YoungPlanet started as a family project and came about as a result of living and working in London, New York, Dallas, Paris, Istanbul and Moscow and entering new communities with young children. Having travelled a bit as a family we have been inspired by the amount of children's stuff we had been able to acquire through US style 'garage sales' and 'hand me downs' in the various places we have lived... One such item was a red fire truck coveted by our first son but also loved by his brothers - the vendor refused payment for the toy stating that it *"was more valuable to see it go to good use and to a happy child"* and this got us thinking...

<https://www.youngplanet.com/>

YoungPlanet is launching in GU postcodes. It is a useful resource to teach our children of the importance of recycling, repurposing and reducing landfill waste.

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Welcome to all our new Staff:

Cross Farm

Kass Grattan

Fernhill

Sarah Bradshaw

The Grove

Hirdip Mandair, Bryn Munford

Hale

Wendy Collins, Roger Hunt,
Gemma Aston, Zoe Thorne

Holly Lodge

Marie Slack, Helen Michaels,
Maria Dulic, Kathryn Brown,
Jo Chalkley

Lakeside

Melanie Johnson, Jonny Prior,
Aimee Wicks

Mytchett

Emma Pullen, Katherine
Coulter, Rachel Pilgrim,
Aimee Squires

Sandringham

Emily Hardy-Trodd, Zoe Turner,
Kylie Hammond

Staff moving academies:

Laura Theobald - from Sandringham to Wyke

Jessica Gladwish - from Sandringham to Mytchett

Polly Russell - from Mytchett to Lakeside

Rashida Nasir - from Lakeside to Fernhill

Charlotte Williams - from Holly Lodge to Cross Farm

Sally Kerr - from Hale to Fernhill

Marie Claire Butler - from The Grove to Fernhill

Margaret Trendell - from The Grove to Holly Lodge

Julie Parlane - from Fernhill to Hale

We would like to wish those staff who are leaving us all the very best for the future

Kite Academy Trust Term Dates and Holidays 2020-2021

Autumn Term - Tuesday 1st September - Friday 18th December 2020

(Half Term - Monday 26th - Friday 30th October 2020)

Spring Term - Monday 4th January - Wednesday 31st March 2021

Kite Holiday: Thursday 1st April 2021

Half Term - Monday 15th - Friday 19th February 2021)

Summer Term - Monday 19th April - Tuesday 20th July 2021

(Half Term- Monday 30th May - Friday 4th June 2021)

Please check with your academy for additional local INSET days

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