

A message from Sara Edwards, CEO

I want to start by saying a massive thank you to you all. Throughout these uncertain times, it has been wonderful to see our community working together, to meet the many challenges that have come with the ongoing Corona Virus situation.

Over the past few weeks, teaching staff across the Trust have gone above and beyond to provide exceptional online learning for their students. While delivering remote lessons is not something we've done on a large scale before, it's been incredible to see the innovative projects which teachers are delivering and students are engaging with. Additionally, it's been humbling to see the safe and fun spaces which staff have created within our schools for the children of key workers and vulnerable children. It's a true testament to the resilience and dedication of our teachers and TAs that they've been able to foster positive learning environments both in school and at home.

Supporting us all with day to day administration, the FSM voucher scheme, resources and documentation are the Business Operation Managers and Administration teams. Thank you for being there for us all, for coping with all the new DfE and LA returns and the constant changes to guidance.

As I'm sure many of you aware, the Acorn Central Teams have also been working around the clock to ensure that the day-to-day running of the Trust is as smooth as possible. Their hard work has allowed us all to adapt to new ways of working quickly and safely, and ensure that any Government updates or guidance are acted on as soon as possible.

In June, we will begin to see schools return. As you know, all our work has been guided by three principles:

- ensuring all our children and staff are safe and well
- providing high quality learning at home and school
- protecting our vulnerable families and supporting our key worker families.

Who knows what the educational picture will look like in two weeks, two months, even six months! What is absolutely clear from the information we do have, is that we will need to move carefully towards a new 'normal'. I'm incredibly grateful for the work that has already gone into maintaining a sense of care, support and challenge within our schools, from all our staff, and know that we will continue to work together to overcome any new issues which arise. The next few months are likely to be complex and a little confusing; as always our top priority will be ensuring the safety and well-being of you and our students.

I encourage you to continue to follow the government policy "stay alert, control the virus, save lives".

Thanks again for all you are doing.

Take care and stay safe,

Sara



Acorn
Education Trust

- Active & Visible Leadership
- Care, Support & Challenge
- Opportunities For All
- Respect, Recognition & Resilience
- Needs Of All Are Paramount

Kingdown School
Woodcock Road
Warminster BA12 9DR

Tel: 01985 224264



@acornedtrust



Kingdown Design Department

The Kingdown School Design Department have been doing their bit to support Key Workers in our community by designing and producing face visors for local NHS GP Surgeries and health centres. The team have now made over 300 masks, which have been donated to local practices free of charge, using the school's 3D printer. A massive thank you to the team for their dedication to helping the local community.



Laptop Donation

In April, Acorn Education Trust was approached by Ready Case Ltd who were looking for a way to support underprivileged students during this challenging time. They are supporting Acorn Education Trust with a donation of laptops, to help children in the Warminster area who don't currently have access to any form of computer. Acorn Education Trust would like to express our thanks to Ready Case Ltd for their kind donation.

Acorn IT Department

Since the start of the Corona Virus outbreak, the Acorn Education Trust's IT Department have been working tirelessly to support students and staff across the Trust during these unprecedented times. In addition to remotely supporting all Trust staff and students, the team have been busy removing barriers that were preventing staff and students from working. Some of their incredible work across the Trust has included: configuring and delivering (as far as Salisbury and Devizes) laptops to students who didn't have any hardware and giving support for the student laptops on their driveways (respecting social distancing rules!), provided Acorn business staff with laptops, monitors, keyboards and mice to allow them to continue to do their work, completing maintenance work across Trust servers. Together, the team have remotely supporting all Trust staff and students, responding to over 800 support cases over the past few weeks. The team have also installed CCTV into Aspire and installed new laptops, computers and monitors at Clarendon Academy and Kingdown School. A massive thank you to the whole IT Department for their incredible work during this very challenging time.

Remote Recruitment

Recruitment has continued across Acorn Education Trust during the Coronavirus lockdown, with a number of positions successfully filled. The adapted interview process, completed via Microsoft Teams, includes a presentation from the candidate about their vision for the job and a panel interview, featuring the school's Headteacher, Deputy Head(s), Department Leader (if applicable) and an additional observer (to ensure that the new process is adhered to). The new process is proving to work well and we look forward to welcoming our new starters to the Acorn Education Trust family in September.



Acorn Estates Team Lockdown Projects

The Acorn Estates team have worked tirelessly during the lockdown on various improvement projects and helped schools prepare for the extended opening from 1st June.

Their work has included painting two classrooms at New Close and at Kingdown they've completed outdoor site maintenance, PAT and fixed wiring testing and deep cleaning of Kingdown. At Clarendon the team painted and installed new lighting in the reception area and three classrooms. Additionally, they continued with 'Operation Womble' by clearing cupboards, garages and the Edward Hyde stage. The team also had a major clearance and tidy of bushes, hedges and tree stumps across the Clarendon grounds. All Acorn primary schools have had their boilers serviced and necessary repairs made, along with their emergency lighting tested and legionella on their water systems.

In preparation for the extended opening, new Perspex screens for reception were installed at Kingdown School, St John's, The Avenue and Clarendon. PPE clothing and cleaning materials were sourced for all Acorn Education Trust schools. A massive thank you to the whole Acorn Estate team for their incredible work over the past few weeks.