

14th July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this letter finds you and your family still safe and well. It has been a very difficult year coping with changes to the school and the COVID-19 pandemic. I thank you for working so co-operatively with staff to make the best of the situation. The strength of our school community has always been the strong relationships that develop between staff and the families we serve, and the effective home-school communication we establish as we seek to do our best to help all students overcome their challenges.

I write to inform you that due to the building work to create a new, modern and spacious centre, the school will have a delayed opening next year. **The school will re-open to pupils on Monday, 14th September 2020.** The new school will be called Springwell Harrogate and the autumn term will see the school develop into the new alternative provision proposed by the local authority's SEND strategy for the Harrogate area.

In September, the school aims to provide a full educational provision for all pupils on roll in the autumn term. For some pupils, this may well include a blend of school-based and online learning. For children with the most complex needs a phased return to in-school learning may be proposed. Staff are currently working on detailed plans to ensure the safest and quickest return to full-time education for each student.

I recognise that parents and students may have anxieties about returning to the centre. **Please be assured that staff will be in touch with you before the 14th September to discuss the individual plan for your child.**

The school has revised its risk assessments in the light of new Government guidance that came out on 2nd July 2020 and this will be posted on our website. You will be able to see the measures we are taking to minimise risks from the virus and ensure the safety of all staff, students and visitors. I am sure that you will continue to support us with the necessary COVID-related changes. In particular, we will

continue to restrict visitor access to the school; we will also continue to expect all students to comply fully with school hygiene and social distancing rules – I thank you in advance for your support with this.

We aim to return to as much normality as possible in September. The Government is expecting all students to attend school. Where there are challenges and changes please bear with us and understand that everyone's safety is the priority. This has been a difficult time for all of us.

We are planning for a range of scenarios and will be flexible in response to any new Government guidance before the 14th September. We will keep you fully informed as always. The general feeling appears to be that a second COVID spike is possible, when the traditional cold and flu season begins, November to February. We have taken this possibility into account. I am sure we will continue to work together through the inevitable challenges and show the strength of spirit that has been such a remarkable feature of this pandemic, which has brought out the best in us as a community.

Finally, we sadly say goodbye to Anna Burton-Cole, who has been an excellent Outdoor Education Teaching Assistant, and has enriched the learning of our young people with her youthful vitality, enthusiasm and positive attitude to life. She will be moving to Newcastle next year to study at the university to become a teacher. We all wish her well in this exciting new stage of her life.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support of our school. I hope you have the chance to enjoy the summer together as a family, and look forward to seeing everybody back, safe and well, after the holiday.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Warren', written in a cursive style.

John Warren
Headteacher,
The Grove Academy