



Ark All Saints Academy

Monday 6th July 2020

Dear Scholars and Parents,

Black Lives Matter

I have taken time to write to you as we have considered how we need to respond as Ark All Saints to George Floyd's death and the Black Lives Matter global campaign.

As a community, we have been deeply shocked and saddened by the death of George Floyd in the USA. The global protests have served as a reminder that no matter how much racial inequality there continues to be, millions of people are standing up and challenging this injustice.

Ark All Saints was established to provide all scholars without exception the education needed in order for them to grow in confidence, live responsibly, act with integrity and to ultimately be successful in their lives, in education, in relationships, economically and play a central part in the life of their community.

We refer to ourselves as a family. We welcome scholars of all faiths and none to our Church of England academy where our guiding principles are based on Christian values. We treat every scholar as an individual and we work with them and their families to develop and nurture their talents. We wish nothing less for our scholars than we would for our own families. We make no excuses.

Now is a good time for us all to reflect on our contributions to challenging and correcting these injustices. As an academy we need to decide what is our role in this and to support our own school community.

What have we done?

As always, our main communication comes within our collective worship sessions and Pastoral Director messages each day.

In the weeks following the death of George Floyd I sent out a questionnaire to all staff and scholars. It asked three questions:

- 1) At AASA we would like to add an extra logo to all PowerPoints to show our support of the Black Lives Matter movement (we use them in every lesson). Do you think this is a good idea? 92% believed we should
- 2) If yes- what should it look like? 69% voted for the BLM fist 
- 3) Do you have any other ideas what else AASA can do to continue to raise awareness?

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The overwhelming answer was to incorporate Black History into the curriculum.

All subjects, including the History department, are writing plans to ensure that their curriculum represents our diverse community in the content that is being taught from September. Our Heads of Departments have started to review their curriculum content and what is being taught, particularly at Key Stage 3.

Whilst we do celebrate Black History Month and last year this lasted nearly three months, this is not enough. The Staff and Scholars who lead on Black History celebrations already had plans to widen the focus and to ensure that AASA regularly focused on the successes of our diverse community and not kept within a specific time of the year.

At AASA we know that it is important that our scholars hear from a wide variety of successful adults. Since September we have been inviting speakers from all areas of life to tell their story to our scholars. Sadly, this had to be paused due to lockdown, but this will continue once it is safe to do so. The speakers we had this year came from diverse backgrounds and included a student from Cambridge University who spoke about her experiences, an investment banker who spoke about the role education had in his achievements and John Boyega, an actor who has starred in the latest Star Wars franchise.

We are reviewing the books we have in our library and will be buying more books that will appeal to our scholar community.

What will we do next?

The AASA Reading Programme

At AASA we have always believed that reading and being able to read at your chronological age is essential to a successful life. We have always insisted that having a reading book is part of our core equipment list.

We will be relaunching our reading programme in September with competitions, prizes and a scholar book review bulletin. A list of great books to read will be sent to you before the end of term and a link of where to purchase them.

Scholar Voice

We will continue to work with our scholar voice and meet with them regularly so that we can listen to what they believe is working well and what we need to do better.



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Alumni

It is so exciting to have an alumni and we are aware that our first ever cohort of scholars are about to go to university. We have already had some scholars return over the past year to talk about sixth form and their experiences. We are excited to welcome them back anytime they are free to talk to our scholars about life post AASA.

News events and celebrations

We will continue to draw attention to news items and days of celebrations and consider what they mean to us and how we should respond. These are usually done in pastoral settings such as collective worship or at tutor times. We are also actively trying to have more sessions created and led by Scholars.

Parent Opinion

Over the years we have tried various ways to hear our parents voices. We always have a survey at Parent Evenings and send out other surveys over the years. Please do not wait for a survey to have your say.

Email us at info@arkallsaintsacademy.org and let us know what we are doing well and what we need to do better.

We miss our AASA family. It has been so good to welcome over 80% of the year ten cohort back on site over the past weeks. We can't wait to see everyone next academic year.

We wish we could see you face to face. We want to share in our sorrow over recent events and try to untangle together some of the emotional responses to them. We also want to celebrate how strong our scholars, parents and staff are and have been during this extraordinary time.

I will write again before the end of term. Until then, stay safe and may God bless you.

Yours Faithfully

Ms Frame
Principal