

Why is the secondary phase of ACS being closed?

In its current form, the school is not viable in the long term. Low pupil numbers have placed it in an extremely difficult financial position which also means that pupils are not able to access the widest possible curriculum or have a good level of choice in what they study. ACS is also judged as 'inadequate' by Ofsted.

Curriculum and choice, in a school which is viable for the long term, are very important. They can have a major impact on young people achieving their desired outcomes, pursuing certain careers and enhancing their opportunities in life.

What is happening with ACS pupils between now and the end of the school year in 2020?

The school is operating as normal for the current academic year. Pupils who are currently in Year 11 will end their school education at the school as planned. From September 2020 there will be no new Year 7 starters and all existing pupils from the current Year 7 to current Year 10 will need to transfer to the roll of another school.

What happens from September 2020?

By September 2020, current ACS pupils will have transferred to other schools to continue their education. We will be supporting families so that transitions are smooth and well planned.

We have written to parents/carers and invited them to make a preference for the school they would like their children to transfer to in September 2020. They can make a preference from King James's School, Netherhall Learning Campus High School and Newsome High School, all of which are local to Almondbury. King James's is around 0.6 miles from the ACS site. Netherhall Learning Campus High School and Newsome High School are both also within three miles.

To help manage those transitions, the current ACS site at Fernside Avenue will remain available after September 2020. King James's School will be using the Fernside site (along with their main school site) for at least one academic year, which means pupils who join King James's from ACS may physically remain on the same site next year. We will share further details about this with parents/carers as soon as possible.

King James's School	Pupils will be able to join the roll of King James's School from September 2020. King James's will use the Fernside Avenue site (alongside their main school site) from September 2020 for at least one academic year. We are working with King James's to ensure that their main site is developed so that it can accommodate all pupils on a permanent basis in the future. Subject to the completion of this work, King James's will no longer use Fernside and all their pupils will be on the main site.*
Netherhall Learning	Pupils will be able to join Netherhall Learning Campus High school, who currently have spaces in some year groups and will make additional places available where possible to meet the preferences expressed by

Campus High School	ACS parents/carers. Any pupils who join Netherhall will be accommodated on Netherhall's main site. We are exploring opportunities for some refurbishment work to ensure suitable accommodation is available on a permanent basis.*
Newsome High School	Pupils will be able to join Newsome High School, who currently have spaces in some year groups and will make additional places available where possible to meet the preferences expressed by ACS parents/carers. Any pupils who join Newsome will be accommodated on Newsome's main site.

* It is important to note that we are working in partnership with King James's and Netherhall to create a small number of extra places for future Year 7 intakes. This is in addition to supporting transition arrangements for pupils.

What about families who have bought school uniform items which will not be needed at ACS from next year?

As pupils will need uniform for a different school, we will be providing a uniform support package to all existing ACS pupils. We will be writing to ACS parents/carers with further details.

What about school transport arrangements?

The offer of a place at one of three local schools will mean transport is no longer a significant issue for the majority of families. However, if transport remains a concern, we will speak to people individually to fully understand their circumstances.

What happens to ACS in the future?

Although ACS will no longer have a secondary phase from September 2020, it will continue as a primary school serving the local community. Due to national regulations about schools which are deemed 'inadequate', the school will become an academy. The number of pupils per year group will be reduced to 30 as this is more in line with the demand for places and will also make sure the primary school is viable.