

**02 September 2021**

Dear parents and carers,

I hope you and your family have all enjoyed the summer break. I am very much looking forward to welcoming all pupils back to school for the start of the Autumn Term.

## 1. Getting Started

A reminder that all pupils and parents starting Year 7 and Year 12 this term must attend their administration induction appointment. These appointments are taking place this Friday (3<sup>rd</sup> September) and next Monday (6<sup>th</sup> September).

If your child is starting Year 7 or Year 12 this term and you do not know when your appointment is taking place, please get in touch by emailing [info@arkstalbans.org](mailto:info@arkstalbans.org) or calling 0121 446 1300.

Each year group will then return, ready to start the new school year on the days and at the times below.

Year Group	Date	Time
7	Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	08:30am
8	Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	10:30am
9	Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	09:30am
10	Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	08:30am
11	Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	08:30am
12	Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	09:30am
13	Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	09:30am

All year groups should arrive via the main entrance to the academy on their first day. Further information about arrival and departure locations will then be shared next week.

## 2. Covid Mitigations

Keeping everybody safe and stopping the spread of Covid-19 remains a priority.

The most helpful way to keep everybody safe, is regular testing using lateral-flow devices (LFD). Pupils and staff will be issued with new test kits regularly and are asked to test every Sunday and every Thursday evening. All test results must be recorded.

All pupils will be tested at school on their first day, before lessons begin. If you haven't previously given consent for your child to be tested for Covid-19

In addition to regular LFD testing, some aspects of school life which help in preventing the spread of illness will now remain in place permanently at the academy:

- Separate entry and exit locations for each year group
- Separate break and lunchtimes for each year group
- The use of home rooms for most lessons

However, if there is a Covid outbreak (as defined by Public Health England) at the school, some additional measures may be reintroduced:

- The wearing of face coverings in some or all situations
- Cancellation of events such as open evenings, progress days and assemblies
- Remote learning for some classes for a fixed period of time

The academy will seek advice from Public Health England as to whether or not an outbreak has occurred if the following thresholds are met at any point:

- 5 pupils or staff, who are likely to have mixed closely, test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period; or
- 10% of pupils or staff who are likely to have mixed closely test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period; or
- Any child, pupil, student, or staff is admitted to hospital with COVID-19 (this could indicate a variant of concern)

In addition, if an outbreak does occur, pupils or staff who are identified as being extremely clinically vulnerable may be asked to work from home. If your child is identified by their GP as being extremely clinically vulnerable, please do let the school know as soon as possible by emailing [info@arkstalbans.org](mailto:info@arkstalbans.org) or calling 0121 446 1300.

If a pupil or member of staff tests positive, it will no longer be our approach to send their class or their close contacts home. Instead, if your child has been in the same class as someone who has tested positive (for example, in the same class), you will be notified and asked to make sure that your child takes either daily LFD tests or, if they are a particularly close contact (i.e. sat near the person who tested positive), a PCR test.

### 3. Staying Safe

The simplest way to stop Covid-19 spreading in the school is to make sure that it does not come into the school.

In school, pupils will be encouraged to wash or to sanitise their hands thoroughly and often. They will also be reminded to use a tissue when coughing or sneezing and to dispose of the tissue safely.

If your child is displaying any of the following symptoms of Covid-19, please keep them at home:

- High temperature – this means feeling hot to touch on your chest or back
- New, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour
- Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

### 4. Parent Events

All being well, I am looking forward to inviting all parents into the academy for information events this half-term.

During these events, there will be the opportunity to hear from me and other colleagues, and to ask us questions about the following:

- The curriculum for your child and plans for their assessment
- How to monitor and support your child's learning
- Plans for the school's future and how you can get involved

There will also be the opportunity to visit classrooms, speak to teachers and look at the work your child has completed so far.

Please save the following dates in your diaries:

Year Group	Date
Year 12	Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup> September (4-5pm)
Year 7	Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> September (4-5pm)
Year 8	Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> September (4-5pm)
Year 11	Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> September (4-5pm)

Year 9	Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> September (4-5pm)
Year 13	Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup> September (4-5pm)
Year 10	Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> October (4-5pm)

## 5. Keeping in touch

I know the start of term is a busy time and that parents will have many questions on their minds.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions or concerns. You can contact me via Ms Hooper ([jayne.hooper@arkstalbans.org](mailto:jayne.hooper@arkstalbans.org)).

I look forward to seeing you all soon.

Kind regards



**Mr Guy Rimmer**  
**Principal**  
**Ark St Alban's Academy**