

Friday 2nd October 2020

Dear Parents,

I am writing to you today at the end of the fourth week of school this year. We are just passed the half-way point of this half-term and we have a further three weeks of school remaining before the half-term holiday.

There have been a number of changes for us all to get used to at the start of this term and I am incredibly grateful for your support and patience as we slowly start to get into new routines and follow the procedures that keep everyone in school as safe as possible.

Included in the update this week is further information about face coverings, more guidance around Covid symptoms, information about our plans to recognise Black History Month and a reminder about appropriate coats.

1. Face Coverings

Pupils must bring a face-mask with them to school every day. This is both for their safety, but also for the safety of those around them.

I am grateful to those of you who last week organise for your child to have a face-mask with them each day.

While we do have a small stock we can give out to pupils in the event that they forget to bring their face-covering, this obviously comes at a cost to the school and any money we spend unnecessarily is money that we can't invest in resources for learning such as textbooks, revision guides and other materials.

I would appreciate all families taking time this weekend to purchase durable, reusable face-masks so that their child can come to school equipped to keep themselves and those around them safe each day.

2. Covid-update

The infection rate in Birmingham and in our community is increasing and we have to make every effort to make sure that virus does not enter our school.

If your child develops any Covid symptoms, no matter how mild (cough, temperature or loss of taste or smell), you must keep them away from school and arrange for them to be tested.

Similarly, if your child develops such symptoms at school, you will be contacted as asked to collect your child from school. In this instance, your child will not be able to return to school for fourteen-days, or until they receive a negative test result.

I know that booking tests is proving difficult and this has been a frustration for all of us in recent weeks. However, more testing centres and more testing slots are now available. If you are finding it impossible to book a test, please do call the school and our attendance team will be able to provide some guidance about how best to access a test.

3. Black History Month

October is Black History Month in the UK. Annually, this is a time at which black history is celebrated and the fight for racial equality is both remembered and revisited. In light of the Black Lives Matter movement which brought huge attention to matters of racial injustice around the world this summer, it is more important than ever that we all meaningfully engage in black history and support pupils to understand its impact on them and the world that they live in.

With this in mind, we will be marking Black History Month with a number of events and activities in school, including tutor time activities led by teachers and by student ambassadors, as well as a series of assemblies led by senior leaders later this month.

4. Coats

As I write last week, it is very important that pupils have a warm, water-proof coat with them in school every day.

It is also important to note that hooded-tops and denim jackets are not allowed, and pupils will be reminded of this by their teachers next week.

As ever, if you have any questions or concerns about any of the above, then please do get in touch by emailing Ms Hooper (jayne.hooper@arkstalbans.org) who will be able to arrange for me to get back to you as soon as possible.

Kind regards,



Mr Guy Rimmer
Principal