

16th December 2020

Dear Parents,

We have reached the end of the Autumn term and the Christmas holidays will begin tomorrow afternoon when pupils are dismissed at 3pm.

Below I have included some updates and information, including a Covid-update. If you have any questions about the information below, please do get in touch.

1. Covid Update

Today we have received news of a positive test for a pupil in 11 Boulton 1. The class has been sent home and will not be able to attend school tomorrow. Pupils in that class will need to isolate for the next seven days.

As I shared with you last week, during the first week of the Christmas holidays, families will be able to contact me directly by email (guy.rimmer@arkstalbans.org). If your child tests positive for the virus on any day between Friday 18th December and Wednesday 23rd December, it is incredibly important that you email me to let me know as I will need to contact the families of pupils in their class to let them know of the need to isolate.

While the national guidance continues to change, it is likely that the Covid restrictions will be slightly relaxed during the Christmas period to allow more households to mix for a number of days.

As we plan to welcome pupils back to school after Christmas for the start of the Spring Term on Wednesday 6th January, it is important that we all do our part to make sure that the school remains Covid-safe.

Pupils who have any symptoms of Covid (a high temperature, a new, persistent cough or a loss of taste or smell), or who live with someone who has symptoms or who has tested positive, should remain away from school.

To avoid the need for pupils to miss school and to minimise the risk of spreading the virus, throughout the holiday period, I would ask all families to make sure that pupils are practicing safe habits as much as possible; social distancing when mixing outside of the home, washing their hands regularly and wearing face-coverings when out in the community.

2. Reports

It was a real joy to meet many Year 11 parents last week to discuss the progress that pupils had made and the results of their mock exams. Year 13 parents should have also received their child's report in the post too.

Parents of pupils in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 should receive the end of term report for their child in the post later this week and we will be discussing the outcomes of their recent assessments further when pupils return in January.

3. Uniform

In January, I want to make sure that all pupils are in the correct uniform all of the time. I appreciate the efforts that parents make to make sure that pupils are dressed smartly and appropriately to school and I want to make sure that expectations are consistent and applied fairly to all pupils.

▪ Outdoor clothes

- As ever, I continue to recommend that all pupils have a warm, water-proof coat to wear over their school uniform when they are travelling to and from school, and at lunch and break times.
- Currently some pupils are wearing hooded-tops and sweatshirts instead of a coat. From January, if worn indoors, items like those below will be confiscated and pupils will be issued with a detention



▪ PE Kit

- Pupils will continue to be allowed to come to school in their PE kit on the days in which their class has PE lesson, however pupils must wear the PE tops available from Clive Marks [here](#) and [here](#).
- Pupils must also wear plain dark bottoms (shorts, skirts or trousers), and these must not have large, obvious logos. Those pictured below, would not be allowed.
- Pupils wearing the incorrect PE kit will not be able to attend lessons and parents will be called and asked to bring in either the correct items or the full normal school uniform.
- On days where the weather is cold, pupils may need to wear more clothes in addition to their PE kit to keep themselves warm. On these days, pupils can wear a base layer (a plain, long-sleeved vest underneath their PE t-shirt) and they can wear their normal school jumper and their normal school blazer over the top of their PE kit to keep themselves warm in lessons



4. Lunch Payments

Many parents have asked questions in recent weeks around planned changes to the lunch payment system. As you know, since the start of the year we have been providing a simple lunch to all pupils free of charge.

We cannot continue to provide lunches for free indefinitely, and in the future, when Covid restrictions are needed less, we also hope to open up the canteen again for pupils to purchase their choice of meals at lunchtime and healthy snacks at lunch and break time.

To allow future payments to be made, all families need to create an iPay account. All families, including those entitled to free school meals need to create an account, as this will be the method by which all payments to the school will be made in the future, including payments around events and trips.

Sign-up is straightforward and there is detailed information available on our [website](#), including a parent-guide showing the steps that need to be taken by families to create an account.

Please take time over the holidays to register for an iPay account before pupils return to school in January.

5. Thank You

Finally, I want to thank all parents for welcoming me into the community at Ark St Alban's Academy this half-term.

It has been a real joy to get to know many of you and your children this term and I am incredibly proud to lead this school and incredibly excited about the future success that we will achieve together.

Thank you for your support this half-term and thank you for your patience as we have adjusted to new ways of working in light of Covid. I wish you all a joyful and peaceful break and I look forward to working with you in the years ahead.

Kind regards,



Mr Guy Rimmer
Principal
Ark St Alban's Academy