

25th September 2020

Dear Parents,

Even though recent news bulletins are a cause for concern and raise the prospect of future lockdowns, I am really pleased to report that in school, pupils are working hard in lessons and starting to make progress in catching-up on the lost learning time from earlier this year.

I have also enjoyed getting to know some parents on the phone in recent weeks.

If we are yet to meet and you would like the opportunity to speak to me on the phone, please do email Ms Hooper (jayne.hooper@arkstalbans.org) and she will arrange a time for me to call you, introduce myself and answer any questions that you may have.

Below you will find important information about face-coverings, coronavirus notices, plans for remote learning, school meals and school uniform.

1. Face Coverings

From Monday morning, like all shops, schools and businesses around the country, all pupils and staff will be expected to wear face coverings when moving around indoors.

This means that at Ark St Alban's, face coverings will need to be worn in corridors, including on balconies, staircases and in the atrium.

Pupils will be expected to bring a face covering with them to school; there are no specific requirements as to the colour or design of the face covering, but it must not be a scarf or bandana – it must be a face mask and it must cover the nose and the mouth.

If pupils travel to school by bus, then they need to wear a different face mask on their journey.

In school, when going into lessons, it is recommended that pupils do not wear a face-covering and that they remove it safely before putting it somewhere safe and clean until they need to wear it again.

I recognise that some pupils may have a medical reason which means that they cannot wear a face-covering and senior staff will be available at all entrances on Monday morning to discuss this with the relevant pupils.

2. Coronavirus Notices

Many parents have asked me how we would communicate with them in the event of a child testing positive for the virus. I also know that there are a lot of rumours on social media.

To be clear, if a pupil in your child's class tests positive for the virus, we will let you know straightaway and it is very likely that the whole class would then need to isolate for several days. We have had one instance of this so far, with a Year 7 class returning today following a period away from school.

It may be necessary in future to send a whole-year group home to isolate for several days. Again, as soon as this is necessary, we would be in touch with you immediately.

Pupils in Year 10 and Year 11 will notice some changes to their timetables from Monday as we look to keep Year 11 even more separate from the rest of the school and the classes in Year 11 separate from one another. This is because we want to take every step possible to reduce the likelihood that pupils studying for their GCSE exams later this year will need to spend significant time away from school.

3. Remote Learning

In the next few weeks, pupils in all year groups will be taught about how they will be able to continue learning if either they, their class or their year group has to spend time away from school.

While I hope that this will not be necessary, I think it is best that we are all prepared. There will be virtual parent events scheduled in the weeks ahead to share with you guidance about remote learning and I will confirm the dates and times for these events with you when I write to you next Friday.

4. Year 11 Parent Information Event

There will be a virtual parent information event for the families of Year 11 pupils next Thursday afternoon (Thursday 1st October) at 5pm. The event can be accessed via this [link](#) and it will be an opportunity for Year 11 parents to find out more about plans for remote learning, changes to the Year 11 timetable and changes to the Year 11 curriculum.

5. School Meals

As you know, since the start of term, the school has been providing all pupils with school meals for free. I can confirm that this will continue until the half-term holiday in late-October.

6. School Uniform

I understand that the school uniform supplier had limited stock available over the summer and earlier this month. I am very grateful for the effort of all parents in making sure that pupils have full, smart school uniform.

In addition to their school uniform, it is also important that pupils have a warm, waterproof coat with them at school every day. Because of the need to keep year groups separate from one another throughout the day, there are no indoor spaces for pupils to use during break and lunch times and I am worried about pupils catching colds.

Thank you for your ongoing support during the busy term and if you do have any questions or concerns about any of the above, then please do get in touch.

Kind regards,



Mr Guy Rimmer
Principal