



Friday, 4th September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers of students in Year 8,

I am writing to you with all the information you need for next week's return to school. **We can't wait to welcome our students back** and share with them our exciting plans for the year ahead. For the health of the students, their families and the staff it is very important that the students follow the routines outlined in this document.

There is a parent checklist on the final page which brings together all the key information contained within this letter.

Student induction

The staff and student induction process will be extended this year to ensure all stakeholders are fully briefed on our high standards and expectations and have time to practice any adjusted school routines. The new academic year will consequently be staggered, according to the information below:

Year Group	First day back at school	Entrance and exit to school	Base for lessons	Time when canteen is open and location of the canteen	Social Break-time location
Yr. 8	Arrive at 10.00am on Wednesday 9th September. Dismissal at 13:00 for Wednesday with dismissal at 15:15 thereafter.	Though the tennis courts on the left-hand side of the building	Left-hand side of the Helenswood Campus	13:45 – 14:15	Back playground

Students arriving late to school will receive a 1-hour detention.

The focus of the induction is to re-engage students back into the school values, being proud through articulating their ambition, and practising study skills to help them succeed academically. Re-instilling a sense of confidence in students is crucial to their successful return to school.

Getting the basics right

It is hard work to maintain sky-high standards every day - but we do it because we care. Students must display impeccable standards of attendance, punctuality and organisation. Students are expected to demonstrate high levels of independence and not rely on their parents to pack their school bag.

Principal: Mr L Collins
Regional Associate Principal: Ms V Cockram
Network Associate Principal: Mr J Scafe

To achieve these standards, we need your support. Parental involvement in a child's education is a powerful force. You play a pivotal role in your child's future. To help guide parents, What a great Ark Alexandra Academy parent/carer does...which can be found [here](#) . All parents must re-sign the home school agreement which can be found here [home school commitment](#) and return it on the first day back in September to show your commitment to your child's ongoing success.

Students must arrive in good time wearing full school uniform and with a full set of equipment. Please see our uniform policy [here](#) and our equipment list [here](#). Our strict uniform policy includes:

- No makeup, jewellery or unnatural hair colour
- Skirts must fall below the knee when standing and trousers must be worn around the waist
- Bags must be black rucksack style. No large logos or handbags. Coats must be black or blue
- Accessories such as hair bands must be school colours (blue, black or grey)
- Top button must be fastened, ties should fall to the top of the belt and socks must be black
- Mobile phones are not permitted on the premises under any circumstances.

Students not wearing the correct uniform will not be permitted into circulation and parents will be contacted.

Excellent attendance to school is vital to a child's education. If, due to illness or other exceptional circumstance, your child is unable to attend school, please follow the process set out in our attendance policy [here](#): including calling the absence line before 8:05am on 01424 439888.

To keep students safe and minimise distractions in class, we have a strict no mobile policy. Any phones found during randomised bag checks will be confiscated and returned to parents at the end of term.

Covid-19 adjustments

The safety and welfare of our community is our number one priority. There will therefore be some adjustments to the student experience next week to ensure the school is compliant with the most recent Government guidelines on keeping children safe. Whilst it will never be possible to ensure a totally risk-free environment, I am confident that all reasonable steps have been taken to prepare our community for a wider reopening. The frequently asked questions (FAQ) area on our website outlines all the guidance and changes. Please refer to the outline of the guidance in the table at the end of this letter.

You must contact the Attendance Officer if your child has an underlying health condition or is classified as extremely clinically or clinically vulnerable. Further guidance on this can be found [here](#). Students are reminded not to attend school if they, or someone in their household has any of the following symptoms: a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; a loss of, or change to, their sense of smell or taste. If you are displaying any of these symptoms you should stay at home and get a test via the [NHS website](#). You should report any absence to school in the normal way by calling reception: 01424 439888 email: ale.attendance@arkalexandra.org

Lower School (Year 7 & 8) – Mrs Louise Barham
Upper School (Years 9-13) – Miss Melissa Anderson

The school will have a robust system in place should any individuals display symptoms whilst on the premises. All stakeholders are asked to actively engage with the [NHS Test and Trace process](#).

Detailed planning has taken place to ensure the quality of education provided by the school remains high in all eventualities. If students are required to self-isolate due to coronavirus, provision will be made for them to join their lessons live via MS Teams. Should the school be subject to a local lockdown, all students will access their lessons live using MS Teams. Students will receive full training on how to do this as part of their induction and we will make provision for the loan of devices where necessary.

In summary, for the great majority of our students, a return to the normal safe rhythm of school life will be most welcome. Our character programme of assemblies, reading, family dining and school routines will

promote wellbeing during the autumn term. For those students needing a little extra support, we will be well placed to meet this need with a further package of in-house mentoring and counselling.

We are keen to work with all parents to ensure every child returns to full time education in September. If you are concerned about your child's return, **you must contact the school as soon as possible** to discuss this.

Should you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact us via reception. Once again, thank you for your incredible support during this period and I look forward to seeing your child in September.

Yours faithfully,



Mr L Collins
Principal

Overview of links and actions in this letter:

Item	Link	Action required
How to Be a Great AAA Parent	https://arkalexandra.org/sites/default/files/How%20to%20be%20a%20great%20parent%20and%20help%20your%20student%20at%20home.pdf	Review and implement within your home before 1st September
Home Academy Agreement	https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=dBTLADS1jUaCn2NuzjLCTP8cYxAgJ7JOh31ZnQp5jp5URDVRRVhGVTVQWUtUOUZKMopCNzNaNldSVy4u	Review, sign and send back with your child on 1st day of school
Uniform	https://arkalexandra.org/sites/default/files/Uniform%20Policy%20-%202020-21%20-%20Updated%2028%20Aug%202020_o.pdf	Ensure your child has all required items in advance of the 1st day of school
Equipment	https://arkalexandra.org/sites/default/files/Uniform%20Policy%20-%202020-21%20-%20Updated%2028%20Aug%202020_o.pdf	Ensure your child has all items in advance of the 1st day of school
Attendance	https://arkalexandra.org/sites/default/files/Attendance%20and%20Punctuality%20Policy%20-%202020.pdf	Should your child be ill, call the absence line (01424 439888 before 8:05am
Structure of the Day	https://arkalexandra.org/life-school/school-day	Ensure you and your child are familiar with this schedule before the 1st day of school

Extremely Vulnerable list	https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higherrisk/whos-at-higher-risk-fromcoronavirus/	Email: info@arkalexandra.org should this apply to your family
If Displaying C-19 symptoms	https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-andtracing/get-an-antigen-test-tocheck-if-you-have-coronavirus/	Consult the NHS if you or your child display symptoms and report to NHS Track and Trace
Track and Trace	https://contact-tracing.phe.gov.uk/	Report symptoms and testing details to Track and Trace (if necessary)

Independent Learning	Assigned on your child's Show My Homework account.	During lockdown your child would have been set a variety of learning tasks. Quizzes on the learning was set and students should aim for a score of 80% or higher. This is particularly important for Year 10 students as they enter the final year of their GCSE studies.
Worried About Return to School	info@arkalexandra.org or 01424 439888	If you're concerned with the return to school, call in to discuss with our Pastoral and Safeguarding teams before return in September
For more information	www.arkalexandra.org/	Please visit our website for key information for all year groups

Breaks and buying food in the canteen	There are now two break times and food is available to buy in the canteen from either 11.15 – 11.45 or 13.45 – 14.45 . Your child will be allocated one of the break time slots to purchase food from the canteen. We are suggesting that all students bring snacks and water if they are not bringing a packed lunch. Please remember that foods high in sugar (sweets) are detrimental for students learning and should therefore be avoided. Water is the only drink that is allowed in school, again for the benefit of the students
Transitions around school	Students will move purposefully around the school at a whisper in single file on the left-hand side of the corridors. One-way staircases will be in operation.
Entrance and exit routines	On entering the classroom, students will routinely use hand sanitiser before sitting down for the 'do now' activity. We expect all students to have a reading book with them.
Classrooms	Where possible, non-specialist classrooms will be arranged with all desks in rows facing forward.
Detentions and intervention	Detentions and intervention sessions will take place in accordance with the school behaviour policy with an emphasis on maintaining distancing between students.
Assemblies	Assemblies will take place within year groups only and will be conducted remotely broadcasted into their form classroom
School trips	There will be no domestic overnight (UK) or overseas educational visits throughout the autumn term. Other day trips may take place in accordance with government guidance.
Enrichment and Drop-Down Days (DDD)	Students will participate in DDDs within their year groups. Enrichment will follow the same format and tutor groups will cycle through each club spending three weeks in each. Some activities will be adjusted to meet government guidelines (see music and physical activity).
Music and physical activity	Singing, playing wind or brass instruments and the use of choirs and ensembles will be limited and carefully controlled. Sports equipment will be frequently cleaned and contact sports avoided. The annual school musical is postponed.
Cleaning and hygiene	Frequently touched surfaces, items and toilets will be subject to an enhanced cleaning rota. Regular hand washing, and good respiratory hygiene will be promoted throughout the school. School uniforms should be cleaned regularly.

School events	Traditional autumn term school events such as Prize Evening, Open Days, Black History Month Concert and Parents Evenings will be conducted remotely.
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	PPE will only be required if an individual becomes ill with coronavirus symptoms or where a student routinely receives intimate care. All students will be expected to uphold our no touching rule.
Parental meetings	Will be by appointment only. Please call reception in case of an emergency. Appointments will be conducted by telephone/video conference wherever possible.