



8th September 2021

Dear parents and carers,

Video message is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gg8qxmT3WxE>

Thank you for your support with carrying out two lateral flow tests last week and this week. I was very pleased with the number of students who participated in the testing, and I appreciate the time that parents spent bringing their children to school for the testing. Seventeen children tested positive in total and while this is a small proportion of our school community it is higher than I expected and emphasises the need for us all to be careful and to follow the guidance.

We are continuing to have enhanced cleaning at school and will still ask students to sanitise their hands at the start of every lesson. We have sanitiser in every classroom, but it would also be helpful if students could carry a small bottle of sanitiser. Classrooms will continue to be well ventilated. Students should continue to socially distance and wear a face covering on public transport travelling to and from school. Staff and students can choose to wear a face covering in classrooms and communal areas. We are also maintaining some bubbling at social times in the canteen.

I am mindful of the number of positive tests, and we are monitoring them closely so that we are able to quickly identify if we have a *cluster* of cases at the school. *The guidance describes a cluster as being when five people who have been in close contact, all receive a positive test within ten days of each other.* Close contact is being in the same classroom for tutor time, lesson time or as part of a club. The guidance says that schools do not need to offer a track and trace service or notify parents of positive test results.

If you receive an email/text message from the NHS test & trace that says your child has been a close contact, we will ask you to continue sending your child to school in line with the guidance, **but to also give them a lateral flow test every day for the next ten days.** If the test is positive at any stage your child will need to stay at home and get a PCR test. Lateral flow tests identify people before they develop symptoms and should help us to prevent a cluster from developing at the school. There is no legal obligation to follow the request for lateral flow tests and your child should attend school whether they are tested or not. The guidance asks that staff and students use lateral flow tests twice a week. It **is important** that you record ALL lateral flow results to <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result> as the results are linked to the NHS test & trace process.

We have been through a very difficult 18 months, and I think that it is likely that there are further significant challenges ahead. We have moved mountains together during the COVID crisis and there is still some way to go. So, with your support, we will continue to strive to meet each new challenge and ensure that your children are successful this year.

Regards,

Liam Collins
Principal

Principal: Mr L Collins
Network Associate Principal: Mr J Scafe

Useful contact information:

COVID@arkalexandra.org – please use this email address to notify the school of any POSITIVE COVID results or any COVID related queries.

- If you have a positive lateral flow result, please contact NHS119 to arrange a PCR test.
- If your child has symptoms, please arrange a PCR test.
- If you require any more home testing kits, please email us or ask our Reception teams at either the William Parker Campus or Helenswood Campus- they have plenty of stock available.

Head of Year 7, Mr Sully (s.sully@arkalexandra.org)

Head of Year 8, Ms Scott (k.scott@arkalexandra.org)

Head of Year 9, Mrs Munnery (c.munnery@arkalexandra.org)

Head of Year 10, Mrs Gill (a.gill@arkalexandra.org)

Head of Year 11, Miss Clark (s.clark@arkalexandra.org)

Attendance Lead- Years 7&8, Mrs Barham (l.barham@arkalexandra.org)

Attendance Lead-Years 9-13, Miss Anderson (m.anderson@arkalexandra.org)