

ALEC REED ACADEMY



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Acting Principal and CEO: Phil Cosby

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Dear Parent/Carer

I hope that you have not been too disrupted by the recent bad weather. To have three 'named' storms in a week is certainly unusual, especially in the South East of the country. We were fairly fortunate on the academy site in that the building suffered minimal damage, although one of the sheds in the Year 2 playground will have to be replaced.

I thought that this was an opportune moment to remind you of the arrangements that are in place should we have to shut the academy due to inclement weather. Every morning our site team do a risk assessment of the Academy building and grounds and report to me should there be an issue that would mean that we are unable to open. For example, extreme snow or a problem with one of the main services such as a loss of water. In such circumstances we will do our best to inform you as quickly as possible to enable you to organise child care for the day. To facilitate this a message will be sent by text and/or email. (I remind you of the importance of providing us with your most up to date contact details.) A message will also be posted on the home page of the Academy website. We will of course always do everything we can to keep the Academy open.

The other key news is the announcement on Monday night by the Prime Minister regarding his 'living with Covid' plan and the fact that all Covid-19 restrictions will end in England on Thursday, including the removal of the guidance that staff and students in educational settings undertake twice weekly asymptomatic testing. Whilst I understand the sentiments behind the announcement and a desire to get back to normality, I do have to balance this against ensuring that we minimise the risk to the ARA community and specifically the educational opportunities of our children. It is only five weeks ago that we had the highest numbers of staff and pupils absent with Covid-19 since the start of the pandemic.

We are fortunate that we still have a supply of lateral flow test kits and therefore we intend to distribute a pack containing seven kits to every secondary age child on Friday 25th February and distribute a further pack of seven on Friday 18th March. This will mean that all secondary age children can continue to test twice weekly up to our return after the Easter holidays. I am sure you will find this reassuring, especially as there has been a lot of speculation in the press about how expensive test kits will be in the future. I expect that by April the chief medical officer Sir Chris Whitty and the chief scientific officer Sir Patrick Vallance will have a much clearer idea on whether we have overcome the main threat of this virus. If any of our families in **any year group** would appreciate an additional test kit then this can be arranged through your child's SafeWorker.

If a child or member of staff does test positive then it is advisable, as with any sickness bug, that they should stay at home and avoid contact with other people. In the case of Covid this should be for at least 5 full days or until they have received 2 negative test results on consecutive days. In terms of face coverings, whilst these are no longer mandatory, we encourage secondary age pupils to wear them if they wish to do so. This is especially important if they live with someone that may be at greater risk from the virus and at times when they are in close proximity to others, in poorly ventilated areas such as the lunch queues. I have also taken the decision to request pupils wear masks in assemblies as I see this as higher risk and am determined to minimise the spread of infection. We will review this expectation on our return after Easter.

Kind Regards

Phil Cosby
Acting Principal & CEO

'The Collins PiXL Award for Outstanding Progress' National Award Winners 2014

