

ALEC REED ACADEMY



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Acting Principal and CEO: Phil Cosby

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Dear Parent/Carer

I trust you are keeping well and have settled back into an organised routine post Christmas. January can be a challenging month but we do know that better weather and longer evenings will return.

Covid Update

You will have heard the Prime Minister's announcement on Wednesday regarding the removal of Plan B measures and the updated guidance for schools. As a result face coverings are no longer advised for pupils, staff and visitors in classrooms and from Thursday 27th January face coverings will no longer be advised for pupils, staff and visitors in communal areas. I am of course guided in my decision making by the government and it is our intention to follow this guidance as the COVID infection rate in Ealing is declining. However, infection rates do still remain amongst the highest in London. With this in mind we will review our decision regarding masks in communal areas on Wednesday of next week based on the COVID infection rate within the Academy itself.

I am sure that you, like me, hope that this is a signal that we are conquering the threat of COVID and will soon be able to return to a more normal approach to your child's education. With this in mind I encourage you to do all you can to ensure that your child attends school as frequently as possible. There is clear statistical analysis of the impact on academy progress of pupils that have an attendance rate below 96%. Not only will it hamper their education but it will also have an impact on their life opportunities when they seek employment.

Vaping

I have been teaching long enough to know that cigarettes used to be a big problem for schools. Thankfully we are now fully aware of the dangers that these bring and most young people do not consider smoking. Unfortunately, something that was designed in 2006 to help people stop smoking cigarettes and to reduce the risk of cancer has become common place and is fast becoming the scourge of all schools.

Vapes or e-cigarettes are not harm-free. It is pleasing that they contain significantly fewer of the harmful chemicals, which can cause diseases related to conventional smoking. However, they still emit harmful emissions in the vapour, including possible carcinogens and irritants and may have an impact on the heart and blood vessels. As they have been in use for less than ten years Doctors still don't know the long-term impact on the heart and circulation, or other aspects of health. With this in mind E-cigarettes and vaping should never be taken up by people who don't already smoke but unfortunately the marketing of vaping products is not sufficiently regulated and they can be purchased from less reputable dealers. This means that the level of Nicotine (which is highly addictive) or THC Tetrahydrocannabinol (the principal psychoactive constituent of cannabis) contained within them can be a great concern.

In light of this the academy took the decision prior to lockdown to ban the use of Vapes on site for all staff and students. Any student found with vaping items or paraphernalia in their possession

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will have them confiscated and destroyed. They will not be returned and sanctions will be imposed. I'm sure that you will all support us in this decision. We do not want a generation of children addicted to Nicotine or THC thereby putting their future lives at risk.

Year 8 Option Evening

Apologies to Year 8 parents regarding the late cancellation of the Year 8 Options evening due to a technical issue. Once the glitch has been resolved we will confirm the revised date. Currently we are hoping this will be Thursday 27th January.

Academy Fields

A crowd funding page has been set up at <https://www.spacehive.com/academy-fields-nature-reserve> in an attempt to raise funds to support the development of Academy Fields. It would be great if you could visit the link and like the page. There is also an option to make a contribution to the fund. If we get enough 'likes' then we will receive additional funding to transform this space into an educational facility.

Enjoy the weekend.

Kind regards,

Phil Cosby
Acting Principal & CEO