



# Ark Charter Academy

25<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear parent/carers,

We have been working hard to make sure that returning to school is as safe as possible for your child and would like to update you regarding the reopening plans, including covid testing and some key changes.

The key dates to note are;

- **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March:**                      **Years 10 and 11 will return**
- **Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> March:**            **Years 7, 8 and 9 will return**

## Operational Arrangements

The operational arrangements of the school will remain as they did in the Autumn Term, with designated entrances opening at 8am for KS3 and 9am for KS4 for breakfast club, different KS3 and KS4 starts and ends to the day, and students based in one classroom for most of their lessons. A reminder of the key information for your child's year group will be sent on Monday.

## Face Masks

The Government has long set out a requirement for students to wear masks in communal areas, this has now been extended to all lessons in classrooms. The only time masks are not required are in practical PE lessons and when outside. The use of masks will be reviewed at Easter in line with government guidance.

We provided students with plain black face masks in September. We will provide all students with an additional two face masks on their return which they carry on them at all times and wear appropriately.

## Lateral Flow Testing before returning to school

The government has given us the opportunity to have a staged reopening from 8th March 2021, however, there is a requirement that students now are tested 3 times, with the first negative test meaning students can return on the 8th March.

As a result we are therefore commencing our testing earlier, from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March. This will ensure students have two tests before they return and minimize the disruption to learning. Testing is voluntary but, for the safety of all, we are encouraging as many students as possible to participate. The dates allocated are as follows:

Year	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3
7	Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> March (morning)	Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> March (afternoon)	Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> March
8	Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> March (morning)	Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> March (afternoon)	Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> March
9	Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March	Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> March (afternoon)	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> March
10	Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> March	Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> March (afternoon)	Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> March
11	Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> March	Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> March (afternoon)	Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> March



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Students will be given a time to attend for their test so that we can manage the number of students on site.

For the first two tests:

- Students will enter via the Isambard Brunel Entrance
- On entry, all students will make their way to the Hornpipe Theatre.
- Students will register and make their way to be tested.
- Students will exit via the Drama Studio and will leave site via Isambard Brunel Entrance

For the third test students will come out of their lessons at the designated time and attend the test centre, returning to class afterwards.

After the first three tests, students will be offered the opportunity to undertake home testing, twice per week. This will require students to administer their own tests and for parents to share the results on the test and trace site online or via phone. We have also been asked to keep our testing centres open, to support students and staff who need additional help in carrying these tests out. We will share details of how to complete these home tests and how they will be accessed as soon as the government makes this information available.

I am sure that you, as we, are looking forward to the children coming back to school and resuming some sense of normality to our lives. However, it is essential that we continue to ensure we are observing social distancing, good hygiene and following the rules laid out. Above everything it is essential that students keep within their year group bubbles and designated zones and wear their face masks appropriately. In addition, it is essential that they only walk to and from school with one other person, until the end of the term, as per the guidance laid out in the government announcement on Monday.

We will all still have a role to play to stop the spread of infection and we must all continue to follow the NHS guidance.

If any student has symptoms of Coronavirus, however mild, they **must not come to school**. All the information about what to do if you have symptoms is available the Government website <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

We appreciate that some of you may be feeling anxious about your child's return to school. As such we have arranged a virtual parent's meeting on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March where we will explain the measures, we are taking to keep your child safe and answer any questions that you may have. You will be emailed the link to the meeting, if you do not receive this link by Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March please contact the school.

I hope that we can all play our part in keeping our community safe and by doing so, we will enjoy the freedoms laid out in the "roadmap" on 21st June and be able to hug our families once more.

Kind regards



Fiona Chapman  
Executive Principal  
Ark Charter Academy



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