



Ark Ayrton Primary Academy

Newsletter
March 2021

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Dear Parents and Carers

It has been so lovely to welcome all of our families back on site. The school is yet again a hive of happy activity and the children have been just brilliant, they've settled quickly and confidently back into the routines and expectations.

We would all like to take this opportunity to thank you for the support and understanding you have shown as we have adjusted again and for the part you have played in helping to ensure such a settled and successful return to school for all.

Survey

Thank you to all of you who have completed the online survey regarding our remote learning provision. The responses are so valuable that Ark have extended the survey for another week. Only a third of parents have completed the survey across all Ark schools. Nearly half of our parents have completed this for us, so if you haven't yet done so, please spend a few minutes to do this and to support your children in Reception, Y1 and Y2. We have had the least responses from these year groups of children. We really value your feedback.

Staffing Changes

There will be some leadership adjustments from September. Following the appointment of Fiona Chapman (Head of Ark Dickens) to permanent Principal of Ark Charter, I will now move to oversee both Ayrton and Dickens as Executive Headteacher. It's an exciting opportunity reflecting all the great work the Ayrton team have achieved together. I am pleased to be able to support Ark Dickens in their continuing journey and look forward to connecting our schools through training and opportunities over time. I also remain fully committed to Ayrton, a school I have been a part of for over 15 years and have led for the last 5 years. Ayrton is still very much part of me! I will continue to be very much present and will be working closely with Mrs Bennett-Acres who will become our Interim Head of School overseeing the day to day running of the school. We will continue to work very closely together on the ongoing development of the school.

Bikes and Scooters

We are having a few issues with bikes and scooters. There are currently very limited bike stands at the front of the school, and these are largely for staff use. More children are riding their scooters and bikes to school and leaving them there. Please be aware that these are left at your own risk. Ideally we would ask that you now take scooters in particular home with you once the children have been dropped off.

I am looking into a bike/scooter store for the children and where this could be housed but in the meantime we will now require you to provide a lock for your child's bike or scooter if you choose to leave it on site and you/your child will need to be responsible for locking and unlocking.

Lateral Flow Testing

You may be aware that with the return of all children to school, secondary age children are being urged to take lateral flow tests twice weekly at home to test asymptomatic children (those showing no symptoms). Primary staff have been doing this for a while now as it provides additional protection and reassurance for the school community and reduces risk.

Lateral flow tests are NOT suitable for primary aged children, the only time a primary aged child or nursery child should be tested is if they have Covid symptoms and they then require a test at a test centre or by post.

However, parents/carers/adults living in a household with nursery, school or college aged children are now able to collect Lateral Flow Devices (LFDs) for adults to test themselves at home on a twice-weekly basis to help reduce transmission of the virus. This includes childcare and support bubbles.

Tests are fast, easy and completely free. Testing is voluntary, but strongly recommended to all who are eligible. Alongside the vaccine, washing hands, wearing face coverings, and maintaining social distancing, rapid testing plays a vital role in reducing transmission rates for our community. Getting into the habit of regular testing as part of our everyday lives will help us all to play our part and do what we can to protect each other.

If you have any queries about the tests, and you live in England, please call 119 (free from mobiles and landlines). Lines are open every day from 7am to 11pm.

Please see some important questions and answers from Portsmouth Local Authority in regards to Lateral Flow Device testing for adults, below.

Thank you for your continued support.

Mrs A H-Chapman

Headteacher

Q and A on Lateral Flow Device testing

Where can I collect a home test kit in Portsmouth?

In Portsmouth, LFD tests for use at home can currently be collected (in packs of 7 test kits) between 1.30pm and 7.00pm from Eldon Car Park, Southsea, PO1 2DJ and between 1.30pm and 7.00pm Unit 9, North Harbour Road, Cosham, PO6 3TL, with two packs being given out per person. Both sites are giving out tests for collection and use at home seven days per week. No ID is needed, and there is no need to book an appointment.

Who should use the tests?

These community tests are provided for adult members of the household only. **It is really important to note that Public Health England advice is that primary age children (and younger children) should not be part of the regular asymptomatic testing programme.** Secondary age pupils will receive tests from their school.

LFD tests for use at home are intended for asymptomatic testing only. Anyone in the household, including children, experiencing possible symptoms of coronavirus (a high temperature, a new continuous cough, or a loss of sense of taste or smell), should book a PCR test via the [government website](#).

What to do if an LFD test is positive

Parents must inform the school where any member of the household tests positive using an LFD test, and the whole household should immediately begin a 10 day self-isolation period.

Positive results from LFD tests used at home should be followed up with a PCR test. Self-isolation begins with the positive LFD test - families should not wait for the PCR test to begin self-isolation. If the subsequent PCR test is negative, the self-isolation can end.

What happens if I have had Covid before, or have had a vaccination?

LFD tests should not be used within 90 days of a positive PCR test. If you get a new set of coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms within those 90 days, you will need to self-isolate again for 10 days and get a new test.

LFD tests can and should be used by anyone who has received either one or two doses of the vaccine. The vaccination will not affect either an LFD or PCR test result. It is still important to follow hands, face, space and other prevention advice following vaccination as it is still possible to get COVID-19 and pass it to others.