



# Ark Greenwich Free School

Weekly Parent Bulletin

**Thursday 3rd September 2020**

*“There is sufficient evidence that this school could now be judged **OUTSTANDING**”  
(Ofsted, 2020)*

## Message from the Headteacher

Dear Parents/Carers,

We can't wait to welcome our scholars back and share with them our exciting plans for the year ahead.

Outlined in the bulletin below, you'll find reminders and key information for our year 7s joining AGFS tomorrow, and for our returning years 8-11 following next week. This year's scholar induction is extended to give ample time to adjust and settle into our school routines, as standards will be even higher when scholars return.

For the great majority of our scholars, a return to the normal safe rhythm of school life will be most welcome. Our character programme of assemblies, reading, family dining and school routines will promote wellbeing during the autumn term. For those scholars needing a little extra support, we will be well placed to meet this need with a further package of in-house mentoring and counselling.

Should you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact us via reception. Once again, thank you for your incredible and I look forward to seeing your child in the upcoming week.

Our full return to school letter can be found [here](#).

Mr Spiers  
Headteacher

### Attachments from Today's Bulletin

Please see your attachments via email/Xpressions app to see further resources from today's bulletin. This includes information about:

- Olive Dining Covid Details
- Xpressions Application details

## Upcoming Dates for the New Academic Year

**Friday 4th September, Year 7 First Day of School** arrive from 7:45, gate closes at 8:20

**Monday 7th September, Year 8 First Day of School** arrive from 7:45, gate closes at 8:20

**Monday 7th September, Year 11 First Day of School** arrive from 13:50, gate closes at 14:15

**Tuesday 8th September, Year 9 and 10 First Day of School** arrive from 10:45, gate closes at 11:10

## Uniform and Equipment Reminders for Return to School

Scholars must arrive in good time wearing full school uniform and with a full set of equipment. Please see our uniform policy [here](#) and our equipment list [here](#). Our strict uniform policy includes:

- No makeup, jewellery or unnatural hair colour. All Any dyed hair must be changed before the start of term.
- Skirts must fall below the knee when standing and trousers must be worn around the waist
- Bags must be black rucksack style. No large logos or handbags. Coats must be black or blue
- Accessories such as hair bands must be school colours (blue, black or grey)
- Top button must be fastened, ties should fall to the top of the belt and socks must be black
- Mobile phones are **not** permitted on the premises under any circumstances.

Scholars not meeting the above standards will not be permitted into circulation and parents will be contacted.



## Travel to School

All scholars are strongly advised to walk or cycle to school. Those that must catch a bus are advised to check the TFL website for school bus services only. Your child should arrive promptly for 7.45am-8.20am and no earlier or later.



## Medication

Any scholars who take medication must bring in a spare medication and copy of their prescription to hold on site. Scholars are **not** permitted to carry medication on them unless it is their spare epi-pen or asthma pump. You must inform reception if a scholar needs to carry either one of these by emailing [info@arkgreenwich.org](mailto:info@arkgreenwich.org).



## Student Emails

All scholar email addresses and passwords will be reset from 4th September 2020. Scholars will receive their new login details during induction in the first week of school.

## Attendance

Attendance is **mandatory**. In exceptional circumstances the school must be notified by calling reception or emailing [info@arkgreenwich.org](mailto:info@arkgreenwich.org). Ms Slee will continue to check-in with families to ensure attendance is exemplary.

## Hand Sanitiser

Scholars **are** allowed to bring and use their own sanitiser on the way to and from school. They will **not** be permitted to use their own hand sanitiser in school as we will be providing hand sanitiser at frequent points throughout the day.

## Face Coverings

Following updated government guidance, scholars will now be permitted to wear face coverings in indoor communal areas at school if they so wish. Please note:

1. Face coverings are not compulsory and are worn at the discretion of the scholar/parent. The government is not recommending face coverings are necessary in education settings generally because other mitigating measures are already in place. However, scientific evidence suggests that the use of face coverings may be beneficial for short periods indoors where there is a risk of close social contact with people you do not normally meet and where social distancing cannot be maintained (e.g., during lesson transitions).
2. If a scholar would like to wear a face covering it must be standard medical type and/or school colours (blue/white/grey) and free from patterns, logos or text. Bandanas and scarves are not permitted. Ark are recommending the following providers of face coverings: Artisan Hygiene, Banner and CS4 UK.
3. It will be the responsibility of scholars to supply and manage their own face covering in accordance with government and school guidelines.
4. Scholars should use a different face covering for travel to and from school and use the link below to help them understand how to remove face coverings safely between settings.
5. Face coverings are not to be worn in classrooms or whilst outside in the playground and must be removed at the school gate on arrival.

For further information on the use of face coverings please visit the government website [here](#).

## Lunch Account Top Up and Y10/11 Snack

Due to Covid, it is important that where possible, families top up their child's lunch account via WisePay. Y7s should receive login details today. If a child must top up with cash, they can only do so during the start of their lunch break.

Because lunch for some scholars is a little later than usual, Y10/11 scholars are permitted to bring a cereal bar or a piece of fruit before AM line up and will be allowed to eat this in their zoned area located in the dining hall before 8.20am line up.

## Be a Model AGFS Parent

Parent involvement in a child's schooling up to the age of 16 is a powerful force which is strongly linked to educational achievement (Department for Education). To help you get off to a strong start in supporting your child as an AGFS scholar, we've created [this document](#) with key tips to help your child achieve to their potential. We ask all parents and carers to review this document and action these tips at home.

## Home School Commitment

At the start of every academic school year, we ask our scholars and families to recommit to the values and ethos of Ark Greenwich Free School. Please review the home school commitment [here](#).

## Digital Detox

We recognise that some of our scholars have had unlimited access to their mobile phones, video games and computers throughout lockdown and over summer holidays. We strongly encourage our community to take time away from digital devices as we transition back to school.

Research shows that over exposure to screens and video games can affect quality of sleep, mental health, stress and anxiety. We believe without careful monitoring, technology can even rob a child of their childhood. For more information click [here](#).

While it's difficult to expect your family to go completely offline, there are easy ways to minimise screen time:

- Set a daily maximum for screen time ( 1 hour is plenty for children and teens)
- Turn off phones, television, etc during all meals
- Set aside time for no-screen activities (sport, painting, picnic in the park, etc)
- Make the detox a family competition
- Move all electronics out of bedrooms (no computers, TVs or mobiles) and 9:30pm lights out.

## Summer Independent Learning Completion

It is vital scholars reflect on the precise gaps in their knowledge and understanding and use the [Summer Independent Learning](#) to address these gap. Doing this will put them in the best possible position for the beginning of this year. All students should complete their Independent Learning before the start of term next week.

## Y11 Work Experience – Further Details

Given the Covid-19 pandemic and the need to close schools and businesses, understandably this has had an impact on students searching and securing their WEX placements for September 2020. AGFS are committed to providing Y11 students with a WEX placement and are able to open up additional dates for students to complete their WEX placement with providers. All Y11 students must be actively searching and securing a WEX placement if they were unable to attend a placement during 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

### **WEX Dates Available for placements during Academic Year 2020-21:**

- October Half Term - 26th -30th October 2020
- December Half Term - 21st - 24th December or 28th - 31st December 2020
- February Half Term - 15th - 19th February 2021

Once successful in securing a placement, please upload the employer details onto the Connect Placement App so Mrs Neville can verify this for you. The employer may even ask to conduct an interview over the phone, or in person to help secure the placement.

**Note: Any placements secured during school term time will NOT be authorised by AGFS, with the exception of the September 2020 dates.**

## School Communications

All Return to School communications can be found [here](#). Don't miss out on communications coming from AGFS! All school emails are saved at the below links: [Year 7 and 11 Transitions](#) and [Years 8–10 Communications](#). To make sure you never miss a notification, sign up to our free Xpressions App. More details are attached to this message. Also join us by following us on LinkedIn and Twitter:



@ArkGreenwich



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