



Alexander Road High School

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23 April

Dear Alex Family Members

End of Term 1 newsletter

It seemed as if term 1 would never start and now it seems surprising that it is already over. Once the term got going it seemed to gather momentum and threatened to sweep us away with it. We made it! I am sure that your children are tired and in need of a break from school. I have asked them to wash some dishes this week, in the hope that this will give you a break.

Reports have been emailed. They are also available via a login to ADAM. If you have used your children to log in to ADAM, please take note that we have changed their passwords for ADAM. The new passwords are in an email from me to their school email addresses. If they go to outlook.com and log in with their school email addresses and passwords, they will be able to get to the email and its explanation of how to get back into ADAM.

Please be aware that these reports contain marks derived only from term 1 continuous assessment. They are likely to be slightly inflated. Please celebrate the successes and encourage some introspection where the marks call for improvement.

The rehearsals for our annual production are progressing encouragingly. This year we are going to treat the city to our production of "Into The Woods". We will run for just over a week in the middle of next term. Brace yourselves, it is going to be fantastic.

A huge thanks to Justin Nagan, Mr and Ms McEwan for organising the Baakens Valley clean up last week Friday and to those who joined the Alex team.

I have written a separate letter, distributed below this one. The tone is a little more severe, addressing the use and possibly abuse of social media by some of our children. It came to my attention that there were several inappropriate images and messages doing the rounds. Please read the letter and take some time to browse through your children's phones.

I have had a few parents contact me to ask when Alex is going back to full capacity. It does seem rather contradictory that we are allowed to play contact sport, but we still

need to maintain a social distance of at least 1m for the rest of the time. Under the current Disaster Management Act, we are compelled to maintain our Covid related protocols, including the social distance. We have made special arrangements to allow our Matrics to return at full capacity, but it has required the use of lots of extra resources. We do not have the resources to make the same allowances for all our grades. There is discussion at national level about a return to 100%.

I am very aware that the current arrangement is very far from ideal. As soon as we have a directive, we will manage the implementation in the safest way possible. The rate of new infections has remained low in the country and particularly in the city, but we have all seen the devastation of the third wave in European and Asian countries. I am sure we would rather endure the inconvenience for a bit longer than have to face the worst of the third wave.

My sincere thanks to everyone who has contributed this term to the table of sharing. We have been able to bless several families who are facing tough times. Please consider adding an extra item to your basket when you are shopping. It really does make a huge difference to the recipients.

I am deeply grateful to everyone who has paid their school fees this term. In these tough times any payment can leave a mark on your soul. Your dedication to Alex makes it possible for us to function. Thank you very much.

Please keep yourself and your loved ones safe and blessed this week

Fond regards



Matthew Ridgway
Principal



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Dear Alex Family Members

Sensible use of digital media

We strive to teach ethical and moral behaviour. This is often difficult to govern in the spheres of social media but there are some extremely important rules of which we must be reminded regularly.

If we send messages of the following nature over WhatsApp, any other messaging system or social media platform, we could be held criminally liable:

1. Threatening or inciting violence against other people.
2. Threatening to cause harm or damage to any person or property.
3. Sending or sharing intimate pictures or videos of ourselves or another people without their consent.
4. Distributing copyright-protected images or videos.
5. Cyber-bullying, harassing or encouraging a person to harm themselves.
6. False communication intent on causing mental harm.

The law states that both the creator (if underage) and/or the sharer of an intimate image or video is considered to be committing an offence. Therefore, if we receive an intimate image, video, or similar media over WhatsApp, or any other platform, and forward it to others without the consent of the person identified, we would be guilty of an offence.

It is also important to remember that there are laws which govern groups on WhatsApp and other messaging platforms. If we are on a messaging group and images, videos or messages which break the above laws are shared, we could be found guilty of an offence if we do not

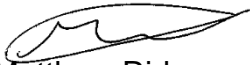
1. Immediately leave the group.
2. Report the offence to the relevant authorities.

It is of the utmost importance that we protect ourselves by knowing and understanding the law governing social media. Criminal cases are being opened against people for sharing information that they do not have permission to share.

Parents, please take note of the fact that if your child's cell phone is on contract under your name then you could be held liable for inappropriate images or messages on that phone. Any intimate photos or videos of underage children is classified as child pornography and anyone, including other children, who has those images or videos on their phones or who shares them on social media can be prosecuted accordingly.

Social media can be an excellent tool for education, communication and collaboration when used correctly. It does, unfortunately, come with a series of new risks that we need to understand in order to prevent.

Please guard yourselves and your loved ones.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Ridgway', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Matthew Ridgway
Principal