



# Alexander Road High School

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Dear Alex Family Members

## The Valentines Newsletter

In this time of certain uncertainty, it should not be hard to believe that we are not quite back at school and that February is almost halfway through.

We have been doing staff training and re-planning our work for the last two weeks and we are very ready to start the 2021 academic year.

Your children have been divided into their blue and green groups. Some of you have approached us with requests for changes, and we have accommodated those as far as possible. When we get to an imbalance in a class, we can no longer allow anyone to change groups. Many of you have asked to change groups because of transport arrangements. In 2019 and Term 1 of 2020 your children got to school every day, so we anticipate that they will get to school on their colour day if we have to decline a request.

Grade 12s will all be in class every day. We have looked at the class sizes and the venues and we are able to have all Grade 12s at school every day from 15 February. Some classes will be split but mostly they will be shuffled to ensure that a safe distance is maintained. We feel very strongly that attending school every day is in the best interests of every pupil. We will also not be accommodating any Grade 12 pupils who wish to work from home. Our experience has been that working from home is not generally conducive to academic progress. Please accept my apologies for informing you of this decision so close to the start of school when your logistics may already be in place. We believe it is the best approach.

If parents of pupils in Grades 8 to 11 insist on keeping their children at home, they must be aware that their child is being placed at a disadvantage because we are not a distance learning institution, but we will do what we can to support your request.

Although we have allowed everyone to wear civvies this term, we are going to insist that the civvies cover the same areas covered by the uniform. We had too many people taking liberties last year. We will also be far more focused on adherence to the rest of the Code of Conduct. There should not be any hats worn, and the make-up, hair and earrings that are worn must comply with our Code of Conduct. Anyone found to be in contravention will be addressed in our usual manner. I need parents and guardians to support us in this regard.

Enjoyed welcoming the Grade 8s to orientation today from 10H00. All new pupils in other grades will attend orientation from 13H00 to 14H00. It is always very exciting to add new families to our Alex Family.

Please remember the rules set out in our operating procedure for managing the spread of Covid19. If your child is sick, please keep them at home. If anyone in your family or recent contact group tests positive for Covid19, you must keep everyone in quarantine for 10 days from the positive test. If there are any symptoms, please contact your medical practitioner for advice.

We will run screening as we did last year. Your child will get a blue or green card and they will need to write down their temperature every day and submit to screening questions. Anyone who fails screening will be sent into our quarantine zone waiting area while we contact you to manage the situation.

Please ensure that your child has a functional cloth mask. If theirs is wearing out, please replace it quickly. Masks are compulsory on campus and must cover the mouth and nose at all times. If the mask is removed for eating and drinking, we will continue to insist on at least a 2m space to the nearest person. Removing of masks to eat and drink results in a big increase in risk of transmission of the virus.

I know that it sounds as if we are droning on while the Eastern Cape currently has a declining infection rate. I need you to think about the many, many families who have lost loved ones to the virus in the last six months and imagine how worthwhile it is to comply with these requests, even when we are hot and uncomfortable. We must do everything we can to prevent more death in our town. It is certainly worth the effort.

We will be assigning work for all Grades 8 to 11 pupils to complete at home on their 'working from home' day. Please ensure that they have a suitable place to work and a structured environment to ensure that they keep up their work rate and productivity.

Please keep yourself and your loved one safe (and cool) this week.

Yours Faithfully

  
Matthew Ridgway  
Principal