



Alexander Road High School

Private Bag X34377
Newton Park
6055
Gqeberha
South Africa

Tel: 041 365 1270
E-Mail: info@arhs.co.za
Web: arhs.co.za

9 January 2026

Dear Alex Family Members

2026 Starts with a Bang (and the Smell of Smoke)

Welcome to the 2026 school year. We have been hard at it since late 2025, preparing the way for this year to start. To all the new families who have joined us this year, we are very pleased to have you as part of our Alex Family. To all the returning families, welcome back. We have some exciting plans for the year.

The most impactful of our initiatives this year is that we plan to make Alex a phone free school from the start of term 2 this year. This may come as a shock proposal. There is a lot of very well researched academic content that supports the idea that our children are not well served by those who create the algorithms that control our social media feeds. The schools who are in their third year of implementation report that their children are more engaged in their learning and with each other. They learn to exist during a social media time out every day. Incidents of cyber bullying have decreased. There will be some practical implications for such a programme. We are well aware that many of you send your child off to school each day and find great comfort in knowing that they can get hold of you if something goes wrong during the day. We advocate that phones should be left at home. Having said that we are aware that it won't suit everyone. We will have to make provisions for the device to be secured during the school day.

We will be presenting some of the evidence supporting our proposal and discussing the logistics required during parent meetings scheduled as below for each grade:

Grade 8s on the 20th January at 17H00.

Grade 12s on the 21st of January at 17H00.

Grade 10s on the 22nd Of January at 17H00.

Grade 11s on the 29th of January at 17H00.

Grade 9s on the 9th of February at 17H00.

We will also be discussing other Grade specific topics and we will introduce you to your Grade Heads. Please make a plan to join us for these important meetings.

SGB By Election

While we are discussing meetings, I hope that you received my email notifying you of the SGB by election on Thursday the 5th of February at 17H30.

Orientation for New Alexans

A reminder to parents of new Alexans in 2026. The Grade 8 orientation is on Tuesday 13 January at 10H00. Please have them dressed in their new Alex uniform, it can be either a red or white gold shirt and brown quantic shorts with mostly white running shoes or the tie and blazer with either grey longs or brown skirt and brown leather lace ups.

They should be done by 13H00.

New Alexans in other grades should be at school by 12H00 for their orientation.

Athletics on Friday 16 January

Trials for the Inter House Athletics for Grade 8s will take place on Thursday 15 January. They should all come to school on Thursday in their house shirts, brown quantic shorts and running shoes.

Everyone needs to report to the Westbourne Oval on Friday the 16th for the Athletics day. This year we have moved the Athletics to a Friday to allow everyone to recover from too much running and shouting and possibly too much sun. This is a formal school day. A roll call will be taken twice on the day. Only those in the cheerleading teams are allowed to dress in theme, everyone else must wear their house shirt with brown quantic shorts and running shoes.

Please take note that the day starts at 07H45 and ends by 14H15. Your child may not leave the Westbourne Oval during the day under any circumstances. Please allow for quite heavy congestion around the Oval in the morning and ensure that you leave earlier in order to ensure that they make it on time.

Textbooks

We will issue the Grade 8 textbooks on Tuesday next week between 12H00 and 13H00. Everyone else will get their 2026 textbooks on Wednesday the 14th. Please note that the document that you get with the textbooks will have a list of all the books that are issued to your child. There may be books from last year or even 2 years ago still on the list. Please make an effort to find those books. We do not want to have to charge you for them.

Correct Contact Details

You will be sent a detailed update email from our data system. Please take the time to update your information. It should be quick and simple. If you have a change in details during the year, it is essential that we have the correct information. We have had a few emergencies that have been made more concerning because we have not been able to contact you about your child. Please help us with this.

School Fees for 2026

On 7 December 2025 I sent you all a letter with the details of our 2025 budget. Please find the debit order form included in that email if you would find it convenient to sign one. The paper version of the budget letter will be sent home in the first few weeks of term. Please sign it and return it to us. I know that some of you have signed the SDF that I sent but our auditors prefer to have these letters on physical paper. Your help in this regard is most appreciated.

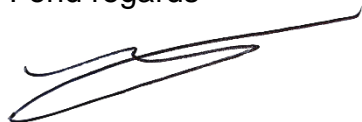
Dress and Deportment

We have a very progressive code of conduct. We are very proud of the fact that there are very few references to gender. We have a variety of uniform combinations to allow Alexans to be as comfortable as possible when they come to school. Having said that we expect everyone to adhere to the parameters set in the code of conduct. We will be inspecting everyone and asking them to address any issues that we may identify. Please support us in this regard. A quick check to see that all hair that can touch the shoulders is clipped or tied back, boys should be clean shaven, uniform should be clean and neat.

We are all looking forward to the year. I wish you all the most prosperous 2026.

Please look after yourself and those you love this week.

Fond regards

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Ridgway', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Matthew Ridgway
Principal