



Sir Graham Balfour School

Member of Sir Graham Balfour Multi-Academy Trust

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are writing to inform you of key information that has been shared with your child this half term.

The Balfour Journey is central to both your child's pastoral development and their understanding of the opportunities available to them beyond their GCSEs next year. Therefore, throughout this half term, Year 10 have focused on Careers Information, Advice and Guidance, with a focus specifically on raising aspirations amongst students; providing them with the opportunity to develop key skills. I would therefore like to make you aware of the information that has been shared with Year 10 and the tasks that have been completed by students this half term, so that you can discuss this further with your child.

In January, students took part in a Careers PSHE Day titled 'Dragon's Den' whereby they developed a business plan, prepared a presentation and delivered their business idea to a panel of 'dragons'. This provided students with a chance to develop their ability to work as part of a team, fulfil a creative brief and practice their presentations skills.

The Year 10 Form Time programme has also been centred around developing the knowledge and skills needed to make informed choices about the Post-16 Options available to students, as well as considering career choices. Year 10 have been introduced to Work Experience (which due to take place in July) focusing on the skills needed within the workplace and the type of placement they need to find for their work placement. Students have also spent time reflecting on their personal attributes before learning how to structure and write Personal Statements.

In addition to this, Mr Hancock, Head of Sixth Form, has notified Year 10 about the criteria needed to access our Sixth Form at the end of Year 11 and how students should be focused on this goal now, preparing themselves through their academic studies and attitude to learning. Mr Hancock delivered a presentation to students explaining that it is never too early to start thinking about life beyond Sir Graham Balfour, and as part of the Balfour journey we feel it is vital that students understand how what they are doing now, directly impacts their opportunities in the future.

Mr Hancock explained to students what Universities are and how to get into them; how to choose a good university and how much it costs. The reason we encourage all students to think about this is that we have found, through past experience, that many students and parents believe that University is only for the elite and is therefore out of reach for people from Stafford. In addition to this, we find that students/parents feel that they cannot afford University through fear that it would leave them with crippling debt for life. However, this is categorically not the case. Mr Hancock therefore delivered a presentation to Year 10 to address the key financial myths about University, which we hope students

found useful. This presentation is available on the 'Making the Most of' section of our school website, and therefore if you would like to see this information for yourself please feel free to access the presentation and discuss this further with your child.

Revision Guides

You will be aware that the school purchased a revision guide for your child in each subject that they study to support them in their exam subjects following on from the disruption caused by the pandemic in Years 8 and 9. This has been a significant financial investment by the school and we do expect that your child keeps these revision guides at home, looks after them and makes good use of them. We expect your child to use the revision guides alongside the work completed in school to prepare for the assessments they have in each subject after February half term and for the Pre-Public Exams they will sit in the fortnight beginning 20th June 2022. Your child has also been given a copy of, as well as online access to, a best practice guide for revision with tips in from each subject they study. The combination of work completed in school, the revision guides and training students to revise in the most impactful way should have a big impact on your child's attainment.

Homework - Satchel:One

We recently invested in an online tool called Satchel:One to set, track and monitor homework. It allows to provide much more detail about the homework to support your child in completing it to the highest possible standard. All parents/carers were sent an email with login details for Satchel:One on Thursday 13th January. If you have not yet received this email please do check your Spam or Junk folder or contact the school with details of any updated email address that we can send the link to. This link has much more information about how Satchel:One operates - [Team Satchel | Parent welcome pack](#). Also, please follow this link for a reminder of the Year 10 homework timetable and support we provide - [Year 10 Homework Timetable - Sir Graham Balfour School](#).

In addition to the information shared, we would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the importance of excellent attendance and most importantly, the correlation between outstanding achievement and excellent attendance. We are encouraging all students in school to attend school every day and where possible, bring in medication to help with any illnesses that can be managed in school. It is paramount that if a student can be in school, that they attend to ensure that they access their lessons and homework.

We hope you found this information useful and will take this opportunity to discuss this information with your child.

Kind regards,