



Sir Graham Balfour School

Member of Sir Graham Balfour Multi-Academy Trust

Our Ref: LDB / VM

14th December 2021

Dear Parents and carers

I hope this letter finds you and your loved ones well. In this last letter of 2021, there are a few things I need to bring to your attention.

Lateral Flow Testing in School in January 2022

We have been informed that we are required to carry out lateral flow tests with students after Christmas, in the hopes of picking up any positive cases as soon as possible. To do this, we will have a staggered start to the term, with students returning in the following order:

Tuesday 4th January, **ONLY Year 13, 12 and 11** are to come into school. Students will be tested throughout the morning, and their lessons will take place as normal from this day forward.

Wednesday 5th January, **Year 10 and 9** students will return. They will be tested throughout the morning, and their lessons will take place as normal from this day forward.

Thursday 6th January, **Year 8 and 7** students will return. They will be tested throughout the morning, and their lessons will take place as normal from this day forward.

Whilst waiting for their turn to return to school, work will be set. For Years 10-7, work will be available from the end of this week via the following links:

Year 10 Work -

<https://sirgrahambalfour.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/Students/EpLYe7MwVT5Mtgs0lwVXgvwBog0kwBDQh1PPQjpk5i6kkQ?e=M9ODWL>

Year 9 Work –

https://sirgrahambalfour.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/Students/EITHhjHQaUBGqv5nQ7GBp6k89qq_UJzrv2zV0qjt0WTCOg?e=aNV8xi

Year 8 Work - https://sirgrahambalfour.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/Students/Eg5DW4Y3K_tFqmYJCjdtD-oBH4ptUBclJA14CxgHIC7Qvg?e=oMLmnd

Year 7 Work -

<https://sirgrahambalfour.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/Students/EpUIO6dvW4FMnCA0Zf5uAyUB8vhFKC9Tvbv8Png43PeH9g?e=Z2nzZD>

To be doubly secure, please would you help us by ensuring your child takes a Lateral Flow Test before coming back to school that week.

Covid update

Throughout this last half term, we have had very few students off school with Covid, I am very pleased to say. All of our combined efforts have meant that few students (and even fewer staff) have caught the virus. At the time of writing we are yet to receive guidance from the DfE regarding any steps we may have to take in the new year as relates to the new Omicron variant. Be assured, that I will do everything in my power to keep our students and staff safe, and to keep the school open.

We currently have around 60% of students who have taken up the offer of a vaccine, and I know of others who are arranging them via the vaccine centres around Stafford. This, taken alongside all our other mitigation strategies should help us continue to operate fully from now on. Please do help us in making sure your child tests for Covid using the Lateral Flow packs we give out regularly, and, as you have been doing, keep your child at home if awaiting a PCR test result.

We have been told that the School Vaccination team will come into school sometime in the spring to carry out mop-up vaccinations. However, please do use the community vaccination centres if you or your child want to take up the offer of vaccine, but have not yet done so.

Online Parents' Evenings

We have now held two virtual Parents' Evenings for students in Year 7 and 8. The feedback we have received from you has been very positive and thus we aim to continue in this format. If you have any further feedback to offer us, please do write to us at office@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk

Making the Most of...

On the back of the virtual Parents' Evenings, we have placed a brief presentation on Making the Most of Year 7, 8 etc on our website. It contains an overview of what makes each year special, with some advice to parents on how to help their offspring. I hope you find it useful. Following each Parents' Evening, the link to the relevant presentation will be opened.

Price increases in the dining room from January

As you are aware from current news, the catering and hospitality industry as a whole is facing substantial challenges. The food supply chain, both in the UK and globally, continues to be very challenging with the pressure of availability driving higher prices. With this in mind, Aspens have had to review their current prices and from 1st January 2022 some of their prices will increase and the Meal Deal will increase from £2.30 to £2.40. Aspens have worked hard to ensure that any price changes are fair, without compromising on quality.

Homework and Independent Learning

Just a reminder that we now have a section of the school website dedicated to supporting students with their homework. The website has details of the homework schedule, details of all the support that students can access to help them complete their homework on time, what happens when homework is not completed on time and the answers to some Frequently Asked Questions. Here is the link to the website - [Homework/Independent learning - Sir Graham Balfour School](#).

Sandon students' final day off reward

A reminder that, for those students **who were in Sandon House last year**, they are entitled to take the final morning of this term off school as a reward for winning the House competition last year. I suspect that many of

them will choose to come into school, and this is fine. We really hope that Sandon students will enjoy their just reward.

For all other students, their House Merits are all being continuously counted in the current year and the successful House will enjoy the final morning of the summer term off school.

Spare Uniform?

Do you have any spare, re-usable uniform at home that you no longer need? If so, we would be delighted to receive it, in order to share with other families in our school. Please send in clean items which we can quickly make available to children, handing it into reception in a plastic bag tied at the top. Many, many thanks.

And finally...

Please accept my sincere thanks for the support you have given your children and our school throughout the year. I extend to you my very best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L D Beck', with a horizontal line underneath.

Mrs L D Beck
Headteacher