



Sir Graham Balfour School

Member of Sir Graham Balfour Multi-Academy Trust

17th February 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope this letter finds you and your loved ones well.

We are now at the half-way point of the academic year, with the promise of spring, summer and the continued easing of Covid restrictions to come. As of 28th February, I have lifted our school's restrictions on the wearing of face coverings. I thank the students on a weekly basis for upholding this important rule which has done much to restrict the number of infections we have suffered over the past 2 years. I'd also like to sincerely thank you for your support in this regard. Without it, we wouldn't be where we are now.

Year 11 and 13 Parents, could I please draw your attention to the letter attached to your son's/daughter's latest report, published this week. It gives important information relating to the summer exams. More information will be coming out on this shortly.

As we now enter the second half of the year, I want to bring a focus back to attendance. Hopefully we will see fewer and fewer Covid cases, and indeed it is likely that there will soon be no requirement to self-isolate even if we test positive. This being the case, we need to get back to our pre-pandemic attendance figures of 95% and above.

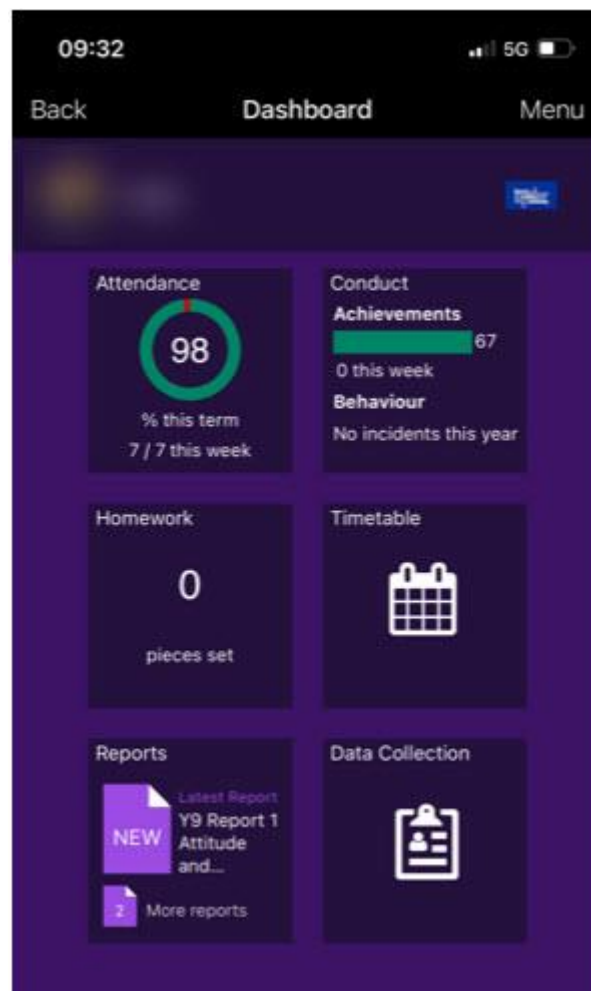
Clearly where a child is obviously ill and incapable of making it to school, then you may decide to keep them at home. However, if they just have a sore throat, or low-level discomfort etc, then they really could and should be in school. We will be speaking with all students in assemblies after half term to remind them of the importance of being in school, and the issues raised by missing lessons.

We all know that students like to attend school to make the most of their opportunities for learning, to be with their friends and peers and when they feel safe. It is important that, if you feel there is a barrier to your child attending school, you should contact their Form Tutor as soon as possible to let us know. An odd day off here and there can, over the year, have a massive impact on the amount of learning lost by your child. The table below illustrates this:

This table shows what your child's percentage attendance means as of 17 th February 2022			
Percentage attendance	Number of weeks missed	Number of days missed	Number of lessons missed
95%	1	5	25
90%	2	10	50
85%	3	15	75

The disadvantage to a child of missing school is considerable, particularly when going back into a lesson where they have missed important explanations etc. This can then often spiral into further anxiety, which means they take more time off school which simply exacerbates the problem. So, please help us and your child by making sure they are in school as often as they possibly can be.

A reminder that you can easily check your child's current attendance by logging on to Sims Parent. You will see the figure in the top left box, as illustrated in the screen shot below. Please do keep an eye on this and stay in touch with the school if you have any concerns or queries.



I wish you all an enjoyable half term break and look forward to welcoming your children back to school on Monday 28th February.

Yours faithfully

Mrs L D Beck
Headteacher