



Sir Graham Balfour School

Member of Sir Graham Balfour Multi-Academy Trust

Our Ref: MMM / VM

13th December 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that this letter finds you all well. I would like to bring you up to date with some important reminders and news from the school as we approach the Christmas holidays.

Back in November, we raised a grand total of £781.81 for Children in Need. Kindness, compassion and care for the local and wider community are very important to our school, so to raise such a large amount of money for such a good cause is something that we are all very proud of. Our cast and backstage crew are now well into their rehearsals for our school production. We will have two performances of Roald Dahl's Matilda taking place on the 22nd and 23rd March. It is our first big production for a while and we are all really looking forward to the show. Tickets will be available in the New Year, so please do come along. We have had large groups of students out completing the expedition element for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Our A level students have been busy completing their university applications. It is always a pleasure to hear them talk about their aspirations. We also have a group of A level students preparing for a trip to Cambodia. This will take place during February half-term and will involve the students visiting Sir Graham Balfour Cambodia school to teach lessons and meet the community who we have such a strong connection with.

Year 11 and Year 13 have been busy with their Pre-Public Exams (PPEs). These exams finished last week and they are an important part of the preparation for the summer exams. There will be a Year 11 PPE result morning for the students on 18th January 2023 where the students will receive their results and predicted grades for their summer exams. Year 10 and Year 12 have been working towards their first PPE fortnight which will start on the 16th January 2023. Effective revision for these assessments is crucial and that will be the focus of their homework in the New Year.

When we return in January, Year 9 will be commencing the GCSE options process. We will have Pathways meetings for Year 9 students and their parents taking place in the wb 30th January. Please do look out for your appointment for this meeting. As well as working really hard in class, it has been lovely to see lots of Year 7 and Year 8 students taking part in the wide variety of enrichment activities that we offer. These range from netball, football, basketball and rugby to Lego robotics, orchestra and chess.

Arrangements for the end of term

School will close for the Christmas holidays at 12.30pm on Friday 16th December. School buses are running and will leave the site at around 12.40pm. We return to school at the usual time on Tuesday 3rd January 2023.

Uniform

The standard of uniform for the vast majority of students remains high. Thank you for your support with this. However, a small minority of students are not following our rules regarding uniform (see [School Uniform - Sir Graham Balfour School](#)). Leggings, nose studs and false eyelashes are particular issues at the moment. When a student wears leggings to school we will contact home so that the correct uniform can be brought in.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to remind you that we do have a uniform swap shop, where parents/carers can bring in items of uniform and swap them for the next size up. Please contact Mrs Metcalfe (smetcalfe@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk) or Ms Travis (ttravis@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk) if you would like to take part in this exchange. If you are having difficulty in purchasing school uniform then please contact

Mrs Metcalfe/Ms Travis or if you don't currently have any uniform to swap, but need an item, that isn't a problem. Just let us know and we will help.

Detentions

I would like to take this opportunity to clarify our detention system and processes for you. Whilst I understand this does not affect many of our school's families, as the vast majority of students have not received a behaviour detention, I would like to ensure that all parents/carers are aware of our policy. We have recently received lots of phone calls requesting that detentions be re-arranged. May I remind you that behaviour detentions are after school on a Thursday and that all our students are aware of this consequence when they choose to disrupt the school environment or to ignore rules. Detentions will only be re-arranged in extenuating circumstances, so please do not request this unless necessary. Detentions are given on the following basis:

- 1 D2 or D3 over a one-week period = 1hr behaviour detention after school
- 2 D2s or D3s over a one-week period = 2hr behaviour detention after school
- 3 D2s or D3s over a one-week period = Isolation for 1 day with a 1hr detention after school
- 4 or more D2s or D3s over a one-week period = Isolation for 1 day with a 2hr detention after school.

You can track your child's behaviour on the SIMS parent app. Students who are absent or unable to attend due to extenuating circumstances will always have their detentions re-arranged for the following day (Friday).

Should you have any queries regarding a D2/D3 that has been issued, please contact the subject teacher or your child's Head of Year.

Parents and Carers of Year 11 and Year 13 students

The Department for Education and Ofqual have confirmed the details for exams in the summer of 2023. It is very much a return to business as usual. See below for the key details relating to the organisation and scheduling of the summer 2023 exams:

- Year 11 and Year 13 exams commence in the week beginning Monday 15th May 2023. The exam period ends on Wednesday 28th June 2023.
- Year 13 exam results day will be Thursday 17th August 2023. Year 11 exam results day will be Thursday 24th August 2023.
- The grade profile will return to the 2019 grade profile. This means that across the country, students have the same chance of getting a A*, A, B etc. at A level and grades 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4 etc. at GCSE as they would have had in 2019.
- Formula sheets in GCSE maths, physics and trilogy science will be used.
- All other adaptations used last year, such as advance information of topics which would be in the exams or the reduction of course content, will not continue.

Finally

I am determined that the school will continue to provide the opportunities and care for our students to enable them to leave Balfour with the very best GCSE and A level grades possible. We cannot do this without your support. All of us here at Balfour recognise that working together offers the best chance for our students to have a successful, enriching and fulfilling experience during their time with us. We are deeply appreciative for the great support you provide to your children and to our school.

All that leaves me to do is to wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We look forward to welcoming your children back to school in January.

Your sincerely,



Matthew Mason
Headteacher