



# Sir Graham Balfour School

Member of Sir Graham Balfour Multi-Academy Trust



## Pathways Booklet 2023.

To help our pupils make informed choices when it comes to careers and future pathways. We have produced this booklet with helpful information

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Employer Competency Matrix – These are the skills that employers feel are the most important when entering the work place.

1. TIME MANAGEMENT	Organizing and planning how to divide your time between different activities.
2. COMMUNICATION	Giving, receiving, and sharing information.
3. RESILIENCE	Being able to bounce back, recover quickly from difficulties - toughness.
4. SELF-AWARENESS	Having conscious knowledge of one's own character, capabilities and feelings
5. INTEGRITY	Behaving honorably at all times.
6. POSITIVITY	Being optimistic in your thoughts, attitude and actions
7. PROBLEM SOLVING	Finding solutions to difficult or complex issues.
8. TEAMWORK	Working collaboratively with a group of people in order to achieve a goal.
9. SELF-CONFIDENCE	Believing that you are capable of successfully meeting the demands of a task

## Parent accounts available – information below

Dear Parent / Guardian,

In keeping with our commitment to provide students with outstanding careers guidance and tailored support when choosing their next step after school, we are now using Unifrog; an award-winning, online careers platform. All students in Years 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 now have access to this excellent website.

The Unifrog platform is designed to support learners in making the most informed decisions about their futures and has a range of tools that are suitable for all year groups. Each student has their own personal account that provides a wide range of information related to their interests and aspirations. Key features of the platform include:

- Exploring Pathways – personality quizzes, career and subject profiles, MOOCs and webinars
- Recording – self-reflection about extracurricular activities and key employability skills
- Opportunities – search tools showing live vacancies/courses/placements for apprenticeships, universities (in the UK and abroad), FE, virtual work experience and much more
- Applications – tools to help students build applications for a range of pathways (e.g., CVs, Personal Statements, Common App Essays)

Students login to Unifrog using their email address and password and they can do so from any computer, tablet or smartphone. We would encourage you to use the platform with your child so you can support them through the process of deciding their next step.

We have also set up a parent login so that you can use Unifrog as if you were a student yourself, allowing you to support your child throughout the process.

The sign-up code you need is: **SGBHSpaents** (please note - this sign up code expires after 90 days)

And you can sign up here: [\*\*www.unifrog.org/code\*\*](http://www.unifrog.org/code)

For a brief introduction to the Unifrog website, please feel free to watch a video on the following link: [www.loom.com/share/1d856c8220f444faa653fd7f719db5c8](https://www.loom.com/share/1d856c8220f444faa653fd7f719db5c8)

Yours faithfully,

Mrs V Bowyer

[vbowyer@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:vbowyer@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk)



GCSE pod is a website that Sir Graham Balfour school subscribes to, allowing our students access to 'on demand' revision resources in the form of short 'expert-led' video clips.

All year 11 students have a GCSE pod account.

GCSE pod is a fantastic resource that can help your child learn, retain and recall the knowledge and information they need to achieve their GCSE goals.

To learn more about its uses, please visit:

[www.gcsepod.com/parent-resources](http://www.gcsepod.com/parent-resources)

Example screenshots  
from GCSE pod

The screenshot displays the GCSE pod website interface. At the top, there is a purple header with the text "Algebraic Manipulation" and a "Share & Assign" button. Below the header, there are three horizontal bars with mathematical equations:  $3a \times 6c = 18ac$ ,  $2 \times 3a \times 4y = 24ay$ , and  $5a \times 30a^2$ . Below these equations, there are two circular icons: one labeled "Different letters" and another labeled "Can't be combined", with the text "expressions. We use the ideas" below them. To the right of the equations, there is a sidebar with a list of video pods under the heading "Algebra Maths [Full Course] 1 Titles - 9 Pods". The list includes:

- Simplifying Algebraic Expressions (00:00 / 05:23)
- Common Factors (00:00 / 04:40)
- Factorising Quadratics (00:00 / 04:17)
- Expanding Brackets (Higher Only) (00:00 / 03:07)
- Factorising Quadratics (Higher Only) (00:00 / 04:05)

Each item in the list has a play button icon, a star icon, and a share icon. At the bottom of the screenshot, there is a video player showing a scene from "An Inspector Calls" with the title "An Inspector Calls: Plot Overview" and a duration of 00:00 / 05:21.

An Inspector Calls by J. B. Priestley

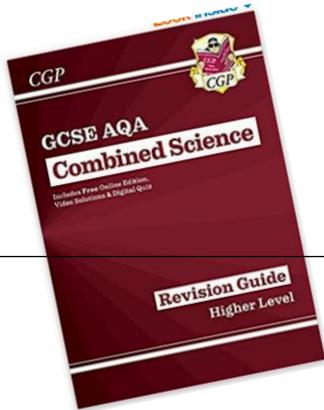


Drama  
English Lite

An Inspector Calls by J. B. Priestley - 23 Pods

An Inspector Calls: Plot Overview  
00:00 / 05:21

## GCSE Revision Websites and guides



- It is vital that you use these revision guides to prepare for your Pre-Public exams AND your GCSE exams
- Use the revision guides to consolidate your learning, to revise areas you need to focus on and to remind yourself of prior learning
- You should also use your revision guides alongside the revision strategies you are focusing on during Form Time (making cue cards, knowledge organisers and flash cards)

### **Useful revision websites**

[www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize)

[mrbruff.com](http://mrbruff.com)

[Mr Salles English](#)

[GCSE Learning and Revision](#)

[Physics & Maths Tutor \(physicsandmathstutor.com\)](#)

[23 Equations](#)

[Freesciencelessons - YouTube](#)

[Science | Revision World](#)

[internetgeography](#)

[senecalearning.com](#)

[timeforgeography](#)

[BBC Bitesize](#) [www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize)

[Coolgeography](#)

[www.mathswatch.co.uk](http://www.mathswatch.co.uk)

## **Sixth Form FAQs**

### ***What are the benefits of sixth form?***

Sixth form gives you the opportunity to study a wide range of A-Levels and BTECs across the Stafford Partnership. These courses are academic and intended to prepare you for further study post-18. The biggest benefit of studying these at Balfour is that you have relationships with the staff, so you get begin learning from day one as you are continuing from GCSE. Sixth form also has the benefit of a dedicated PHSE programme that is delivered in a bespoke manner, not always available at other institutions.

### ***How many A-Levels can I study?***

It is recommended that you study 3 A-Levels and an EPQ. This opens up options for further study at university and on competitive apprenticeships. It also ensures that you have the time to complete a thorough amount of independent study outside of class.

### ***What happens with transport to other schools?***

If you are studying at another school in the Stafford Partnership you will be responsible for getting to the relevant school for your first lesson of the day and home from that school at the end of the day. However, any transport required between schools within the day will be provided via minibus or taxi.

### ***How will sixth form help me in the future?***

As well as achieving globally recognised qualifications, a key aim at sixth form is to prepare for your next steps whether this is university, apprenticeship or work. We use Unifrog for help with research and applications, we have outside speakers to help with preparation for interviews and assessment centres, we use contacts to find the best webinars and masterclasses available. For specific paths, such as Oxbridge, medicine, veterinary and dentistry applications we have a collegiate group set up to help with additional guidance. The school will also fund specific courses for entry tests where required. We work with local universities and the Sutton Trust to ensure opportunities are available to everyone regardless of their background.

### ***Is sixth form all about studying?***

There are lots of opportunities available through sixth form. There are opportunities to get involved in sports, trips, competitions, mentoring and much more. You can still be part of the Balfour Buzz, performing arts shows, Duke of Edinburgh and fundraising drives if you have enjoyed this at lower school.

### ***What grades do I need?***

To study at the Stafford Partnership you will need 7 grade 4-7 GCSEs including Maths and English. You need a 5 in the subject you wish to study (or related subject if not studied at GCSE). You need a grade 6 to study Maths, Sciences or MFL. It is recommended that you study Maths if you are going to study Physics.

## **Useful websites focused around post 16 pathways and careers:**

- **Stafford sixth form partnership - [www.staffordsixthformpartnership.co.uk](http://www.staffordsixthformpartnership.co.uk)**

Information relating to Stafford's collaborative sixth form offer of Level 3 subjects, for post 16 study. This consists of A-level qualifications in the most part, with some BTEC courses also, across a wide breadth of subject areas.

- **UCAS - [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)**

Platform to explore University courses, gather info around what Alevel or BTEC grades are needed for future studying of degree courses.

- **Unifrog - [www.unifrog.org](http://www.unifrog.org)**

One-stop-shop where students can explore their career interests, write CV's, personal statements and access support and advice through the means of webinars, videos and 'how to' guides.

### **Apprenticeship search engines**

These sites allow you to search and apply for apprenticeship vacancies:

**[www.staffsjobs Careers.com](http://www.staffsjobs Careers.com)**

**[www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk](http://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk)**

**[www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/apprentices/browse-apprenticeships](http://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/apprentices/browse-apprenticeships)**

- **'National Careers Service' - [www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk](http://www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk)**

Job Profiles: Use the link to access job profiles. Use these profiles to explore your career ideas.

- **Icould - [www.icould.com](http://www.icould.com)**

Free access to over 1000 personal video stories, detailed job information, plus practical tips, insight and advice and Labour Market Information

- **Careers box** - [www.careersbox.co.uk](http://www.careersbox.co.uk)

National online careers film and video library. You will be able to watch real people doing real jobs to help give you more of an insight

- **Start** - <https://guest.startprofile.com/>

Play the Game to discover careers that match your personality, interests and skills. Get the free careers magazine on your phone. Look at what the world of work is really like. Then use this knowledge to find the right courses, work experience, apprenticeships, jobs - and more - near you.

- **'All about Careers'** - [www.allaboutcareers.com](http://www.allaboutcareers.com)

A careers site highlighting job profiles, updates on job sectors, career matching tool and featured employer links

- **'My kinda future'** - [www.mykindafuture.com](http://www.mykindafuture.com)

A careers site to build your CV, meet employers and find a job

- **'Get my first job'** - [www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk](http://www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk)

A website to look at Apprenticeships and Traineeships

- **Careers Springboard** - [www.mycareerspringboard.org](http://www.mycareerspringboard.org)

Take a career test, explore your options, plan your future

- **Success at School** - [www.successatschool.org](http://www.successatschool.org)

Career advice for schools and students aged 13-19. Search jobs, advice & find out about employers, work experience, courses, career choices, apprenticeships.

- **National Citizen Service** - [www.ncsyes.co.uk](http://www.ncsyes.co.uk)

Initiative for young people aged 15-17, to develop their skills and have new experiences through attending a 4 week scheme (residential involved).

- **'Not going to University'** - [www.notgoingtouni.co.uk](http://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk)

Website with information relating to post 16 and 18 pathway choices that do not involve solely University.

- **Uni stats** - [www.unistats.co.uk](http://www.unistats.co.uk)

Compares University courses and their career/salary prospects upon graduation.

- **The complete University guide - [www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk](http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk)**

Central base of information for all things University – league tables, open days, fee information, course searches.

- **‘Studential’ - [www.studential.com](http://www.studential.com)**

Lots of useful support from personal statement and interview advice to key questions about Higher Education.

### **Other education providers in the local and surrounding areas:**

Newcastle and Stafford Colleges group: [www.nscg.ac.uk](http://www.nscg.ac.uk)

South Staffordshire College (campuses in Cannock, Lichfield, Penkridge and Tamworth): [www.southstaffs.ac.uk](http://www.southstaffs.ac.uk)

Stoke-on-Trent College: [www.stokecoll.ac.uk](http://www.stokecoll.ac.uk)

Reaseheath College: [www.reaseheath.ac.uk](http://www.reaseheath.ac.uk)

## OPTIONS

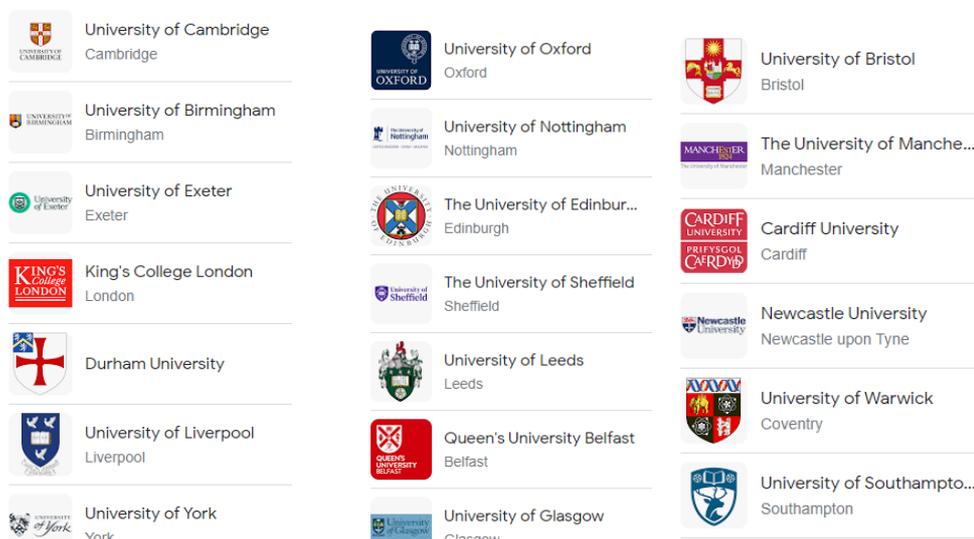
### A Levels

The most important criteria for choosing A levels subjects are:

Looking at what you are likely to enjoy and be good at. If you enjoy a subject or have an ability in it already, you are more likely to do well.

If you have a particular career, job, or further study in mind, you may need to choose specific A levels in order to meet entry requirements.

If you are good at exams and aspire to go onto University/Higher apprenticeship levels, can commit to the courses and are able to work independently then `A` levels are for you.



Above are the `Russell Group` Universities . We encourage our pupils to aspire towards studying at Russell Group universities . They produce more than two-thirds of the world-leading research produced in UK universities and support more than 260,000 jobs across the country.

### BTEC`s

A BTEC is a vocational qualification studied at school or college. They tend to be work-related and are ideal for any student who prefers more practical-based learning. BTEC qualifications allow you to continue further study at university or enter the workforce.

What are the different BTEC levels?

There are a few main types of BTEC levels. BTEC Firsts are Level 2 qualifications, equivalent to GCSE level study. BTEC Nationals are Level 3 qualifications, the same standard as A-level study. BTEC Higher Nationals are Level 4/5 study, the same level as the first two years of degree study.

Sixth form colleges are most likely to offer BTEC Nationals. The amount of A-levels a BTEC National is equivalent to depends on how many modules you study. A BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate is worth one A-level, while a Level 3 National Diploma is worth two A-levels. The BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma is worth three A-levels.

## **Apprenticeship**

An apprenticeship, which must last for a minimum of 12 months, combines hands-on work with the opportunity to train and obtain qualifications. It's also a paid position, so you earn while you learn. At least 20% of your time is set aside for learning, usually at a college, university or with a training provider.

The rest of your time is spent applying your knowledge and skills in the actual workplace, doing the job that you set out to get. At the end of it, you'll gain official certification, which will be equivalent to traditional qualifications. Apprenticeship levels are set and equivalent to as follows:

2 (Intermediate): GCSEs

3 (Advanced): A-levels

4 (Higher): foundation degree

5 (Higher): foundation degree/first year of bachelor's degree

6 (Degree): bachelor's degree

7 (Degree): master's degree

Apprenticeships are designed to be flexible. That means that one employer may offer a higher level 6 or 7 apprenticeship without giving you the option of getting an actual degree qualification, while others will.

It's essential that you check before applying. Employers and training providers will be clear about the qualifications on offer and the level at which you'll train. It's up to you to decide if you're happy with the level of your apprenticeship, and what you get at the end of it.

Many intermediate, advanced, and higher apprenticeships will also give you the opportunity to obtain qualifications such as diplomas in relevant areas.

There is no maximum age limit for an apprenticeship, but they are for those aged 16 or over, living in England and not in full-time education.

## **T levels**

T Levels are 2-year courses which are taken after GCSEs and are broadly equivalent in size to 3 A Levels. Launched in September 2020, these courses have been developed in collaboration with employers and education providers so that the content meets the needs of industry and prepares students for entry into skilled

employment, an apprenticeship or related technical study through further or higher education.

T Levels offer students practical and knowledge-based learning at college and on-the-job experience through an industry placement. The ratio is normally 80% in college, 20% at a placement. Next steps after a T level can be University, a level 3 or 4 apprenticeship or employment.

<b><u>Year 11 Key Calendar Dates</u></b>	
Pathways Meetings	W/B 23 rd October 2023
Year 11 Parents Evening	7th November 2023
Pre-Public Exams (fortnight)	W/B 27 <sup>th</sup> November 2023 W/B 4 <sup>th</sup> December 2023
Year 11 Tutor Evening	17 <sup>th</sup> January 2024
PSHE Day (Careers)	8th February 2024
Year 11 Full Reports	TBC January 2024
Pre-Public Exams (fortnight)	W/B 19th February 2024 W/B 26th February 2024
Year 11 Form Tutor Parents Evening	9th April 2024
GCSE Exams Start	W/B 9 <sup>th</sup> May 2023 – 21 <sup>st</sup> June 2023



'Careers and Aspirations Lead' Mrs V Bowyer

I am here to help and guide our [pupils](#) to make good decisions about their future. I will give them relevant and up to date information on opportunities that are available to them when they leave school as well as guidance on the careers programme delivered via the schools PHSE programme.

I will listen to them, acknowledge and support them whilst they are exploring what they want to do with their life and encourage them to use their time wisely and positively whilst at school.

My email address: [vbowyer@sirgrahamabalfour.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:vbowyer@sirgrahamabalfour.staffs.sch.uk)

**Where you end up after school is in your hands.**  
Log in to Unifrog today.

**unifrog** [unifrog.org/sign-in](https://unifrog.org/sign-in)

*"If you can dream it, you can do it." — Walt Disney. "*