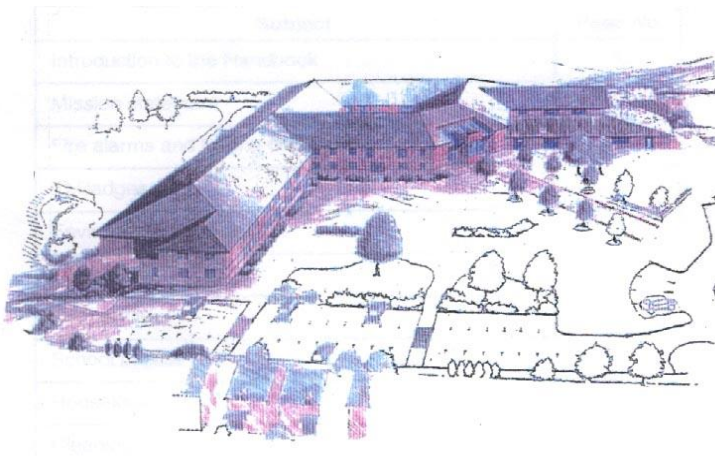




# Sir Graham Balfour School

Member of Sir Graham Balfour Multi-Academy Trust

## Parents' Handbook 2023-24



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# Sir Graham Balfour School

Member of Sir Graham Balfour Multi-Academy Trust

## **Welcome to** **Sir Graham Balfour School**

Dear Parents/Carers

We believe that every child matters and that each is important as an individual. Our aim is for each and every child to achieve highly in the subjects they will study during their time with us at Sir Graham Balfour School. We want to develop the unique talents that every child possesses, within a well ordered and caring environment. This approach will provide the security and support your child needs as they build on their previous educational achievements during a period of considerable emotional and physical change.

We know that we cannot do any of this with out you and we look forward to working with you and your child in a productive partnership which will provide the challenge, support and stability so vital for success. This handbook is a key element of that partnership as it contains key information about life here at Sir Graham Balfour School, so please read the following carefully.

If, after reading the handbook you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Mason', written over a light blue horizontal line.

**Matthew Mason**  
**Headteacher**

Welcome to Sir Graham Balfour School, which OFSTED in May 2019 found to be a 'Good' school. I hope you find the information this handbook contains useful and informative. Our vision is summed up in our mission statement – **'Learning, Working and Succeeding Together'**

For us, the 'together' is absolutely critical; collaboration, cooperation and teamwork are essential for developing the skills, knowledge and confidence necessary for academic and personal excellence. As well as the drive to achieve academically, the ability to self-regulate, to communicate clearly with others, to know and be proud of who you are, to be compassionate to others and to be ambitious for yourself and others are equally important.

We passionately believe that the circumstances of birth or upbringing should not be the key determining factors to success in life and we are relentless in our ambition for ALL children to achieve as well as possible at Sir Graham Balfour School, regardless of their sexual orientation, socio-economic, ethnic, religious or gender status.

## Our Values

Our aim as a school, working alongside parents and our community, is to help students to become outstanding and effective citizens; to make responsible, appropriate and healthy choices in all things. Staff and parents will not always be there, at the point where critical decisions need to be made. This is why we are committed to values based learning; *rules* prescribe a set of appropriate/inappropriate behaviours (e.g. don't run in the corridors) which are specific to given contexts, whereas *values* provide a set of aspirational guidelines within which children must choose the right behaviour or action for the vast array of contexts they will be faced with in life (e.g. how do I need to move around the school if I am taking responsibility for myself and others?).

These are the values which we believe will help our students to become excellent citizens of Stafford and beyond:

- Commitment to excellence
- Responsibility for ourselves and others
- Care for the local and wider community
- Respect, kindness and compassion for ourselves and others
- Perseverance and resilience
- Ambition for ourselves and others
- Pride in working hard and the success it brings

Our values drive and shape every aspect of school life, taking the place of school rules. They seek to reinforce the development of the whole person, in addition to the academic. They are values which will, if routinely exemplified and embedded, give our young people all the skills and characteristics necessary to become outstanding citizens of the future.

## Term Dates 2023 – 2024

### Autumn Term 2023

<b>Inset Day 1 &amp; 2:</b>	<b>Monday 4 &amp; Tuesday 5 September</b>
<b>Term Starts:</b>	Wednesday 6 September
<b>Inset Day 3:</b>	<b>Friday 27 October</b>
<b>Half Term:</b>	Monday 30 October - Friday 3 November
<b>Inset Day 4:</b>	<b>Friday 24 November</b>
<b>Term ends:</b>	Friday 22 December
<b>Holiday:</b>	Monday 25 December - Friday 5 January

### Spring Term 2024

<b>Term starts:</b>	Monday 8 January
<b>Half Term:</b>	Monday 12 February – Friday 16 February
<b>Term ends:</b>	Friday 22 March
<b>Holiday:</b>	Monday 25 March – Friday 5 April

### Summer Term 2024

<b>Term starts:</b>	Monday 8 April
<b>May Day:</b>	<b>Monday 6 May</b>
<b>Holiday:</b>	Monday 27 May – Friday 31 May
<b>Term ends:</b>	Friday 19 July
<b>Inset Day 5:</b>	<b>Monday 22 July</b>
<b>Holiday:</b>	Tuesday 23 July – Friday 30 August

## School Organisation

### Lesson Times

We operate a five period day and Form time. Times for 2023-2024 are as follows:

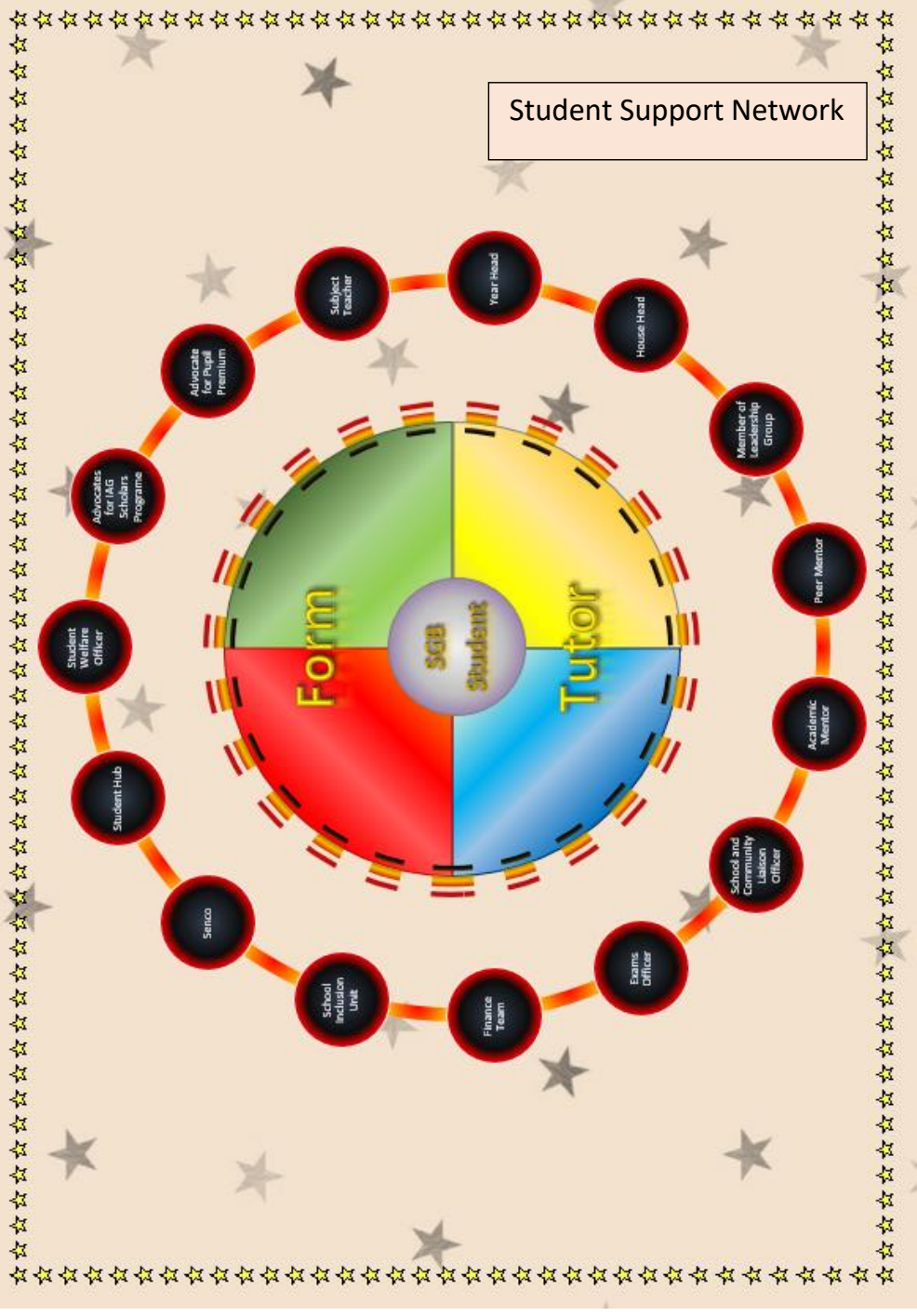
Warning Bell	08.40 am
Students must be on the playground by 8.40am in order to start the day promptly.	
Form Time	08.50 am – 9.10 am
Period 1	9.10am – 10.10am
Period 2	10.10am – 11.10am
Break Time	11.10am – 11.30am
Period 3	11.30am – 12.30pm
Period 4	12.30pm – 1.30pm
Lunch	1.30 pm – 2.10 pm
Warning Bell	2.05 pm
Period 5	2.10 pm – 3.10 pm

### Lateness

Students arriving in school after 8.50 am even at 8.51 am, will be marked late.

If your child is late to school without a valid reason they will receive a warning. At the next subsequent late he/she will receive a detention. There is then a system of increasing sanctions for persistent lateness which culminates in a period in the Internal Isolation Room. Parents will be contacted whenever their child is late, either via text or letter; the school expects that parents help to ensure that their child is in school on time.

# Student Support Network



## Pastoral System

House	House Head	Colour
Chetwynd	Miss Winwood	Green
Sandon	Ms Tinsley	Yellow
Shugborough	Mr Martin	Purple
Tixall	Mrs Cooper	Red
Weston	Miss Simmons	Blue

### Form Groups

Year 7		Mrs Cooper	Tixall House (Red)
7B	032	Mr Gilroy (CJG)	cgilroy@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
7A	053	Mrs Paddison (ZP)	zpaddison@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
7L	042	Mrs Miller (LCM) Mrs O Price (OP)	lmiller@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk oprice@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
7F	064	Mr Field (BF)	bfield@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
7O	417	Mr Simmons (AS7)	asimmons@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
7U	028	Mr Williams (MTW)	mwilliams@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
7R	094	Mr Tinsley (CT3)	ctinsley@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
7S	428	Ms Dewsbury (MD3)	mdewsbury@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
Year 8		Miss Simmons	Weston House (Blue)
8B	434	Mrs Auger (RJA)	rauger@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
8A	020	Mrs Jaman	sjaman@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
8L	206	Mrs Domuradzka (BD)	bdomuradzka@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
8F	418	Mr Lewin (BL)	blewin@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
8O	419	Mrs Lavelle (LPL)	llavelle@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
8U	434	Mr McKenzie (CKM)	cmckenzie@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
8R	210	Mr Parry (CJP)	cparry@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
8S	443	Mr Mills (PM2)	pmills@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk



<b>Year 9</b>		<b>Miss Winwood</b>	<b>Shugborough House (Purple)</b>
9B	026	Mr Rowley (DR)	drowley@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
9A	058	Mrs Watson (HW1)	hwatson@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
9L	441	Mrs Downward (PMD)	pdownward@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
9F	414	Miss Brinsdon (AMB)	abrinsdon@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
9O	428	Mr Wass (CSW)	cswass@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
9U	042	Mrs Olano (AO)	aolano@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
9R	012	Ms Mitchell (PGM)	pmitchell@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
<b>Year 10</b>		<b>Mr Martin</b>	<b>Chetwynd House (Green)</b>
10B	202	Mrs Thorndyke (KT) Miss Gumbley (CG)	kthorndyke@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk cgumbley@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
10A	439	Mr Metcalfe (JAM)	jmetcalfe@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
10L	046	Miss Chapman (CSC)	cchapman@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
10F	036	Mrs Wallbank (HMW)	hwallbank@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
10O	025	Mrs J Hales (JH)	jhales@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
10U	040	Mr Tunstall (LT)	ltunstall@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
10R	432	Mrs Johnston (CJ2)	cjohnston@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
<b>Year 11</b>		<b>Mrs Tinsley</b>	<b>Sandon House (Yellow)</b>
11B	034	Miss Brown (DPB)	dbrown@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
11A	030	Mrs Giles (DG)	dgiles@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
11L	423	Miss Tranter (DTR)	dtranter@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
11F	470	Mr Tilsley (TT)	ttilsley@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
11O	445	Mr Cooper (MAC)	mcooper@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
11U	044	Mr Sturmeay (TS)	tsturmeay@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
11R	430	Mrs Williams (RW3)	rwilliams@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
11S	426	Mr Smith (JTS)	jsmith@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk

<b>MENTORS FOR 2022/2023</b>		
Pupil Premium	Mrs Healey (HCH)	hhealey@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
Careers & Aspiration Lead	Mrs Bowyer (VJB)	vbowyer@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
SENCo	Mr Chamberlain (DC)	dchamberlain@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
Personal Development & Welfare	Mrs Norman (RN) Miss Travis (PT) Mrs Price (OP) Mr Freeman (PF)	rnorman@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk ttravis@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk oprice@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk pfreeman@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
Sixth Form Mentors	Miss Collins (BMC) Mr Hoyle (DSH) Mrs Dangerfield (LJD) Mrs McConnachie (KMC) Miss Kempa (SK3)	bcollins@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk dhoyle@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk ldangerfield@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk kmcconnachie@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk skempa@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk

## **Personal Development & Welfare**

In order to provide targeted pastoral support which is age specific and relevant to your child, we use a horizontal tutoring system. Form Tutors will be the first point of contact between parents/carers and school regarding pastoral issues. All problems/queries should initially be put to the Form Tutor (who sees your child daily). The House system exists for the purpose of competition and celebration; meaning that your child will still retain an affiliation to one of our Houses. Each House Merit which your son/daughter earns will contribute to the overall House Merit total.

## **Achievement and Positive Behaviour Policy**

The school attaches great importance to the maintenance and encouragement of good behaviour. It is only in an ordered atmosphere that education, both academic and social, can take place effectively.

Students are rewarded for good work and behaviour through our system of house merits. These build towards a variety of prizes available from our House Merit Shop. This scheme has proved to be very popular with the students and contributes to the fun and excitement of our reward system. Our House competitions culminate in July with the Best House award. This is based on the number of House Merits earned, as is the Best Form Group award.

## Rewards

House Merit (1 Merit)	Good demonstration of the school values in or out of lessons for example: contributing positively to the class, playing a pro-active role within the lesson, demonstrating leadership skills, producing a piece of work that shows effort and has stretched the students ability, demonstrating care for others and going out of your way to be respectful and courteous. Producing a good piece of homework on time.
Merit Award (5 Merits)	Very good demonstration of school values in attitude and work ethic. It has taken time and effort to produce a piece of very good work that has stretched the student's abilities. A student has made a very good positive contribution to a lesson through leadership, teamwork hard work or resourcefulness. A very good piece of homework produced on time. Achieving an outcome through hard work that shows good individual progress moving beyond expectations. Awarded by Form Tutors weekly for students who have maintained perfect attendance, uniform, behaviour and homework consistently over the week.
Kindness cards (5 Merits)	Can be issued by any student or staff member to another for acts of kindness, respect and compassion or for having a consistently kind, respectful or supportive attitude
High Merit Award (10 Merits)	Issued only by a Head of Faculty, Head of House or Head of Year for an outstanding demonstration of school values. Can be given for outstanding effort towards the completion of a task/activity that has taken time, effort or has specifically stretched the abilities of the individual student 1 grade or more beyond expected progress. Can be given for an outstanding contribution towards an activity/task/event.
Commitment to Excellence Award (15 Merits)	These are issued for effort and consistency over time, they are not given for one off accomplishments. These awards will be issued routinely and periodically by a class teacher to 1 or 2 members of the class who are showing consistently high standards of effort.

<p>Headteacher's Award (20 Merits)</p>	<p>These are a high honour and are only issued for exceptional hard work and effort. These awards can be given to students who demonstrate our school values exceptionally; where a student has gone above and beyond expectations in their actions or to prepare for/complete or participate in an activity, event or set task. The student must be able to explain what they have done to achieve this award with regards to time and effort spent in preparation or have understanding of why their actions deserve such high praise. They must have shown a real commitment to excellence and their accomplishment should show ambition and pride in their work. Some examples may be achieving a grade that is two grades higher than target through extensive preparation, undertaking some pro-active fundraising in their own time to support a local charity. Dedicating time and effort to the mentoring of other students consistently etc...</p>
<p>Headteacher's Honours Award (50 Merits)</p>	<p>These can only be issued by the Headteacher. These are awarded to students who are achieving multiple high recognitions over a period of time (Headteacher's awards) or for students who complete an exceptional task requiring resilience, commitment, dedication and ambition that required excellent levels of initiative, determination and endurance from the student.</p>

**Merit certificates**

Merit certificates will be issued to students when they have met the following milestones:

- 50 Merits – Bronze Award
- 100 Merits – Silver Award
- 200 Merits – Gold Award
- 300 Merits – Platinum Award
- 400 Merits – Ruby Award
- 500 Merits – Emerald Award
- 600 Merits –Diamond Award

Education is very much a three-way process involving you, your children and us. The school will, therefore, involve you at an early stage in behavioural matters if it appears that a particular form of misbehaviour is becoming persistent. Our Achievement and Positive Behaviour system is aimed at minimising any disruption to students' learning. Apart from increasing rewards, as outlined above, it sets out a range of De-merits which result from poor behaviour. The De-merits cover a range of sanctions which will encourage keen attitudes to learning and good behaviour. They also give you a detailed picture of how your son/daughter behaves in lessons. The De-merits as the name suggests results in students losing previously earned Merits as a consequence of their behaviours.

D1 (5 De-merits)	This is the first level of behaviour logged in a lesson. It is a serious breach in behaviour – you have disrupted learning of others despite being reminded of expectations and any relevant strategies being in place.
D2 (10 De-merits)	Even more serious - the disruption to the lesson has continued and you will receive a one hour after school detention for your disruption and/or continued lack of respect for those around you.
D3 (15 De-merits)	Yet more serious. The behaviour you are choosing runs contrary to everything we believe in. You are continuing to disrespect all of the students around you and your teacher. You will be <b>removed to work with another class and teacher in the faculty</b> . You will also do a <b>one hour after school detention</b> .
D4 (20 De-merits)	Even more serious. You will be removed to spend <b>the day in the Internal Isolation Room to reflect on your behaviour choices and to safeguard the education of other students</b> . You will not be allowed out for break or lunch. Should your behaviour not improve dramatically and quickly, your stay in the Internal Isolation Room will be extended.
D5 (25 De-merits)	Extremely serious, your behaviour and/or attitude is such that you have been referred to a member of Leadership Group. 1 day in isolation plus a two-hour detention with a member of the LG. This is an attempt to avoid exclusion and it ensures the right to education for all of our students is safeguarded.

## **Detentions**

Detentions are one of the main sanctions available to the school. These may be given for failure to complete classwork/homework, repeated misbehaviour, or for a particularly serious incident.

If your child is issued with a D2 or 3 in a lesson they will receive a 1hr detention after school. If they accumulate two D2s or D3s over the course of the week they will receive a 2hr detention after school. If three incidents of D2 or 3 are recorded over the week your child will be given 1 day in the Internal isolation room with a 1hr detention. If 4 incidents of D2 or D3 are logged over the week they will receive a day in the IIR plus a 2hr detention after school.

Detentions are run on a Thursday evening; if your child fails to attend or leaves a detention, they will be put into an after school detention the following day with the Leadership Group. If they fail to attend the 2 hour detention, students will be placed in the isolation room for 1 day, as well as sitting the original detention. Lunch detentions will be issued where appropriate for students who have been late to school, have incorrect uniform or where a social incident has occurred.

From September 1998 all schools have had a legal right to detain students after school, even without parental consent. The Government has now strengthened the school's position by introducing statutory powers regarding behaviour and discipline through the Education and Inspections Act 2006 which came into effect in April 2007. We are extremely fortunate at Sir Graham Balfour that the majority of parents of children who receive detentions do support the school in our efforts to maintain the highest standards of behaviour and work.

## **Homework**

Research evidence shows that homework, on average, can add five to eight months' additional progress each year for your child. The research is clear, homework has an integral role to play to improve the academic achievement of your child. It is because of this that we have introduced a structured homework timetable for all years. The timetable will stipulate what homework your child will be set and on what day. Your child can use the timetable to keep organised and to help with workload. The schedule is designed so that your child completes the work on the same day it is set. We will give reasonable deadlines to hand the work in, but doing it on the day it is set will be a powerful way to ensure that your child is completing a manageable amount of homework each week day.

All homework is uploaded to Satchel:One (<https://www.satchelone.com>) which is also available as an App and your child will log in using their school's office 365 details. As a parent you will receive a login letter from us to create your own parent account. In

addition, if your child already has access to their account, they can get the code for you under their account settings, my parent code.

Your child will be rewarded for very good pieces of homework completed on time (merit/s will be issued). If they fail to hand the work in on the deadline no demerits are given, but we will insist they turn up to a Subject Support Session, after school, staffed by teachers of the faculty, to receive support and complete the work.

However, before it gets to that stage please see below the proactive support that we have put in place to support the Homework schedule. Prior to handing the work in your child will be able to:

- Ask the teacher in lesson for advice/clarification etc. about the task.
- Speak to the teacher at the end of the lesson/break/lunch for advice or clarification if they are too shy to ask in class.
- Choose to voluntarily attend a Subject Support Session on a Monday or Wednesday (up to 1hr after school) where a member of staff will be on hand to provide advice and help with the homework.
- Choose to use the school's Learning Resource Centre after school or at lunch for a quiet place to complete the homework (open every day until 4.30pm).
- Make use of the structured timetable that will ensure no more than two pieces of work being set on the same day.

If your child fails to hand homework by the deadline:

- No demerits will be given but, they will be issued with a Subject Support Session which they have to attend. These will be on a Monday or Wednesday after school for an hour. You will be informed of this by the school. This is staffed by our teachers who are on hand to support your child in completing the homework.

If a lot of deadlines are missed, or it appears that your child is struggling with their homework, to ensure they do not fall behind in their learning:

- Your child will be placed into Compulsory Homework Club by their Year Head. This will take place Monday to Thursday after school for one hour, where your child will be provided with structured support to ensure they catch up on work missed while also establishing effective learning habits by completing their homework.

## Subject Support Sessions

Each faculty runs their own Subject Support Sessions on a Monday and a Wednesday after school for an hour.

Students can also choose to go to these to complete their homework and receive additional support from a member of staff within that faculty.

However, some students will be issued with a Subject Support Session (this appears as H0 on the SIMS Parent App) if they fail to complete the homework by the deadline date. In this instance they must attend the Support Session for an hour after school on the designated day. Parents of students affected by this will be notified the day before and can use the SIMS Parent App to see further details of the subject(s) in which homework was not completed. No demerits are issued when homework is not completed, however to prevent your child from falling behind in their learning they must attend the Subject Support Session.

It is important to remember that we are placing this level of importance on homework due to the positive impact that it has on attainment and progress for your child. Homework, on average, can add five to eight months' additional progress each year for your child, it also helps with developing the skills your child needs in order to become an effective independent learner. These skills will support your child all the way through their time in education.

## Parent App

As a parent, you will receive a login letter from your child's school with a code that you will need to use to create your Satchel One parent account. In addition if your child already has access to their account, they can get the code for you under their account settings, my parent code.

Once you have logged in you can track and monitor your child's homework.

From your Dashboard, you will be able to see any student accounts linked to you. Each child will have their own Calendar, Homework, and Notice board pages for you to view. Their last activity on the site will also be displayed, as well as their Recovery PIN numbers, which they can use to get logged in.

There is also a calendar to check your child's homework, click on the Calendar tab. This will arrange their work in a week by week format. You can filter the calendar by date, teacher,



subject, class, year group, and type of homework task to find what you are looking for more efficiently.

You can also review homework as a list by clicking Homework from the menu under the student whose To-do list you wish to view. On this page, homework is sorted into two tabs: Recent and Upcoming. In the Recent tab, tasks with the nearest due dates will be displayed. You can also tick Only show overdue homework on the Recent tab to see any overdue homework. In the Upcoming tab, homework which is due further in the future will appear.

If your child has submitted the homework the task will display as Submitted. To search for a specific assignment, use the search box and click on the corresponding title to view details of the assignment.

The Gradebook helps you keep track of your child's homework task submissions.

If your child is having trouble getting logged into their account, you can always give them their Recovery PIN which they can use here to reset their login information.

## Necessary Equipment

All students will need to bring to school various equipment every day. This consists of:

- Suitable black or blue pens
- Pencils, including a few coloured ones
- A ruler, compass and protractor
- An eraser
- Their Student Handbook (provided by the school)
- A calculator
- An envelope file or plastic wallet to keep work on paper tidy
- A French/German/Spanish dictionary is desirable. (These are available to buy through the school)

All students follow courses which require the use of an electronic calculator. The use of a calculator is now allowed in the majority of external examinations. However, students should be aware that some mathematics lessons will take place where the use of calculators is not allowed, as basic arithmetic skills remain a central part of these courses.

## Uniform

We believe uniform is important because it helps to develop a sense of personal pride and form good habits for a student's journey into adult life. As a school, our aim is for an affordable, but smart uniform which identifies our students as part of the Sir Graham Balfour community. Our rules on uniform are simple and straightforward and we urge parents to support the school in ensuring a high standard of appearance at all times. We expect all students to wear the school uniform which is smart and practical. Wearing the uniform makes students feel dressed for work, and encourages them to develop a pride in their school.

Our striped school ties come in five different colours which denotes the student's House.

Green	=	Chetwynd
Yellow	=	Sandon
Purple	=	Shugborough
Red	=	Tixall
Blue	=	Weston

Please ensure your son/daughter wears their uniform correctly. It is especially appreciated if you check their appearance before leaving for school so that inappropriate 'extras' such as jewellery, heavy make-up and trainers can be removed in order to avoid a bad start to your child's school day.

The school reserves the right to confiscate items that are being worn or used inappropriately and can ban unforeseen items that may come under 'fashion items' but are not specifically stated in our uniform code. If you have any doubts or concerns please contact your child's Year Head. Sixth Formers do not wear school uniform, but they are expected to dress smartly and appropriately for a professional setting.

## **Uniform Supplier**

We do not have one set supplier to purchase our school uniform from, please feel free to purchase different items from different suppliers if you choose. There is no requirement to just buy items from one shop.

PE Uniform – All PE uniform items can be purchased from any supplier apart from the SGB Logo Black Quarter Zip Track Top and Royal Blue SGB Logo T Shirt which are available from Crested Schoolwear (35-36 Gaolgate Street, Stafford. ST16 2NT).

Should you have any queries about uniform, please contact Mrs Metcalfe – Deputy Headteacher or the Office Manager, who will be happy to help.

## **Uniform Rules**

<b>Boys and Girls Uniform</b>		<b>Comment</b>
Blazer	Navy blue blazer with badge on chest pocket and sleeves rolled down.	NO student is permitted to not wear their blazer in and around school except during extremely warm weather and at the School's direction. Students have a choice whether to wear their blazer during lessons. Blazer sleeves are NOT allowed to be rolled up.
Trousers	Standard dark grey trousers.	NO hipster, skinny, flared trousers, jeans or trousers with exposed fashion buttons, laces or zips.
Belts	Plain black belt.	NO large belt buckles.
Skirt	Dark grey knee-length skirt.	NO jersey skirts (eg. tube skirt) and skirts MUST NOT be rolled up.

Shirt	White cotton shirt or blouse. These may be either long or short sleeved but must be capable of being tucked into trousers or skirts and must be tucked in at all times. There must be a top button that can be done up so that the clip-on tie can be attached.	NO Short, fitted blouses or un-tucked shirts.
Jumper/ Cardigan	Navy blue "V" necked sweater or cardigan (optional) worn underneath their blazer.	NO Hoodies.
Tie	School Tie – Clip-on with House colour.	NO ties unclipped or positioned lower than the top button in school.
Socks	Plain socks (Black, Grey or White).	NO coloured socks or leggings.
Tights	Black, grey or flesh coloured.	NO patterned tights, lace tights, fishnet tights, coloured tights or footless tights.
Shoes	Sensible, plain, black leather or PVC leather school shoes with sensible heels (height 3cm). They must be plain black shoes and if they have laces they must be black.	NO fabric, canvas, trainers, converse, sports shoes, pumps, sandals, creepers, wedges, dance slippers, sling backs, mules or boots.
Coat	Plain coats are recommended but not compulsory. Coats to be worn over uniform to and from school.	NO coats worn in school and they must not have inappropriate logos.
Bag	Large enough and strong enough to carry the necessary books.	NO small handbags that cannot fit books.
Make up	Subtle make-up is acceptable - this is natural foundation and includes clear nail varnish and a subtle coat of mascara.	NO blusher or bronzer.  NO thickly coated eyelashes, false eyelashes, eye shadow, eyeliner or heavily pencilled in eyebrows.  NO false nail extensions, clip-on nails or coloured nail varnish.  Teachers reserve the right to ask students to remove excess make-up at their discretion.

Hair Styles	Sensible hair styles.	NO extreme hair colour or styles /shaved patterns (natural tones only).
Hair Accessories	Plain, dark blue or black hair bands or bobbles.	NO coloured hair bands, bobbles or large flowers.
Jewellery	A watch and one small plain gold or silver stud per ear. All other body piercings (tongue, nose, lips, belly button, eyebrow etc.) are forbidden on the grounds of health and safety in and around school.  A religious bangle may be worn and any religious necklace can be worn underneath the shirt, to be confirmed in writing by the parent.	NO large earrings, ear gauges, ear cuffs, dangly earrings or fashion earrings.  NO bangles, bracelets or non-charity wristbands, non-House charity badges.  NO rings.
Contact Lenses or Glasses	Prescription lenses and glasses only.	NO coloured contact lenses or fashion glasses.

## PE Uniform

<b>PE Outdoor Kit:</b>	Quarter Zip Black Track Top, Black Shorts, Royal Blue Football Socks, Football Boots (for Rugby and Football only), Shin Pads, Outdoor Trainers, Gum Shield (for Rugby only)	Optional Outdoor Kit: Black or blue Tracksuit Bottoms, black or blue sweatshirt, Black Long Sleeved Base Layer.
<b>PE Indoor Kit:</b>	Royal Blue T-Shirt with school badge, Black Shorts, Royal Blue Football Socks/White Sports Socks, Indoor Trainers	

All jewellery and piercings must be removed for PE.

## **Break and Lunch Time Arrangements**

Students have two alternatives:

**A meal from the Dining Room:** A wide range of full meals and snacks are served before school, at break and at lunchtime on a cafeteria basis.

**Sandwiches brought by the student:** These may be eaten outside, or in the Main School Hall. All litter, scraps, crumbs must be cleared away and disposed of in the bins provided. Privileges to eat inside will be withdrawn if the Main School Hall is left messy. At the beginning of lunch, the Dining Hall will be reserved for those students buying food from there, but can then be used by students with packed lunches or those simply wanting to chat with friends indoors.

Students from Year 10 and 11 only are allowed to request a pass to leave the site at lunchtime, but only with parent/carer's signed consent. Students should see their Year Head for a form – these will only be considered in the first two weeks of the autumn and spring term.

Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 are not allowed to leave the school site at lunchtime.

Parents are asked to indicate which option their child will be taking at the start of each academic year. Any permanent or temporary changes should be arranged by contacting your child's Year Head.

The school operates a cashless catering system and all payments are made through the online payment system ParentPay. Students can pay at the counter using their biometric finger ID once parents have given their consent. Alternatively, a PIN can be allocated.

If there are not enough funds on a child's account, then Finance will contact the parent/carer and ask for an immediate top up which will appear on the child's account within 10 minutes.

The free school meal allowance is **£2.40 per day**.

If free school meal students choose to spend part of, or their full balance at break time, unfortunately the school cannot provide additional funds for them to spend over and above the £2.40. If FSM students wish to spend more than £2.40 per day, their parents are required to top up the ParentPay balance in the usual way.

## School Entrances

Students can arrive at school in the following ways;

- School Bus – Buses drop and collect students on the School Bus Park.
- On foot via North Avenue.
- On foot via The Oaks (the housing estate) except between 10.45 am & 2.30 pm.
- By car via North Avenue.  
**Please note children must walk from the gate at the very end of the school drive.**
- On foot via the Parkside entrance by the side of Parkside School (please note, the gates through to Parkside are locked from 10.40 am – 11.30 am).

**Please note:** The school places traffic restrictions on entry and exit to the school between 8.15 am – 9.30 am and 2.45 pm – 4.00 pm, to maintain the safety and security of our students. School buses have right of way during these times and we therefore ask parents NOT to use the school drive during these times.

## Visitors

We hope that you become a regular visitor to the school. However, we would ask in the interests of security that, whenever you visit us, you first sign in at Reception. You will be issued with a Visitor's Pass, which should be returned to Reception when you sign out and leave.

Please be aware that if you wish to speak to a member of staff, emailing is the quickest and easiest way to do so. Appointments to see a member of staff will need to be made in advance.

We would like to thank you for your co-operation in this.

## Smoking/Vaping

Sir Graham Balfour is a completely non-smoking site. Most students value and respect this. Anyone who persists in smoking/vaping on site or mixing with smokers lose half an hour of their social time in the first instance. Those who continue to offend will be dealt with more severely and parents will be involved in the process. N.B. As well as cigarettes, tobacco etc, e-cigarettes are strictly banned from site.

## School Buses

Students up to the age of 16 living in Eccleshall, and other outlying villages in the catchment area, are provided with free transport to and from school. Students are issued with bus passes at the beginning of the Autumn Term, and it is their responsibility to retain them. After school, all buses leave from the school premises, apart from the Chaserider public bus which some children catch from Parkside shops.

If any students do miss their bus, for whatever reason, they must report to Reception or a member of staff who will phone home in order that appropriate arrangements can be made for them to reach home.

In the unlikely event of serious and repeated misbehaviour on a bus, the school will discuss with the parents alternative methods for the student to return home. In this way, good behaviour, essential for the safety of everyone on the bus, can be assured. The School Transport Office will support the school in agreed strategies to improve behaviour.

School transport is arranged directly by Staffordshire County Council, and any queries should be taken up with Admissions & Entitlement, Education Offices, Tipping Street, Stafford (Telephone **0300 111 8007** (select the option for 'School Admissions & Transport')).

## Student Bicycles & Cars

Students who cycle to school must ensure that their bicycles are road worthy, and locked when on the premises and can be left in the bike racks preferably under the CCTV camera. Students must wear protective headgear to and from school. The school does not have any insurance cover for bicycles, if this is required it must be taken out by the student/family themselves. Bicycles may safely and carefully be ridden on the footpaths into school.

Parking spaces for Sixth Formers' motor bikes/cars are exceedingly limited and a special case must be made to the Head of Sixth Form for one. Sixth Form students are required to park in the car park at the bottom of the drive, and if full, they **MUST NOT** park on any yellow lines or on the access routes for the school buses. The school reserves the right to refuse or withdraw permission for school parking at any time. Students who are not yet Sixth Formers, may not bring motorbikes, cars or mopeds on site.

## School Closures

On extremely rare occasions the school may have to close due to an emergency such as severe weather or heating problems. If this does happen either:

**Commented [MLB1]:** Should this read 'Students up to the age of 16?'



- We will put a message on the school website <http://www.sirgrahambalfour.co.uk> or may send a text or email by our School Comms system, please also see our Facebook page for updates.  
OR
- Students will be sent home with a signed and dated letter of explanation if the school has to close during the day. **STUDENTS WILL NEVER BE GIVEN PERMISSION TO GO HOME BY WORD OF MOUTH!**

We will, however, always make every possible effort to keep the school open and operating normally, or supervise any students who are unable to go home.

## **Stafford Educational Endowment Fund**

### What is it?

The fund can provide parents with financial support which is not normally provided by the school or by the Local Authority.

### Who can benefit from the fund?

Y7 – Y11 students who are eligible for free school meals. Help is offered to support the costs incurred for new school uniform (essential items) and school-based activities. This is normally a percentage of the total cost.

To apply for support in Y7 – Y11 please ask the Finance Department for Financial Assistance Application Form. Each application will be dealt with in order and balanced across all students who are eligible.

Up to your 26<sup>th</sup> birthday: Year 12 students and ex-students can apply using a form from the Head of Sixth Form to support in a range of activities which have a cultural or educational benefit.

## **16 – 19 Bursary Fund**

### Can Sixth Formers apply for financial assistance?

The school receives a grant from the Government which is specifically for Sixth formers. The 16-19 Bursary fund is used to provide financial support to help students overcome specific financial barriers to participation so they can remain in education. Contact the Finance Office or the Head of Sixth Form for details and an application form.

## **Absence from School**

If a student is going to be absent from school, please follow the procedure below:

- A quick phone call before school on 01785 223490 (this stops us worrying later about his/her non arrival). Messages may be left on the answer phone system from 5.00 pm to 9.30 am daily.
- A note confirming an absence to Reception (to update records on his/her return).
- Dental/Medical appointments: A parental note or an appointment card needs to be shown to Reception, who will issue a Temporary Pass before attending the appointment (advance notice is vital). Any student who needs to leave the school premises during the day upon return must "sign in" at Reception. Please note; local appointments are usually limited to a maximum of 2 hours.

We will contact you by telephone or text message via the School Comms system on the first day of any absence if you have not rung us to give a reason why your child is not in school. You can reply to this text message but please do not use it to report a child absent in the first instance this must be done by a phone call.

## **Illness at School**

If a student becomes ill during the school day, it is important they tell their subject teacher who, if necessary, inform the Pastoral Admin Officer, Mrs Phillips. If a student needs First Aid they must go to Reception. Several staff are qualified First Aiders. Every possible care is taken of students. Students must not contact parents/carers to come to collect them from school unless asked to do so by a member of staff.

If it is thought necessary, students may be taken to hospital for treatment. In this situation, or if it is thought advisable for the student to be taken home, you will always be contacted. Students will never be taken or sent home unless we know there is a responsible adult to receive them.

Accidents and illness can happen to anyone at any time, it is therefore vitally important that we always have at least two accurate work or emergency contact numbers, including the relationship to the student. Please do not forget to let us know of any alterations, including changing a land line/mobile phone number or email address.

## **Leave of Absence**

You may make a request for a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances during term time. The request for a leave of absence form can be obtained from Reception or the School Website. The form must also be accompanied by a letter explaining the reason for the absence. It should then be returned to Reception so that any requests can be recorded and finally passed to the Headteacher or her representative before leave is granted.

Please see our Attendance Policy on the website regarding holidays taken during term time.

## **Medical**

If your child has any illness or medical problems do let us know. Please be aware that no member of staff is allowed to give your child unprescribed medication, for instance paracetamol.

## **Damage to School Property**

Students are encouraged to take a pride in their surroundings, and to assist in improving the learning environment. They are responsible for putting litter and food scraps/wrappings in the bins provided. Privileges will be withdrawn if these rules are not adhered to. Chewing gum is forbidden everywhere. We want to keep our school in as pristine a condition as when it opened.

## **Lost Property**

All items of school clothing and equipment should be named, in order to greatly increase the chances of recovery if lost. Anyone who does lose any item should report this to Reception. Unclaimed property is eventually passed onto charity; advance notice is given of this through the weekly Student Bulletin.

Any valuable items (financial or sentimental) or substantial amounts of money must not be brought to school. Every reasonable effort will be made to safeguard individual property, however, the school cannot accept liability for either loss or damage. During PE lessons all cash and valuables etc must be handed to PE staff so that they can be locked away in the PE Office and returned to the students at the end of that lesson.

## **Mobile Phones**

Students are allowed to bring mobile phones to school. We recognise their benefit for security purposes, especially when travelling to and from school. However, before entering the school building, phones must be switched off and placed in bags. Should a phone ring whilst in school or should a student be seen handling one inside the building, the phone will be confiscated for one day in the first instance. If this happens again with the same student the phone will be confiscated for longer periods of time, potentially leading to a situation where parents need to come to collect the phone.

Students can be reached easily by contacting the Office on 01785 223490 if an urgent message needs to reach them during the day.

Students should also be aware that should they bring a phone into school they do so at their own risk. School does not accept any form of liability for them. However, any form of valuable property, including mobile phones, may be left in the main school office.

Headphones are also banned in class and in the school building.

Sixth Formers may also carry mobile phones, but they must be switched off around the building. They may be used in the Sixth Form Centre.

## **Use of Surnames**

On some occasions the use of a student's appropriate surname can cause some embarrassment or difficulty. In order to comply with your wishes and to avoid confusion on a day to day basis, for all ordinary documents and correspondence we use a student's "known by" surname.

On occasions when a student's official surname has to be used for legal reasons – for example, when examination entries are being made – changes will be made for that purpose only.

## **Safeguarding (Child Protection)**

The school has a Designated School Lead for Child Protection (Mrs Metcalfe), and she, when necessary, will always implement the statutory procedures and practices laid down by the DFE for safeguarding your children.

## **Reports & Parents' Evening**

We believe that it is important for you to be able to monitor how your child is progressing at school. In order to help you do this, we will make one formal contact with you each term through a report. All reports will contain information regarding your child's behaviour, effort, homework and attendance. It will also indicate if they are making the expected progress academically. One report will also contain comments on your child's strengths and areas to develop in each one of their subjects. Please let us know if you require an additional copy of reports and other letters if, for instance, parents live at different addresses.

## **School Council**

At Sir Graham Balfour school we value student voice. Students elect a representative from their Form Group to attend the Year Group Council. Each Year group council then elects representatives to attend the Whole School Council. Council meetings happen every half term in order for students to give feedback from their peers and actively discuss current issues and upcoming events.

## **Enrichment**

At Sir Graham Balfour School we believe in preparing our students for the future by providing a range of opportunities to gain new experiences, develop life skills and pursue interests via our enrichment opportunities. Our extensive Enrichment programme encompasses three main strands:

**Extra-curricular** clubs and activities: We have a weekly timetable of clubs and activities that provide further opportunity to develop curriculum-based skills and interests in lunch time and after school such as choir and sports clubs. Our extra-curricular programme also offers the chance to engage in competitions and events with other schools such as our school sports teams and associated fixtures.

**Extension:** Extended learning opportunities include masterclasses, music lessons, foreign trips, educational visits and events. These are all undertaken to extend learning, provide stretch and challenge and inspire ambition, for example individual music lessons, the CREST award and leadership skills programmes. Our Scholars Award programme offers students the opportunity to extend their learning and interests via a structured achievement programme.

**Engagement** in wider personal development: we offer opportunities for students to engage in experiences which develop skills and knowledge that they would not usually develop in the mainstream curriculum. For example; The Duke of Edinburgh Award, the Sir Graham Balfour Award, the school Ski trip and a variety of optional enrichment activities such as British Sign Language and First aid.

## **Community Links & School Visits**

Several clubs and other groups book the school's facilities for football, gymnastics, rock climbing or various meetings. Please telephone Pell Frischmann to enquire about hire of the premises after 6.00 pm and at weekends. (Tel: 01785 222531)

Departments regularly visit a number of venues near and far. Parents are fully informed about visits by either the Balfour News or through a special notice. All parents must sign a form agreeing to their child taking part in any such activity. All trips are risk assessed and comply with Health and Safety policies, whether the trip is to Stafford town centre or abroad.

## Community Liaison

Sir Graham Balfour School has strong links with the local community. We run a number of community projects and competitions, which our students actively take part in.

We are also regularly invited, to visit a number of establishments in our locality, from nurseries, schools to care homes etc, where our students are encouraged to engage in activities and share experiences. Our fantastic School Choir and Orchestra are also very active performing in the community, which is very well received by those involved.



For more information on work in the community, please visit the school website or contact the School Community Liaison Officer, Mrs Lynne Gannon [lgannon@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:lgannon@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk)

## Charity Work

The school has a long tradition of raising money for a range of charities through a variety of fundraising activities. We actively support national events for example Children in Need and Comic Relief. On a local level we are very supportive of Katharine House Hospice and in previous years we have also supported Staffordshire Young Carers, Guide Dogs for the Blind, Air Ambulance, Red, White and Blue Day, Macmillan Cancer Support, to name a few.



## Sir Graham Balfour Cambodia

In 2004, we raised over £12 000 to build our sister school, Sir Graham Balfour Cambodia.

We support the school on an ongoing basis providing classroom resources and paying the salary of one of the staff.

In 2009, our Cambodia Committee took a decision to press ahead with a much needed 2 classroom extension to replace a tin shack and these classrooms have been in use since October 2010.

Since 2012, on a bi-annual basis, 3 Staff and 12 Sixth Form students spend 10 days visiting Cambodia, during which, 3 days are spent in our Cambodian school, meeting and teaching the students. They also have the opportunity to explore this wonderful country, experiencing a trip of a lifetime.

Do visit the school's website at <http://www.sirgrahambalfour.co.uk> for more details.

