



Sir Graham Balfour School

Member of **INSIGHT**
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

March 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

As always, I hope that this letter finds you well. This letter contains important news from the school and key updates as we reach the end of the Spring Term.

Proposal to change the length of the school day

I'd like to inform you of some proposed changes to the timings and structure of the school day here at Sir Graham Balfour School. The proposals are:

- To increase the length of the school by 10 minutes by starting the school day at 8.45am and finishing the school day at 3.15pm. This increase will ensure that we meet the Department for Education's new minimum expectation of a 32.5 hour school week.
- Form Time would increase from 20 to 25 minutes in duration and lunchtime would increase from 40 to 45 minutes in duration.

This would leave the times of the school day as follows:

Form Time	08.45 to 09.10
Period 1	09.10 to 10.10
Period 2	10.10 to 11.10
Break	11.10 to 11.30
Period 3	11.30 to 12.30
Period 4	12.30 to 13.30
Lunch	13.30 to 14.15
Period 5	14.15 to 15.15

Should the changes be approved, they will come into force at the start of the 2024-25 school year beginning in September 2024.

The changes are minimal in terms of time, but I do believe that they will benefit the students by giving them extra time with their Form Tutor in the morning to do important work on getting organised for the day ahead and allowing extra time for the delivery of the PSHE curriculum. The addition of 5 minutes to lunchtime will also allow more time for students to eat their lunch and extra time for students to enjoy the enrichment activities that we offer.

The information here has been sent to School Transport so they can liaise with the bus companies, the Local Authority and to our local primary schools. We will work together so that there is minimum disruption. I also appreciate that these changes may impact upon pre-school or post-school arrangements that you have relating to childcare or work. I would like to invite you to give your feedback about this proposal by sending any comments to lunchtime@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk at any point from today until the 12th April. We will inform you of the results of this consultation and the final decision by 19th April by a letter to parents.

School Uniform Update

At Sir Graham Balfour we recognise the importance of a school uniform to avoid peer pressure and promote belonging. Unfortunately, we are still dealing with a small number of students not wearing the correct uniform despite many reminders of expectations. The vast majority of these students do have the correct uniform but a few choose not to wear it. Therefore, we will be introducing a new uniform store after Easter where students will be

Address: North Avenue, Stafford ST16 1NR **Tel:** 01785 223490 **Email:** office@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk **Web:** www.sirgrahambalfour.co.uk
Headteacher: Mr M M Mason **Deputy Headteacher:** Mrs S L Metcalfe **Deputy Headteacher:** Mrs R Haines

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given items of uniform (including shoes) to borrow for the day if they are not in the correct uniform. If a student refuses to borrow an item of uniform, they will complete their work in the isolation room for the day. If there is a genuine medical reason why a student is unable to wear full uniform, for example following an operation, please inform the school via a note or email to their form tutor so that staff can be made aware. We hope that this will encourage students to check they are in full uniform before they leave home each morning.

Can I also remind parents/carers that students require their PE kit for every lesson, unless they have a doctor's note, long term injury and/or pre-arranged reason. Please can you support us by checking their timetable with them. Students who forget their kit will be directed to where there is a range of clean PE kit that they will be expected to borrow so they can continue to take part in the lesson.

Curriculum Update

We publish full details of the school curriculum on our website - [Curriculum - Sir Graham Balfour School](#). If you are curious about the content that your child will be studying in each subject, just click on the link above and you can explore what each subject teaches from Year 7 through to Year 13.

Mobile Phones

I would like to thank parents for the support they have given the school whilst we have been re-focused the students on our long-established rules regarding the use of mobile phones. Whilst students became re-orientated with the rule, we temporarily removed the requirement for parents to come to school to collect phones following multiple confiscations. We will be re-introducing this requirement after the Easter holiday. All previous confiscations have been wiped with all students starting with a zero-confiscation total. Therefore, when a phone is confiscated for the third time parents will have to come to school to collect them.

Parent's Evenings

Following a great deal of deliberation, we have decided to move back to in person parent's evenings from September 2024 onwards. We really value the chance to sit down to meet in person with parents and we believe that the productive relationships that these face-to-face discussions develop between home and school can support students to make even better progress during their time with us here at Balfour.

Finally

We want to provide the high-quality teaching, opportunities and care for our students to leave Balfour with the very best GCSE and A level grades possible. All of us here at Balfour are thankful and deeply appreciative for the great support that you provide to your children and to our school. All that leaves me to do is to wish your families a lovely Easter break. We look forward to welcoming your children back into school on Monday 8th April for the final term of the school year.

Yours faithfully



Mr M Mason
Headteacher