



Sir Graham Balfour School

Member of Sir Graham Balfour Multi-Academy Trust

5th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope this letter finds you all safe and well. You cannot fail to have heard the news about the new lockdown, and I wanted to send you a quick update, whilst assuring you that I will be in weekly contact with you, as I was throughout the last lockdown.

We have been very busy yesterday and today making arrangements with your children and our staff with regard to how we will be working from now on. I have just emailed all your children with the key information they need as they embark on this new chapter of home learning.

For parents of Year 11 and 13 only, please see the enclosed letter I emailed to your children yesterday. Please also see the letter regarding the cancellation of BTec exams – another development from just this morning.

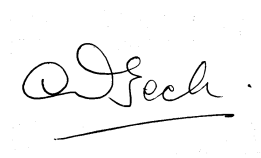
As last time, we will be sticking with our school timetable in order to give our students, and you, the routine that will be so necessary in keeping us all on track over the coming weeks. Your child's teachers and form tutors will be in regular contact, to assist with work issues and any concerns they, you or your children may have. Do not hesitate to contact your child's form tutor by email – if you are unsure of who this is, please ask your child. If they are unsure, please contact us at office@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk and we will be pleased to help.

Given the span of time anticipated by this lockdown, we will be pressing forward with our curriculum, rather than biding our time until we are all back in school. This will involve work being sent out by email, sometimes via a Powerpoint presentation with audio/video clips and explanations, and sometimes via Microsoft Teams. Please do note that we will not be 'live' teaching all the time; this is not feasible given we have around 15% of our student body with no consistent access to the internet or technology. We are urgently seeking clarification from the Department for Education over their promise for more laptops to be delivered to school. If and when they are delivered, we will send them straight out to families who need them, starting with the oldest students first.

As you will be aware, we were asked to set up Covid-testing in schools just before Christmas. My team and I have spent much time in planning for this. For those of you who are Key Workers and who have sent your children into school, I will be contacting you in the coming days, giving you much more information and asking whether you will consent to your child being tested on a weekly basis. There will be no compulsion to this, so please do not be concerned. The staff who are in school will also be tested on a regular basis, in order to reassure us all that we are staying safe.

I know that some of you will have heavy hearts at the prospect of another lockdown and having to home-school your children again. Please remember, we are here to help and support you too. Get in touch with us if you have any concerns. You did a brilliant job of working with your children last time and I am sure you will do the same this time around. No matter how hard these next few weeks may be, we know we have the promise of a vaccine being administered at some point in the future, meaning we can get back on with our lives as we would all wish.

With my best wishes for the New Year, stay safe and well

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "L Beck", with a horizontal line underneath.

Lesley Beck

Proud Headteacher of Sir Graham Balfour School

Address: North Avenue, Stafford ST16 1NR **Tel:** 01785 223490 **Email:** office@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk **Web:** www.sirgrahambalfour.co.uk

Headteacher: Mrs L D Beck **Deputy Headteacher:** Mr M M Mason

*Sir Graham Balfour School is part of the Sir Graham Balfour Multi-Academy Trust, a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 10238899.
The registered office is at Sir Graham Balfour High School, North Avenue, Stafford, ST16 1NR.*