



# Sir Graham Balfour School

Member of **INSIGHT**  
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

Our Ref: MMM / VM

19<sup>th</sup> July 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that this final letter of the school year finds you and your families well. I am deeply appreciative of the support that you have shown to our school during the year. It really has helped the students to make the most of their education and the opportunities they get here at Balfour.

The last few weeks of the school year have been busy. Lessons have been interspersed with our celebration evenings where over 350 students in Years 7-10 were recognised for their exceptional work and effort during the year; the big walk for Cambodia where we raised £2684; Sports Day which was won by Chetwynd House; the wide range of experiences on offer during Activity Day; work experience for our Year 10s and 12s and the trips on offer to Warwick Castle, Blists Hill and Dudley Zoo during our Cultural Visits Day. As well as these experiences we have also had trips to Buckingham Palace where students received their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award; to Wimbledon to watch the tennis; to Liverpool and London; to the Victoria Hall in Stoke to watch the Halle Orchestra perform and to Nottingham University for the UK University and Degree Apprenticeship Fair. All the above come hot on the heels of the trips we had in the Spring Term to Iceland for the annual Geography expedition, to Austria for our annual ski trip and to Cambodia for our annual 6<sup>th</sup> Form visit to the school we fund and support. It has been wonderful to see the children gain so much from taking part in these experiences.

During the school year students have been rewarded with the staggering total of 372,000 merits. Weston House received 84950 merits which meant that they won the House competition. Credit to the students in Weston House for their combined efforts, but also credit to every student in the school who worked hard to make sure that they had a positive conduct score. It takes a lot of perseverance to do this, so well done! If a student did not end the year with a positive conduct score, then September can, and will, be a fresh start for them.

We have commenced the refurbishment of the 6<sup>th</sup> Form area. This will be ready for September 2024 and has been designed in collaboration with our current 6<sup>th</sup> Form students. It will have a silent study area, social areas, updated IT equipment and vibrant decoration. The exam results achieved by students in our 6<sup>th</sup> Form are excellent, the quality of teaching and the opportunities they receive during their courses are second to none. We send our students away to join high class universities and commence the highest quality apprenticeships. We will be doing all we can to encourage even more of our students to embrace the challenge, the highly personalised support and the opportunities offered in our 6<sup>th</sup> Form.

I am also pleased to report that our links with Sir Graham Balfour Cambodia have been rejuvenated over recent months. There was a period when we were genuinely worried about being able to continue our relationship with the school as the charity we partnered with to send our money into Cambodia closed down. Fortunately, we have been able to forge a new link with a new charity in Cambodia so that we can continue supporting our sister school. We need to raise around £5000 a year to pay the wages of the English and Computing teacher in the school. Sir Graham Balfour Cambodia will play a much bigger part in the life of our school next year and we have plans for a high-profile fundraising event in the Autumn Term. Please keep your eyes out for this....

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**Headteacher:** Mr M M Mason

**Deputy Headteacher:** Mrs S L Metcalfe

**Deputy Headteacher:** Mrs R Haines

Sir Graham Balfour School is a member of Insight 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.

## Arrangements for September

- School reopens for **all** students at 8.45am on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September.
- A reminder that from Wednesday September 4<sup>th</sup> the times of our school will change. We will start at 8.45am and finish at 3.15pm.
- Year 7 students will need to go to the Hall.
- Students in all other year groups will need to go to their Form Room.
- Form Time and Period 1 will be used to distribute timetables. Lessons will start during Period 2.

## Uniform

Before any new items of uniform are purchased ready for the return to school in September, I would like to remind you of our rules around uniform. You can see the details at this link on our school website - [School Uniform - Sir Graham Balfour School](#). Our uniform rules are sensible and clear, and they help our students to develop a sense of pride in our school as well as develop good habits for adult life. We do need your support in dealing with uniform issues. Key reminders are as follows:

- Nose piercings, false nails and false eyelashes are not allowed, and we will challenge students to remove them.
- If you are buying a new skirt, they need to be knee length and not stretchy tube skirts.
- Jumpers - round neck jumpers are not part of our uniform for the 2024-25 academic year. If worn, jumpers must be a navy blue "V" necked jumper.
- Shoes – some shops market black trainers as being suitable for school. They are not, so please do not purchase them. Shoes must be plain black leather or PVC leather shoes.

## Finally

After the students have left school today, we will have the bittersweet task of saying goodbye to highly valued colleagues as they embark on new adventures. I would like to formally thank Mrs Thorndyke as she retires after nineteen years of service to our school teaching Spanish. Mr Parry is also moving on to pastures new after seventeen years of service here at Balfour teaching French. They both leave a wonderful legacy in our Modern Foreign Languages Faculty and they will be greatly missed. We will also be saying goodbye to Mr Tinsley, Mr Tilsley, Miss Morgan and Miss Cooves. I would like to thank them for their service to Balfour during their time with us. They have given so much and we wish them well as they begin the next stage of their careers.

All that leaves me to do is to wish you all a lovely summer holiday. I hope that the weather is kind and that your children return to school refreshed and rejuvenated for the start of the new academic year in September.

Yours faithfully



**Mr M Mason**  
**Headteacher**