



Parents' Handbook 2025-26



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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 without 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', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Matthew Mason
Headteacher

Welcome to Sir Graham Balfour School, which OFSTED in October 2024 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 2025– 2026

Autumn Term 2025

Inset Days 1 & 2:	Monday 1st & Tuesday 2nd September
Term Starts:	Wednesday 3rd September
Inset Day 3:	Friday 24th October
Half Term:	Monday 27 th October - Friday 31 st October
Inset Day 4:	Friday 21st November
Term ends:	Friday 19 th December
Holiday:	Monday 22 nd December - Friday 2 nd January

Spring Term 2026

Term starts:	Monday 5 th January
Half Term:	Monday 16 th February – Friday 20 th February
Term ends:	Friday 27 th March
Holiday:	Monday 30 th March – Friday 10 th April

Summer Term 2026

Term starts:	Monday 13 th April
May Day:	Monday 4th May
Holiday:	Monday 25 th May – Friday 29 th May
Inset Day 5:	Monday 20th July
Holiday:	Tuesday 21 st July – Friday 28 th August

School Organisation

Lesson Times

We operate a five period day and a Form Time. Times for 2025-2026 are as follows:

Warning Bell 08.40am

Students must be on the playground by 8.40am in order to start the day promptly.

Form Time 08.45am – 9.10am

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 1.30pm – 2.15pm

Warning Bell 2.10pm

Period 5 2.15pm – 3.15pm

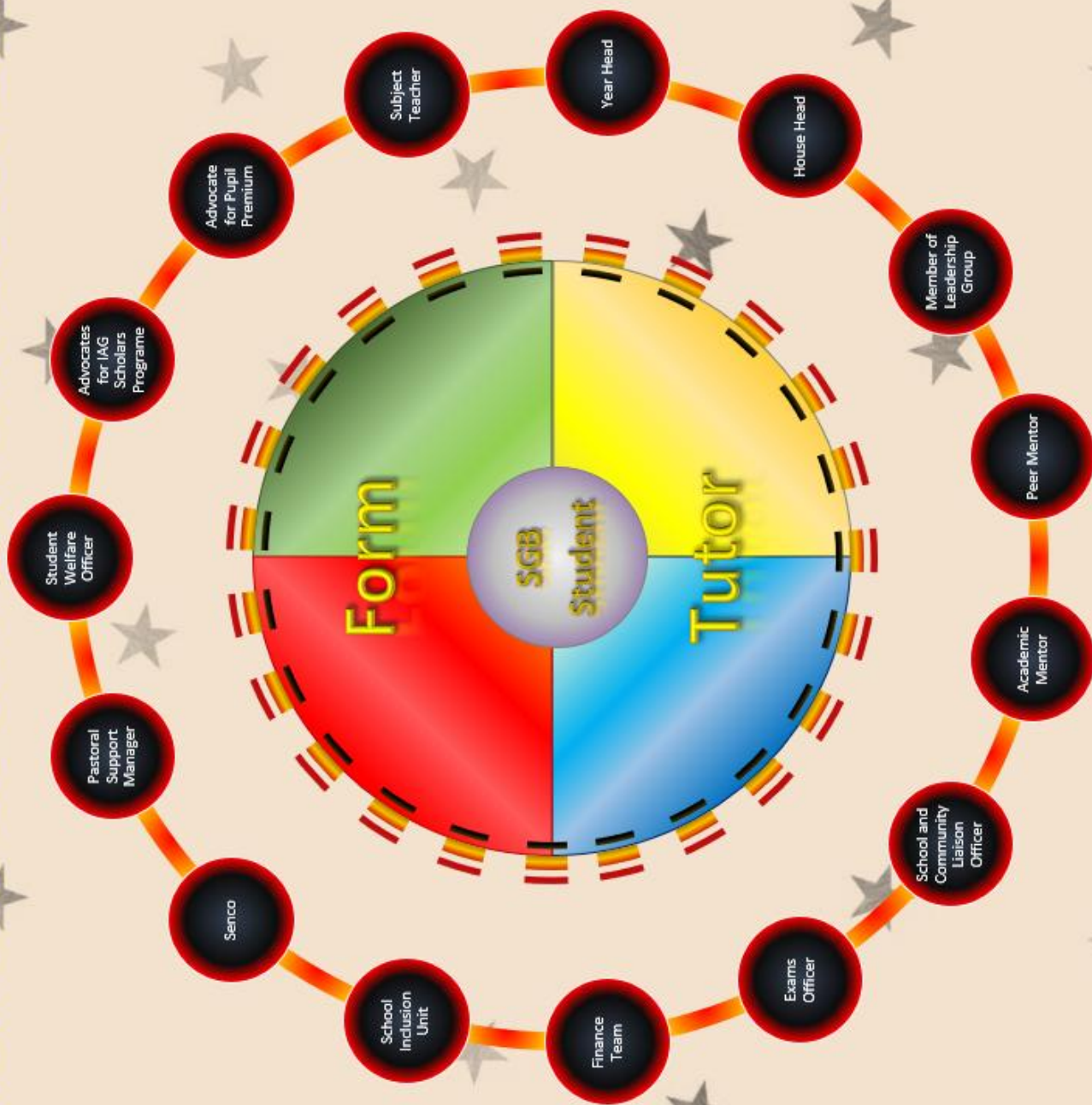
Lateness

Students arriving in school after 8.45am even at 8.46am, will be marked late. They should be in their form room at 8.45am.

If your child is late to school without a valid reason they will receive a detention that lunchtime which will be on their Satchel:One. Parents will be informed whenever their child is late, via Satchel:One. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child is in school on time and the school expects parents to ensure their child is not late.

Lateness to lessons is unacceptable as this causes a disruption to learning and the student who is late is often unsure on the content of the lesson as learning objectives and success criteria have already been explained. Parents will be informed regularly if their child has been late to lessons and the child will be expected to make the time up at lunchtimes or after school.

Student Support Network



Pastoral System

FORM TUTOR LIST 2025-26

Year Head		Year	House	Assembly Day	Colour
Mr Martin		7	Chetwynd	Friday	Green
Mrs Byrne		8	Sandon	Tuesday	Yellow
Mrs Cooper		9	Tixall	Thursday	Red
Mrs Johnston		10	Weston	Monday	Blue
Mrs Kearney		11	Shugborough	Wednesday	Purple
Year 7		Mr Martin		Chetwynd House (Green)	
7S	202	Miss Kirton (RK1)	rkirton@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk		
7B	024	Mrs Beirne (DB2)	dbeirne@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk		
7A	436	Miss Piper (AP4)	apiper@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk		
7L	046	Miss C Chapman (CSC)	cchapman@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk		
7F	036	Mrs Wallbank (HMW)	hwallbank@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk		
7O	055	Mrs Mackenzie (KM2)	kmackenzie@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk		
7U	026	Mr Tunstall (LT)	ltunstall@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk		
7R	439	Miss Fowler (RF)	rfowler@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk		
Year 8 Miss Byrne		Sandon House (Yellow)			
8S	445	Mr Smith (JTS)	jsmith@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk		
8G	434	Miss Gumbley (CG)	cgumbley@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk		
8B	432	Mr Trenbirth (ST)	strenbirth@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk		
		Mrs Price (OP) (Fri only)	oprice@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk		
8A	030	Mrs Giles (DG)	dgiles@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk		
8L	417	Mr Ward (DW)	dward@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk		
8F	094	Mr Brookes (RAB)	rbrookes@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk		
8O	025	Mrs L Chapman (LCH)	lchapman@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk		
8U	044	Mr Coghlan (AC5)	acoghlan@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk		
8R	430	Mrs Williams (RW3)	rwilliams@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk		

Year 9		Mrs Cooper	Tixall House (Red)
9B	032	Mr Gilroy (CJG)	cgilroy@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
9A	053	Mrs Paddison (ZP)	zpaddison@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
9L	042	Mrs Miller (LCM) Mrs L Dangerfield (LJD)	lmiller@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk ldangerfield@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
9F	064	Mr Field (BF)	bfield@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
9O	414	Mrs Nixon (GN)	gnixon@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
9U	028	Mr Williams (MTW)	mwilliams@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
9R	470	Mr Dunn (JD2)	jdunn@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
9S	428	Miss Prendergast-Sharratt (BP3)	bsherratt@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
9LK	407	Mrs Knapp (LK)	lknapp@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
Year 10		Mrs Johnston	Weston House (Blue)
10S	443	Mr Mills (PM2)	pmills@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
10B	034	Miss Brown (DPB)	dbrown@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
10A	020	Miss Cooper (AC)	acooper@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
10L	206	Mrs Domuradzka (BD)	bdomuradzka@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
10F	418	Mr Underwood Jones (SU)	sunderwoodjones@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
10O	419	Mrs Lavelle (LPL)	llavelle@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
10U	423	Mr McKenzie (CKM)	cmckenzie@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
10R	207	Miss B Turner (BT3)	bturner@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
Year 11		Mrs Kearney	Shugborough House (Purple)
11B	040	Mr Rowley (DR)	drowley@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
11A	210	Mrs Watson (HW1)	hwatson@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
11L	441	Mrs Downward (PMD)	pmdownward@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
11F	424	Miss Brinsdon (AMB)	abrinsdon@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
11O	426	Mr Wass (CSW)	cswass@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
11R	012	Ms Mitchell (PGM)	pmitchell@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk

Mrs Tranter will float between Mrs Downward's Form on a Thursday and other Year 11 Forms for the remaining days.

MENTORS FOR 2025/2026		
Pupil Premium	Mrs Healey (HCH)	hhealey@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
Careers & Aspiration	Mrs Bowyer (VJB)	vbowyer@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
Duke of Edinburgh	Mr Brookes (RAB)	rbrookes@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
SENDCo: Assistant SENDCo:	Mr Chamberlain (DC) Ms Clapton (JC7)	dchamberlain@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk jclapton@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
Personal Development & Welfare	Mrs Norman (RN) Mrs Dempsey (JD3) Miss Travis (PT) Mrs Flanagan (KF) Mrs Price (OP) Mrs Corbett (KC2)	rnorman@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk jdempsey@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk ttravis@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk kflanagan@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk oprice@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk kcorbett@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk
Sixth Form Mentors	Miss Collins (BMC) Mr Hoyle (DSH) Mr Metcalfe (JAM) Mr Cooper (MAC)	bcollins@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk dhoyle@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk jmetcalfe@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk mcooper@sirgrahambalfour.staffs.sch.uk

Home – School Agreement

This Home – School Agreement is very important to us, as it outlines clearly how the school’s values link directly to our expectations. As you have chosen to send your child to Sir Graham Balfour School, as parents, we do expect you to support the requirements outlined below. Please ensure both you and your child understand all aspects of it.

All conversations about positive praise, behaviour, attendance, uniform, homework completion and careers will be based on the Home – School Agreement.

Commitment to Excellence.

Attending: each day and arriving on time for school and lessons

- **Pride:** Wear our uniform with pride
- **Prepared:** Bring everything we need to lessons
- **Listening:** One voice in the room so that the thoughts and answers of all are respected
- **Behaving:** Be on task throughout the lesson - making it easy for everyone to learn and for the teacher to teach
- **Integrity:** Always doing the right thing, even when others are not looking
- **Care:** Taking good care of ourselves, our property and our time

Respect, Kindness and Compassion for ourselves and others

- **Respect:** Recognising that teachers are the authority in school and following instructions is essential
- **Kind:** Being courteous, co-operative, friendly and showing consideration for other people’s feelings and points of view
- **Humble:** Always thinking the best for others before ourselves, being respectful in victory and defeat
- **Language:** Always speaking in a respectful way towards students and staff, never using racist, sexist or homophobic terms
- **Safe:** Moving around the school safely and sensibly, taking care of other people’s property

Care for the local and wider community

- **Environment:** Taking good care of property and the environment, in and around the school
- **Impression:** Making sure we always give the right impression of the school
- **Community:** Playing an active part in helping improve the school, the local community and our global community

Ambition for ourselves and others

- **Ambition:** Always aiming high and not settling for mediocre
- **Confidence:** Believing in ourselves and taking pride in all that we do, both academically and socially
- **Teamwork** Encouraging our friends to do the best they can do

Perseverance and resilience:

- **Reflection:** Learning from our failures and our successes
- **Determination:** Remembering all success will come from hard work and dedication
- **Grit:** Understanding that failure is a natural step towards success

Pride in working hard and the success it brings

- **Celebration:** Embracing and celebrating our successes and others
- **Feelings:** Remembering how success makes you feel and
- **Modesty:** Enjoying the praise we get
- **Personal success:** Recognising that hard work will bring lots of rewards

Student: I agree to follow the school’s values as described above: _____

Parent: I agree to support my child to help them understand and follow the school’s values: _____

School: We agree to ensure that the school provides every opportunity to enable the school’s values to be followed: _____

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 student's 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 or 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.
Headteacher's Award (20 Merits)	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...
Headteacher's Honours Award (50 Merits)	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.

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 an accumulation of D2s will lead to 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 removed to work with another class and teacher in the faculty . You will also do a one hour after school detention .

D4 (20 De-merits)	Even more serious. You will be removed to spend the day in the Withdrawal Room to reflect on your behaviour choices and to safeguard the education of other students . 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 the Withdrawal Room 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 set by Year Heads on a Wednesday when they review the number of D2s/D3s a student has received in the previous 5 days of school e.g. the number of D2s/D3s recorded from Wednesday to the following Tuesday. Members of staff who have a Teaching and Learning Responsibility (TLR) in school are part of a rota to oversee these detentions for the first hour and Leadership Group oversee the second hour of detentions. Communication is sent home via Satchel One to give parents 24 hours notice of the detention set for the following day. Detentions will not be routinely re-arranged, any requests must go to the Year Head who will request proof of medical appointments. For those students who will be going into the Withdrawal Room, a phone call will also be made home by the Form Tutor or Year Head.

Over a course of 5 school days (Wed-Tues) should a student acquire:	Sanction (Thursdays)
An accumulation of D2s	1 hr detention
1 x D3	1 hr detention
2 x D3	2hr detention
3 x D3	IIR + 1hr detention
4 x D3	IIR + 2hr detention
Failure to attend 1hr detention	2hr detention (Friday)
Failure to attend 2hr detention	IIR + 2hr detention (Friday)

Absent due to illness/other	Re-arranged for following week (Thursday) any further consequences given in the following week will result in sanctions being given on the Friday.
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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.

We will also use homework prior to the whole school assessments to learn students how to revise and embed skills of effective revision throughout their time with us.

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 the lesson for advice/clarification about the task.
- Speak to the teacher at the end of the lesson/break/lunch for advice or clarification if you do not wish to discuss in class.
- You can message the teacher on Satchel:One in the homework tab to ask for advice or clarity.

- Choose to use the School's Library (Learning Resource Centre LRC) after school or at lunch for a quiet place to complete the homework and open Monday to Thursday until 5,10pm.
- Make sure when you do your homework at home you are in a quiet place/room and away distraction.
- Always try to complete the homework on the night it is set according to the homework timetable to stay organised and on top of your work.

Faculty Non-Completion of Homework Detention

Each faculty runs their own homework detention on a Monday and a Wednesday after school for thirty minutes.

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.

Satchel:One App for homework

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, positive and negative behaviour, attendance and detentions. You will also be able to see their timetable and uploaded documents by the school

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.

A notification will also be sent via the App if your child has been placed into a Homework Detention with 24hrs notice. You will be able to see details of the detention by visiting the App and selecting on detentions.

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:

The super seven:

- Suitable black or blue pens
- Pencil
- Green pen
- A ruler
- An eraser
- A pencil sharpener
- A calculator

They will also need:

- For Maths - a compass and protractor
- A few coloured pencils
- An envelope file or plastic wallet to keep work or paper tidy
- A French/German dictionary is desirable.

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. Uniforms encourage equality among pupils. By wearing the same outfit, students can focus more on their education and less on social pressures related to fashion. The concept of school uniforms supports an increased sense of belonging. 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 the SGB Logo Black Quarter Zip Track Top and Royal Blue SGB Logo T Shirt are available from Crested

Schoolwear (35-36 Gaolgate Street, Stafford. ST16 2NT). Plain blazers and blue t-shirts can be purchased as the school has iron on logo badges.

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

Boys and Girls Uniform		Comment
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 (e.g. 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.. 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

PE Outdoor Kit:	Quarter Zip Black Track Top with SGB Crest (optional), Black Shorts (NOT tight shorts or cycling 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 Tracksuit Bottoms, Royal Blue or Black Long Sleeved Base Layer.
PE Indoor Kit:	Royal Blue T-Shirt with school badge, Black Shorts (NOT tight shorts or cycling shorts), Royal Blue Football 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 Dining Room. All litter, scraps, crumbs must be cleared away and disposed of in the bins provided. Food is not to be eaten anywhere else in the school building.

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 official free school meal allowance is **£2.60 per day**. However, as a school we personally fund an extra 50p per free school meal child to have a piece of toast and a drink at breakfast club (this money **cannot** be carried over to break) and an additional 50p at break time to purchase a snack.

If free school meal students choose to spend part of, or their full balance at break time, unfortunately the school cannot provide any additional funds for them at lunchtime. If FSM students wish to spend more than their daily allowance, 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. The 432 public bus drops and collects at Parkside shops.
- 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 will be sanctioned in the first instance with an after-school detention. If this persists it could result in a day in the withdrawal room. 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 travel to and from school. 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:

- 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 assist parents of Yr 7 to Yr 11 students by providing financial support which is not normally provided by the school or by the Local Authority.

Who can benefit from the fund?

Any Yr 7 to Yr 11 family facing financial difficulty may apply for assistance from the endowment fund. Examples of assistance provided include contributions towards the cost of uniform, school activities, trips and Music Tuition.

Funding is limited per year and decisions will be made on a case by case basis. To apply for financial assistance, please complete the online form which can be found in the parents section on the school website.

Funding is also available for ex-students up to your 26th birthday. Applications can be submitted to assist with and promote a variety of social, cultural or educational benefits, for example work experience at home or abroad, scouting activities, sporting endeavours and Duke of Edinburgh projects. Further information and an application form can be obtained from the Head of Sixth Form.

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. We can only authorise absences in exceptional circumstances.

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

Mobile phones are not compulsory items for secondary school and can be the source of distractions in lessons, if this is the case the phone will be confiscated. Please note the vast majority of apps have age limits of at least 13. Social media, if used incorrectly, can lead to upset and unkindness.

Students are allowed to bring mobile phones into school for the main purpose of travelling to and from school. The simple rule is that the phone must be switched off in any of the school buildings and must not be seen. If they are seen/used or go off, they will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day. If students continue to ignore these simple rules they may have to hand their mobile phone into Reception every day.

Students can be reached easily by contacting the Office on 01785 223490 if an urgent message needs to reach them during the day. Please support us by not phoning or messaging your children during lesson times as this can create a disruption to learning if they have forgotten to turn their phone off.

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.

Currently smart watches can be worn but children will be asked to remove them if they are causing a distraction during lessons.

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 letter. 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



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, Macmillan Cancer Support, to name a few.

Sir Graham Balfour School Cambodia

International Charity



SGB Cambodia: Chi Phat Village, Koh Kong Province, Cambodia.

From 2002 to present, pupils and staff at SGB have shown care for the wider community by supporting a primary school in rural Cambodia.

Initially, \$16,000 was raised for a new school building in village, with a further \$18,000 raised by 2010 to fund an extension.



Everyone involved at SGB is incredibly proud of our success and in showing kindness and compassion for others through this charitable work.

The donations received from a variety of annual fundraising events allow us to pay for the salary of an English and Computing teacher, which the school otherwise would not be able to afford.



Receiving an education in English and Computing provides an immense difference to the children's lives. Their ambitions to become teachers and doctors are now a realistic possibility.

Generous donations fund other important aspects within the school. They help pay for the school to have an electricity supply and internet connection.

In addition to this, donations are used for school resources, including books, stationary, computers and playground equipment.



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Cambodia Trip

Year 13
Annual Visit



Every year, an 11 day visit to Cambodia takes place over February half term.

The trip is open to any SGB pupil who attends the Sixth Form and who has consistently demonstrated the school's values.

To apply, pupils need to write a letter outlining the reasons why they would like to go and their personal qualities that are important to a trip like this.

The main purpose of the trip is to visit SGB Cambodia, in Chi Phat village.

Pupils will see the school and meet the teachers & children. Resources are given to every child to help them with their education.

The most rewarding aspect is when Year 13s teach the fun and creative lessons they have planned to the children and experience the happiness and excitement it brings.

A trip to Cambodia is not complete without visiting many of the remarkable cultural and natural sights.

The idyllic island of Koh Rong has miles of unspoilt beaches. The unforgettable temples of Angkor are world-renowned. The full magnificence of Angkor Wat represents the height of Khmer art, whereas visits to Tuol Sleng prison and the Killing Fields illustrate the most depressing aspect of Cambodian history.

Sampling Cambodia's cuisine is a must, including the national dish, bamboo-leaf infused fish amok, and for the brave, deep-fried spider.



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WE NEED YOUR HELP

Sir Graham Balfour Cambodia



If you wish to find out
more information or
donate to our
international charity,
then please contact us.



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