



Balfour Newsletter Summer 2016



Dear Parents/Carers

As is traditional, at the end of the academic year, we say goodbye to several members of staff who are either retiring or moving on to pastures new.

Teachers moving on to promoted posts elsewhere, or to pastures new are -

Mrs Breakwell - ICT/Computing

Mr Cooke - Science

Mrs Fiddler - Food Technology

Mr Tidyman - Chemistry/Science

Teachers retiring -

Mrs Massey - Technology

Mr Wright - Headteacher

Non-teaching staff leaving -

Miss England - Student Welfare Officer

Mrs Jupp - Teaching Assistant

Mrs Shaw - Midday Assistant

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the above staff for their commitment, dedication and continued hard work during their time at Sir Graham Balfour School. I'm sure you would wish to join me, in wishing them all, every success in their future endeavours.

In September, we will welcome -

Mrs Hales - Food Technology

Mr Lewin - Physics/Science

Mr Morrey - ICT/Computing

Mr Mason - PE

Mr Wright - Chemistry/Science

Mr Jupp - D & T Technician

Farewell

This is my last Balfour Newsletter before I retire from the profession at the end of this academic year. It has truly been an honour and a privilege to lead and represent Sir Graham Balfour School, for which I will always have the greatest affection. This last decade has been the most satisfying of my long professional career.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Governors for appointing me in 2005 and for the outstanding commitment and support both I and the school have received during my time as Headteacher. I would also like to thank the staff for their unstinting hard work and dedication in providing a quality educational experience for our students; the students themselves for their involvement and engagement; and parents and carers for supporting and working with the school so well. I firmly believe the successes we have had, are the result of this concerted team effort.

I like to think Sir Graham Balfour School has made significant progress in the last decade especially in terms of student outcomes, pastoral care and community confidence. My task was to ensure we were rated consistently a strong good by OFSTED and became the school of choice for many, which is where we now are. Most pleasing is our current grading of outstanding for behaviour, welfare and safety. This shows how, in our quest to raise achievement, we have also focused on personal development and well-being.

The establishment of Sir Graham Balfour as a Multi-Academy Trust brings exciting possibilities. I have said many times over the last few months how I wish I was ten years younger, as I would relish the opportunity to steer the school through this next phase of its developmental journey. However, time waits for no-one. This is a project which will last several years and given my age, I could not guarantee to see it through. Hence my decision to retire.

I am confident that with the current Governing Body and newly appointed Leadership Team, I am leaving the school in very safe, capable hands.

Please accept my sincere good wishes for what I believe will be a vibrant, productive and very successful future.

Thank you and goodbye!

Dave Wright

Big Walk for Cambodia

Thank you to everyone who took part in the Big Walk for Cambodia on Thursday 14th July. Fortunately the weather was in our favour as students from Years 7, 8, and 9 took to the field to raise valuable funds for our sister school in Cambodia.

In addition to sponsorship for laps around the field, students were permitted to wear non uniform and fancy dress was encouraged for the event during the last period of the day.

Thank you to Parkside Primary School who joined us to support this worthy cause. All monies raised will continue to help pay for the salary of a teacher at the school, as well as fund additional equipment for our Cambodian students.



Pictured (l to r):
Katie Allen, Kaytlin
Rutter, Rowan Brown
and Tyler Parkes Smith

Bikeability

In July, 30 students in Year 7 braved the rainy conditions to successfully gain their Level 3 Bikeability. They learned about road safety, bike maintenance and honed their skills taking part in a sizeable bike ride around Stafford.

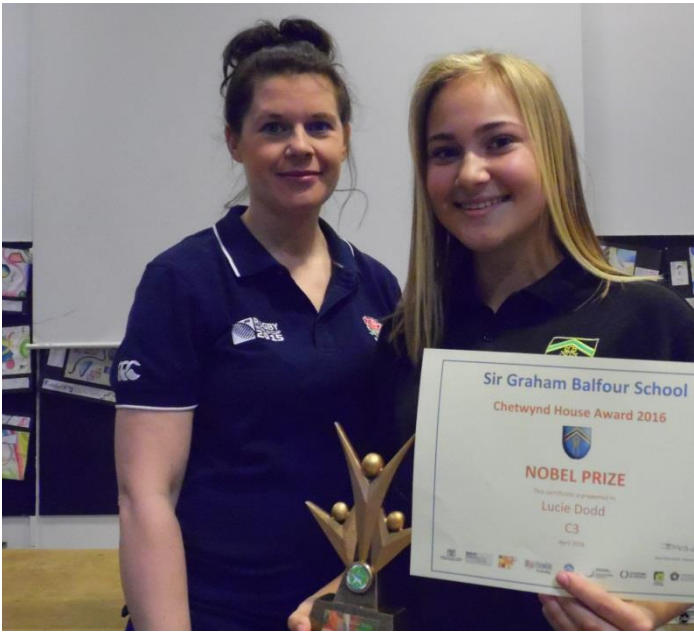
The students were a real credit to the school and received glowing reports from their instructors.

Well done to all those who took part and thank you to Mr Parry for organising the programme.



Celebration Assemblies

In the summer term each House received a Celebration Assembly; a recognition of students' successes in and out of school, over the past year. House Tutors nominated students for such awards as 'Most Helpful', 'Best Role-Model' or 'Most Improved' and students were also recognised for achievements and awards gained outside school. Each assembly culminated with the award of the Nobel Prize to a student who had been voted for by their peers as being an outstanding figurehead and role model within their House. The Celebration Assemblies created a real 'buzz' around school and we are looking forward to repeating the event next year. Well done to everyone who received an award.



Pictured: Nobel Prize Winners
Lucie Dodd, Katie Henderson,
Sam Hart and Amber Brigham.

Eco News

Eco Action Day

On Tuesday 5th July, Mrs Gannon, along with 10 Year 7 students took part in Stafford Borough Eco-Schools Network 'Eco-Action Day 2016' at Staffordshire Wildlife Trust HQ at Wolseley Bridge.

The day was intended to be both educational and fun and consisted of eco-themed workshops followed by a theatre production on recycling by the Momo Theatre Group. Thankfully, the weather stayed favourable and everyone enjoyed the 'hands on' interactive workshops; a memorable experience and great learning opportunity for all involved.



Birthday. Each of the four houses was allocated a £30.00 budget to purchase plants and vegetables for their garden beds. We also had the excellent services of an excellent gardening consultant, Matt Long who helped work with the students from each house over a period of four months, to help guide them with the preparing, planting and maintaining the beds. This activity not only focused on the Queen and her long Reign of this Country and the history of our monarch but also an awareness of the garden and how plants/vegetables grow. Another planned activity is the building of an Insect Bug Hotel in the school grounds during Activity Day. 12 students from years 7, 8 and 9 will be involved in creating a fantastic insect habitat.

Explore Uni

Sir Graham Balfour School has been working in close partnership with the Explore Uni Programme. This is a joint venture funded by Staffordshire, Harper Adams, Keele and Stoke on Trent Universities. The aim of the programme is for students to understand and experience 'a taste' of what it is like to study at University.

On Wednesday 18th May, 60 of our Year 9 students visited the Staffordshire University Campus at Stoke on Trent where the students experienced what it is like to attend a University and how the learning process is lecture rather than classroom based. They were able to ask University Ambassadors questions and take part in various activities related to University life. After a tour of the campus, the day ended with a theatre performance and question and answer session.

The programme will also be funding our Year 10 students' two day University Experience in July, one day will be based in school undertaking various workshops followed by a visit to Wolverhampton University, Walsall Campus on the second day.



News from the Geography Department

Iceland

During the Easter Holidays the annual Iceland trip took place. 39 pupils and 5 staff had a wonderful week in the Land of Fire and Ice. They walked on glaciers, over active volcanoes, in rift valleys where the earth is moving apart under your feet, behind waterfalls, above waterfalls, stood under a



geyser, experienced the tranquillity of the Black Beach at Vik, bathed in geothermally heated swimming pools, relaxed in the Blue Lagoon and saw the Northern Lights (twice!).

The itinerary was as follows:

Day 1 - Tour of Reykjavik

Day 2 - South Shore Adventure - glaciers, waterfalls and the Black Beach

Day 3 - The Golden Circle - geysers, waterfalls and rift valleys.

Day 4 - Eyjafjallajokull Volcano

Day 5 - The Blue Lagoon



News from the Science Department

CERN Trip

This summer 13 A level Physics students went to Cern in Geneva. At CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research, physicists and engineers are probing the fundamental structure of the universe. They use the world's largest and most complex scientific instruments to study the basic constituents of matter - the fundamental particles. The particles are made to collide together at close to the speed of light. The process gives the physicists clues about how the particles interact, and provides insights into the fundamental laws of nature.



Physicist of the Year Award

Congratulations also to Jonty Macmichael who won the Physicist of the year award and attended Birmingham University to receive his award.

Mission: Starlight

Students from Years 7, 8 and 9 took part in Mission: Starlight, the Royal Society of Chemistry's global experiment.

The students watched the launch video in which British astronaut and ISS resident Tim Peake, introduced the experiment which looks at the dangers of UV radiation and how we can protect ourselves against it. The students then tested a range of substances using special colour-changing beads that react to UV light to investigate which is the best at blocking out UV rays.



Curtis Jones, was one of the many students who took part in the activity. He said, "The experiment was fun and easy to complete. We put different materials over these special UV beads and took them into the sunlight to see which material would be best for a space suit. I learned what UV energy is and that the sun produces it. I got a certificate for completing it."

Mrs O'Dell, Head of Chemistry, who organised the experiment said, "Mission: Starlight seemed like an excellent opportunity to take part in an experiment with students from across the world, and with Tim Peake's massive milestone for UK space exploration, and all the recent news and social media coverage of his time on the ISS, I thought the students would really connect with the experiment."



News from the Music Department

Summer Concert

Our summer music concert took place on Wednesday 22nd June. It was a lovely evening of musical entertainment enjoyed by parents, students and staff alike. Thank you to everyone who contributed to creating a very successful event and especially to Miss Braverman for her



dedication and organisation of our fantastically talented students. A DVD from the evening is available to purchase (£3.00) from school with all proceeds helping to purchase new equipment for the Music Department. Please contact the school for further details.



Exam Results

Congratulations to Ellie Gorwood, Kirsty Charlesworth and Sarah Horton who have all passed their Grade 5 Music Theory and to Lottie Holland on achieving a Merit. Also to Peter Holland for passing his Grade 3 Music Theory.

Visit to Marshlands

Our orchestra visited Marshlands School on Second Avenue on Thursday 14th April. Pupils at the school were able to see what instruments our students played and listened to them perform a number of pieces including the Harry Potter theme tune. We have promised to return in the near future.



News from the PE Department

Balfour Sport Achievements

Balfour Basketball: Congratulations to our Year 10 Basketball team who have had another extremely impressive season. During the first term, the boys were crowned district champions after finishing unbeaten in an extremely competitive competition held at SGB. Thanks to their victory in the district championships, the boys were invited to the Staffordshire School Games at Northwood stadium. After finishing second in their group, the boys progressed through to the semi-finals where they were marginally beaten. However, they managed to bounce back extremely well and win their third and fourth place play-off tie, crowning them as the third best under 15 Basketball team in the county! A magnificent achievement! Well done to all of the boys in the image below (Liam Green, Mateusz Bedokowski, Liam Insull, Jay Gasch, Ryan Chilton, James Murphy, Harry Cross, Ammar Pathak and James Heath).



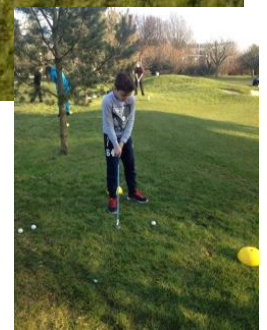
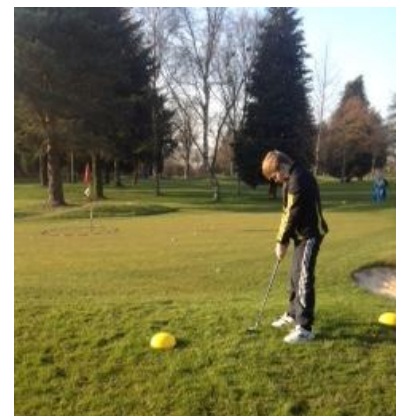
Handball: This year, the PE department have really pushed Handball and we are extremely impressed with the progress that a number of our students are making in the game. After an excellent performance in a friendly game against Weston Road Academy, we recently took

our Year 10 team to the county championships at the Chase Leisure Centre in Cannock. After performing extremely well against St John Fisher School, the boys progressed through to the final and produced another excellent performance. However, they just missed out on victory and were crowned as the County Runners Up. I'm sure that you would agree that this is an outstanding achievement, particularly considering the fact that the team have only started playing competitively this year. In addition, special congratulations go to James Heath, James Murphy and Lenny Baker who were all scouted for the regional Handball Academy. The boys have now also been invited to train with the national academy. Keep your eyes on the Olympic Handball Squad in 4 years' time!

Athletics: Congratulations to all of the athletes that have represented Balfour in the competitions that have been held at the Rowley Park Stadium this year. We have had a number of exceptional performances again this year with a number of our students qualifying for the county competitions. Congratulations to Amy Pye (Hurdles/200m), Holly Till (100m), Iris Davies (800m), Joe Littledyke (Javelin), Joe Porter (100m), Suzanne Nunn (Javelin), Charlie Owen (1500m) and Meshach Dallas (100m). Furthermore, one student, Amy Pye is currently competing at a national level in the 300m Hurdles. She really is a star for the future and we are excited to see her continued progress on the track.

Golf

The students listed below have been attending golf coaching sessions run by professional golf instructor, Iain Seath. They have completed 4 out of 6 weeks of the course so far (the last 3 sessions take place at Three Hammers Golf Complex). The students have learnt basic chipping, pitching and putting skills and lots about the sport itself.



Matthew Stevens, Oliver Noden-Mayor, Grace Gilchrist, Miras Zekovic, Tyler Parkes-Smith, Oliver Chivers, Stephen Pursall, Rhys Chilton, Lacey Powell, Zach Tallent, Wren Ramsden, Maddy Keay, Lauren Lenton and Bob Clewes.

Zach Tallent (Year 10) who has previous experience of playing golf, has assisted Iain in demonstrations and coaching the other students. He has been able to use his knowledge of the game to help other students improve their technique and overall performance.



Well done to all those involved! You have all made very good progress so far!

Girls Football

Well done to (back l to r) Megan Pointon, Katrina Hamilton, Zoe O'Keef, Jessica Warren, Sophie Pollard (front l to r) Jennifer Higgs, Amelia Evans and Hannah Beasley who represented Sir Graham Balfour in a recent Under 13's Girls Premier League football tournament in Stoke. They did extremely well and won with their group scoring 15 goals and without conceding a single goal! They then went on to win their quarter final but unfortunately got knocked out in the semi-finals.



All of the girls played fantastically and should be very proud of themselves.



CREATING CHANCES

Many congratulations to all of the boys who have represented one of the school Football teams this year at Balfour. Particular

congratulations go to our Year 10 team who managed to progress to the semi-final of the County Cup, missing out on the final in a nail biting penalty shoot-out. We would also like to congratulate Lenny Baker on his continued goal scoring form. His record for the school team is absolutely outstanding.

We would also like to include a special mention to a former student, Morgan Gibbs-White who would now have been in Year 11. Morgan is currently a member of the academy at Wolverhampton Wanderers and he recently made his debut for the England School-Boys team. We wish Morgan the very best of luck for the future.

With further Athletics competitions, Cricket and Rounders fixtures to come, we hope to inform you of further success in the future. Congratulations again to all of the students that have represented SGB this year! The PE department.

Panto

On 26th and 27th January 2017, Sir Graham Balfour will be hosting a production of Sleeping Beauty. This will be the third year the school has produced a Pantomime and rehearsals are due to start in September. Anyone interested in taking part or supporting the production, please see Mrs Metcalfe. Further details to follow shortly.



Parent Teacher Association



Wednesday 19th October 2016

Annual General Meeting

Venue: DAC Centre

Time: starting at 6pm.

Bring along your interests and knowledge to share and we will supply the refreshments.

All welcome!!!



Rotary Young Photographer

Rotary Young Photographer Regional Competition

Well done to everyone who took part in the competition.

Lucy York - Year 10, was awarded 2nd Prize in the secondary

school, colour print category with her print Dandelion

Delight, Pippa Spencer - Year 12 received a Highly

Commended with her mono print Old Jetty and also a

Commended for Glacier Walking, Iceland. In addition from

the 800 photographs entered the following students entries

were selected to be entered into the exhibition:

Never Stray from the Path	Holly Howdle
Camouflaged Mallard	Lucy Spencer
Locked in Battle	Jasmine Gallant
Ladies Love Spring	Holly Howdle
Bobbi	Evie Spencer
Red Hot Chilli Peppers	Lucy Spencer



Pictured: Lucy at the Presentation Evening held at Weston Road Academy on Thursday 28th April where she received her prize medal and certificate.

Rotary Young Photographer District Competition

Following their success at the Regional Competition, Lucy

York, Pippa and Lucy Spencer were invited to attend the

District Final held at Denstone College on 28 June. Lucy

received a Commended for her Dandelion Delight, Lucy

Spencer also received a Commended for her print Bobbi

and Pippa won 2nd Prize in the Mono category with Old

Jetty.



School Parliament

Our school Parliament met on Friday 27th May for the last time this year as a whole group, before our Year 11 members finished school, after their exams. It was a chance to wish them well in the future and give thanks for their hard work and support to the school.

The planning day also resulted in nominating George Moore (Year 10) as the new Parliament President and Sarah Preston (Year 10) as Vice President for the next academic year.



Spinathon Katharine House Hospice Cheque Presentation

On Tuesday 7th June, Emma Whitehurst, Community Fundraiser from Katharine House, came into school to receive the cheque donation from our recent Spinathon. A cheque for £2997.79 was presented to Emma which represented half of the total funds raised! The Hospice has also received two donations directly which took



the final amount to £3177.79 an outstanding amount on its own for one day's fundraising, let alone the additional half which has been sent to Sports Relief!

President George Moore in his first official role of presenting the cheque on behalf of school parliament, along with Emma Whitehurst (KHH), Miss Poole and Sarah Preston.

Stafford in the World Event

Saturday 23rd April hosted the first Stafford in the World Exhibition in the town square. The event was orchestrated by MP for Stafford, Mr Jeremy Lefroy to showcase the variety of links Stafford has to many parts of the world. Representatives from JCB, Perkins Engines, and the Army were present, along with our very own SGB Cambodia display, in total there were over 40 exhibitors.

Stafford
in the World
Sat 23 April 2016
Market Square, Stafford

The stand was manned by the Cambodia 2016 team and generated a lot of interest and donations from the general public, including families from some of our Primary schools who stopped to find out more about our sister school in Cambodia.



Stafford Railway Building Society Award

I am pleased to announce Kyle Chapman - Year 11, as the winner of the Stafford Railway Building Society Award for Outstanding Achievement. Nominated by Mr Parry for Kyle's outstanding contribution to Modern Foreign Languages, he receives a certificate and a cheque for £25.00. The MFL department also receives a cheque for £25.00 for their nomination. Thank you to Mrs Emma Parker from SRBS for presenting the award to Kyle.



Transition Activities

Year 6 and Year 5 Visit Days

Last week the school welcomed our upcoming Year 6 students for a two day visit to experience life at Sir Graham Balfour, in preparation for the move to Secondary School in September. Pupils attended lessons and were given the opportunity to make new friends. On Thursday 14th July, Year 5 pupils also visited the



school for a taster day. The pupils really enjoyed the experience, thank you to Miss Brinsdon and the Transition Team for organising a comprehensive programme of lessons for our visiting pupils.



Year 5 Taster Sessions

Our programme of Year 5 after school Taster Lessons has now concluded for this year, a new series will commence in April 2017 (Wednesdays 4.00 - 5.00 pm) giving students the opportunity to experience many of the academic subjects on offer here at SGB. Details will follow in early 2017.

Year 11 Prom

Our Year 11 Leavers Prom was held at The Moathouse, Acton Trussell on Monday 4th July. Everyone looked stunning and we were very fortunate the rain held off until everyone was seated for dinner.



... A final word from Mrs Beck

Life beyond Levels....

In the last edition I did let you know about the changes to reports from next year, but this is just a reminder:

There will be some minor changes to our Attitude to Learning and Attainment and Target Reports, particularly for Years 7 and 8. Instead of reporting students' predicted and target grades, we will be showing simply 'traffic lights' which will indicate the progress they are making according to their starting points. We are keen that students so young do not become 'hung up' on a grade which is likely to change several times in the five years up until their GCSEs - rather, we want to show the extent of their progress. Mr Mason and I will be holding Parent Q&A sessions on the new Curriculum and Reporting systems in September, so please watch this space for further details. If you have any concerns or questions at this point, however, please do not hesitate to contact me at school.

Fundraising for next year

As you know, we are very proud of our efforts to raise funds for a variety of special causes. Sir Graham Balfour School in Cambodia is funded largely by our school community and so will receive the bulk of our fund-raising monies. The following is a break-down of our planned donations for next year:

Children in Need on 18th November 2016	50% to Children in Need, 50% to SGB Cambodia
Christmas Jumper Day on 16 th December 2016	100% to SGB Cambodia
School Panto 26 & 27 January 2017	100% to SGB Cambodia
Spinathon 24 th March 2017	Proceeds shared between Katherine House, Comic Relief and SGB Cambodia
Big Walk for Cambodia 13 th July 2017	100% to SGB Cambodia

And finally...

I wish you all a relaxing summer break and look forward to welcoming all our wonderful students back on Wednesday 7th September.

**Have a fabulous Summer break
and we look forward
to welcoming students
back in school on
Wednesday 7th September 2016!**