



Headteacher Mr P Brockwell

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Dear Parent/Guardian

It has been a great pleasure to be able to work with your children and their teachers over the past few weeks. As I stated on Monday at the Ofsted Parents' meeting, Graham School is a great school, made up of fantastic students and enthusiastic hard working teachers. For those of you who couldn't make it on Monday the presentation is now on the website.

In my presentation I mentioned a number of actions that we must put in place to address the challenges by Ofsted. The first is the number of supply staff that impacts on learning at Graham School. When we arrived the school needed to appoint 9 supply teachers to cover those staff leaving. This is far too many and needed to be addressed urgently.

Secondly, at the moment the government is approving a range of courses that we feel our students would really engage with and enjoy. However, many will not have been approved until next academic year. To allow our Year 8 students the chance to access these courses and have a greater choice, I have decided to postpone the options that the Year 8 students took in March and they will redo their options at the end of Year 9 when we are able to offer some of these new courses to them. The only choice they will make this year is whether to follow history or geography in Year 9 and we have taken that choice from the options they chose earlier. Where students have opted for both humanities the second will be offered as an additional subject after school. By making this change to the year 8 curriculum we have been able to reduce the number of supply teachers required from 9 to 2. These two staff have been interviewed and observed teaching and we are excited about them joining us in September.

Low level disruption in lessons was identified by Ofsted as a concern that impacted on lessons and around school. Some of this comes from inconsistencies in teaching and we are addressing this through training for staff and clearer high expectations. I have also become aware of students being distracted by mobile phones both during and in between lessons. To avoid this, from 1 September 2017, mobile phones will not be allowed to be used within the school grounds. If they must bring them to school, they must remain in their bags during the school day. If phones are seen in school they will be taken from the child, kept securely and given back at the end of the day. Very rarely, teachers may ask students to use their mobile device for a classroom activity and this is an acceptable use. If children need to call home, they should speak with a member of staff who will ensure they can use a phone in school.

We aim to provide a range of opportunities for extra-curricular and our staff will be offering a number of enrichment programmes at both lunch and after school, including Duke of Edinburgh award, Young Enterprise and Debating Club. A programme will be sent out shortly for your children to choose from. To enable this, we have made some slight changes to the school day and increased lunchtime. However it does not change the school start and end time other than when students stay for extra-curricular activities. I would encourage all students to get involved with at least one new experience after school.

We are also making a slight change to the school uniform. From 1 September the new expectation will be that students wear single colour black leather shoes. Trainers of any kind or colour will not be allowed. Other than this the uniform will remain the same. If you feel that this change may cause you financial hardship, please get in touch with your child's Director of Progress to discuss it.

The whole staff will be working hard in the coming years to make sure that Graham School becomes the outstanding school you and your children deserve. But we can only do this through working with you and communicating better. As a result, details will be coming out in September about half termly parent group and one to one meetings with myself and the senior team. I will also be sending out a fortnightly update of our progress from 1 September.

Mr Pritchard, the whole staff and myself are looking forward to making a difference to the life chances of every single child that will be with us in September and beyond.

Kindest regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Paul Brockwell', written in a cursive style.

Paul Brockwell
Headteacher