



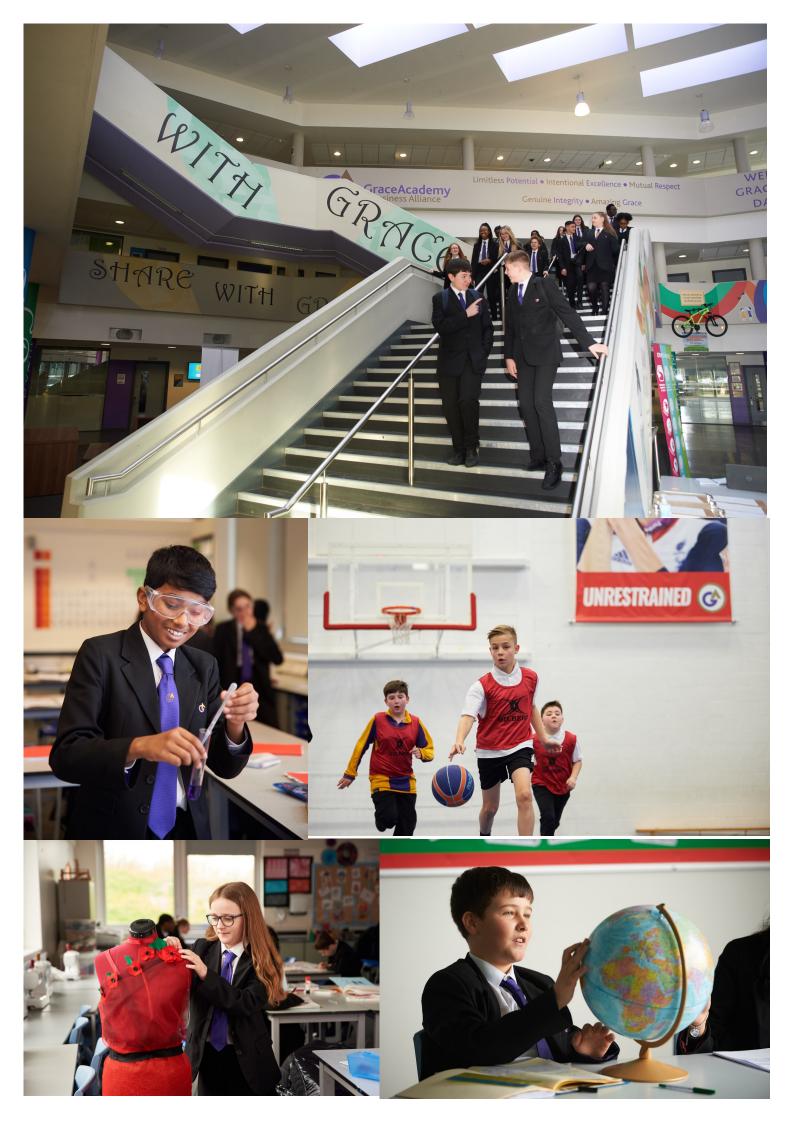
# Parent and Carer Handbook

Taking you step by step through starting at Grace Academy Darlaston





Potential. Excellence. Respect. Integrity. Grace.



Dear

ear Parent/Carer

### Welcome to Grace Academy Darlaston

We are delighted that your child has been allocated a place at Grace Academy. If you have not had the chance to come and see us we would very much like you to come and meet us and have a tour of the school. You can meet students and staff and see the academy hard at work. If you contact Reception we will be more than happy to arrange this.

We are incredibly proud of our academy and our community. We are proud of our happy students and staff, both of whom work together to achieve excellent results. As part of Tove learning Trust our academy benefits from being in a strong partnership with a number of other schools. We are also supported by a number of Ethos staff as part of the Trust. Grace Academy students thrive during their time here and visitors frequently comment on students' excellent manners and behaviour. We expect and give the very best education to every child. The academy's core set of values ensure every student is given every opportunity to develop into a confident, successful and happy young adult, ready to face the future.

Our recent Ofsted in April 2022 confirmed that we are a good school. Students behave well and make the most of the learning opportunities. Students feel safe and valued by all the staff. However much of what we offer is truly outstanding. Our excellent GCSE and Post 16 results over the last few years show the progress that students make across a range of subjects. However, our staff know that academic achievement is only one part of success. At Grace we have so much going on including a wide range of trips, visitors, presentations and sporting and creative opportunities for all students.

We are really excited about the chance to work in close partnership with you over the next 7 years. If you have any questions, please ask any member of staff and they will point you in the right direction to have your question answered.

Yours sincerely

### **Julie Anstey**

### **Principal**





### The Academy Pledge

The Academy should be a place where everyone, students, staff, parents, carers and visitors alike can come and go happily and feel valued for who they are and what they do.

To ensure this happens we have a Code of Conduct that provides a framework for cooperation between staff, students and parents. The Code is understood and agreed by all, for the benefit of all.

### We will:

- Provide high quality teaching and learning
- Respect and value each student as a unique individual
- Record, reward and celebrate good performance and progress
- Provide a safe, well-ordered and caring environment in which a personal learning program can take place
- Encourage excellent attendance and punctuality
- Encourage each student to work to the best of their ability and reach their maximum potential
- Provide a personalised and challenging curriculum which meets individual needs
- Provide opportunities for students to discuss issues and recommend changes
- Provide regular mentoring time for students
- Provide progress feedback and assessment to inform learning
- Provide regular formal reports and meetings on each student's progress
- Provide an extended curriculum
- Provide a wide variety of enrichment activities e.g. trips, visits and events
- Create an exciting Business and Enterprise specialism with opportunities to work with external partners
- Keep parents/carers informed about Academy developments
- Listen to and respond quickly to any concerns
- Enforce our values and ethos with all members of the community
- Promote pride in our community and in our students' successes



### Students agree:

- ✓ To wear the uniform with pride and maintain a neat, clean and tidy appearance,
- √ To take responsibility for my learning and support the learning of other students,
- ✓ To work to the best of my ability at all times,
- ✓ To arrive at the Academy fully prepared and equipped (i.e. a bag, books, pens, pencils, calculator and PE kit when required),
- ✓ To complete all work, homework and coursework and hand it in on time,
- ✓ To adopt a positive attitude towards, and participate fully in, the life of the Academy,
- ✓ To move sensibly and safely around the Academy,
- ✓ To arrive at school and to lessons on time,
- ✓ To achieve excellent attendance at all times,
- √ To look after the Academy environment and take pride in its appearance,
- ✓ To take care of personal and school equipment,
- ✓ To have regard for the safety of others,
- To follow the Academy Acceptable use policy,
- ✓ To follow the Academy Behaviour Policy and Pathway

For health, safety and hygiene reasons, there is zero tolerance with regards to: chewing gum, alcoholic drinks or drugs; knives or weapons of any kind.

### Parents / Carers:

- ✓ I will support the Academy and its values and encourage my son/daughter to adopt a positive attitude at all times.
- ✓ I will encourage my child to demonstrate our shared values of Grace, Respect, Integrity, Potential and Excellence at all times.
- ✓ I will send my child to the Academy daily, on time, in full uniform and equipped for learning.
- ✓ I will take an interest in his/her education by encouraging him/her to complete all coursework and homework, and by providing other opportunities for learning.
- ✓ I will keep the Academy informed about any issues which might affect his/her learning.
- ✓ I will attend Parent's/Carer's meetings to ensure I am fully aware of my child's progress.
- ✓ I will support the Academy and its policies, and by signing this pledge, also agree on behalf of my child to the acceptable use of ICT as defined by the Digital Policy.
- ✓ I will ensure that doctor/dentist appointments and family holidays are taken out of Academy time when ever possible.

## **ICT Acceptable Use Policy - Parent/Carer Copy**

The ICT systems at Grace Academy Darlaston must always be used by staff/students/parents/governors and contractors/guests in an appropriate manner. The Academy reserves the right to monitor any ICT usage and examine or delete any files that may be held on its ICT system. In the event of misuse the relevant Principal/Director will determine the appropriate sanction.

### Rules for responsible computer use

The Academy has installed computers and also offers access to the internet, Academy email, and the Academy portal to aid access to information onsite and offsite. Like all Academy equipment the ICT computers and network resources should be treated with respect. In using the Academy ICT equipment you must agree to the following terms:-

- I will only access the system with my own usernames and passwords, which I will keep a secret and not share with fellow students or colleagues.
- I will not access, or attempt to access, other users' files.
- I will log off correctly and leave all equipment in the same state as I found it.
- will not cause damage to or interfere with any of the ICT equipment.
- I will report any damage and not attempt to repair, replace, or swap, any faulty ICT equipment.
- I will not display, print or distribute, in any form whatsoever, material that may be regarded as offensive (promoting discrimination of any kind) or copyrighted.
- I will not try to access pornographic, racist or offensive material.
- I will not enter public or private chat rooms.
- I will only email people I know, or that a member of staff has approved.
- I will not open email attachments from an untrustworthy or suspicious source.
- I will not send anonymous messages or forward chain letters and I will not send messages which appear to come from someone else.
- I will not give my home address or telephone number, or arrange to meet someone, unless an appropriate Academy staff member agrees and my
  parent
  or carer has given permission. I will be aware of 'stranger danger' when online.
- I will report any unpleasant material or messages sent to me immediately.
- I will not compromise the security of ICT systems, whether owned by the Academy or by other organisations or individuals (including attempting to bypass internet security filters).
- I will not use my own software, or attempt to install any new software, on any Academy computers.
- I understand that copyright and intellectual property rights must be respected. I will not use the Academy ICT systems to plagiarise.
- I understand that the Academy may monitor my computer usage, including any saved files, internet sites I visit, and the contents of my email
  messages.
- I will not copy or download music, pictures or video files to the Academy network for personal use.
- I will not listen to online music or watch online videos without an appropriate Academy staff member's permission.
- I will not take photographs or record videos of anyone without their permission.
- I will not use the Academy ICT systems for online gaming, online gambling, file sharing, or financial gain unless approved by the Principal in writing.

### **Grace Values**

Grace Academy: No limit to your potential!

"Our vision is to develop well-educated, considerate and caring citizens with a strong sense of values who will succeed in and contribute to modern society".

As well as wanting you to succeed in your studies and exams, there are plenty of opportunities for you to develop other important life skills during your time at the Academy... we are here to help you reach your potential!

"Our Christian ethos is what makes us stand out from the crowd, it is what makes us tick, and it is what makes Grace Academy so special".

Here are Grace Academy everyone is working together to demonstrate our Christian ethos through our shared values of:

### Limitless POTENTIAL

We can achieve so much more than we think we can.

### Consistent **EXCELLENCE**

Success doesn't happen by mistake.

#### Mutual RESPECT

Everyone deserves to feel valued and important.

### Genuine INTEGRITY

Honesty and doing the right thing are what really count.

### Amazing GRACE

Life is better with fresh starts and second chances.

### **Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

Grace Academy Darlaston has an unwavering commitment to the education and welfare of our students. Students identified as SEND are fully supported by all staff in accessing the curriculum and their personal development. The SEND team are equipped with skills and resources to identify additional needs and put appropriate interventions in place. The SEND Policy and Information Report forms our local offer and outlines the Academy procedures in relation to assessment, planning and reviewing the support for all students with SEND, including the liaison with outside agencies and professionals.



### **Attendance**

Attendance and punctuality is extremely important for students to learn effectively. Students need to be in all their lessons and be on time to ensure they make excellent progress which can help them get the best possible exam results and career opportunities.

Students are expected to be in the Academy before 8.30am. Tutor time begins at 8.40am.

If a student arrives after 8.37am, they will be asked for a reason for their lateness. A late detention is issued.

If a student is absent from the Academy, the parent/carer should contact the Academy that day to tell us why and how long they expect the student to be absent for.

The Attendance Officer can be contacted on 0121 568 3440 or through reception on 0121 568 3300 and press option 2 for reporting absences, our answer machine is also checked regularly.

### What reasons will the Academy accept for absences?

- Illness
- Emergency dental/medical appointment only medical evidence required

(All routine appointments should be after Academy hours or during the holidays. Only half a days absence will be permitted for such an appointment unless it can be proved that treatment takes longer)

- Day of religious observance
- Attending an interview for a job, college, university etc.

### What is unacceptable?

The Academy will not authorise absence for day trips, visiting relatives, shopping, birthdays or looking after other siblings. This is unauthorised absence.

### Can we take family holidays during term time?

Family holidays will not be authorised and unauthorised absence from the Academy may lead to a fixed penalty notice being issued. The Principal cannot authorise any periods of leave during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. If you need to request permission for your child to be absent from the Academy you must complete a form from reception.

### **Further Information**

The Education Act 1996 states that all children should attend school regularly and punctually.

"If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parent is guilty of an offence".

Expectations are that a child will have attendance of at least 97%. For example, 5% absence is 10 Academy days.

Regular attendance will help your child to:

Keep up their work and get the best results possible.

Feel confident and ready for the future.

Get a job, as employers want people who are reliable and punctual.

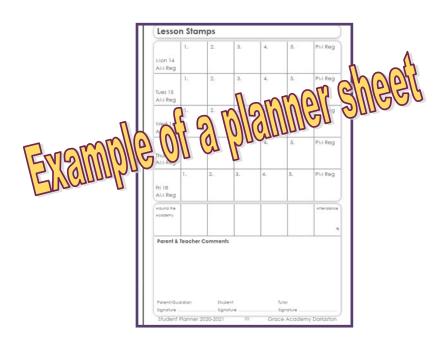
### **Communication Home**

### The Student Planner

Staff and Students use the school planner to communicate with parents/carers for homework, praise and consequences. Please ensure you check your child's planner each evening after the school day.

Stamps are issued after every lesson your child attends.

If a student has worked well they will get a subject stamp as seen below, if a student goes above and beyond in the lesson they may receive a 'Gold Star Stamp'. Each week, the Gold Stars are counted and entered by the form tutor as 'Grace Points'. The points enables students to receive prizes, reward bundles and access reward events through out the year. The planner also contains the Ethos Journal where students can record work done in tutor time. It contains useful information including our expectations and uniform requirements. If a student loses their planner they will be expected to pay for a replacement.



**School Gateway App** 

As an Academy, if we need to communicate with yourself as a parent/carer we will either email or text via the School Gateway App. Virtual evenings and events such as parents evenings are also accessible via the School Gateway App useful links section.

Therefore once your child is on roll here at Grace Academy in September, please download the app and sign up using the information that you have provided to the school.

It is vital that all details are kept up to date throughout your child's time here at the Grace Academy. This includes all contacts' email addresses, telephone numbers and

Download the FREE app to your phone

home addresses.









This is our Behaviour Pathway that is displayed in every classroom and in the students planners. If a student reaches a You Can Do Better, a Nil, a Parked or an On Call, it will be stamped in the child's planner and the relevant detention written. If a child receives one of these stamps they will receive negative behaviour points.

It is important you check your child's planner daily.

# Verbal Warning

- Student name on the board
- Give the student time to process this
- No further action

# You can do better

- Name on the board
- Student can work off in 1st instance (teacher discretion)
- If not worked off Stamp in planner at the end of the lesson
- Form tutor to record on G4S
- 10 minutes at end of day with form tutor

# Nil Teacher Action

- Name on the board under 'Nil'
- Stamp in planner at the end of the lesson
- Teacher to record on 64S & write 30 minute detention into planner
- Detention held with teacher who issued detention
- If not complete, escalate to HOD

# Parked HoD Action

- 'Parked' logged on the portal by teacher.
- Parked stamp recorded in planner
- On call staff to come and support if necessary
- Student to move to another classroom in department
- 45 minute Head of Department detention arranged by HOD with student 8 written in planner. Logged on 64S by HOD or allocated MOS.
- If not complete, escalate to HOY

# On Call Pastoral Action

- Student refusing to be parked or 1 major incident
- On call on the portal by the teacher
- Picked up & taken to Refocus
- •1 hour Detention written in planner
- Refocus member of staff to log on G4S

### What are our Academy times for year 7?

8.40 Tutor time 1

9.00 Lesson 1

10.00 Break

10.20 Lesson 2

11.20 Lesson 3

12.20 Lunch

12.55 Lesson 4

13.55 Lesson 5

14.55 Tutor time 2

NOTE - Due to Covid19 or other unforeseen circumstances these timings may be subject to change.

### **Purchasing Uniform**

All items of branded academy uniform can be obtained from First Choice Uniforms in Wednesbury - Telephone 0121 505 7100. Other items can be purchased from any retailer that the parent/carer wishes.

### Uniform

We take great pride in our building, our students and our staff. We also place great emphasis on standards – standards of learning, conduct and behaviour. In line with our Business and Enterprise focus we operate a compulsory school uniform policy. All students in years 7 to 11 will wear the full Academy uniform at all times. Students not in the full uniform will not be admitted.

Our business style Academy uniform fulfils three important functions:

- It gives the Academy a clear identity
- It represents a simple but effective statement of our pride and sense of community
- It also avoids any competition or stigma between individuals that can occur too easily because of designer clothes and fashion trends

Detentions will be issued for incorrect uniform or missing items of uniform and PE Kit.

\*Head Student purple and gold stripe, awarded by the Academy, should be worn instead of the plain purple tie when prefect status is given.

### **Optional - headscarves**

Black school approved headscarf conforming to the requirements below:

The fabric should be lightweight and plain black. The headscarf must be folded under the chin, taken round to the back of the neck and the ends tucked in. This conforms to the health and safety and school requirements. The headscarf must be worn so that the collar and tie can be seen clearly. The reason for wearing the headscarf is to preserve modesty. Therefore, it should not be worn with headbands, brooches, shadow stripes, patterns, logos, embellishments, diamantes, tassels or other colours.

A photographic example of the above criteria for headscarves is available upon request.

### **Grace Academy Uniform**

Blazers: Black Grace Academy Blazer

**Shirt**: Plain white cotton shirt with a top button which should be fastened at ALL Times (no polo-shirts).

Ties: Purple Grace Academy tie with GA logo on display below the knot. \*Prefect purple and gold stripe, awarded by the Academy, should be worn instead of the plain purple tie when prefect status is given.

Pullovers: Plain black V-neck – optional (no sweatshirts, no hooded tops, no cardigans, no tank tops).

**Trousers:** Plain black (no denim/fashion trousers) which should cover the legs and ankles entirely with black socks i.e no trainer socks

**Or Skirts:** Plain black pleated/non-pleated of knee length. with black opaque tights which should cover the legs and ankles entirely and which must be a minimum of 60 denier. **Shoes:** Plain black shoes (no trainers/pumps/canvas shoes/

boots/sports brands/shoes with fashion

laces or extra adornments).

Coats: Winter coats/anoraks – optional. Plain in colour (no denim, hooded tops, tracksuit style tops or fashion jackets). No coats, gloves/scarves to be worn inside the Academy.

#### **Grace PE Kit**

Grace Academy Polo shirt

Grace Academy Rugby shirt and/or Grace Academy Sweatshirt

Black Rugby/Football shorts or Black sports joggers Grace Academy waterproof PE Jacket (optional)

Non-marking sports shoes

Football boots (optional for football/rugby)

Black Rugby/Football socks

Shin pads (optional)

During outdoor activities especially in winter months, we advise a black or white underlay/base layer to be worn also

NB: Students not participating in a PE lesson are expected to bring kit so they can assist in the lesson. It is recommended that all items are to be clearly marked with the student's name.

### The Grace Academy PE kit:

PE Polo Shirt



**Sweat Shirt** 



**Rugby Shirt** 



Waterproof Jacket (Optional)



#### **Meal times**

At Grace Academy Darlaston we have a biometric cashless catering system which requires us to take digital measurements of your child's finger to record on our system as a series of numbers. These numbers are stored securely on a dedicated server, are fully encrypted and applicable only to our system, so are compliant with current GDPR legislation.

#### Free School Meal

Free School Meals - allows your child to access a lunch time meal every day while attending school. Please apply to Walsall Council directly if you are in receipt of any of the following:-

Your child may be able to get free school meals if you get any of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)
- Children who get paid these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian, can also get free school meals

We strongly advise that you apply for free school meals even if you are not sure of eligibility.

https://go.walsall.gov.uk/schools and learning/ schools in walsall/school meals/free school meals

### Lunchtime sample menu/prices

A meal deal is £2.20 - main meal and pudding or

a baguette and bottle of water for £2.20.

We do a blue dot deal where a student can get 4 smaller items for £2.20 or 70p for 1 item.

We do paninis, jacket potatoes, fresh fruit pots and we also run theme days (please see sample leaflet below).

### **Parent Pay**

We would ask that all parents & carers sign up to Parentpay for an easy way to deal with your child's meal money, along with a whole host of other benefits of the system such as purchasing optional text books or attending one of our exciting residential trips. A letter will be sent out to you in September which contains your unique Parentpay user name and password. This will allow you to log on, pay for meals using a debit/credit card and also see what your child has purchased. Until this letter arrives your child can add money onto their account using the cash machines within school.

### Supporting our families

At Grace Academy we recognise that all families need information and advice from time to time for a variety of reasons. Sometimes it is just about needing someone to talk to.

We offer:

Practical and emotional support for you and your family. Putting you in touch with other services that can help you, if we cannot.

Supporting you through difficult issues to help you make informed decisions.

If you would like to find out more simply:

Call Justine Clark on 0121 568 3333 or

Email justineclark@darlaston.graceacademy.org.uk





### **Frequently asked Questions**



#### Rewards

We really do enjoy rewarding our students here at Grace. We reward throughout the year in a variety of ways. In the planners there are plenty of opportunities to receive Grace Points which will enable students to receive prizes, reward bundles and access reward events. There is an activity at the end of each half term for positive behaviour and effort. Students are continually rewarded for outstanding attendance and at the end of each year we have a whole school reward trip for those with positive behaviour points 'Grace Points'.

### **Eating and Drinking in the Academy**

Eating is not allowed in lessons.

Students are allowed to drink on the way to and from lessons, from a bottle or flask; water only.
Students are allowed to place their bottle on the desk at the start of the lesson. Bins must be used for all litter.
No gum is allowed in the academy.

All students are encourage to take up the opportunity of having a locker in the academy both for convenience and security.

A £10.00 key deposit is required which is refundable providing the key is handed back in when the locker is no longer required. If the key is lost or the locker is not handed back in an acceptable condition the deposit will be lost.

To obtain a locker, a consent form is available from reception and needs to be completed and handed in along with the £10 deposit



### **Mobile Phones**

Mobile phones and other electronic devices should be not seen at all in the Academy building or outside.

If a mobile phone or electronic device is seen, it will be confiscated immediately by the staff member, placed in a labelled envelope with the pupil's name written on it and taken by the member of staff to reception. The student can collect this at the end of the day on the first occasion. If the phone is confiscated more than once, the phone will need to be collected by a parent/carer from reception. If a student refuses to hand over a mobile phone, the defiance is referred through On Call incurring a detention which will be written in the planner. If a student needs to contact a parent or carer urgently during the day, then they may go to the reception office and contact them from there.

### Make-up and Jewellery

Students will be asked to remove any make-up, nail varnish and non uniform jewellery on entry to the Academy (please refer to the Key information pages in this book for information).

If a student should choose to apply make-up, nail varnish or jewellery during the day they will be asked to remove it immediately and a behaviour point will be logged.

If jewellery is worn during the day, the item will be confiscated immediately, a behaviour point will be issued and the item will be returned at the end of the day as per an electronic device.

If a student refuses to hand over jewellery or remove make-up/nail varnish the defiance is referred through on call – please refer to the Behaviour Pathway.

Jewellery which has been confiscated is placed in a brown envelope with the pupil's name written on it and taken by the member of staff to reception as soon as possible.

Items confiscated more than once from the same student will need to be collected by a parent/carer.

### Toilet during lesson time

As all students education is so important, to avoid a missed learning opportunity students are not allowed to go to the toilet during a lesson. If a student has a medical issue, a pass will be issued through the Key Stage Team.



