

14th July 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

As we approach the end of this academic year, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing support of Grace Academy Darlaston. It has been a year filled with hard work, resilience, and many successes across our community. Detailed in this letter is information on the end of term and the new academic year.

Celebrating This Year

We are incredibly proud of our students' achievements this year. Highlights in this last term include:

- The Blue Brothers performance on Wednesday 9th July with a huge cast and crew made up of over 70 students
- Ice Cream Van and Inflatable Mayhem rewards for exceptional attendance and behaviour
- VE 'Dress for Victory' Day, raising money for charity
- Sports events – Cricket Tournament, Sport Relief – clocking up the miles
- Trips and visits – Devon Residential, Warwick Castle, UCAS Exhibition, Duke of Edinburgh, Carding Mill Valley, and more!

Throughout the year, our students have also shown tremendous compassion and generosity, raising funds for a wide range of charities such as The Royal British Legion, the British Heart Foundation, and Sport Relief. Thank you to all staff, volunteers, parents, carers and supporters that make these opportunities a great success for all.

We still have more to come in the final week of term with Culture Day, Year 7 Sports Day, Social Action Day, and more – all detailed below.

Staffing Update

At the end of this academic year, Mrs Hobson (Vice Principal) will be leaving us for a new adventure; we thank her for her years at Grace Academy and wish her all the best in the future. We have recruited Mr Thomson as Vice Principal, who will start with us in September to work with Mr Holland (Principal), Ms Chance (Vice Principal), and the wider leadership team.

You will have also seen that we have been actively recruiting teaching staff and support staff in other roles to ensure continued high-quality teaching and pastoral support in the academy.

Last Week of Term

The last week of term has been planned to be fun-filled and enriching for our students with a variety of activities including social action and culture day celebrations as below:

- **Tuesday 15th July** – Year Group Rewards Assemblies: students celebrating their successes from this academic year with individual and group awards.

- **Thursday 17th July** – Character and Social Action Day: a range of sessions to include various volunteering opportunities, creative crafts, gardening, and more.
- **Friday 18th July** – Culture Day: cultural dress/non-uniform with performances and food stalls to celebrate our incredibly diverse community.

On Friday 18th July, students will be dismissed at 12.00pm for the end of term.

Returning in September

- **Monday 1st September:** Staff INSET (no students in school)
- **Tuesday 2nd September:** Year 7 and Year 12 only – 8.20am arrival
- **Wednesday 3rd September:** All year groups in school as normal – 8.20am arrival

Students should **arrive by 8.20am** in full school uniform, ready for a positive and focused start to the new academic year. They will be supported with assemblies, new planners and time to refresh our academy values.

Launching the MCAS (My Child at School App)

From September 2025, we will be introducing My Child at School (MCAS) App. MCAS will be our exciting new parent/carer system, which can be accessed via a web page or by downloading the App to your mobile phone or other device. This will allow parents/carers to view important information about their child, as well as staying up to date with key academy updates. Implementing a new system is a significant task and so we will be introducing these functions gradually. Our focus for September will be on setting up parent/carer access and ensuring that student timetables and attendance information is available. Further modules, including our payment and communication systems, will then be released as the year progresses. **MCAS login in details will be provided in due course. Please keep an eye on your emails for further information and updates.**

Uniform Update

We take pride in students' uniform at Grace Academy Darlaston and are grateful for your support in upholding high standards for all. When we return in September, students will be expected to be in full school uniform. Please ensure all items are labelled clearly with your child's name. Attached to this letter is a summary of uniform expectations and full uniform expectations can be found in the policy on our website.

In September, we plan to begin consultation with parents, carers, students and stakeholders on our academy uniform, where we will be gathering your views on the future of the Grace Academy Darlaston uniform.

Attendance Reminder

Excellent attendance remains crucial to academic progress, wellbeing, and future opportunities. We want all students to strive for 100% attendance; however, we understand there may be times of unavoidable absence, therefore, our expectation is that all students attend at least **97%** of the time.

From September, we will be introducing same-day detentions at breaktime or lunchtime for unauthorised lateness to the academy. Students are expected to arrive for lining up by 8.20am and will be marked late from 8.30am. Students arriving after 9am will receive a 'U code' in line with government guidance, meaning they will be marked absent for the morning session.

We ask that you ensure your child is in school every day unless they are genuinely unwell or they have appointments that cannot be made outside of school hours. You can find the full details of our attendance procedures on our website.

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enquiries@darlaston.graceacademy.org.uk

Free School Meals

Due to the rising costs of food throughout the sector and in general, the Free School Meal tariff and Meal Deal price will be £2.60 from September. The Meal Deal is designed to offer the best value for money and nutrition for our children, options being either a hot meal and pudding (meat & veg option), or a baguette/sandwich with a small cake, or piece of fruit or bottle of water for both hot and cold options. Please encourage your child to take up one of these options or ask one of the Kitchen staff if they are unsure what's available.

We strongly advise that you apply for free school meals, even if you are not sure of your eligibility. This will allow your child to access a lunch time meal every day while attending school. Go to: <https://apply.cloudforedu.org.uk> to apply.

Final Thoughts

Thank you once again for your partnership this year. I wish you and your family a safe, restful, and enjoyable summer break, and I look forward to welcoming all students back in September for another year of excellence at Grace Academy Darlaston.

Yours faithfully



Henry Holland
Principal

Grace Academy Uniform Summary

Please see our policy for full uniform expectations.

Acceptable examples of plain black shoes and Trousers/Skirt:



Not Acceptable Shoes and Trousers/Skirts



Uniform Suppliers:

Items with Logos such as blazers, ties and PE kits can be purchased from:

Clive Mark Schoolwear
Units 40-44 Saddlers Centre
1 Park Street
Walsall
WS1 1YS
01922 622556

First Choice Uniforms
26 Union Street
Wednesbury
WS10 7HD
0121 505 7100

<https://clivemark.co.uk/>

<http://www.firstchoiceuniforms.co.uk/>

Items such as shirts, trousers, or other items non-branded can be purchased from retailers of your choice.