



THE GRANGE
ACADEMY
LIBERTAS PER CULTUM

28th March 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

Although a short half-term, it has once again been incredibly busy.

Over the last 5 weeks, the academy has hosted many external visitors. We have revelled in The Beatles Experience, an incredible show created by our Head of Music, Miss Anderson and enjoyed by parents, students, staff, local primary schools and our VIP guests from Meadow Wood School. Sporting accomplishments have been in abundance, alongside many other school-based enrichment activities. We welcomed our new cohort for September who joined us for taster classes and tours at a very special event on 14 March, and we look forward to meeting them all again at further transition events before September.

At the beginning of the term, we were joined by our colleagues from the Trust, who were deployed at The Grange for two weeks. The work that they were able to do with colleagues in classrooms and our students has already shown dividends, and we are building on this every day. Thank you for your support as we continue our school improvement journey and work hard in maintaining the expectations set out by the school.

Our ambition is to raise standards, and improve the quality of education and we stand by the view that to have anything other than the highest expectations of students would be to do them a disservice. In my communications, I have acknowledged that it is clear that the school has taken huge strides forward, most notably since its last Ofsted in 2018/19. That said, whilst the journey from A to B has been successful, the journey from B to C, although it appears shorter, is the most challenging for schools.

I speak very openly about my view (lived through my own education and my experience within educational leadership) of the acceptance of mediocrity that exists in schools. This mediocrity, if allowed to exist and not challenged, is evident in staff, students, and parents, with a refusal to believe that the journey from B to C is truly necessary. The high standards that we set out will always be driven by our vision statement of providing freedom for our students for the next stage of their lives. It is important to me and to the school that as parents you are made aware (as students are) of the rationale (the 'Why') behind the school's decisions and that there is a trust that these are always aligned to achieving our vision and the embedding of our values within the school.

As part of this, the school must continue to create opportunities for staff, parents and students to feedback and in some cases be part of the decision-making process. This week for example I met with the Student Council and the Parent Working Group (details included later in the letter) and discussed the uniform policy in place currently, where clarity was needed regarding the rationale (the 'Why'), and what changes could be proposed. Following consultation both with the student council and the Parent Working Group (PWG) I will be writing to all parents next half term, outlining changes being made to our uniform policy, including where the academy has been able to look to reduce the cost of the uniform for parents.

As part of our work to ensure that our values of **Knowledge**, **Aspiration** and **Respect** are embedded, the school has looked to identify for students and staff the habits and actions that we feel make these values truly lived, and not just words on the page. This document has been shared with students and is known as '**The Grange Academy Way**' and provides the students with clarity as to how they can demonstrate our values each day. This piece of work has also been completed for our staff and as shared with the Parent Working Group this week, for parents also. The document below looks to set out the ways that parents can support their child and the school, under the framework

of our 3 core values of **Knowledge**, **Aspiration** and **Respect**. Please see below **‘The Grange Academy Way – Parent Commitment’**, which will, as we move forward provide the foundation of our home school agreement.

The Grange Academy Way – Parent Commitment

‘LIBERTAS PER CULTUM’

Freedom through Education

Knowledge To actively pursue new understanding and skills.	Aspiration To have concrete and deliberate goals.	Respect To have a positive attitude towards oneself and one’s community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a supportive environment at home that facilitates learning, reading and completion of homework • Take an active interest in what my child is learning in each subject and find opportunities to discuss with them • Read all communication sent out by the academy and attend Parents’ Evenings and meetings arranged by the academy in order to discuss progress and/or behaviour • Inform the academy if I have any concerns or information that the academy needs to be aware of, including if my child is going to be absent • Support my child to have 100% attendance, arriving to school on-time every day and avoid arranging holidays during term time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the academy’s policies, including uniform, behaviour and routines • Review students’ work and encourage them to take pride in their books, providing opportunities for my child to explain/teach what they have learnt • Support my child’s aspirations and research next stages in their education • Encourage my child to get involved in all aspect of the academy, including extra-curricular activity • Prepare my child for learning each day, ensuring uniform is always worn correctly and that they have correct equipment each day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively communicate with my child’s tutor/HoY when I have concerns resolving disputes in a calm and polite manner, understanding all parties have our child’s best interest at heart • Build relationships with the school and key staff, treating them with respect at all times • Praise my child when they receive recognition from the academy • Support the academy’s sanction policy, including sanctions and detentions. • Take responsibility for my child’s journey to and from school, including support of the academy’s expectations in the local community

Return Arrangements after Easter

- Staff will return to the academy on Monday 15th April for an INSET day.
- Students return to school on Tuesday 16th April.

The full school calendar/term dates can be found on the school website (including the 2024-25 academic year): www.thegrange.futureacademies.org

Attendance

As previously shared within my communications with parents, students who attend well and arrive on time achieve better than their peers at every external assessment point, including GCSEs and A levels. The research into the link between attendance and student attainment states that ‘the analysis of the link between overall absence and attainment when taking prior attainment and pupil characteristics into account showed that, for each KS2 and KS4 measure, overall absence had a statistically significant negative link to attainment’ – i.e:

1. Every extra day missed was associated with a lower attainment outcome.
2. A student with 100% attendance has an 80% chance of achieving at least 5 good GCSEs.
3. However, if a student takes one day off every 2 weeks (90% attendance) then this falls dramatically to 50%.

To further support the schools’ work around attendance, The Grange Academy has signed up to the DfE’s ‘Attendance Hub’, which will provide further support and allow The Grange to share some of its practices, which has meant that we have been able to work alongside parents to ensure the school has above national average attendance this academic year. Thank you for your ongoing support with this.

Parent Working Group

Thank you to those of you who were able to attend our fourth Parent Working Group (PWG) meeting this week. With a focus on **Sanctions and Rewards** this forum was a well-attended and really enjoyable session. The feedback from the PWG is incredibly valuable to us as a school and it was pleasing to see some new faces, alongside some regular attendees

Our next meeting will be in Summer Term 1 and will focus on **Homework**. A date and time will be confirmed in due course.

Parent Working Group – Schedule:

- ~~Autumn Term 1 – Principal welcome, vision, and values~~
- ~~Autumn Term 2 – Curriculum and Assessment~~
- ~~Spring Term 1 – Communication and Reports~~
- ~~Spring Term 2 – Sanctions and Rewards~~
- **Summer Term 1 – Homework**
- Summer Term 2 – Enrichment

Assessments and External Examinations

Our return after Easter puts us firmly in exam season. Please see the schedule below for upcoming assessments:

- 9th May GCSE examinations commence
- 13th May A Level examinations commence
- w/c 13th May Y7 and Y9 Assessment Point 2
- w/c 10th June Y12 Assessment Point 2
- w/c 17th June Y8 and Y10 Assessment Point 2

We remain dedicated to our vision of ***Libertas per Cultum*** (**Freedom through Education**) and will achieve this for our students by working with you to ensure our expectations of our students are as high as they possibly can be.

I look forward to seeing you all in the Summer Term.

Yours sincerely,



Danny Bryant
Principal
The Grange Academy

Knowledge, Aspiration, Respect
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