



THE GRANGE SCHOOL

Mr V Murray – Headteacher

19 July 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

The end of the strangest year in School!

I hope this letter finds you and your families safe and well during these increasingly optimistic times. We have had a busy and successful summer term with ongoing national change in the right direction. All members of the school community continue to adapt in light of ever-changing advice, the resilience shown by our students is astounding.

Throughout the final term of this academic year, we were able to re-establish increasingly higher levels of expectation of our students as the restrictions eased. Rightly, we have afforded students some necessary concessions around uniform, PE kit, etc. but with September 2021 promising to be as normal as possible, the high expectations of our students can return to pre-pandemic levels.

To achieve this, I ask for your support in reinforcing the following with you and your children, as we will do through tutor times, during the final week before the break.

School Uniform – The highest expectations for September 2021

Although we have been necessarily lenient regarding uniform due to shops being closed, or out of stock, and the wearing of PE kit to school, we now need to restore our full uniform expectations.

We take great pride in ensuring our students look smart and ready to learn. Our uniform policy has not changed in recent years, so the expectations are clear and explained to students regularly.

Can I please ask you to make sure you read the uniform guidance below very closely, paying particular attention to the following:

Shoes, not trainers: Some students in the past have convinced their parents there is a degree of flexibility around black trainers and they have bought expensive Nike air force or similar. This is incorrect and will be robustly challenged.

No Nose Studs: Please do not allow your son or daughter to get a piercing at a time when they cannot remove it by the time they return to school in September. One stud per ear is permitted, but no further piercings can be worn in school. If a student attends school with a piercing, they will be expected to remove it immediately. Any refusal will be seen as defiance and sanctioned in line with the school behaviour policy.

Plain black Tights only: In this summer term, we offered the option to wear plain black socks. In September, we will be returning to our published policy of plain black tights only.

Jewellery, make up and hair styles: As part of our expectations, we have a clear policy around jewellery, make up and hair styles. Please continue to support the school in upholding our high values around this by discussing the following (taken from our school website) with your son or daughter.

'One pair of small, plain earring studs may be worn and a watch may be worn. No nose studs, oral or facial piercings. If make-up is worn, it should be very discreet, otherwise students will be asked to remove it. No nail varnish other than neutral and nails should be an appropriate length for sport, Food

Technology and other physical activities. Acrylic and gel nails should not be used if they cannot conform to our policy.

Hair should be neat and tidy and in a style that does not draw undue attention to the student. Hair dyes must be in natural appropriate colours with no two-tone hair. Subtle highlights are acceptable, provided they are in natural colours. No patterns/shaved areas cut into the hair. Hair accessories must be plain black or navy blue.

Please do not commit to any expensive products late in the holiday which will need to be removed prior to returning to school. Any student refusing to follow this expectation will be seen as defiant and sanctioned accordingly.

Shirt, tie and blazer, worn correctly: We expect our uniform to be worn with pride. We will be insisting students wear their shirt tucked in, with their tie an appropriate length and knotted at the top button.

I would be grateful if you supported us in ensuring any uniform purchased meets our published expectations as we will be challenging students wearing anything different.

The link to uniform on the school website is: <https://www.grange.bucks.sch.uk/parents/school-uniform>

Boys Uniform

Black jacket with Grange School badge.

Pale blue (Years 7–9) or white shirt (Years 10–11) from uniform suppliers or retail stores. Can be short or long sleeved. **No polo shirts.**

Black V-neck jumper (optional).

Grange School tie.

Black trousers (from uniform suppliers or approved styles from retail stores). **No jeans style or skinny style.**

Plain black socks.

Black shoes (See examples on the website). **No canvas shoes or trainers/leisure style shoes.**

Black or dark blue top coat. **No hooded sweat tops**

Girls Uniform

Black jacket with Grange School badge.

Pale blue (Years 7-9) or white (Years 10-11) shirt/blouse from uniform suppliers or retail stores. Can be short or long sleeved. **No polo shirts.**

Black V-neck jumper (optional).

Grange School tie.

Blue check skirt or black trousers.

Black trousers (from uniform suppliers or approved styles from retail stores). **No jeans style or skinny style.**

Blue check skirt (only available from Price and Buckland uniform supplier).

Plain black tights.

Black shoes – heels no higher than two inches (See examples). **No canvas shoes or trainers/leisure style shoes.**

Black or dark blue top coat. **No hooded sweat tops**

Alternative Muslim Girls Uniform Y7 – Y11

Black jacket with Grange School badge.

Navy Shalwar Kameez with gold trim (only available from Price and Buckland uniform supplier).

Navy headscarf with Grange School logo (only available from Price and Buckland uniform supplier).

Long sleeved pale blue (Years 7-9) or white (Years 10-11) shirt/blouse from uniform supplier or retail stores.

Grange School tie.

Black trousers (from uniform supplier or approved styles from retail stores). **No jeans style or skinny style.**

Plain black socks or plain black tights.

Black shoes – heels no higher than two inches ([See examples](#)). **No canvas shoes, trainers/leisure style shoes or high heels.**

Black or dark blue top coat. **No hooded sweat tops.**

We are looking forward to seeing all students returning to school after the Summer break in full uniform. If this cannot be achieved for whatever reason, I would appreciate an email to see if we can rectify the issue before the term begins.

When we return after the Summer break, we will be sending students home to change who repeatedly challenge our uniform policy. Please do all you can to help avoid this and ensure your son or daughter has the correct uniform or kit available and by reminding them of our expectations. If you have any issues around this, please contact me directly on ngolding@grange.bucks.sch.uk

PE Kit expectations

During lockdown, we recognised that if you did not have the Grange Logo tee shirt because it had been outgrown, a plain white polo shirt was suitable for the remainder of this academic year, but as we stated at the start of the summer term, we need to insist on full Grange PE kit from September 2021.

All of our uniform and PE kit information is on our school website, but I have copied it here to ensure there are no misunderstandings.

White/black or plain white polo shirt with Grange School logo.

Black/white or plain black shorts with Grange School logo OR black/white skort with Grange School logo.

Plain black football socks.

Appropriate Training shoes/boots as required.

Optional Items

¼ zip tracksuit top with Grange School logo.

Black sweatshirt with Grange School logo.

Black/white rugby shirt.

Black tracksuit bottoms.

Black dance tights.

Black or white base layer for underneath kit in cold weather.

Shin pads.

Gum shield.

Attendance and punctuality

As a school we continually strive to improve students' attendance and we are closely focusing on this to improve student achievement. Research shows that there is a direct link between attendance and achievement: the higher the attendance rate, the less risk there is of a student underachieving. If a child is not in class then they are not learning and hence not making progress. We have a dedicated team of staff in our Attendance Office to not only monitor, but support attendance in school. If you are finding it difficult to motivate your son or daughter to attend each day on time, please do get in touch with them for help and advice.

Holidays during term time

Removing your children from school during term-time hinders their learning and places them at a distinct disadvantage in terms of both their education and in comparison, with their peers' opportunities and achievements. Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school and they are expected to take holidays during official school holidays – which equates to approximately 90 days per year. Our Attendance Policy is a comprehensive document outlining our approach and can be found on our school website.

Time away from school for Religious Observance

The Grange School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance (Code R). It is reasonable for a parent to allow their children not to attend school on any day of religious observance if recognised by the parent's religious body. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school if they intend their child to be absent.

However, in the interests of fulfilling the academic requirements of the school and limiting the authorised absence rate of the school, it is identified as reasonable that **no more than one day** be designated for any individual occasion of religious observance/festival and no more than three days in total in any academic year. Any further absence will be categorised as unauthorised.

What is good attendance?

Our attendance expectations are clear, we want our students in school 100% of the time. We, like most schools, have a minimum school expectation of 97%, which the vast majority of our students achieve or better.

Surely 90% attendance is good?

90% attendance, or 10% absence, is considered by the Government as 'persistent absence'. Persistent absence is challenged, but also supported rigorously by the Attendance Team in school and by Buckinghamshire Council Education Welfare Officers.

90% attendance will mean that ½ a day is missed every week.

If a student has 90% attendance over a school year then they will miss one month of school. That is over 100 lessons.

After 5 years at school (Years 7 to 11) it means that a student will **miss half a school year**, this directly impacts upon a student's progression, achievement and ultimately life choices.

Further research has found that for every 17 days of school lost per year a student will drop, on average, a full GCSE grade.

Mobile Phones

Our stance on mobile phone use in school has not changed, they are not to be seen or heard during the school day. This includes the inappropriate use of headphones and earpods. We have to apply an obvious adjustment to what the 'school day' is to this, based on year group timings, but we are seeing an increase in use during the school day, resulting in an increasing number of phones and headphones being confiscated. We are all keen to avoid this.

It is important our students have their phones for travelling to and from school, so I would appreciate it if you could reinforce the expectations about use in school. I would also like to thank those parents who have emailed me recently in support of the phone expectations and support when the phone is taken from their children until the end of the day or end of the week for repeat issues.

Electric Scooters

We have seen an increase in the use of electric scooters and bikes in and around Aylesbury recently, the trial with the yellow scooters is still underway. A small number of Y10 and Y11 students had been using their own electric scooters to travel to and from school. Personally owned electric scooters are currently only legal to use on private land. Please see the information from Thames Valley Police in this link.

https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/police-forces/thames-valley-police/areas/advice/e-scooters-what-are-the-rules/?fbclid=IwAR3rzP87C4zEsVCGvPDRL_cTM3YWpnajRIG7lcpSpxAngH3vdWkjnn3_j2A

As a consequence, we cannot condone or support the use of any scooters being used as transport to, or from, school. If your son or daughter has been using an electric scooter, please find an alternative mode of transport. If electric scooters are brought into school, they will be confiscated and only returned to parents or carers.

Cycle safety

It is good to see an increasing number of students cycling to school. However, I am concerned about the safety of students on and off bicycles at the beginning and end of the day. As you know, there is severe congestion coupled with some unsafe driving outside school, so minimising the risk to all students is paramount. The vast majority of students cycle safely on well-maintained bicycles. I am concerned how few are wearing helmets, but also how some students are cycling in and out of the road wearing headphones. Naturally, erratic cycling is challenged by duty staff, but we are not confident that the rest of the journey home is as safe as it could be.

We have had serious accidents involving cyclists near to the school in the past, and I am keen to ensure we minimise the risk to all of our students. Please do all you can to reinforce the message to your son or daughter about staying safe on the roads. We have taken steps to ban some students from cycling who have persisted with unsafe cycling near the school, I sincerely hope not to have to do this with any other students.

Ongoing congestion at the front of school.

In each letter I send, I ask all parents to arrange to pick up their children away from the front of the school. It is clear this is still not happening consistently and I continue to fear an accident is imminent. I have asked for the support of our local police officers in managing this better. If you have a pass to enter the school premises as children are leaving, please be prepared to show it upon entry. If you do not have a pass, please help us manage safe entry and exit for our students by not driving into the school car park when students are present.

If you are reading this, thank you for persevering with the length of this letter!

I am very optimistic for a return to normality in the new academic year. I sincerely hope you and your families can have some relaxing time together over the summer break.

Yours faithfully



Nick Golding
Deputy Head Teacher