



The Earls High School

Parent & Student Handbook



Welcome



The parents of Halesowen have been sending their children to The Earls High School for well over three hundred and sixty years.

We started as a small grammar school and the proud traditions of high standards in behaviour and high expectations of academic progress have stayed with us in the school's present form as a thriving, innovative comprehensive school.

At The Earls High School we believe that people really do matter the most; our school is made a very special place by the students and staff who come here together to learn.

The partnerships we form with parents play a vital role in the success of our students, and we look forward to welcoming you in to school so that you can see for yourself our wonderful, motivated young people and the high quality work they produce.

MR J FOX | HEADTEACHER

Excellence | Care | Partnership

Getting in touch



Call [01384 816 105](tel:01384816105) and speak to our main office. We can help make an appointment to see a member of staff.



Email info@earls.dudley.sch.uk. Messages will be forwarded to the relevant person.



Visit our website www.earlshighschool.org for the latest news, school policies, feedback and important dates.



Follow us on twitter [@EarlsHigh](https://twitter.com/EarlsHigh)

The school day



8:20 Students allowed on site
8:40 Start of the day
9:00 Period 1
10:15 Break
10:35 Period 2
11:50 Period 3 (including lunch)
1:40 Period 4
2:55 End of day

All students must be in school on time every day. It is the parent's/carer's responsibility to ensure their child arrives punctually to school. Please ensure that if you drive your child to school, you avoid driving on to the school site when dropping them off. Please also respect the road markings and park in a way which shows consideration for our neighbours.

End of the School Day

Students must leave the school site promptly at the end of the day unless they are taking part in a supervised activity, when you will be advised of a finish time.

Term dates for students



Autumn term

Start of term (years 7 & 10 only) - Wednesday 4th September

Start of term (all students) - Thursday 5th September

INSET day - Friday 27th September

Half term - Monday 28th October - Friday 1st November

INSET day - Friday 6th December

Last day of term - Friday 20th December

Spring term

Start of term - Tuesday 7th January

Half term - Monday - 17th February - Friday 21st February

Last day of term - Friday 11th April

Summer Term

Start of term - Monday 28th April

Half term - Monday 26th - Friday 30th May

Last day of term - Friday 19th July

Communication with school



Good communication with parents is essential in supporting our students. Much of our communication home will be sent via email, it is therefore crucial that we have an up-to-date email address for all parents and carers.

Your main point of contact will usually be your child's form tutor.



The school uses Class Charts to share student information with parents. The app lets you see attendance, achievements points, behaviour points and homework set. Log in details and instructions, for both parents and students, will be distributed when your child first starts at the school.

Please email ictsupport@earls.dudley.sch.uk if you need help accessing your account at any time.

Attendance



We expect excellent attendance and punctuality from our students. Absence from school affects attainment, wellbeing and can also be a risk to the safeguarding of students. We consider an attendance rate of 96% or above to be good.

Parents/carers are responsible for making sure that their children attend school regularly and we will work with parents to support them with this responsibility. Class Charts is best way for parents to monitor homework, behaviour and attendance of their children.

Where attendance becomes a concern, we will work proactively and sensitively together with families together to ensure that any barriers to attending school are removed.

Lateness to school

The school register is taken each morning at 8.40am. Students will be marked as late if they are not in their form room for registration. When students are repeatedly late for registration or for lessons during the day, they will be given a detention by their Year Co-ordinator.

Reporting absence



Holidays and other requests or leave of absence

The headteacher will only authorise holiday during term-time in exceptional circumstances. You should put your request in writing to the school as soon as possible. If you go on a holiday without the authorisation of the headteacher, you may be liable to pay a fine and/or be prosecuted for non-attendance.

If you need to report an absence

The parent/carers must notify the school on the first day and subsequent days of any unplanned absence by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible either by using the Class Charts App, sending an email to attendance@earls.dudley.sch.uk or telephoning 01384 816108.

We encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours.

If you have any concerns about attendance, please get in touch. Our full attendance policy can be found on the school website [here](#).

Catering



All students must remain on the school site throughout lunch time. Students may either buy a school lunch or bring their own packed lunch. Parents/Carers are not allowed to bring take-away or cooked food into school for their child.



The school uses a cashless catering system. This requires parents to use the online payment system to top up the students' account. Further details will be issued on joining. Meals are purchased by identifying themselves through a biometric 'finger image' system.

We do not allow sugary, fizzy drinks or energy drinks on the school site. Healthy alternatives are available to buy in our canteen, and free drinking water is always available.

Free School Meals



Students who are eligible for free school meals will have their account credited daily with enough funds to buy a meal in the Dining Hall.

If you want to find out more about whether you might be eligible for this benefit and to apply for Free School Meals, please go to the following website:

<https://www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/benefits/free-school-meals>



Equipment



The school will provide normal stationery and exercise books for use in school, but we expect each student to bring basic personal supplies and suggest the list below as a minimum:

- 2 pens
- 2 pencils
- 1 ruler
- 1 rubber
- 1 glue stick
- 1 highlighter pen
- 1 scientific calculator*
- Reading book



*Scientific Calculator - these are the ONLY ones we recommend:

Casio fx - 83GT CW (suitable up to GCSE)

Casio fx - 85GT CW (suitable up to GCSE)

Casio fx - 991 CW (suitable up to AS & A Level)

Simple mathematical instruments will also be useful. Students will need a sturdy bag in which to carry their books and equipment.

Equipment will be checked regularly by form tutors.

School Uniform



Jumper: Navy blue V-neck with school badge

Tie: Clip on The Earls High School tie

Shirt: Plain shirt (long or short-sleeved)

Shoes: Plain black polishable, low heeled shoes (no visible logos)



Skirt: Black pleated knee-length worn with black tights

Socks: Dark grey/black

Trousers: Traditional charcoal grey or black, of traditional length & width

Our uniform suppliers are A. Oakes School Shop, Dudley, Dancers, Ltd., Halesowen, Crestwood Schoolwear, Dudley and Clive Marks,, Bearwood.
Full details of our uniform and suppliers are on our website.

PE Kit



Navy polo shirt
(Earls logo)

Navy rugby
top
(boys only)

Trainers
(compulsory)

Football
boots and
shin pads
(boys only)



Navy
football
socks,
purchased
from our
suppliers

Outer Layers (optional, only available from our suppliers): navy fleece (girls only), navy tracksuit bottoms or Earls leggings

Navy
shorts

The PE department operates a 'kit for all' policy, which means that all students are expected to wear correct PE kit even on the rare occasions that they are not participating in the activity.

Curriculum in KS3



Curriculum organisation in Key Stage 3

When students join the school at age 11, they all study the same subjects. Year 7 students are placed in mixed ability tutor groups. Most lessons are taught in tutor groups but for some subjects, students will be put into sets according to aptitude and ability or taught in smaller groups.

Modern Languages: In Year 7 students will learn French, German or Spanish as their main National Curriculum language. This will depend on their form class. Please contact us if there is a strong reason why you would like your child to study a particular language.

PSHCE (Personal, social, health and citizenship education): Included in the course is a programme of relationships and sex education (RSE). Parents have the right to withdraw their children from sex education, although they may not withdraw their child from those parts which are in the National Curriculum Science syllabus. Parents who wish to exercise this right should contact the Headteacher in writing.

Curriculum in KS4



Curriculum organisation in Key Stage 4

In Years 10 and 11 students follow courses leading to GCSE and BTEC qualifications. They also study Physical Education, Religious Studies and Citizenship. There is a wide choice of subjects to take to examination level. Students are prepared for these choices by participating in an 'Options' programme in Year 9 that includes careers advice and a parents' evening.

Detailed curriculum maps of what the students will learn in each term, in addition to the number of periods allocated to each subject, can be found on the school website - curriculum page.



Home Learning



It is the school's policy to set homework on a regular basis, and we expect it to be completed. We set four types of activities:

- **Practise:** this is an opportunity to practise knowledge and skills that have been previously taught or modelled in lessons.
- **Prepare:** this might take the form of pre-study, researching information or finding resources that will directly support the learning in the coming lessons.
- **Revise:** this is specific preparation for an upcoming test or assessment, focusing on retrieving prior learning.
- **Extend:** this may be a more creative task, or provide the opportunity to delve deeper into a topic.

We use **Class Charts** to set homework online, so that students and parents can see and manage the tasks that have been set. Login details will be issued in September, and further support can be found on our website.

Homework Clubs run every day after school for KS3 and KS4 students, where they can access ICT facilities and support from school staff.

Reading



We believe that being able to read well is both a pleasure and an essential life skill, and we do lots at The Earls to promote reading.



- Students read regularly in school, and we expect all students to have a reading book with them every day.
- Students have Reading lessons weekly in Year 7 and fortnightly in Year 8 to develop their reading skills.
- We use the Sparx Reader software to encourage positive reading habits, and reward students for achievement and progress in reading.
- We have invested heavily in the refurbishment of our library, and our full-time library assistant is on hand to encourage students in their reading.
- The library is well stocked with a huge range of books, IT facilities and workspaces, and also hosts homework club.
- We monitor progress in reading, and provide targeted intervention for those students who need extra support.

Learning Support



The overall aim of the Learning Support Team is to ensure maximum participation in the curriculum by all students. Many students will have individual needs at some time during their school careers for which they will require additional support.

A team of experienced learning support staff work alongside subject teachers in the classroom. In addition, small group interventions help to develop the key skills for students who need extra support outside of the classroom.

The School's Policy on Special Educational Needs is in accordance with the Department for Education's Code of Practice, details of this can be obtained from the Director of Student Needs, Mr Berry, via email at sberry@earls.dudley.sch.uk.



Reporting Progress to Parents



We believe that all of our students should be encouraged and supported to reach their academic potential. To monitor this, we collect information from teachers to check that students are on track with their learning. We publish this to parents in a report, called the Record of Achievement.

We also report our assessment of the student's attitude to learning (ATL) in each subject, based on the following criteria:



THE EARLS HIGH SCHOOL
AN ANGLICAN SCHOOL FOUNDED 1862

**IN LESSONS
AT THE EARLS
WE FOCUS
ON THE
POSITIVES**

P Pride in work

O Obviously listening

S Sitting up straight

I Independent working

T Tracking the speaker

I Intelligent questions

V Voice is clear

E Engaged in activities

S Subject specialist language

The House System



The Earls High School is a large school, and the House system provides an opportunity for students to gain a sense of identity across the year groups. The four houses were set up more 100 years ago and each has its own distinct character and history.

Every student is allocated to one of the four Houses. House activities are numerous and are held regularly throughout the year, including sports, crafts, photography, music and drama, and points achieved count towards the annual House Cup competition. House Assemblies are held on a regular basis.

The house system also provides student leadership opportunities, for example, students can apply to become House Captains.

The four houses are:



Enrichment



We believe that getting involved with extra-curricular activities is an important part of developing character. All students are encouraged to join in the wide range of activities which take place after and out of school, just some of which are listed below.

We also run a host of visits and residential trips, and frequently bring visiting speakers and theatre companies into school.

Film Club	Eco Leaders	Samba Band
Art Club	Music Ensembles	Warhammer Club
Orchestra	Biscuit Club	Science Club
Basketball Club	Sports Leaders	Little Big Band
Rugby Club	Chess Club	Duke of Edinburgh
Textiles Club	Drama Club	Languages Club
Boxing Club	Momentum Dance Co.	Astronomy Club
Chamber Choir	Netball Club	History Club

The Duke of Edinburgh Award



The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) has been successfully running at The Earls since 2012. The Duke of Edinburgh's award is the world's leading achievement award for young people.

The four sections are:

- **Volunteering:** undertaking service to individuals or the community
- **Physical:** improving in an area of sport, dance or fitness activities
- **Skills:** developing practical and social skills and personal interests
- **Expedition:** planning and completing an adventurous journey.

There is no such thing as one DofE programme because every young person completing it chooses what they want to do.

If you would like further information about the DofE programme, please contact Mrs Wycherley at lwycherley@earls.dudley.sch.uk.

DofE at The Earls is generously supported by Friends of The Earls.

Music Tuition



We are fortunate to be working in partnership with Dudley Performing Arts, who provide all of our excellent peripatetic instrumental teaching. A wide variety of instruments are taught by DPA on a weekly basis during the school day; from electric guitars to violins, saxophones and many more.

Learning to play an instrument is an excellent way to meet new friends as you will be given the opportunity to join The Earls' Orchestra and other school, local and even national musical groups.

Anybody wishing to find out more about instrumental tuition is welcome to contact Mr Cajigal, via jcajigal@earls.dudley.sch.uk.



Performing Arts



The school has a proud tradition of putting on orchestral, drama, dance and choral productions each year.

Professional artists often work with students in the school on specific projects.

The Music Department at The Earls provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities for all students of all abilities to participate in: Choir, Jazz Ensemble, Keyboard Club, Guitar Ensemble, String Group and Chamber Choir to name just some. What's more, trips frequently run to concert venues providing students with opportunities to see excellent local music groups perform.

In recent years, the whole-class instrumental teaching approach has been providing large numbers of students with the opportunity to learn to play an instrument for free, learning as a mini orchestra. We currently run two of these projects which focus on the learning of trumpets, trombones, saxophones, clarinets and flutes.

All Year 7 students will be offered the opportunity to take part in this project at the beginning of the school year, but as there are only 50 places, it often fills up very quickly, so it is advisable to apply straight away!

Recognition of Achievement



The recognition of individual achievement is an important part of the culture at The Earls High School. We believe that the recognition of achievement, progress and attainment is key to the growth of individual students.

Students will be rewarded with achievement points, messages to parents, flashes for their jumper and reward breakfasts. Achievement Points can be seen by parents and students on the Class Charts app.

When a student reaches a certain number of Achievement Points they will arrive at a 'Learning Landmark' which will trigger recognition at a celebration assembly.

Our most prestigious award is the 'Earls Gold Award.' Students achieve this award if they demonstrate all-round excellence in attendance, reading, attitude to learning, commitment to the community, improving their health and developing their cultural awareness.



Behaviour Expectations



At The Earls High School, we believe that good behaviour is fundamental to the aims of our school. Everyone is expected to take responsibility for helping to maintain a culture where all members of our school community feel safe and secure, where teachers are able to deliver high quality lessons and where students are able to learn to the best of their ability.

The school behaviour policy applies not only when students are in school or travelling to and from school, but at all times when they are acting as members of our school community. We expect that parents will fully support us in our efforts to maintain the standards that we feel necessary.

Full details of our behaviour policy can be found [here](#) on our website.



Mobile Phones



We have strong reservations about mobile phones or earphones being brought to school. Phones **must** be switched off and in bags, and not seen or heard between the first bell in the morning, and when students are dismissed at the end of the day. If students are seen with mobile phones or headphones during these times, they will be confiscated. If the behaviour persists, a sanction will follow, and parents may need to come to school to collect the mobile phone/earphones.

If a student needs to make contact with home during the school day it should be done through their year co-ordinator or student reception, and not directly using a mobile phone.

We ask that parents **do not** contact their children via mobile phone during school hours, as they will not be allowed to answer. If you need to contact your child urgently, please contact reception.

The school takes no responsibility for any loss or breakage of mobile phones.

Further details about our mobile phone policy will follow in September.



Mental Health



At The Earls High School, we recognise how important it is for students to look after their mental health, in the same way that they look after their physical health. Our state of wellbeing affects how we cope with stress, relate to others, make sensible choices and get on with our family, friends and people that we work with.

We teach health and wellbeing through both PSHE (Personal Social and Health Education) and throughout our broader curriculum.

We are fortunate to have both an excellent school nurse and a school Counsellor, who run programmes to support students' mental health and wellbeing.

Our experienced pastoral team will refer students who need support as well as acting as mentors, providing advice to parents and signposting support services. Although we don't have all the answers, we are able to provide in-school support and links to external organisations.

Two national organisations that we often recommend are [Kooth](#) and [Young Minds](#), both of whom specialise in free, safe and anonymous support for young people.

Friends of The Earls



The Friends of The Earls is intended for all interested members of the community, especially parents. Support for the school is provided in a number of ways, one of which is fund raising. All parents are welcome to attend committee meetings, which take place once a month, in order to organise a regular programme of activities.

Much of the real work is carried out by working parties of interested volunteers. We also have a dedicated body of students who are always on hand to help. If you wish to find out more, or offer your services please contact the school.



Further information



This booklet contains summaries of the key information for parents of new students.

Further details can be found on our school website:

www.earlshighschool.org

Full copies of the policies mentioned in this booklet can also be found on our website.

