



THE EARLS HIGH SCHOOL

AD 1652

Information for Parents & New Students



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Headteacher's Welcome

Dear parents and students,

The Earls High School is a school with a long history, and I am delighted that you are joining us in September 2021 as our 369th intake of students.

As a parent of students in secondary school, I appreciate that 'moving up' from primary school is an exciting time with lots of opportunities ahead. For many it can also be a time of anxiety and although this is completely normal, we have designed our transition programme to help to reduce any concerns that you and your child may have in the run up to September.

Everyone at The Earls High School supports the students to make as much academic progress as possible so that they are equipped for the next stage of their education or career. We also believe that it is our duty to help them develop character too, so that they can communicate effectively, have resilience to carry on when things get difficult, work effectively as a member of a team and develop their leadership skills. In addition to this, we want students who leave us to be kind, compassionate and caring individuals; people who will support and help their neighbours and make a significant positive contribution to Halesowen or whatever community they choose to live in.

How do we achieve this at The Earls?

- **Great teaching:** a stable, experienced group of excellent teachers who work hard to improve the learning of the students.
- **A rich and diverse curriculum:** we teach the full range of subjects from Year 7 through to Year 9. The students choose their subjects that they will specialise in Year 10 and 11. We give students the widest range of choices at GCSE so that they can focus their learning on subjects that they enjoy and are good at.
- We have **high expectations** of our students: we will give lots of support, but we expect the students to make good decisions and to work to the best of their ability in every aspect of their learning.
- **Extra-curricular** is big part of our work at the school. Our Freshers' Fair in September will give students the opportunity to sign up for a wide range of activities such as orchestra, choirs, samba band, sports teams, dance companies, drama club, science club, history club plus many more.
- **The Earls Gold Award.** This recognises reading, attendance, attitude to learning, community, health and culture. You will see students wearing their GOLD flashes with pride, it shows us that they are developing into well rounded individuals.
- We put a huge emphasis on the **care** of our students to ensure that they are safe and happy at school. We have a large pastoral team and great form tutors who will support students so that they can learn effectively at school. Like any school there are incidents of bullying, but we deal with these rare incidents quickly and effectively.
- **Partnership** is also vital in so many ways, and probably the most important one is the partnership between the school and parents. Research has shown that a parent's involvement in their child's educational achievement is crucial. When we have high quality staff at school, supportive parents and motivated students the results can be absolutely stunning.

Our exam results show that when students attend The Earls High School they make more progress than if they were to attend an average school. This is important, but perhaps more importantly when you spend time in school you will see happy, safe, confident students who attend well. We know that our students thrive when they leave us because they are so well prepared for their next steps. We know that students make friendships and build relationships here that will last a lifetime.

We look forward to welcoming you in September and helping you to settle quickly to your learning at The Earls High School.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Fox



SECTION 1 - ESSENTIALS

a) The School Day

Form	8:40 am
Period 1	9:00 am
Break	10:15 am
Period 2	10:30 am
Period 3	11:45 am (including year 7 lunch 12:20-12:50)
Period 4	1:30
End of day	2:45 p.m.

Students arriving late for school **must** report to their Year Co-ordinator.

b) School Term Dates 2021-22

Autumn 2021

- Term starts for year 7 only – Friday 3rd September
- Half term - Monday 25th October to Friday 29th October
- Term ends - Friday 17th December

Spring 2022

- Term starts - Tuesday 4th January
- Half term - Monday 21st February to Friday 25th February
- Term ends – Friday 8th April

Summer 2022

- Term starts - Monday 25th April
- Half term - Monday 30th May to Friday 3rd June
- Term ends – Friday 22nd July

INSET days will be published soon on the website and parents will be informed.

c) Communication with school

Good communication with parents is essential in supporting our students. Correspondence to parents is sent using the School Gateway app that can be downloaded to a phone or accessed from a computer. The app lets you see attendance, achievement points, behaviour points and timetables. We also send texts to parents through this app.

Much of our communication home will also be via email, it is therefore crucial that we have an up to date email address for parents.

Your main point of contact will usually be your child's form tutor. You can also contact key pastoral staff using the emails below:

- Mrs Bryant (Year Co-ordinator for Year 7): jbryant@earls.dudley.sch.uk
- Mr Benham (Head of Lower School): abenham@earls.dudley.sch.uk
- Mr Berry (Director of Student Needs - SENDCO): sberry@earls.dudley.sch.uk
- In case of a student absence: absence@earls.dudley.sch.uk or 01384 816108

Consultation evenings are arranged at least once per year when parents will have the opportunity to discuss the progress of their child with tutors and subject staff. Students are welcome and encouraged to attend these evenings.

d) School uniform

At The Earls High School our high expectations apply to our school uniform as well as all other aspects of the education we provide. We believe that a formal, smart uniform is in the best interests of the school, our students and the local community that we serve. We are grateful for the support of our parents and of the students themselves in achieving high standards of dress and appearance both in and out of school.

Students are expected to respect and adhere to the uniform code and we ask parents to help by supporting us in this endeavour. To enable us to reinforce and maintain these high standards, and to ensure fairness, it may be necessary on rare occasions to use appropriate sanctions.

Our uniform is practical, cost-effective and easily maintained; and one that students wear with pride. It removes the pressure from our students to judge or be judged about the way they dress during the school day and therefore has a positive effect on mental health. In addition, it allows our students to be recognisable in the wider community and ensures that students are modestly dressed and safe to take part in school lessons and activities.

The School Uniform

Jumper: Navy blue jumper (V-neck) with school badge

Trousers: Black, of traditional length & width from school suppliers

Skirt: The **only permitted skirt** is the black pleated knee length skirt, which is sold by our suppliers, and worn with black tights minimum 40 denier

Tie: Clip on The Earls High School tie

Shirt: White plain shirt of traditional style (long or short sleeved)

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

Socks: Dark grey/black

The PE Uniform

Navy polo shirt (Earls logo)

Navy shorts

Navy football socks

Navy rugby top (boys only)

Football boots and shin pads (boys only)

} compulsory, purchased from our suppliers

Outer layers: optional, only available from our suppliers – no other outer layers are permitted.

Navy fleece (Girls only)

Navy tracksuit bottoms / Earls Leggings (available from Dancers only)

Footwear:

Trainers – compulsory

- All uniform (both PE and school) should be labelled with the student's name.
- Denim or leather jackets are not acceptable as outdoor coats.
- Hooded tops should not be worn, as either a substitute for the school jumper or as an outdoor coat.
- Hats or hoods should at no time be worn inside the school buildings.

Hair, Makeup, Jewellery and Nails

Jewellery

- Excessive jewellery should not be worn in school.
- For health and safety reasons, only studs are allowed to be worn in the ear, not hoops or dangling earrings. All other piercings are unacceptable. If a student has recently had a nose piercing, they may be granted permission by their Year Coordinator to wear a clear, flat retainer for a limited period.
- Students may wear a single ring.
- No ankle bracelets are allowed.

Makeup

- Students may wear light make up.
- If the school deems that make up is too heavy, students may be required to wash it off, either at school or returned home to do so.
- False nails/eye lashes are not permitted.

Hair

- Students are not allowed extreme hair styles that would bring undue attention to themselves.
- Hair colouring should be of natural shades and all one colour.
- There should be no 'lines' in the hair.
- Parents are asked to remind their children of these important requirements with regard to hair on a regular basis and in particular when their son or daughter is due to visit the barbers or hairdressers! Pupils are expected to remember these requirements when they visit the barbers or hairdressers.

Suppliers

Our school uniform suppliers are A. Oakes School Shop, Dudley, Dancers, Ltd., Halesowen and Clive Marks, Bearwood.



e) Equipment

The school will provide normal stationery, exercise books and a planner 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

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.

f) Catering arrangements

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 or guardians are not allowed to bring take-away or cooked food into school for their child.

Students buying a school lunch will be provided with a wide-ranging, healthy menu. This is served on a first come, first served basis with their year group. Students should line up in the dinner corridor under the direction of a member of staff.

The school uses a cashless catering system. This requires parents to use the online Parent Pay system to top up the students' account or students themselves to pay cash into their account at one of our payment stations. Meals are purchased by identifying themselves through a biometric 'finger image' system. This 'finger image' cannot be transferred to any other purpose.

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/>.

Those students bringing in their own lunches can eat these in the dining areas. They can enter the hall immediately without lining up.

Students may drink water throughout the day, and bottles can be refilled at break and lunchtimes.

Energy drinks

Energy drinks are not allowed in school. They contain high levels of caffeine and sugar as well as other ingredients such as taurine. Both the World Health Organisation and the National Health Service agree large intakes will contribute to rising rates of obesity and type 2 diabetes amongst the population. Energy drinks will affect students' learning and behaviour; a huge energy jolt may be followed by irritable or restless behaviour, which is not conducive to learning. They should not be consumed before or during the school day.



SECTION 2 – CURRICULUM

a) 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.

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 on the curriculum page.

b) 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.

c) 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. More able students may need additional support to realise their potential while other students may require support in developing their literacy, numeracy and social skills.

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. A Homework/Study Club is available for Years 7 and 8 after school most evenings and support is provided by experienced staff.

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. Establishing constructive working relationships with parents is a vital part of our work and parents are always welcome to meet staff either by visiting the school by prior appointment or by telephone.

d) Homework

It is the school's policy to set homework on a regular basis from Year 7 and we expect it to be completed. We use Microsoft Teams to set homework online, so that students can see and manage the tasks that have been set. Log in details will be distributed in September, and further support can be found on the website.

e) Physical Education

The school operates a 'Kit for All' policy where students who are injured or otherwise non-participants are expected to change into physical education clothing. This policy has a number of functions which include an 'inclusion to lessons' philosophy, so that all students feel a part of each lesson. Such students may be involved in coaching, refereeing or analysis of performance. We also believe this policy is a help to students during outdoor lessons, as it prevents school clothing getting dirty or wet. Please note that students participating in the latter roles may wear a tracksuit and/or waterproof at all times.

f) Religious Education

The school is not affiliated to any religious denomination but links with different faith groups will be encouraged in order to develop students' awareness and understanding of the multi-cultural society in which they live. Religious Studies in the school will follow the agreed Dudley Syllabus together with AQA examination board for the GCSE examination.

g) PHSCE (Physical, Health, Social & Citizenship Education)

The whole ethos of the school emphasises many important moral and spiritual issues. Students are encouraged to be creative, to care for others as well as for themselves, to value the individual and to show respect and sensitivity for others. Issues to do with citizenship are introduced throughout the 5 years and students are encouraged to become involved in school life and take responsibility so that they can succeed and fulfil their potential in a modern British society.

Included in the course is a programme of relationships and sex education (RSE). As of September 2020, the government made Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education compulsory in all schools. The Governors of The Earls High School believe that sex and relationship education is part of the educational entitlement of all students. All young people, whatever their ability, develop physically and emotionally and need to be helped to understand their bodies and their feelings. Relationships and sex education supports our students' overall development, confidence and self-esteem.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from sex education at any age up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. Parents 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.

h) Careers education, information and guidance

Careers education is part of the carefully planned PHSCE programme experienced by all students in Years 7 - 11 in form groups. It helps students to prepare for option choices in Year 9, to develop an Individual Careers Action Plan and to help plan post-16 pathways.

In Year 10 the programme prepares students for Work Experience and every student has an opportunity for one week's work experience with a local employer.

i) Reporting progress to parents

At The Earls High School we believe that all of our students should be encouraged and supported to reach their academic potential. To monitor this, each term we collect information from teachers to check that students are on track with their learning. We use this information to celebrate successes, identify students who may need extra support and we also publish it to parents in a report, the Record of Achievement.

Each term we will report to parents our assessment of the student's achievement and their attitude to learning (ALT) in each subject. ATL grades are based on the following criteria:

P	PRIDE IN WORK	I always aim to produce Beautiful Books. I am well-organised with all the necessary equipment. I respond positively to feedback and readily go back and improve my work.
O	OBVIOUSLY LISTENING	I listen respectfully to the teacher, facing them and never talking over them. I value and encourage the contributions of others.
S	SITTING UP STRAIGHT	I sit in my chair properly, and my body language makes it clear that I am focused on my learning.
I	INDEPENDENT WORKING	I work hard independently, relying on my own ideas. I am resilient and keep going even when I find the work challenging.
T	TRACKING THE SPEAKER	I turn towards the speaker, making appropriate eye contact, so that I can easily follow what is being said and contribute my ideas.
I	INTELLIGENT QUESTIONS	I ask questions that show I am thinking hard. I also ask for help when I need it, after trying first on my own.
V	VOICE IS CLEAR	I speak clearly in class, and make interesting and helpful contributions when it is my turn. I only speak at appropriate times to allow everyone to focus on their own learning.
E	ENGAGED IN ACTIVITIES	I take part in all activities, on my own or contributing in a group. I follow instructions without distracting others, and challenge myself to complete all tasks to the very best of my ability. I remain focused, and complete excellent work both in school and at home.
S	SUBJECT SPECIALIST	I use subject specialist vocabulary when speaking and writing, showing that I understand the importance of using appropriate academic language to communicate at school.

SECTION 3 - PASTORAL CARE

a) Safeguarding children

Nothing is more important to us at The Earls High School than the safety and welfare of our students. We take rigorous steps to ensure that students stay safe and do not come to any harm. We work with parents, carers and a range of external agencies in order to secure this.

If you have any concerns, no matter how small they may seem, about the safety and welfare of a young person, please contact the schools Designated Lead for Child Protection, Mr Ramage (pramage@earls.dudley.sch.uk), or Mr Benham or Mrs Bryant. The school website has a section on safeguarding children which includes our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

b) Pastoral organisation

Each year group is supervised by a Year Co-ordinator whose job it is to see that the whole year group functions well. He or she will ensure that students feel happy, safe and secure and are working hard, behaving well and doing their best in all subjects, with all teachers.

All students belong to a form group with its own Form Tutor whom they see every day during morning registration. Form groups are chosen carefully and organised so that there is a mixture of students of varying abilities from different primary schools in each group.

New students will be contacted by their form tutors before September, and will meet them in person on their first day. If possible, they will stay with the same Form Tutor from when they start in Year 7 to when they leave in Year 11. In this way students get to know their Form Tutors really well and Form Tutors get to know their students and their students' parents well.

c) 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 house 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. They aim to enable all students to contribute in some way to the benefit of the House. Activities include Inter-House competitions in a wide range of sports, craft, music, etc. In addition, there is an annual House Points competition. House Assemblies are held on a regular basis.

There are leadership opportunities in the house system for the students. For example, students can apply to become House Captains.

e) Recognition of achievements

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 house points, text messages to parents, flashes for their jumper and postcards. These are logged as Achievement Points which can be seen by parents and students on the School Gateway 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.

f) Attendance

If your child is absent please contact the School daily on the dedicated student absence line: 01384 816108 or by email attendance@earls.dudley.sch.uk or via the School Gateway app and also send a note to his/her Form Tutor on the day of return.

If an absence is likely to continue beyond 3 days please contact the Form Tutor or Year Co-ordinator who may arrange for work to be sent home. The best way of contacting a teacher is either by telephoning the school, leaving a message with the Receptionist, or by using the email info@earls.dudley.sch.uk.

Please note that a student will be recorded as 'Absent' if they have not arrived at school by 9.25am. Parents will need to provide a note explaining why the child was late.

g) Requesting Leave of Absence

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2013 a Headteacher MAY NOT authorise a leave of absence in term time for a holiday. A Headteacher may (at his or her own discretion) authorise absence for exceptional circumstances. An application for a leave of absence must be made in writing to the school as early as possible.

Dudley Local Authority's Code of Conduct states that Penalty Notices can be issued where a pupil's absence has not been authorised by the school. This includes: a number of unauthorised absences within an academic year; one off instances of irregular attendance; and where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours.

Penalty Notices are imposed upon each parent per child and are fines of (currently) £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Parents can be prosecuted if 28 days

have expired and full payment has not been made and under S444(i) Education Act 1996 where there is sufficient evidence. There is no right to appeal against the penalty notices.

h) Health and emergencies

We need to know about medical conditions which may affect a child's well-being in school. Parents will be asked for this information at the start of each academic year.

At present HPV, Diphtheria, Tetanus and Polio immunisations will be offered. Parents will be notified of any condition found which requires observation and/or treatment.

There might be occasions when it is necessary to contact parents urgently, especially in the event of illness or accident. Parents are asked to ensure that their day time telephone numbers (at home and at work) are given to the school in the questionnaire which they complete upon their child's entry to school and updated as necessary.

The school should be informed of any student who has been medically identified as suffering with asthma. Parents need to provide the school with a spare inhaler labelled with the student's name. This will remain in school, to be used in emergencies. The school should also be informed of any student who carries an EpiPen and a care plan should be in place and held at school.

If a student becomes unwell at school they should let their Year Co-ordinator know and a member of staff from the school will contact home. Students should not use their phones to contact home directly.

In order to keep records accurate, it is essential that the school is informed of any changes.



SECTION 4 - EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

A) Clubs and activities

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, some of which are listed below.

Arts Award	Eco Leaders	Jazz Ensemble
Art Club	Film Club	Samba Ensemble
Ballet Club	Guitar Ensemble	Science Club
Basketball	Leadership through Sport	String Ensemble
Dance Club	Little Big Band	Table Tennis
Brass Ensemble	Mini-Momentum Dance Co.	Tap Club
Boxing Club	Momentum Dance Co.	Textiles Club
Chamber Choir	Multi Sports Club	The Good Historical Fun Club
Chess Club	Netball	Warhammer Club
Choir	Orchestra	Weights Club
Drama Club	Rugby Club (boys)	Rugby Club (girls)
	Duke of Edinburgh	

B) 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 Mrs Sevier (currently responsible for Performing Arts) using the email nsevier@earls.dudley.sch.uk.

C) Performing Arts at The Earls High School

The school has a tradition of putting on drama, dance, orchestral, choral and instrumental productions. Throughout the 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: The Earls' Choir, Jazz Ensemble, Keyboard Club, Guitar Ensemble, String Group, Chamber Choir. What's more, trips frequently run to concert venues providing students with opportunities to hear and 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!



SECTION 5 - GENERAL INFORMATION

a) Mobile phones

We have strong reservations about mobile phones or headphones in school and we ask that phones are switched off and not seen in school 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 the school day they will be confiscated until the end of the school day. If the behaviour persists, parents will need to come to school to collect the mobile phone.

If a student needs to make contact with home during the school day it should be done through the school's pastoral office 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.

b) 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 Mrs Lowe, Administration Assistant on 01384 816105.

c) Online Payments

Parents are able to make payments to the school to top up funds to spend on food or to make payments for school trips. Further details can be found on the school website.

d) Equal opportunities

We believe that every student at The Earls has the right to be valued as an individual whatever their race, gender, religion or social background. We try to ensure that all students feel safe and valued at school and feel able to join in any school activity. The school has a clear anti-racist and anti-bullying policy and any instance of bullying or racism will be dealt with seriously.

e) Stour Vale Academy Trust

Being part of a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) is exciting and provides many opportunities to extend our current partnership working. It is underpinned by a commitment to work for the good of all the schools in the MAT with no school being left in a vulnerable position.

We will continue to ensure that The Earls High School will maintain its individual identity, characteristics and ethos which will be further strengthened by the highest quality working practices.

f) Policies

This booklet contains a summary of many of the school policies, the full versions of the policies can be found on the school website.



info@earls.dudley.sch.uk

Main Reception: 01384 816105

www.earlshighschool.org

The Earls High School, Furnace Lane, Halesowen, West Midlands. B63 3SL