



Bishop Douglass School
Sixth Form Handbook
2020-2021

BISHOP DOUGLASS SIXTH FORM

Welcome to our sixth form. Congratulations on making the decision to join us, I am sure that you will find your time here valuable, enjoyable and rewarding. We want you to be successful and well prepared for your next step. The aim is that you will receive high quality teaching and appropriate support from your tutor and the sixth form team, but this alone will not be enough; you will need to work hard and keep a firm eye on your long-term goals – be that University or work related. We hope too that you will grow in your faith and gain a better understanding of yourself and your neighbour. Core Sixth Form R.E. is compulsory and enables students to develop their understanding of the Catholic faith and wider issues in religion from their studies at key stage 4. Students will explore important questions related to how faith, ethics and spirituality can be relevant to people in society, and also to themselves as individuals.

We have high expectations of you in terms of both behaviour and your work ethic. The sixth form has a reputation for success, this is a reputation that you are expected to uphold. Your approach to work, the grades you achieve, the standards of behaviour that you display, will all be examples for the rest of the school community to follow. Much rests upon your shoulders but if you can meet this challenge, then you will be successful in your own right and continue the tradition of excellence at the sixth form.

You are here voluntarily; you have made the choice to be part of the sixth form. By the same token, there is no obligation on our part to have to accept you. You have earned your place but it is important that you understand and accept the terms and conditions that exist.

During your time in the sixth form, we want to know you as individuals treat you with respect and make sure that you are given all the necessary support and guidance that you need. Along the way you will be offered many opportunities. You will be given every opportunity to develop a wide range of skills and experience, which will be of great advantage and benefit when moving on in one or two years' time. Keep an eye on the notice board in the sixth form common room, listen out in assemblies, and tutor time for notices.

Your timetable will consist of:-

- Lessons in your chosen subjects
- Core Sixth Form RE (1 lesson per week) or A level Theology (if it is one of your options)
- Private study: You are expected to complete between 5 and 7 hours of independent study a week for **each** A level subject you have chosen; or 15 hours a week for your BTEC courses.

Education is about much more than just your chosen subjects. It is preparation for a successful life.

Opportunities will be provided to enable you to:-

- Develop your ability to work and learn independently
- Take responsibility and provide leadership
- Develop your ability to work effectively with others
- Contribute to your local community
- Develop your knowledge and understanding of a range of issues and subjects not directly offered in your subjects
- Gain qualifications
- Develop your physical skills

Think about: being part of the **top team**; becoming a **peer mentor**; putting your name down for a **University visit**; volunteering to support lessons **lower down the school**; writing an article for **The Douglass**; organising a **sixth form event** and fundraising for **charity**.

SIXTH FORM STAFF

Ms Laura Binz – Head of Sixth Form
Ms Daniela Prina – Senior Tutor to the Sixth Form
Ms Sandra Chisholm – Sixth Form Assistant
Ms Lisette Modebe – Sixth Form Assistant
Mrs Betty Pavlou – Sixth Form Assistant

THE ROLE OF THE SIXTH FORM TUTOR

Your tutor should be a central figure in your education. They are the first point of contact for any concern or problem; they monitor your progress, act as a communication link and generally guide you through the sixth form. Some students need lots of help, others very little, but all students need to go to tutor time in the morning and participate enthusiastically.

SIXTH FORM UNIFORM

Sixth form students are expected to set the example and act as role models for the rest of the school community. Blazers, ties, sensible leather shoes (no trainers, converse or plimsolls) and a white shirt/blouse with a collar must always be worn. Boys can wear one earring and this must be a plain gold or silver stud and girls can only wear one pair of earrings. All students are asked to ensure that jewellery is modest and discreet. Girls are asked to ensure that skirts are knee length and not figure hugging. Tattoos must not be visible. Compliance with the uniform code is mandatory.

BOYS

- Formal black trousers (no jeans/denim)
- White shirt
- Black blazer or black suit jacket
- Black v-neck sweater (optional)
- Sixth form clip-on tie (bought from Student Services, worn correctly, top button fastened)
- Conventional black shoes (no trainers, converse or plimsolls)
- One gold or silver stud (no diamantes)
- A watch

GIRLS

- Formal black trousers or skirt (to the knee and not figure hugging, skater or pleated)
- White formal blouse with a collar
- Black blazer or black suit jacket
- Black v-neck sweater (optional)
- Sixth form clip-on tie (bought from Student Services, worn correctly, top button fastened)
- Black tights
- Conventional black shoes (no trainers, converse or plimsolls)
- A modest amount of jewellery is permitted (no oversize rings or earrings, etc.)
- One pair of earrings (gold or silver stud, no diamantes)
- A modest amount of make-up

BOYS AND GIRLS

- Dark coat (no denim or leather jackets, or coats with a pattern or motif)
- Mobile phones should not be used around the premises, they can only be used in the Sixth Form common room
- Sensible hairstyles, no lines or extreme styles.
- No hoodies, hats or caps

SIXTH FORM COMMON ROOM

The sixth form team supervise in the sixth form areas, keep study records and generally help with administrative tasks such as monitoring attendance to lessons, printing and helping with general queries. Please treat staff with the utmost respect and co-operate with them to ensure the area remains a pleasant space for students to use.

FIRE BELL

Most students are well-used to the procedure when the fire bell rings: leave the building immediately in silence, take your bag with you and, assemble on the football playground area in your tutor group and wait in silence for a register to be taken before being dismissed. The sixth form are expected to set an example by filing out and lining up in a serious and silent way.

CHANGE OF COURSE

You may only change course with the written permission of Ms Binz or Ms Prina. Changing course will involve you getting agreements from both the Head of the subject you are enrolled for and the new Head of the subject that you wish to take on. Please remember that many courses fill up quickly and it may not be possible to permit your change of course. Any course changes must be completed by **Friday 26th September 2020**.

USE OF THE CANTEEN/LUNCHTIMES/FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Sixth formers are encouraged to use the canteen at break and lunchtime and encouraged to do so as they are good role models for younger pupils. As a privilege, sixth formers have their own lining up queue at lunchtimes and can go to lunch at 1pm if they have a private study or a free lesson.

We do ask all eligible sixth formers to ensure their parents continue to register for free school meals and to apply for the 16-19 Bursary Fund.

LEAVING THE PREMISES AT LUNCHTIME

We do allow sixth form students to go off-site for lunch at 1.30pm. Students who have a free period 5 are not necessarily expected to come back to the school unless they have after school intervention or a late detention. Those returning must be back by 2pm. Students must sign out at Student Services if they are leaving the school at any other time.

THE COMMON ROOM

This is your social area and is normally busy at break and lunch times. It is a pleasant environment and should be treated as such.

A few requests from the Sixth Form Team to keep the environment pleasant:

- All litter goes in the bin.
- Only eat in the main area not by the computers.
- Act responsibly if you make a mess, clean up after yourself.
- Feet stay on the floor, not on tables or chairs.
- No inappropriate behaviour!
- Only use the computers for work – they are not there for leisure purposes.

INTERNET AND COMPUTER USE POLICY

Students are reminded not to use the internet to access inappropriate sites. Any student caught downloading inappropriate material or sending malicious messages etc. will be subject to the school's disciplinary code. As a general rule, always make several backup copies of assignments. Work must not be plagiarised.

PRESENTATION OF WORK

Keep your notes and files neat. An A4 ring binder folder will be required for each subject. The sixth form policy is that A level homework essays are hand-written in black ink on A4 lined paper and not word processed thereby preparing you for handwritten exams, limiting plagiarism and encouraging synthesis of material.

COMPULSORY STUDY

It is important to get into good habits of work and study to ensure a successful transition to A level and BTEC study. The latest and best research demonstrates quite clearly that in order for a student to achieve their potential and exceed target grades, 15-21 hours extra study is required per week. Accordingly private study lessons will be timetabled for you and these must be attended. Please ensure that you have enough work to do with you each day – and remember that this work must not be computer dependent (unless it is BTEC coursework) and must be completed in silence. Any student missing a private study session will be deemed to have truanted and will be subject to the disciplinary code.

LIBRARY AND STUDY ROOMS

The library and study rooms are independent study areas for sixth form students during modules 1-5. Please remember that the spaces are silent study areas – if you are not silent you will be subject to the disciplinary code. Please ensure that you sign in when you go to the library for your compulsory study periods. Mobile phones are **not allowed** to be used.

ORGANISATION

This will seem obvious to most students, but your days and your studies will run much more smoothly if you have the right equipment! Please bring a bag with you each day that is capable of being closed. The following is a list of things to help you to be organised and ready for any task set:

- Your sixth form journal
- An A4 ring binder folder **per subject**, with dividers
- Textbooks
- A pack of plastic wallets
- Pad of A4 ruled lined paper

- Full pencil case
- Scientific calculator
- USB flash drive / memory stick
- Reading book

ATTENDANCE

This is the most important factor in deciding your success. We cannot teach you or help you if you are not here. Your courses are designed to last all year and do not have built in catch up time at the end for anything you have missed. If you are not here, you miss all kinds of information and support, everything from UCAS dates to bursaries. The first sign of a student who is failing or at risk of failing is a falling percentage for attendance.

By signing up to the sixth form you agree to be here full-time. This includes: tutor time; assembly; PSHE and enrichment sessions; RE lessons and compulsory study periods as well as all lessons. If sessions are missed then you will be subject to the sixth form disciplinary code.

IMPORTANT ATTENDANCE PROTOCOLS

Register with your tutor each morning **arriving no later than 8:45 am** to school. Be punctual to lessons. On assembly day (Monday), line up in the designated area and be registered in the hall.

You will be registered for your study periods and must remain in the timetabled room for the duration of the period. If you leave before the end of a period then expect to be marked as absent.

If you miss a lesson through illness or an appointment it is your responsibility to catch up, your responsibility to hand work in or meet a deadline early and your responsibility to provide a valid reason for your absence. Be aware of your attendance percentage and number of missed lessons. These will be discussed during tutor times and with parents and are an excellent indicator of performance and likelihood of success.

PUNCTUALITY

Lateness to school is never condoned. Expect to have a half-hour detention at the end of the day **and** at lunchtime if you are late for school. If you are late twice, you will also automatically have a one-hour detention after school on Friday. If you are late more than twice, you will automatically receive a Friday and a Saturday detention too. Regular lateness means that students will be subject to the disciplinary code.

TARGET SETTING

At the start of year 12 you will be given minimum target grades to aim for. Note that these are a minimum expectation. You should be able to exceed these targets if you put in the fifteen to twenty one hours per week of private study which is expected of you. The targets are worked out by looking at your average GCSE score which predicts what you are likely to get in a given AS, A Level or BTEC subject. The targets may be tweaked by your teachers if they feel you are capable of more. Make a point of knowing your targets which should be stuck in your journal. Every half-term, you will be given a printout of your progress and it will be sent home to your parents too. It will tell you if you are currently at, above or below target. Your effort and behaviour will also be graded. This data may form the basis of tutorials or meetings with parents.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH AND MATHEMATICS GCSE

Having passes at grade 4 and above in these subjects is crucial to allowing a student to take the next steps on the learning or career ladder. Those without passes must attend classes and complete all the work set. The school invests heavily in support for students who find these subjects difficult and we are committed to working with you to ensure your success.

SATURDAY AND HOLIDAY LESSONS

Compulsory lessons will be scheduled afterschool, on Saturdays and during holidays and these are intended to support the progress of sixth form students. Students must attend these lessons and if they are unable to do so, they must inform Ms Binz or Ms Prina.

LOCKERS

There are some lockers available in the sixth form common room and students have the option to purchase use of them for one year at a non-refundable cost of £5.

STUDY LEAVE

There is no designated study leave at sixth form. Your lessons will run right up until the final exam in that subject, thereby giving you maximum support and preparation by staff. Do not be naïve in thinking that all revision can be completed a day or two before exams; you will need to start this process much earlier. All subject teachers offer timetabled revision classes in the run up to public examinations. You must attend these sessions to make the most of any support on offer.

PROGRESSING FROM YEAR 12 TO YEAR 13

Please be aware that progression from year 12 to year 13 is not an automatic right. In order to progress at A Level, a student has to secure passes in the end of year 12 examinations and will have attended and completed work to a satisfactory standard. We expect as a minimum 90% attendance in the year without major breaches of the disciplinary code.

For each BTEC level 3 course, students must have completed 3- 6 units (dependent on the subject) at merit level or above in order to progress to the second year of level 3 courses.

Students following the level 2 pathway will need to achieve at least a merit in their subjects to progress onto the level 3 pathway.

SIXTH FORM TOP TEAM AND PREFECTS

We value the opinion and input of the students in bringing about change and driving improvement. The sixth form committee led by the Head Boy and Head Girl and their deputies are at the heart of this process. You will have the opportunity both formally and informally to express your ideas and opinions through student council meetings and from conversations with sixth form committee members. You should know who they are as they are your representatives and work for you. Remember, this is your sixth form so make sure that you have your say! There will be an opportunity for all students to apply for a position on the committee and this will be announced early on in the new term.

EMPLOYMENT

At Bishop Douglass School, we recognise the value of having a part time job. The extra money, the experience and the skills learned are all useful to students. Problems tend to start where students are working too many hours, or working unsociable hours. You are strongly advised **not** to undertake paid work if you can manage without the money – paid work will get in the way of your studies.

CIGARETTES, ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

Alcohol is banned: a student caught drinking alcohol on the school site faces disciplinary action and possible removal from roll. Students should not drink alcohol at lunchtime.

Smoking is banned on the school site and is prohibited in the building. Sixth form students are asked to set an example by never smoking within two miles of the school site.

Any student using or in possession of illegal substances (drugs) will be permanently excluded.

DISCIPLINARY CODE

The sixth form operates a 'three strikes' policy. In short, if you are reprimanded for any reason e.g. being persistently late to school, not handing in work on time, not meeting academic standards, poor uniform, rudeness or inappropriate behaviour, not attending compulsory study periods, less than 90% attendance, using a mobile phone outside the common room, to name but a few (this list is not exhaustive), then a record will be kept and parents will be required to attend the school for a meeting. Infringements of the code may lead to temporary exclusions or an instruction to leave a course and/or the sixth form.

JOURNAL

All students are expected to carry their journal in their blazer ready for inspection at any point during the school day.

MOBILE PHONES

Sixth form students are allowed to use their mobile phones in the common room only.

UCAS

It is our policy to encourage every sixth form student to think about Higher Education as the default route after following level 3 qualifications. Having a degree is now almost mandatory in society. It opens doors to many more careers and the opportunity to a better standard of living. The route into Higher Education can be daunting and seem like a very long way off; however, it comes around faster than you think. Luckily, there is lots of help at hand. Your tutor will be a source of advice as will the sixth form team. There is a scheduled programme involving workshops and university visits. The summer term culminates with a series of presentations and workshops to ensure that all students are ready to submit their first draft university application by the end of year 12. Whatever you do, do not decide yet that you are not going on to higher education or university. Complete your form as requested and then make an informed choice when the time comes.

THE 16-19 BURSARY FUND

The 16-19 bursary is available to support students pay for education related costs; e.g. clothing, books, transport and other equipment needed for your course. The 16-19 bursary fund has two elements:

- A bursary worth up to £1,200 a year (depending on circumstances) is available for students in vulnerable groups:
 - Students in local authority care or who have recently left local authority care;
 - Students in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit (because they are financially supporting themselves);
 - Students in receipt of Disability Living Allowance who also receive Employment Support Allowance or Universal Credit and
 - Students in receipt of Personal Independence Payment and either Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit.
- Discretionary awards can be made by the school to students according to their needs and circumstances. Therefore, students who are aged between 16 and 19 and are eligible free school meals or face financial hardship should not hesitate to see a member of the sixth form team regarding financial support.

The policy and application forms will be available at the start of each academic year.

BOOK DEPOSITS

Students are asked to pay a book deposit of £50 at the beginning of Year 12 which will be refunded at the end of the course of study, subject to all books being returned in satisfactory condition. Students eligible for the 16-19 bursary will be able to use this to pay their deposit monies.