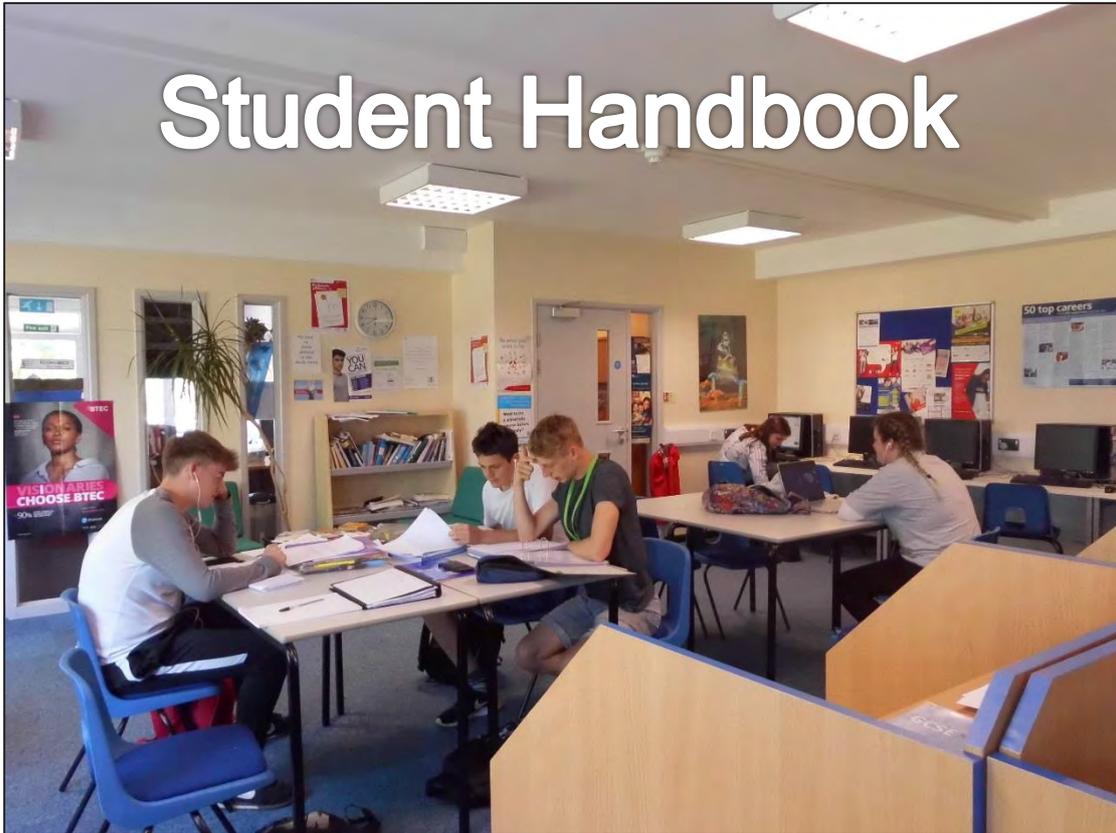




Sturminster Sixth Form

# Student Handbook



*The secret  
to getting  
ahead is  
getting  
started*

We would like to remind you to look at the “**Getting Started**” section of the Sixth Form area of the school website. It contains material from the subject departments of Sturminster Newton High School which you should have a look at now in order to be ready to make a good start in September. Many departments have set work for you to complete over the summer that they will expect you to have ready for the first lesson in September.

[www.mysnhs.net](http://www.mysnhs.net) then click on Sixth Form/Getting Started



Welcome to Sturminster Newton Sixth Form, we hope you enjoy your study with us and that you achieve your best at all times.

I know that students have many questions when they begin their sixth form course, so I have compiled a list facts, questions and answers below to help you. I wish you every success.

Mrs E Neilson  
Head of Sixth Form

## **Induction**

From the very first day, you will be finding your feet in quite a different environment. You will be given an Induction Checklist which outlines the various activities you will be doing to introduce you to 6<sup>th</sup> form life. This includes an induction day on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> September, undertaking a team challenge, being introduced to time management and organisation strategies, completing a work experience week in October, receiving a study skills handbook and having an individual tutorial in which your personal tutor will discuss your personal timetable, study periods and targets. You will also be given your travel times if you are studying at Shaftesbury. This is also an important time to discuss any special needs/requirements you may have. Your academic tutors will outline the requirements of your course and outline assessment methods and deadlines.

## **Attendance**

At the start of year 12, all students are issued with a 'swipe card'. This card **must** be worn on a green lanyard around your neck at all times and used every day when you come into school to register you electronically. You must also use this card to register for your supervised study sessions.

**All year 12 students are required to be on site at lesson times and study times during the day. You are permitted to leave the school at break time and lunch time provided you have swiped out.**

Students travelling between sites also need to swipe in on arrival and out as they leave the school site.

**Students who persistently forget to use their swipe cards may be placed on attendance report.**

**If swipe cards are lost or damaged, replacements can be obtained at a cost of £3.**

## Post 16 Transport

The Sixth Form provides a free bus link between Shaftesbury and Sturminster during the school day. The timetable for the link bus will be published in September so if you travel to the other site for lessons you must familiarise yourself with the bus times.

If you need a bus to get to school from your home you will need to apply to the county you live in to purchase a bus pass. As stated in your offer letter, if you live in **Dorset**, the application window was **between 1 and 31 May**. Go to [www.dorsetforyou.com/402557](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/402557) for full information.

There may be help towards the cost of Post 16 transport from the 16-19 Bursary Fund, please see the details on the next page.

## Tutor Periods and Assemblies

It is essential that students attend all registration as well as assemblies. (If you are travelling to Shaftesbury, let your tutor know the days you will not be present). Not only is this a valuable time for the communication and sharing of information, but it is also the chance to discuss your progress, or any concerns you may have, with your tutor. Tutor sessions give vital support to your future progressions plans and are an important part of your sixth form experience. Your tutor is your ally and will speak to staff on your behalf. In addition, your tutor needs to get to know you well because he/she will be providing a reference for you as you apply for jobs or write university applications.

Assemblies are an important part of Sixth Form life. They are a vital way of communicating information and also provide space to promote reflection on a spiritual, cultural or citizenship issue.

It is compulsory for all students to attend assemblies; you will be notified in September when the assemblies are scheduled to take place



## Private Study



You will have allocated private study time on your timetable, you are required to register for these study times via the room swipe card in the Sixth Form Study Room and you are expected to work quietly on your preparation for lessons and homework.

For each lesson you have, you should do a further hour of private study. All students are required to register their presence in every study period.

This study can be carried out in the Sixth Form Study Room, Sixth Form Café, the UCAS Library, Room SF1(if available), the school resources area or in the departments of the subjects you are studying. You should be in the Sixth Form Block during your timetabled study time. It is important that you observe the rule of silence in the Sixth Form Study Room and if you want to discuss work in groups this should be done in “free” classrooms, a list of available rooms is available in the study room. In addition, you can talk to Mrs Neilson about arranging a “drop in” time for support with work you are finding difficult.

You should allocate approximately 4 “free” lessons over the timetable fortnight and during this time you should organise any medical/dental appointments, etc. Do not book appointments during the assembly time. We are not able to authorise Driving Lessons during the school day and, if taken, will be regarded as unauthorised absence.

## What do I do if I want to change my choice of subjects?

If you are not sure that you have made the right choice, **don't worry**. You will have time in September to rethink your choices, if, after the first two-week cycle you think that you have made a mistake you need to **discuss your concerns** with your academic/personal tutor and then consider an alternative programme. After the end of September it will not be possible to change. It goes without saying you will need to meet the entrance requirements of any course you may wish to take up.

## **What do I do if I want to drop a subject?**

When you start in the sixth form we recommend that you study 3 A Level courses. (Very rarely an able student may take 4) If, however, you have serious reasons for dropping one of these subjects, it is important that you discuss it with your personal tutor and Mrs Neilson. We do not accept Part Time students but can make arrangements, if necessary, to complement your studies with work placement or volunteer work within the school or local community. These arrangements must be agreed with Mrs Neilson and will be overseen by Mrs Privett.

## **Will I be able to continue from Year 12 to Year 13?**

Yes! All courses are now 2 year courses, if you are struggling with a full A level, we may recommend that you take an AS examination instead of the full A level.

## **How will I know how well I am doing?**

During your induction programme you will discuss your target grades with your tutor. The grades will be based on national indicators which reflect your performance at GCSE. In addition, your academic tutors, who know your work, may identify a more ambitious target. Your performance will be monitored against these targets and you will have regular one-to-one tutorials with your personal tutor when you can discuss this. Academic staff are asked to record progress against targets in the review section of your planner at least once each year. It is important that this entry is made following a discussion between you and your tutor, during which you consider your current performance, attitude to learning and any steps you need to take in order to improve. In addition, you are welcome to discuss progress with staff at any time.

## **How will my parents know about my work?**

You will be given a **formal report** once a year, in **March of Year 12** and in **November of Year 13**. However, your parents are welcome to contact the school at any time to discuss your progress or any difficulties you may be experiencing.

## **What should I do if I have to be absent from school?**

If you know that you are going to be absent in advance, please complete an absence form, which you can find in the Sixth Form Office. If you are unexpectedly absent through illness you must notify the school on the first morning of absence.

Please note that it is not possible to authorise absences for family holidays. There is a notification form to fill in that is obtainable from the Sixth Form Office but, even if this is completed, absences for holiday reasons will always be recorded as unauthorised. It is important that you let your academic tutors know if you are going to miss a lesson, they will make sure that you have the necessary work you need. In addition, your personal tutor needs to know if you intend to miss a tutorial session or registration.

Examples of acceptable reasons for missing a lesson include:

- attending a university open day (we would recommend a maximum of three per year)
- appointment with a hospital consultant
- practical driving exam. (Driving theory tests and driving lessons are not acceptable reasons to miss lessons or study periods).

We would encourage any students to organise non-emergency appointments with GP, dentist or optician outside school hours.

## **Quality Assurance**



This is maintained by:

- Allocation of Course Tutors (Assessors) and Personal Tutors
- Student reviews (Tutor Programme)
- Assessment documentation
- Regular tutor co-ordination meetings

## **Attendance at lessons**

- Each student must attend all timetabled lessons, arriving on time with all relevant equipment. Evidence shows that poor attendance almost always leads to poor results, so your teachers will monitor your attendance and punctuality and will report back to your tutor or the Sixth Form Office if your attendance becomes a concern.
- If you know you are going to miss a lesson, it is your responsibility to inform your teacher and arrange to get the work to catch up on. Failure to meet these attendance requirements alongside underperformance may jeopardise your place in Year 13.

## Post 16 Attendance Policy

<b>Student misses a lesson/s</b>	Subject teacher emails student requesting reason for absence (if none given)
<b>Further lessons missed</b>	Subject teacher contacts home to report absence.
<b>Attendance drops &lt; 85% for a subject</b>	Tutor arranges interview with student and parents to discuss absence and the tutor informs your Head of Year.
<b>Attendance drops &lt; 80%</b>	Letter sent home by Head of Year outlining the consequences of poor attendance, including the initiation of the school disciplinary procedure and the risk of failure. Targets set to improve attendance over a 2week period. Student placed on Attendance Report, which is monitored by your Head of Year.
<b>No Improvement</b>	Letter sent home by your Head of Year initiating disciplinary procedure.

## Appeals Procedure

What should you do if you have concerns about fairness or reliability of assessment?

### The Appeal Process

Stage 1

You are unhappy with the grade/outcome of assessed work



Stage 2

You must discuss the outcome with your teacher that marked that work. If you are still unhappy with the outcome, then go to stage 3



Stage 3

Your work will be re-marked by the Head of Department on your course. If you are still not happy then go to stage 4



Stage 4

Your work will be reviewed by the School's Senior Leadership Team and Mrs Neilson, who will make a judgement in favour of the student or the assessor.

## All Academic Tutors will

- Make sure that all your assignments are available to students
- Provide you with an assessment plan for the year ahead
- Keep you informed of deadlines for assignments and essays
- Provide assignments which prepare you for your examinations
- Provide opportunities for you to ask any questions you may have, both during both the planning and writing stages of essays and assignments
- Check that you understand and agree the way forward with all assignments, essays and deadlines
- Offer you revision opportunities before external examinations

## **Study Leave**

Study leave is not available in Year 12, students are permitted study absence for the session before an examination e.g. the afternoon before a morning examination, but must attend all subject lessons up until the day of the examination. The same applies to Year 13 students, who must attend all lessons until their leaving date (the start of the May Half Term).

## **How to use study periods effectively?**

Your timetable will show that you have study periods in school.

### **At the beginning of Year 12**

1. It is really important that you plan which work you are going to do in which study periods, so that your study is organised and productive. It is important to get into good habits early on, otherwise as the workload increases as term continues, you can easily find yourself being overwhelmed.
2. Work out how many study periods you have each week
3. Decide on a percentage of study periods that you are going to use for studying, and a percentage that will be used for other things: on line learning, work experience, volunteering, Certificate of Personal Effectiveness, Medical appointments, etc.

### **Use these questions to help you:**

- How much free time have I got that day?
- How many lessons have I got that day?
- What time of day is the study period, and what time of day do I work best?
- What commitments do I have that night, or the night before, that might make it really important to use study time that day
- How many study periods do I have in common with my friends and when are they?
- Are there any times when study rooms are quieter than others, which I can take advantage of?



## **Code of Conduct**

Please remember **you are a role model for younger pupils** and a representative of the school to the general public, so we ask that you:

- Dress in a manner appropriate for business
- Address staff politely
- Respect all equipment, books and furniture (leave the rooms you use tidily)
- Act responsibly on the Shaftesbury Shuttle bus (please do not leave litter or distract the driver)
- Turn up on time and attend all registrations, assemblies, lessons and supervised study periods
- Meet all assessment deadlines
- Do not smoke within sight of the school
- Do not use a mobile phone during lessons and no mobile phone whilst walking around the school (you are welcome to use these in the 6<sup>th</sup> form block)
- Please do not distract students in the 6<sup>th</sup> form Silent Study Room
- Swipe in and out when you arrive or are leaving the premises
- Do not copy work for assessment from other students
- Make sure all work you submit is your own and in your own words. If you include information you have found on the internet, or in books, or from other students, record all those information sources on your work.

Bringing alcohol, tobacco and illegal substances on the school site will result in permanent exclusion.

### **If you break the Code of Conduct:**

To start with your tutor might remind you of the behaviour expected. If the issue is more serious there are 3 chances before it is too late. However, if the offence is serious misconduct, then you may jump straight to Stage 2 or 3.

#### **Stage 1: Verbal Warning**

- Your tutor will refer you to Mrs Neilson who will tell you what went wrong and how you can change it
- The tutor will make a record of your behaviour and Mrs Neilson will record it and send a copy home.
- If you keep breaking the Code of Conduct you will face Stage 2 or 3

#### **Stage 2: Formal Written Warning**

- This letter will be sent directly home and will outline exactly why you have advanced to this stage.
- You will be temporarily withdrawn from the 6<sup>th</sup> form until you have had a Review Meeting with Mrs Neilson when you can discuss what went wrong and what can be done to change it.

#### **Stage 3: Final Warning**

- A letter will be sent home confirming that any further breaking of the Code of Conduct may well result in external exclusion from the 6<sup>th</sup> Form. (Your last chance.)

## Your Rights

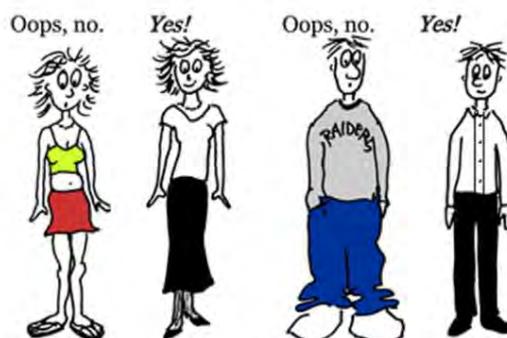
- ✓ You have the right to be treated with respect and fairness by your tutors and other students. You have the right to complain if you are not treated this way.
- ✓ You have the right to appeal against decisions made about you, particularly if you are unhappy with how things worked out.
- ✓ You have the right to be safe and well supported whilst you are studying.
- ✓ You have the right to work in peace and quiet in the 6<sup>th</sup> form study room.
- ✓ You have the right to be kept informed of your progress and be given help on how to improve

## Guidelines for appropriate dress for all students

There is no uniform in the Sixth Form. However, Years 12 and 13 are role models for younger students and must dress accordingly. Please do not be offended if you are asked to amend your appearance.

- Clothing should be appropriate for a working environment and not be too revealing.
- Clothing should not have slogans or images.
- Facial jewellery is not allowed. Body art, such as tattoos, must not be visible. Hair should be of a natural colour.
- No ripped jeans, tracksuits or hoodies
- No strappy tops, short shorts or board shorts. No bare midriffs. summer term smart tailored shorts (just above the knee) are permitted

If you do not adhere to the dress code you will be asked to go home and change, or isolated if this is not possible.



## Check list

- Do I understand the expectations of behaviour in the sixth form?
- Do I know where and when my bus leaves for/returns from Shaftesbury?
- Have I got a copy of the Study Skills Handbook?
- Do I understand the 6<sup>th</sup> form dress code?
- Have I arranged the time for my first tutorial with my personal tutor?
- Am I clear about what I need to do to achieve success in my studies?
- How will I know what I have to do on my assignments and essays?
- How will I know what my assignment or essay deadlines are?
- What do I do if I don't agree with my assessment decisions?

If the answer to any of these is “no”, or “I don't know”, then NOW is the time to discuss these with your Course Tutor, Personal Tutor or Mrs Neilson

