Gryphon Sixth Form **Handbook**

Welcome to your next steps in your Education

2026 - 2027

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Sixth Form Vision

The Vision

For students to leave the sixth form in a position of maximum opportunity.

Our Aims

·To provide students with a broad range of courses suited to their individual needs.

·To enable students to feel motivated by their courses and take responsibility for their own level of performance and improvement targets.

·To challenge students to plan for their future and to provide them with advice and information to do so.

·To develop a positive, supportive relationship between students and staff.

·To encourage all students to be part of an active community: responsible to the school, each other and to society at large.

·To encourage tolerance, respect and sensitivity towards others.

·To provide opportunities for students to experience a variety of activities that broaden their horizons and perspectives.

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Welcome

Welcome to the Gryphon Sixth Form.

This is without doubt an exciting time in your life and your studies, and the Sixth Form at the Gryphon will provide opportunities to excel in the subjects you have chosen and to become well rounded young adults. There is a range of opportunities; from having talks from university lecturers, gaining work experience, getting excellent careers advice or university guidance, going on exciting fieldtrips, becoming a leading student as part of the sixth form committee, and leading charity and environmental projects. These opportunities are all underpinned with outstanding lessons to ensure that you can go on to achieve every success in your chosen subjects.

There will be opportunities to develop your personal skills, broaden your horizons and gain a range of perspectives on a variety of issues. The more you contribute to our community, the more rewards you will reap. By making the most of these opportunities you will get the best foundation for your future.

The following guidelines are intended to outline some of our procedures and help you settle in to a new stage of your life.

We hope you will enjoy these years in our Sixth Form and wish you every success.

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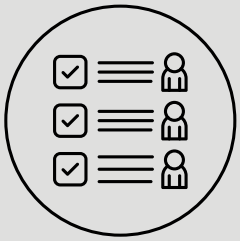
The Foundations

Studying

The change from GCSEs will definitely be noticeable, while the number of subjects is fewer, the depth of knowledge and understanding is much greater. Utilising your study periods and spending time on your subjects outside of lesson time will be crucial in supporting you to make progress.



Attendance

You are a full time student so the expectation is full time attendance to all lessons and tutor times. Poor attendance has a direct impact on personal progress, however, we recognise there are times where attendance could be more difficult for some, so communication is key to ensure we can work together to support students as best we can.

Respect

Within our sixth form community we expect students to show respect for themselves and for others. Being mindful of language that is used, being respectful of the spaces in which students work or socialise as well as following the school rules as per the behaviour for learning expectations both in and outside of lessons.

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Academic **Study**

Expectations

While you are studying fewer subjects, you will be able to work at much greater depth in your chosen areas. This will be fascinating and exciting, and allow you to develop your interests and passions. You will find that this is a big step from the requirements for GCSEs, and may demand new skills and perhaps even new methods of study for you.
You need to be **organised** from the start with equipment and folders of your own. You will need to use your 'study periods' sensibly to keep up with your courses. You have a one-hour compulsory 'Pathways' lesson on your timetable each week to support you in this..

During these sessions, you will practice your study and research skills and develop your personal pathway through the Sixth form and beyond, with guidance from the Pathways teacher. You will also be encouraged to engage with wider reading and research, which will develop understanding of the subjects you are studying at A level and help you to become an expert.

Using your time- Study Periods

You will also have blocked study periods where you need to register in the library and complete your homework and any consolidation tasks.

After lessons, you will need to spend time reflecting upon and consolidating your learning so that you really understand the ideas you have been learning. For each hour of learning we would encourage an additional hour of work consolidating your learning. This could be through home work tasks, practising exam questions or developing and crating revision resources such as flash cards, revision mats or mind maps.
You will have homework tasks and coursework, and you will need to do research and obtain your own background materials. Your tasks will often be open-ended, which will require planning, organisation and self-discipline if you are to achieve to the best of your ability. Due to the linear nature of exams, revision should be an on going process as well. Ensure you have a way of storing your lesson resources effectively.

In Sixth Form lessons, you will be encouraged to think independently and contribute fully to the lesson. Developing these skills, with due respect for the opinions of others, will enable you to enjoy your studies. Should you encounter any problems, please mention your concerns to your class teacher and/or your tutor. This may resolve a situation quickly rather than allowing it to worsen.

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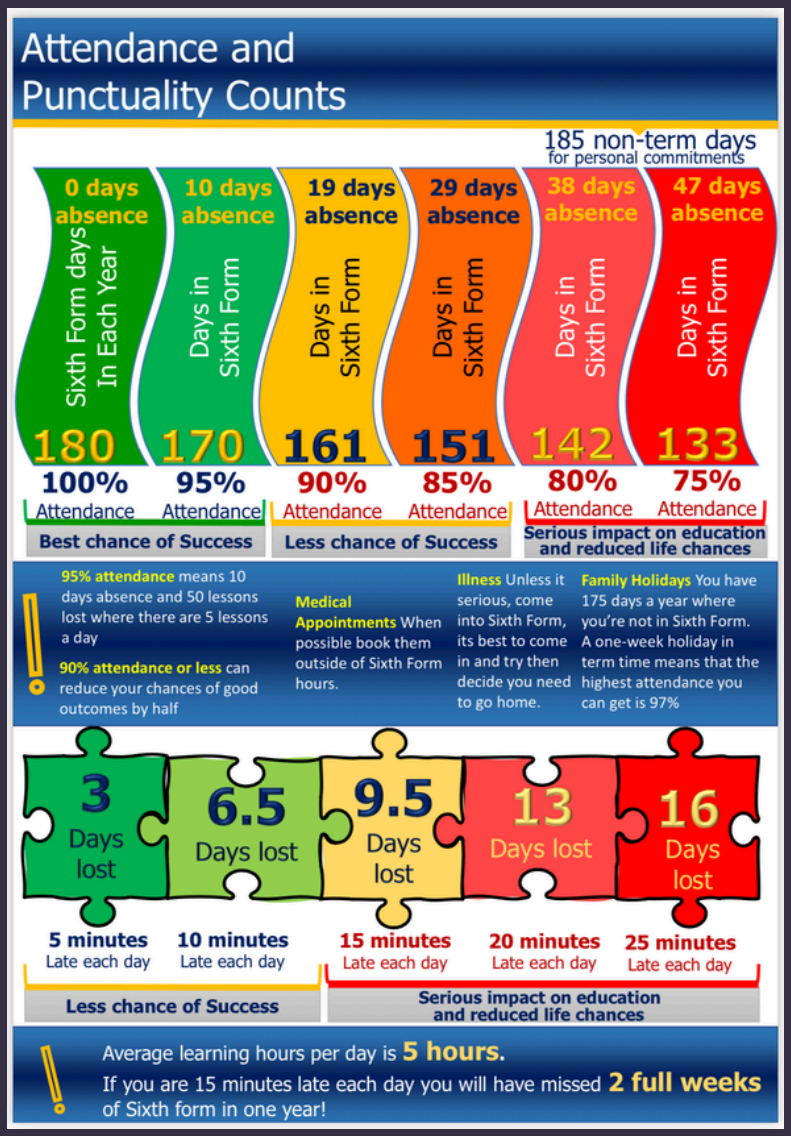
Attendance



Reporting Absence: Planned

For planned absences such as university visits, work experience or driving tests to name just a few examples students will need to complete an electronic absence request.
This can be accessed via the contact us area on the Sixth Form website or using the link below:
Reporting Planned Absences
It is expected that driving lessons will be arranged outside of timetabled lesson time. Missing a lesson or part of a lesson for a driving lesson will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

Reporting Absence: Unplanned

Please call the sixth form office, ideally before 10am and report the reason for absence to Mrs Spencer-Smith.
Contact number;
01935 811055

Leaving through the day

Students are reminded they need to sign out and back in should they wish to leave site during the day during a free.

Attendance Expectations and Checks

Students are expected to attend all timetables lessons and tutor times.
Should a student truant a lesson during the day on more than one occasion during a week they will receive a level 3 detention.
Any unauthorised absence will be monitored and should it fall below 95%, parents/guardians will be invited in for a meeting and students placed on support plans and/or written warning should there be a lack of progress with attendance without appropriate reason. Students whose attendance falls below an acceptable standard may not be able to progress with their studies., Please see our attendance policy for further details.

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Respect you
Respect Me

Student Responsibilties

These are a wide and varied area within a school based Sixth Form. You need to show common sense and consideration for the others in the community in which you are learning. Behaving responsibly and with self-discipline should be your aim e.g. if you are making phone calls, please use a quiet area of the Common Room to do so, do not do this around the school. The use of mobile technology (BYOD) should be appropriate and as directed by staff in your lessons.

Many younger students aspire to follow in your successful footsteps. As such there are many ways you can lead by example:

- Encourage good behaviour and extend the friendly, caring atmosphere of this school among all students.
- Be willing to participate in and/or assist with events – plays, excursions, teams.
- Show leadership within the school – organising charity events, running clubs.
- Become involved in the wider community programme both in and out of school.

Use of Technology

Students are welcome to bring their own devices on which to work both in and outside of lessons, they are brought on to site at their own discretion. There are a number of rentable lockers in the common room students can rent.

Mobile phone use is welcome in the common room or the learning hub, however, when moving around the school buildings or through the quads, mobile phones should be out of sight. In lessons mobile phones should be out of sight unless they are being used appropriately to enhance opportunity for learning.

Other behaviour expectations

You are reminded that drinking alcohol during the school day is not acceptable. Smoking, including eCigarettes and vapes, on school premises or within sight of the school is also not allowed. Students who ignore our request not to smoke within sight of the school will be given a verbal warning in the first instance. Further transgression will lead to a temporary exclusion. In accordance with school policy, anyone bringing in, or purporting to bring in, illegal substances or drugs related equipment will be permanently excluded. This also applies to all trips and visits arranged by the school.

Your behaviour in school, on trips and in town should at all times reflect well on The Gryphon School and yourself.

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Day to Day

Student Acreditation

Students receive a student ID badge during their induction day.
Students are expected to have their badges and lanyards in plain site at all times during the day and they should be used for signing in and out of the school site. Replacement of a lost or broken badge will be £5.

Common Room

This is your social area. All Sixth Form students are responsible for maintaining this area to a respectable standard. This is a space for students to relax in and to socialise, but students do also like to use the space to work. The Sixth Form Commitee will meet to discuss any issues arising in relation to the Common Room.

Sixth Form Committee

These students are an integral part of this school. They assist in the efficient running of the school at formal events e.g. parent's evenings, and by establishing links with lower school tutor groups to assist both tutor and younger pupils in many ways. They may expect to host guests and visitors, and liaise with the public as representative students of our school. High personal standards are expected. Students will be advised of the procedure for applying to become a Committee member at the start of the academic year. The Heads of Year will co-ordinate the teams and duties.
Within the committee there will be wider opportunities for responsibility including charity and fundraising leads, student event leads and community link leads to name just a few.

The committee will meet approximately once a month and provide an opportunity to discuss issues or concerns raised by students or teachers. Each tutor group will be represented by at least one member. Those members will elect representatives to the Whole School Council, who will continue to take forward issues or concerns for response by Senior Management, two of these students are also Associate Governors on the School's governing body.

Sixth Form Bulletin and Careers Support

The Sixth Form Bulletin is published every Monday to facilitate communication about the success of students as well as to provide information about events and opportunities. This document, which is emailed to all students and parents/guardians and is available on the student intranet, will inform you of school events taking place the following week as well giving information about numerous opportunities related to university preparation, apprenticeship schemes, national competitions, gap year opportunities etc.
Alongside this a careers bulletin is also produced on a weekly basis.
Students are able to make individual appointments with Mr Martin/ Mrs Rowland, our dedicated careers advisor based in the learning hub.

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Further Academic Info

Enrichment and Enhancement

All Year 12 students are expected to participate in an enrichment programme on a Wednesday afternoon. You can select from a variety of workshops, talks or work experience and/or choose to take part in Sporting activities. Details of the enrichment programme will be given to you at the start of term. We would also encourage students to take on a leadership role to run an enrichment programme for other students.

Students will also have Pathways provision on their timetable. These are weekly and provide time for students to explore their future pathways and extend their knowledge so that by the time comes to apply to higher education or apprenticeships they have a wealth of experience behind them.

Course Changes

These can only be made after consultation and agreement with the Head of Sixth Form and Subject Teachers. You will need to complete a course change form, available via our Student Support Manager. All staff involved will need to be consulted on such changes and your parent(s)/guardian will be kept informed of such decisions. Obviously the sooner a course change is done the easier and more likely it is to be approved. **If you do not complete a course change form prior to an exam entry being made, you may be liable for the entry fee (see exams section).**

Learning Hub

The Learning Hub is available for Sixth Form to use every day. It is open from 8.30 am until 4 p m Monday to Friday. During busy exam periods the Learning Hub is only open to Sixth Form students studying for exams. The Learning Hub is a quiet working area. If students need to work in group and discuss aspects they should work outside Café 6and the canteen area.

Facilities:

Wireless access is available throughout the library

There are colour and black and white printing and scanning facilities. You will be issued with print allowance at the start of the academic year. Further credit is available for you to purchase if this is insufficient.

The Learning Hub has a varied range of stationery items available for students to purchase;

Within the Learning Hub there are 72 computers providing networked access to a wealth of software applications, the internet, the school's Virtual Learning Environment and a host of subscriber-only electronic databases.

Copies of text books and reference stock to support all of the subjects taught at the school are held in the Learning Hub as well as a wide range of fiction to cater for all tastes.

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Further Academic Info

Examinations and Certificates

External examinations will take place, in May/June of Year 13 only for the vast majority of courses. In some cases, there are external examinations during the course; please speak to your teacher or refer to the Induction Handbook for your subjects to find out if this is the case. If a student leaves before the end of the A level course, then they will not receive any external credit/qualifications for the studying that they have completed.

There will be internal pre-public (mock) examinations at the end of Year 12 so that staff are able to predict A level grades for students and provide support and guidance as necessary in order that each student achieves their potential. Students do need to pass their PPEs at the end of Year 12 in order to continue on the course. There are two more sets of PPEs in Year 13as well to fully prepare students for their final exams.

The Examinations Manager, Mrs Samantha Hole is the person who ensures that all the necessary administration is done on your behalf so that you sit the correct examinations at the correct time. Mrs Hole is based in the office just off of the Visitor/Conference Centre Reception. If a student has already been entered for an exam in a subject they no longer wish to study, they will be charged for the cost of the exam entry in full.

Those students who are new to the school and whom have had special exam arrangements for GCSE **must get into contact with the sixth form office by the end of September.** For ex-Gryphon students, Learning Support will get in contact with you in the Autumn term and let you know if your arrangements will automatically transfer to A level. The Head of Learning Support and SENCE at the Gryphon School is Bethan West.

Examination Certificates

Certificates arrive in school during the autumn term for the previous academic year. Certificates will be needed in the future for employers/universities to verify results. Although duplicates can be obtained from the exam boards this is a very expensive option and we strongly advise students to return to collect their original official exam certificates.

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Further Academic Info

iGryphon

The school supports a bring your own device (BYOD) culture. There is freely accessible WiFi around the school which allows you to connect to wireless services, such as your school workspace and a range of specialist software, as well as utilising our wireless printing services. In addition to enabling you to access over 750 fixed computers around the school your school login gives you access to the school Intranet and mobile device app. Staff post notices to the app, which includes year relevant push notifications and a dedicated Sixth Form page. Homework assignments are set online via Microsoft Teams. The mobile app gives free access to Microsoft Office 365 with applications including Word, Power Point and OneNote. These can also be installed on your home PC for free.

The Gryphon 30

The Gryphon 30 recognises that students have 30 hours per week of structured support time. This includes:

Engaging positively in these 30 hours enables students to make positive progress towards achieving their potential at the end of their sixth form Journey and be in a Position of Maximum Opportunity.

For students who require support to do this, we have attendance and academic progress mentoring programmes, where students receive regular check ins and monitoring to encourage positive progress.

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Travel & **Finance**

Travel to Sixth Form

Information about applying for bus spaces can be found on the main school website.
All car and motorcycle owners must register their vehicle and obtain a parking permit (forms are available from the Sixth Form Office). Cars and motorcycles are to be parked in the designated area, Sixth Form Car Park, situated immediately on the left of the entrance gate. When full, students should park in the overflow area beyond the “Little Gryphons” nursery.
Please remember that this is a school/nursery site and you should therefore exercise extreme caution whilst driving on site. Please keep to the 10 mph speed limit at all times. Students who are reported to be driving without care and attention face losing their parking permit. No parking is permitted outside the History huts. If you do park off site, please be mindful of our neighbours, treating them with respect and courtesy.

16-19 Bursary

Government funding is available to some students to help meet the costs of participating in education and training post-16.
More information about eligibility for the 16 to 19 Bursary scheme is available on our website. Students should apply in September of each year for the bursary. We prioritise financial support for transport and educational resources.
Applications remain open during the school year should students’ home financial situations change, they would be welcome to apply.

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Further
Day to Day

Tutor Groups

You are expected to remain in your tutor base during morning and afternoon registration. During these times important information will be given out, and there is a tutor time calendar that will be followed with different activities. Registration and Tutor time will provide an opportunity for you and your tutor to build relationships which will enable them to advise you on career/higher education plans or deal with any problems you may have. You will also cover PSHRE during tutor time with issues that are pertinent for sixth form students. All students will be involved in an academic
mentoring programme with their tutor. This information may be passed to your Pathways and/or subject teachers if relevant. Academic mentoring involves setting personal targets and regularly reviewing progress towards these targets.

Parental Contact

If your parent/carer needs to raise any concerns they should contact your tutor in the first instance via email or the Sixth Form office. The contact details can be found in the front of this handbook.

Café @ Gryphon

The café is open to Sixth Form students from 8.20 am to 2.00pm, when a range of cold snacks and hot and cold drinks are available to purchase.
Café 6 in the common room is open to Sixth form only from 9:45 am to 2:00pm. Hot food is available daily from 12:10pm. The Café is cashless and you can top up your account using cash in the provided machine in the Café or alternatively by using WisePay online. The café is open to the whole school at break and lunchtime. Students are welcome to use the dining room as a study area. We use a biometric system of paying for food and refreshments so when you join we will take a fingerprint scan.

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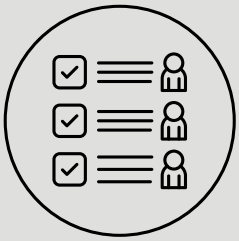
Student
Dress Code

Expectations

Dress is expected to be of a good standard in cleanliness and decency. While you are not required to wear school uniform there will be occasions when smart dress is more appropriate e.g. school events, interview practice, presentations or visits to places of work. You must also consider health & safety issues relating to some styles and fashions of clothing. Dress, such as revealing tops, offensive slogans and dangerous accessories will not be accepted. The Heads of Year 12 and 13 reserve the right to decide whether a particular item is suitable, and if necessary send a student home. If in doubt, seek advice.

Should a student not meet the dress code expectations, they will be asked to wear more appropriate clothing on their return the next day. Should this continue parents/guardians will be contacted. Should the issue continue students will be asked to return home for the remainder of the day following further contact with parents/guardians.



Some Specifics

To give some clarity the following points indicate inappropriate attire;

- Clothing with inappropriate/offensive logos, images or text.
- Tops which are; low cut at the neck or under arms, strapless, 'off the shoulder' or that do not cover the torso*

  *Cropped tops; a top is defined as cropped if it reveals the torso above the belly button.
- Skirts, dresses or shorts which are shorter than mid-thigh length.
- Clothing which is not wholly opaque.
- Hats can be worn, but should be removed for lessons.
- Coats can be worn, but removed for lessons.
- Underwear should not be visible.

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Gryphon
LIFE Values

Leadership	Integrity	Fellowship	Exploration
The action of leading a group of people or an organisation.	The quality of being honest and having strong moral principles.	Friendly association, especially with people who share one's interests.	The action of exploring an unfamiliar area.
"Act justly, love mercy and walk humbly" (Micah 6: 8)	"Make yourself an example of good works with integrity and dignity" (Titus 2: 7)	"Do to others what you want them to do to you" (Luke 6: 31)	"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you" (Matthew 7: 7)
6th form mentoring programme – supporting students in the lower school to support access to education and inclusion and attendance.	Aim for 100% attendance so that you are as prepared for your exams as possible. Arrive on time. Have high expectations of yourself and others.	Be proud of your tutor group and contribute positively to challenges (behaviour / attendance).	Try new things – expand your horizons.
Sign up for the Sixth Form Committee or other groups such as the Equality and Diversity Council in order to be part of positive change in the community.	Adhere to the correct expectations of dress code – be a role model for the younger students.	Show kindness, empathy and understanding to all students.	Resilience is key - Failure is feedback, feedback is knowledge, knowledge is power.
Participate in and actively seek community projects to support and maintain.	Bring the correct equipment to lessons to show that you are ready and eager to learn.	As 6th form – be a positive role model for others within the school. Support and nurture others.	Attend as many university open days and careers fairs as you can. Find out about things you don't know yet.
Become involved in 6th form mentoring projects to support younger students and peers.	Demonstrate excellent behaviour and learning in lessons.	Actively contribute to events and opportunities in the sixth form and the wider community.	Expand your knowledge on diversity and inclusion.
TeDX talks and assembly presentations from tutor groups and individuals.	Be the best version of yourself.	Explore, develop and share connections for yourself and to others who would benefit from them.	Explore wider knowledge and understanding of subjects.

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Dates
for the diary

- Correct at time of creation

SEPT

Thursday 10th- Abbey Prize Giving
Friday 11th- School Photos
Monday 21st- Year 13 Geogrpahy Trip
Thursday 24th Year 12 Tutor Evening
Saturday 26th- Sponsored 20mile walk
Thursday 24th- Yr 12 Tutor Evening

OCT

Wednesday 2nd- UCAS Conservatoire deadline
Monday 6th- Year 12 assessment week
Wednesday 7th- UKMT Maths Challenge
Wednesday 14th- Year 12 Parent information evening
Thursday 15th- UCAS early entry deadline
Friday 16th- BAttle of the Bands
Friday 23rd- Inset day

NOV

Monday 2nd - Return to school
Thursday 5th Yr 13 Parents Eve

DEC

Tuesday 1st- Adventurous Training Awards Evening
Thursday 7th- Yr 13 Mock Exams begin
Tuesday 8th & Wednesday 9th- Year 12 Geography London Residential
Monday 14th- The Abbey Carol Service
Tuesday 15th The Gryphon School Carol Service
Thursday 17th- Last Day of Term

JAN

Monday 5th- Return to school
Thursday 8th- 6th form Drama Trip
Wednesday 14th- Yr 13 Interview Experience Day
Wednesday 14th-Yr 13 UCAS Deadline
Monday 18th Week of Year 12 Mock Exams
Wednesday 20th - Careers Fair
Tuesday 26th - RE trip & Year 13 Parent Information Evening
Wednesday 27th - Year 13 Practise Interviews
Thursday 28th- Year 13 Parent Information Evening
Thursday 29th- Yr 12 Parents Evening

FEB

Wednesday 10th- Saturday 13th- School Production
Monday 15th- Half Term Begins
Monday 22nd- Inset Day
Tuesday 23rd - Return to School
Tuesday 23rd & Wednesday 24th - Year 13 Drama Exams

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Dates
for the diary

- Correct at time of creation

MARCH

Wednesday 3rd - Year 13 Parent Information Evening & Year 13 Mock Music Recital
Monday 15th- Year 13 Mock week,
Tuesday 23rd - Year 12 UCAS Discovery Trip
Thursday 25th - Last Day of term
Friday 26th - Gold D of E
Tuesday 30th - Sixth Form Rome Trip

APRIL

Monday 12th - Return to School
Tuesday 13th - 15th - Year 13 Art, Photography and Art 3D exams
Wednesday 14th - Year 12 Parent Information Evening
Monday 19th - 21st - Year 13 Art, Photography and Art 3D exams
Wednesday 21st - 27th - Year 13 Language Orals
Wednesday 28th- Law, Criminology and Sociology Trip
Thursday 29th- Year 12 BTEC Sport Exam
Friday 30th- Alevel Drama Trip

MAY

Monday 3rd - Bank Holiday
Wednesday 5th - Year 12 Drama Exams
Friday 7th - Year 13 Leavers Day & Ten Tors Weekend
Monday 11th Alevel Exam window begins and Careers Week
Wednesday 26th - Year 12 Culture Day
Friday 28th - Year 12 Work Experience Submission Deadline & Last Day of Term

JUNE

Monday 7th - Return to school
Tuesday 15th - Yr 12 Geography Trip
Thursday 17th - Yr 12 Geography Trip
Monday 21st - Friday 25th - Year 12 End of Year Exams
Wednesday 23rd - Alevel Exam Contingency Day
Monday 28th - Inset Day
Tuesday 29th - Thursday 1st - Year 12 Work Experience

JULY

Friday 2nd - Return to School
Monday 5th - Arts Week
Monday 12th - School Celebration Week
Friday 16th - Wednesday 21st - Music Tour
Monday 19th - Whole School Sports Day
Monday 19th - Friday 23rd - Gold D of E Final
Wednesday 21st - Last day of term

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Thank You

Thank you for joining our Sixth Form.
By following these guidelines, we believe you will have a really enjoyable and successful time with us.