



THE GRYPHON SCHOOL

SIXTH FORM HANDBOOK

2019

Welcome to the Sixth Form

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**ABSENCES SHOULD BE REPORTED ON 01935 811055 –
BY 10 AM IF POSSIBLE PLEASE**



The Aims of the Sixth Form

- 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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The Sixth Form: Notes for guidance

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 prefect, 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.

Studying

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. 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. 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 ongoing process as well. **It is**

suggested that you buy an A4 lever arch file for each subject with dividers ready for the start of September.

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.

Attendance is essential as you are a full-time student within a School-based Sixth Form. You will be expected to attend both registration and lessons, arriving punctually for both. School attendance is monitored through registration with your Tutor at 8.50am and 2.10pm. Attendance at assemblies and tutorial sessions is also compulsory. In the interests of good communication, your health and safety requirements and with a view to providing evidence for attendance and punctuality in references, you are expected to liaise with your Tutor regarding absences. Whenever possible you should seek your Tutor's permission in advance for known appointments, however, for unplanned absences such as illness a note or phone call to the Sixth Form Office on 01935 811055 by 10.00 am if possible is expected. **Please do not email.** Should you wish to leave the school site during the day, please sign out via the signing out book in the Sixth form office and sign back in on your return. Driving lessons may only be booked in a free period or the lunch hour, not during lesson time, or blocked study periods. In the event of a student's attendance falling below an acceptable level of 95%, parents will be contacted and in some cases strategies such as attendance reports will be implemented to support the student. **Students whose attendance during Year 12 falls below an acceptable standard may not be able to proceed with their studies. We will use a warning letter system and involve parents throughout this process.**

Course changes 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).**

Café @ Gryphon is open to Sixth Form students from 8.30 am to 2.00 pm, 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 10.30 am. Hot food is available daily from 12:20 pm. 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. Wi-Fi is available throughout the school including the Café. The Catering Manager is Trudie Painter.

Tutor Groups You are expected to remain in your tutor base during morning and afternoon Registration and Tutor time. During these times important information will be given out, and there is a tutor time calendar that will be followed. 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. 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 on the front of this handbook.

Student responsibilities 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 – organizing charity events, running clubs.
- Become involved in the wider community programme both in and out of school.

An opportunity you may want to be involved in is the peer mentoring scheme in which Year 12 students support younger pupils in Years 7 or 8. Details of this will be given to you in September. You will also be given opportunities to assume roles of responsibility as Prefects, Lunch time supervisors, on the Charity committee, the environment and Eco-club committee, as well as Sixth Form Council reps on the School Council and student representatives on the School Governing Body.

You are reminded that drinking alcohol during the school day is not acceptable. Smoking, including eCigarettes, 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.

Enrichment and Pathways Programme - 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.

Prefects are an integral part of this school. They assist in the efficient running of the school at formal events e.g. parent's evenings, on duties at lunchtime 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 prefect at the start of the academic year. The Heads of Year will co-ordinate the Prefect teams and duties.

Prefects 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 prefect. The prefects 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.

The Common Room 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 socialize. Each tutor group, on a weekly rota basis, will be responsible for tidying the Common Room and Study Room each day, supervised by their Tutor. During your duty week you will register in the Common Room. The Prefects will meet to discuss any issues arising in relation to the Common Room.

The Sixth Form Bulletin is published every Friday 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 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.

Travelling to school and parking is only a concern for those wishing to use their own transport. 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.**

It is often the case that a student passes their driving test part way through the school year. If a student has already paid for a place on the bus but no longer requires their bus pass for this or any other reason, he or she may be eligible for a pro-rata refund from the day the bus pass is returned to the Bursary. All queries relating to school transport should be referred to the Bursar.

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. Provocative dress, such as revealing tops, offensive slogans and dangerous accessories will not be tolerated. 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.

16 to 19 Bursary Scheme - 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.

Learning Resources Centre (Library) - The LRC is available for Sixth Form to use every day. It is open from 8.30 am until 5pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30 am until 4.00 pm on a Friday. During busy exam periods the LRC is only open to Sixth Form students studying for exams. The LRC is a quiet working area. If students need to work in group and discuss aspects they should work outside Café 6 and the canteen area.

LRC Facilities - Wireless access is available throughout the LRC and we would encourage students to bring in laptops, tablets or phones to access the internet for research.

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 LRC has a varied range of stationery items available for students to purchase; pens, pencils, rulers and well as headphones and memory sticks.

Within the LRC 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. The upper floor of the LRC is for Sixth Form use only.

Copies of text books and reference stock to support all of the subjects taught at the school are held in the LRC as well as a wide range of fiction to cater for all tastes. The LRC intranet page which is available as an app gives useful links to the Library Catalogue and information on referencing and plagiarism.

The LRC Manager, Mrs Julie Hoskins and the other LRC staff are available to help with queries from students from books to internet research, plagiarism and referencing.

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 Assignment manager and iLesson. 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.

Careers - Students can book an individual careers guidance interview with our Careers Advice and Guidance Manager, Mr Steve Martin, by visiting the Careers Office in the LRC. We can offer expert, impartial guidance on the following topics: careers planning, UCAS advice, employment training and apprenticeships, work shadowing, A Level choice, personal statements and student finance, along with CV, applications, cover letters and interview skills.

The Careers department hosts "Careers Cafes" on a regular basis where individuals from a range of professions and industries are invited to share their experiences with Sixth Form students. There is also an annual careers fair held in the Spring term. Careers-related trips to employers, UCAS convention and other relevant opportunities are promoted through assemblies, tutors, careers noticeboard, the Sixth Form bulletin and the careers area of the school website - www.gryphon.dorset.sch.uk/learning/curriculum/careers

Examinations – External examinations will take place, in line with new Government exam guidelines, 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. We are not offering AS level examinations/subjects.

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.

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. It is the responsibility of the Examinations Manager to make sure your examinations run as smoothly as possible. 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 Learning Support Department 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 AS/A Level. The Head of Learning Support and SENCO at the Gryphon School is Sarah Darlington.

Exam 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.

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