

Q&A with our Head Students

1. *Where do I go on the first day of Sixth Form?*

On the first day of Sixth Form you initially go to the Sixth Form Common Room which is located at the back of the school in front of the AstroTurf (opposite the school library). This is the main meeting point for Sixth Formers and is where the Pastoral Team is located. There will be an assembly for Year 12 during registration on the first day back and you will be told what Learning Coach group you will be in.

2. *When will I get my timetable?*

You will receive your timetable towards the end of your first week in Sixth Form as the Senior Management Team need time to confirm options and look at the GCSE grades that you receive in the Summer. This is definitely quite an exciting moment that you'll have in your Sixth Form experience as you get the chance to compare timetables with friends and get the first insight into Sixth Form life. If there are any problems with your timetable or anything needs to be changed, just tell one of the Sixth Form Team straight away.

3. *What is the policy regarding mobile phones in the Sixth Form environment?*

Unlike the lower years, Year 12&13 are allowed to use mobile phones but only in certain areas. These areas are the Sixth Form Common Room, The Sixth Form Cafe (Block 9) and The Library (for work purposes only). You are not allowed to use your mobile phones in lessons or walking through the school.

4. *How different are A Levels in comparison to GCSE's?*

Due to the qualification being of a higher level it is inevitable that it is going to be different to sitting your GCSE's. The biggest difference that I discovered was the workload. There is a lot of independent learning that goes into studying your A Level subjects, however you adapt to this very quickly and you have a lot of support from the Pastoral Team and your teachers to cope with this change.

5. *What Activities and Programmes can you get involved in during your time at Sixth Form?*

There are so many different opportunities that you can get involved in. There are lots of different committees that you can join such as the Fundraising Committee where you can organise a range of activities for events such as Children Need and Red Nose Day. In Year 13 there is a Ball Committee which you can join and help to get involved in organising the Leavers' Prom. There are also other opportunities such as the Sixth Form Tuck Shop where you can help to volunteer and sell stationary to younger years. Personally, we found the more we got involved with the more exciting it made our week.

6. *How do I earn my Sixth Form Stars and how does the system work?*

You earn your Sixth Form Stars by volunteering, assisting and representing the school. Your Learning Coach will keep track of the amount of activities you take part in. The stars work based on a point system, there are 4 different 'stages' of the stars these are Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum. For each one that you collect you get a small badge which you can put on your school tie. It's really worth aiming for these stars as they help you to get a lot more involved in Sixth Form life.

7. *How do I apply to be a Senior Prefect?*

You usually apply to be a Senior Prefect towards the end of the Summer Term in Year 12. The application process will be explained in more detail closer to the time, however you are usually asked to complete a letter, PowerPoint or video on your school achievements and what skills you have to offer for that particular role. A shortlist is then created from these applications by the Senior Management Team.

8. *How hard are AS/A levels?*

We would be lying if we said that A levels weren't hard and that the jump from GCSE wasn't too difficult, because it is quite a big step up. However, we do feel that it is manageable if the right amount of time and work is put in outside of lessons.

9. *What is the right balance between working and socialising?*

Whilst we do feel that work and extra reading does need to be done outside of the classroom, we do think that it's important to have a break from studies and just relax occasionally, as this sometimes can be just as beneficial. We would also suggest that you do enjoy your time whilst you're in the Sixth Form as it does fly by so don't take it for granted. We would still suggest completing extra work outside of lessons though as this will be beneficial come lessons and the end of the year for exams.

10. *What is the relationship between the teachers and students?*

Personally, we feel that the teacher-student relationship does change between year 11 and Sixth Form, as they do see you as young adults. Everything that the teachers do is with your best intentions in mind, and they do everything they can in order to help and get you through your studies. They do understand that it is hard, and they are always there for support if or when it's needed.

11. *How much support is available in the Sixth Form?*

Throughout the Sixth Form there is a lot of support available, not only from learning coaches and subject teachers, but also from the Sixth Form Team. They're constantly checking on everyone's well-being and monitoring how you're getting on. If you do have any troubles, then they are always available and will do their utmost to try and help, whatever the situation is.

12. What happens if you don't like a subject?

Whilst we are not saying that this happens to everyone, there are some occasions where people may not like a subject they've chosen, and this may be due to a number of reasons. In this case, you are able, up to a certain point which is usually the end of September, switch or drop subjects from your timetable, and you can discuss this through with the Sixth Form Team. However, we would advise that you do this as soon as possible. During the first few weeks of Sixth Form, you will be given the opportunity to try out all the subjects you are interested in so, hopefully, you will be able to make the right decision quite quickly.

13. What happens during the first week?

Normally, the first week is quite relaxed and eases you into the Sixth Form. There are usually some activities and exercises that take place, and we feel that these activities can be a good icebreaker and can also open your eyes to things you may not have seen or done before. We really enjoyed the first week in the Sixth Form due to these activities.

14. What facilities are available for Sixth Formers to use?

We are fortunate to have really good facilities in the Sixth Form. These range from the Common Room where you can relax, to the Library which is open all day, where you are able to do some extra work in the quiet, with a number of devices/laptops also available to use. There's also the Block 9 Coffee Shop which sells a range of hot drinks, and also the toasties and muffins that they sell are unbelievable and we would highly recommend them!

15. What happens if I haven't got the entry grades to do the subject that I want to do?

During the first week you will have another options interview with a member of the Sixth Form Team and they will advise you about the right subjects to choose based on your GCSE grades and your career plans in the future.