



Sturminster Newton High School  
Sixth Form



# Welcome to Sixth Form at SNHS

## Induction Handbook & Essential Information

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**Thank you** for choosing to become part of the Sturminster Newton Sixth Form.

The aims of the Sixth Form are to:

- Ensure success in your chosen courses
- Provide opportunities to develop personal qualities
- Support transition into young adulthood, ready to play an effective role in society
- Provide advice and guidance about progression

This booklet covers all aspects of Sixth Form life and we would greatly appreciate all students and their parents/carers taking time to familiarise themselves with the information it contains; it is intended as a reference for all Sixth Formers and their families.

Many aspects of Sixth Form life differ from the lower school, for example the requirement to undertake independent study, study periods and a different dress code.

We hope you will enjoy your time here in the Sixth Form and we will offer you all the support, advice, guidance and encouragement you need to get you where you want to go.

Please read the information carefully and do not hesitate to contact the Sixth Form team should you have any questions.

Mr S Ling (*Head of Sixth Form*) [4179sl@mynhs.net](mailto:4179sl@mynhs.net)

Mrs A Gilmore (*Assistant Head of Sixth Form*) [4179ag@mynhs.net](mailto:4179ag@mynhs.net)

Mrs H Privett (*Sixth Form Coordinator & Student Wellbeing*) [4179hlp@mynhs.net](mailto:4179hlp@mynhs.net)

Mrs Anita Woods (*Sixth Form Counsellor*)



## Sixth Form Transition Projects



The transition from GCSE to A level is a significant challenge and the demand and complexity of courses is much greater. Making this transition is typically something that students struggle with at first, but most soon develop skills and routines that enable them to be successful and thrive on the

challenge of a different way of working.

We want to support you in being successful in making this transition. Each subject has prepared a Transition Project to help bridge this gap. This work is available on the courses section of the Sixth Form website.

If you have any questions about this work please direct them to the staff responsible for the subject. Details can be found on the Sixth Form section of the school website:

### [SNHS Transition Projects](#)

Should you decide to change courses during the first few weeks, you'll need to first contact the Head of Sixth Form. If you are unsure whether a subject may be of interest, the transition work is an extremely good way to get a sense of the course you may be wishing to switch to.

### My subject checklist for Transition Project

Tick once downloaded from School website  
[www.mysnhs.net/sixth-form-courses](http://www.mysnhs.net/sixth-form-courses)



## Work Experience

GET EXPERIENCE

STAND OUT  
FROM THE CROWD



Work experience is a vital part of the Sixth Form programme and all students are expected to complete at least 30 hours work experience during their time in the Sixth Form. The majority do this during Year 12 so that Year 13 is free for exam preparation and working towards next steps. A week of work experience is scheduled for the week prior to February half term and no lessons will take place during this time.

Whilst some students do struggle to find placements that take them beyond their current experience and which link to their career interests, we do see many secure, meaningful and inspiring placements every year. Some students do more than the minimum number of hours, continuing their placements into the summer holidays. This has often led directly to paid work and, in all cases, boosts a student's profile and employability.

Level 2 students will need to complete up to 120 hours depending on their time table. Some students will be required to complete 300 hours over 2 years (course dependent).

Placements must be arranged independently and coordinated via tutors and the school office. All placements need to be checked to ensure they meet guidelines for student work experience providers. Whilst we already have an extensive database of providers, we always encourage students to seek opportunities further afield – just let us know in good time!

Places I would like to complete work experience/areas of interest




# Dates for Your Diary

## Academic Year Term dates

[Term Dates — Sturminster Newton High School \(mysnhs.net\)](http://mysnhs.net)

Autumn Term	Tues 5th Sept – Fri 15th Dec 2023
Half Term	
Monday 23rd October – Friday 27th October 2023	
Spring Term 1	Wed 3rd Jan – Thurs 28th Mar 2024
Half Term	
Monday 12th February – Friday 16th February 2024	
Summer Term 1	Mon 15th April – Friday 24th May 2024
Half Term	
Monday 27th May – Friday 31st May 2024	
Summer Term 2	Mon 3rd June – Wed 24th July 2024

## Staff Training & Public Holiday Days

2023
Monday 4th September - Inset
Friday 29th September - Inset
Friday 24th November - Inset
Monday 25th December - Public
Tuesday 26th December - Public
2024
Tuesday 2nd January - Public
Monday 19th February - Inset
Friday 29th March – Monday 1st April - Easter
Monday 6th May - Public
Monday 27th May - Public

## Important dates to note

Progress Grades due: PG1 Oct, PG2 Dec, PG3 March, PG4 May

Yr12 Parents' information event	September
Yr13 Parents' information event	September
Yr12 Yr13 Parents' evening	November
Yr12 Work Experience (1 week)	February
Yr12 Internal Assessments	May/June
Progression Week	July

## Post-16 Transport



School transport for Post 16 students is **NOT FREE and must be applied for.**

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.

**Students travelling via Vale Coaches:** Vale may have already contacted you regarding Post 16 transport. If you have not heard from them please contact them on 01963 363000 and they will be happy to assist you. Alternatively go to [www.dorsetforyou.com](http://www.dorsetforyou.com).

**Students who travel from Blandford, Durweston, Shillingstone, Child Okeford:** 'First Group X10' - a weekly return pass has previously been the cheapest option at £25, please check timetable and pricing as it is set to rise.

**Students who live in Somerset:** you will need to contact Somerset Council at <http://www.somerset.gov.uk> and complete the form to 'Request school transport on a paying basis'. The cost for transport previously was £800, although it is set to rise. You can pay annually or by monthly instalments.

There may be **help towards the cost** of Post 16 transport from the **16-19 Bursary Fund**. Although we are not able to make any payments prior to students commencing Year12, we are happy for you to submit an application now for preliminary approval.

*Please see the details of how to apply on the next page.*

**Lessons at Shaftesbury School** – there is a free bus link between Sturminster and Shaftesbury during the school day. The timetable for the link bus will be published in September so if you travel to Shaftesbury for lessons you must familiarise yourself with the bus times as they may not be the same each day. Details will be provided to those students studying at Shaftesbury at the start of term.

## 16-19 Bursary Fund

Every year the school is allocated funds by the government to support students remaining in Post-16 education when financial issues might impact on their time in the Sixth Form. We aim to do this in the following ways:



- Students identified by the government as ‘highly vulnerable’ such as students looked after by the local authority, care leavers, students who receive Income Support [in their own right] and those entitled to both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance will receive a bursary of £1,200 in instalments throughout the year.
- Students who are eligible for free school meals or who come from families with a household income of below £30,000 will be able to apply for assistance to meet educational needs, such as the cost of transport to school, equipment (receipts required) and educational visits. Once it is established a student is eligible for support, payments will be made from the bursary fund, but it is not guaranteed that the fund will be sufficient to pay all needs in full.
- If sufficient funds are available we may also be able to provide some support to students on a family income of £30,000 - £34,000.
- If sufficient money is available after all identified needs have been met, we will also provide a termly lump sum payment to students eligible for support under the scheme to go towards the general costs of remaining in education. However, in the current climate this is very unlikely.

Further information and an application form for the 16-19 bursary fund is available on the school website under *Sixth Form/Sixth Form Bursary*. If you need further information or wish to discuss a bursary application, please contact a member of the Sixth Form team, or email Mrs Privett [4179hlp@mynhs.net](mailto:4179hlp@mynhs.net)



# Sixth Form Dress Code

The dress code of Sixth Form is 'business casual' with the aim being to provide a professional and safe work environment, where students can feel comfortable and get the most from their learning.

The dress code also aims to support students in creating a healthy separation between work and home, as well as providing opportunity for self-expression and confidence building.

This dress code explicitly does not suggest value judgements in terms of what is or is not permissible, acting instead to provide a guide to the style and tone of clothing in line with the school environment.

## **Guidance on dress:**

No ripped jeans (clothing should be in a good state of repair)

Shorts, skirts, dresses should be long enough so that skin should not come into contact with seating when sitting down

No items of underwear should be visible. Please check that your clothes are not see-through, including trousers/leggings

No very small crop tops or very low-cut tops (similar to the above, skin should not touch the back of the chair when seated)

No pornographic images or offensive slogans

Hoods are allowed, but hoods should be worn down

Coats are permitted, but should be removed during lessons

Tattoos must not be visible and no facial piercings other than a nose stud

Earpools/earplugs are not permitted

Make-up in line for a work/study environment. Certainly room for individuality, but if you're not sure where the line is, please talk with a member of the Sixth Form team.

Hair can be dyed, but must be a natural hair colour

## A note on details

In an effort to avoid a prescriptive uniform, or exhaustive list of dos and don'ts, this dress code provides a guideline only on how to meet the expectation.

This guide has been delivered through discussion with the student leadership team, and review of local sixth forms/colleges. The aim is to meet the spirit of the dress code, rather than the letter of the policy.

As such, although conversation with the Sixth Form team is welcome to get advice on what is and is not in line, the final decision will be with the Sixth Form team.

This approach is in part about developing your professional judgement as you move into real life work environments.



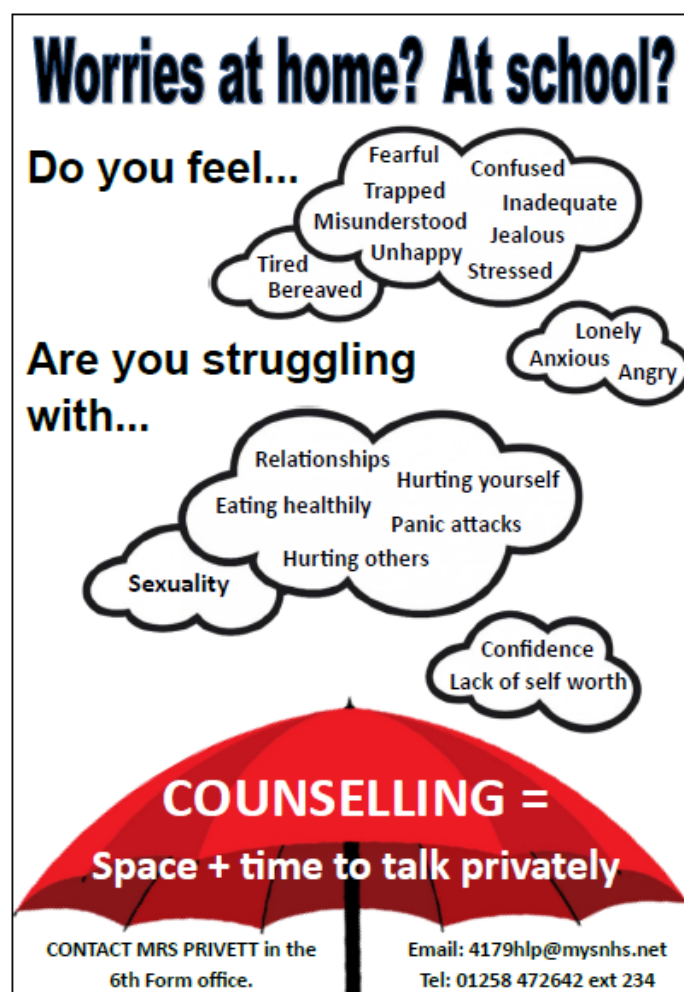
Business Casual

## Guidance on challenging dress code:

In the first instance the assumption will always be made that not meeting dress code is unintentional and should only require a conversation. A member of staff will note with you that you've not matched the dress code, and politely ask that this is resolved by the next day.

Should the choice be substantially outside of the code then you'll be asked to have a quick chat with the Sixth Form team.

## Sixth Form Counselling/Support



### How do I access counselling?

Here at Sturminster Sixth Form we are lucky to have our very own counsellor, Mrs Anita Woods.

She provides a free, confidential service, which is open to all students from 9am – 3pm every Wednesday during term time.

To book an appointment please speak to your tutor or any member of the Sixth Form team; Mrs Privett will then arrange your appointment and send details via your school email.

As one of the school's Designated Safeguard Leads, Mrs Privett will treat your request with the strictest confidentiality.

## Tutor time

As a Year 12 student you are required to attend tutor time with your tutor (or the briefing on Mondays) every morning, unless you are travelling to Shaftesbury School. Attendance is compulsory, and you should be sitting down ready for tutor/briefing **before the bell for the start of the school day**.



Contact with your tutor is one of the main ways we can provide support to help you achieve your full potential in the Sixth Form and help you plan your progression to higher education, apprenticeship or employment.

Your tutor will lead you through a structured programme of lessons and activities. Themes include developing awareness of the world around you, study skills, wellbeing and emotional and mental health, relationships, interview technique, applying for jobs, apprenticeship and university and developing independence. Your tutor will monitor your progress and help you prepare for the future. Tutors will also keep you up to date with what is going on in terms of school events, opportunities regarding volunteering, employment, higher education and apprenticeships.

Your tutor or a member of the Sixth Form Team will also:

- Register groups and monitor attendance at lessons.
- Review progress with students and set appropriate targets for student progression.
- Liaise with parents and the Head of Sixth Form where there are concerns with attendance, welfare or progression.
- Advise students with regard to pastoral matters affecting student progress. The Head of Sixth Form will liaise with external agencies where necessary.
- Write student references for UCAS/HE, apprenticeship or employment.

## Assemblies

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

It is compulsory for all students to attend these sessions; further details of these sessions will be made available at the start of the year.

## Attendance

At the start of Year 12, all students are issued with a 'swipe card'. This card **must** be used every day when you come into school to register you electronically.



You must also use this card to register for your private study sessions and must **swipe out when leaving** the school site, as this swipe system will be used in the event of a fire to report the whereabouts of students.



All Year 12 students are required to be on site between the hours of 8.30am and 3pm. Year 12 may not leave the school site unless previously given permission by the Head of Sixth Form or until the Head of Sixth Form announces he has relaxed the rules.

Students travelling between Sturminster and Shaftesbury school sites need to remember to swipe in and swipe out as they arrive and leave both school sites.

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

If swipe cards are lost or damaged, replacements can be obtained via the Sixth Form office at a cost of £3.

# Lesson Times


	SNHS		Shaftesbury School
	Mon/Wed/Fri	Tues/Thurs	Tues/Thurs (travelling days)
Registration/Assembly	08.30 (10 mins)	08.30 (20 mins)	08.35
Lesson 1	08.40 (65 mins)	08.50 (60 mins)	09.00
Lesson 2	09.45 (65 mins)	09.50 (60 mins)	10.00
Break	10.50	10.50	11.00
Lesson 3	11.10 (65 mins)	11.10 (65 mins)	11.20
Lesson 4	12.15 (65 mins)	12.15 (65 mins)	12.20
Lunch	13.20	13.20	13.20
Lesson 5	14.00	14.00	14.00
School ends	15.00	15.00	15.00

## Attendance at lessons

Each student must attend all timetabled lessons, arriving on time with all necessary equipment. Evidence shows that poor attendance almost always leads to poor results, so your teachers will monitor your attendance and punctuality.

If you know you are going to miss a lesson you **must complete a green Notification of Absence Form** which are available from the Sixth Form Office. It is your responsibility to inform your teacher and arrange to catch up on work.

## Attendance Policy

<b>Not swiped into Sixth Form &amp; non-attendance in Tutor and Period 1</b>	 Absence email sent to parent from Sixth Form office requesting reason for absence.
<b>Student misses a lesson/s</b>	Subject teacher emails student requesting reason for absence ( <i>if permission not previously sought</i> ).
<b>Further lessons missed</b>	Subject teacher contacts home to report absence.
<b>Attendance drops below 85% for a subject</b>	Tutor arranges interview with student to discuss absence and the tutor informs Sixth Form staff.
<b>Attendance drops below 80%</b>	Discussion with Head of Sixth Form 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 2 week period. Student placed on Attendance Report, which is monitored by Head of Sixth Form, home informed.
<b>No Improvement</b>	Letter sent home by Head of Sixth Form initiating disciplinary procedure.

Failure to meet these attendance requirements alongside underperformance may jeopardise your place in Sixth Form.



# Planned and Unplanned Absences

## Planned Absences

Sixth Form study is very challenging for all students, and there is a proven link between high levels of attendance and successful outcomes.



Each time a lesson is missed increases the risk that a topic comes up in an exam which you have not covered in a classroom. We therefore encourage students to keep lessons missed to an absolute minimum.

Examples of acceptable reasons for missing a lesson include:

- attending a university open day
- appointment with a hospital consultant
- practical driving exam (**driving theory tests and driving lessons are not acceptable reasons to miss lessons**)

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

If you need to be absent you must complete a **green Notification of Absence Form** which are available from the Sixth Form Office.

If you are absent with no explanation your register will be marked as unauthorised absence. Please also note that it is not possible to authorise family holidays: these absences will always be recorded as unauthorised.

Unauthorised absence can affect external references.



## Unplanned Absences

If you are unexpectedly absent such as through illness, either you or your parent/guardian should notify the school before 9:00am on 01258 472642 or email

[4179hlp@mysnhs.net](mailto:4179hlp@mysnhs.net)

**You should endeavour to call/email each day of absence.**



## Independent Study Time in School

When you get your timetable you will immediately be struck by the fact that you are not in lessons all day. All Year 12 and 13 students have study periods built into their timetable. These **non-contact lessons must be used constructively** to ensure learning and progress: they are NOT to be viewed as free time.

Independent study is an essential skill that has to be learned in order to be successful at A-level. There is a vast difference between study at GCSE and A level and we work hard to help students to develop into independent learners who go beyond just completing home learning set by teachers, and who will read around their subjects and review their own work, producing summaries, revision notes and extension work.

Each subject has published a '**Guide to Independent Study**', which will be distributed at the start of the year, and are available on the website. Students can expect teachers to regularly set challenging independent learning tasks which are relevant to their courses. They can also expect teachers to provide constructive feedback indicating how to improve their work.

Students may choose where they spend this time, either in the Sixth Form quiet study areas (SF2 and Rm 22), which are both equipped with computers and laptop charging sockets. Note that these areas are for silent study only, please respect others needs for quiet study space. No food or drink may be consumed in these areas. Alternatively, you may wish to study in the Sixth Form Café. The café has a more relaxed environment where you can carry out group work or enjoy a drink or something to eat while you work.



Many departments, particularly practical subjects such as Art or Photography, encourage students to spend study time in department areas. You can study in subject rooms when they are available.





Students will be expected to do at least **one hour of learning outside the classroom for every hour they spend in the classroom**. This is the basic requirement for you to keep up to date with the pace of delivery of the course. A lot of content is delivered in each lesson and it is essential that you consolidate the material studied in lessons by working on it in both your study periods and at home. Being able to study at home and developing your skill as an independent learner are vital for success at this level. Students who put the effort into developing these skills early on are the ones who do best in their exams.

It should also be said that there will be times when additional work is required and you will need to go beyond the “1 hour for 1 hour” requirement;

- Preparation of coursework
- Revision for tests and mock exams
- Deadlines

Students who meet or exceed their target grades typically use all their study periods during the school day for study and then work 1-2 hours each night of the week and 2-4 over the weekend.

Preparing for lessons;

- Reading around the subject
- Textbook tasks
- Practice questions
- Creating revision resources



Being a full-time student is just that and **it is your full time job**. We do not recommend more than 10 hours a week for a part time job and although we understand the value of part time work



A student who has the ability to learn independently, manage their time and meet deadlines will be more likely to succeed in both university study and employment and this ability will be commented upon in references supplied by the school.

## Sixth Form Progress Grades



During your time in the Sixth Form you will find that your teachers regularly carry out various forms of assessment. This is a key means by which both we and you are able to gauge your progress in your learning. There are regular progress grades issued to you and copies will be sent home to your parents. The grades in these Progress Grades will reflect recent assessments that you completed in your subjects.

The Progress Grades in the Sixth Form are slightly different to those in the lower school. The first difference is in the grades you will receive. These are traditional letters A\* - E, not numerical grades. Note also that grades A\*-E are passes at A level and can help you in your next steps; BTECs are awarded Distinction (\*), Merit or a Pass. At each Progress Grade you will be given the following information:

- ✓ **Current Grade:** this reflects your current attainment based on recent assessment. It indicates how well you are doing NOW.
- ✓ **End of Course Estimate:** the grade your teachers predict you will achieve by the end of the course, informed by current performance and a judgement about the progress you are likely to make in this time. This is where you are heading.
- ✓ **Target Grade:** the minimum grade you should achieve, based on your performance at GCSE. This is fixed but is worth discussing with your teachers – you may feel it is too low and you can do better, or you may be worried that it is beyond you at the moment.

It is important that you develop an awareness of the grade that you are working at and how you can improve.

In addition to grades there are particular attributes and qualities that we regard as important indicators of success at this level

and your teachers will provide feedback on each of these. Your ability to study independently and in lessons is vital. But so is the development of thinking skills and your ability to question and dig a little deeper. How engaged are you in your learning? – do you get stuck into debates, or sit back and let others do the leg-work in discussion? Finally, are you organised and prepared for lessons, arriving with homework done? These aspects of successful A level studentship are detailed below. You will also be given a score for your performance in four criteria described below. These relate to the key learning habits and behaviour required for success in Post-16 education.

#### S = Independent Study

4	<b>Always</b> completes work set to high standard; evidence of extensive independent study and commitment to subject beyond lesson time; always reviews lesson material and initiates own research
3	<b>Most</b> work completed to a good standard; evidence of some independent study but room for improvement; mostly reviews lesson material and initiates own research
2	<b>Sometimes</b> completes work but of variable quality; little evidence of independent study; sometimes reviews lesson material and initiates own research
1	<b>Rarely</b> completes work; no evidence of independent study; never reviews lesson material or initiates own research

#### T = Thinking

4	Thinking <b>always</b> at a high level; questioning approach; shows initiative and consistently explores wider issues, arguments and ideas; makes intelligent links
3	Thinking <b>often</b> at a high level; often adopts a questioning approach; some exploration of wider issues, arguments and ideas; makes links
2	Thinking <b>sometimes</b> goes beyond the obvious; sometimes questions; sometimes attempts to explore wider issues or make links within the subject
1	Thinking <b>seldom</b> goes beyond the obvious; rarely questions; makes links and explores wider issues reluctantly or only when prompted

#### E = Engagement

4	<b>Always</b> engaged in class activities; conscientious; motivated; resilient; excellent level of effort
3	<b>Mostly</b> engaged in class activities, generally conscientious and motivated, quite resilient, good level of effort
2	<b>Sometimes</b> engaged in class activities, variable motivation, weak resilience, little level of effort
1	<b>Poor</b> engagement in class activities, passive, unmotivated, poor effort

#### P = Planning and organisation

4	Highly organised, <b>always</b> equipped, meets all deadlines, plans ahead to enrich own learning
3	<b>Usually</b> organised, normally equipped, meets most deadlines, some forward planning to enrich own learning
2	<b>Occasionally</b> organised, sometimes equipped; often misses deadlines; little forward planning to enrich learning
1	Disorganised, poorly equipped, <b>rarely</b> meets deadlines; no forward planning to enrich learning

## Working Partnerships

### ...for Enrichment



### ...for Progression



### ...for Academic



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