

Forge Valley

Student and Parent/Carers

Sixth Form Handbook

2023-24



GENERAL INFORMATION

Welcome to Forge Valley Sixth Form. This handbook aims to provide you with all the necessary information you need to make your time in Sixth Form productive and enjoyable.

KEY STAFF

Head of Sixth Form – Dawn Cook	0114 2348805 (Ext 2667) dcook@forgevalley.sheffield.sch.uk
Sixth Form Manager – Rachel Petters	0114 2294046 - Direct phone line rpeters@forgevalley.sheffield.sch.uk
Sixth Form Admin Officer – Berry Clay	0114 2348805 (Ext 2668) bclay@forgevalley.sheffield.sch.uk
Academic Mentor – Chloe Lyon	clyon@forgevalley.sheffield.sch.uk
Examinations Officer – Charlotte Springthorpe	0114 2348805 (Ext 2605) cspringthorpe@forgevalley.sheffield.sch.uk
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We welcome contact from parents/carers and consider a mutually supportive relationship crucial to a student's academic and personal development. Please use the telephone numbers/email addresses above to contact us.

SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

The Form Tutor or the Sixth Form Manager will usually be a student's first point of contact. They are both essential resources in developing the student's wellbeing, general study skills/habits and in monitoring progress.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Term Dates

	FROM	TO
Autumn Term 2023	Monday 4 September 2023	Friday 22 December 2023
Half Term	Monday 23 October 2023	Friday 27 October 2023
Christmas Holiday	Monday 25 December 2023	Friday 5 January 2024
Spring Term 2024	Monday 8 January 2024	Thursday 28 March 2024
Half Term	Monday 12 February 2024	Friday 16 February 2024
Easter Holiday	Friday 29 March 2024	Friday 12 April 2024
Summer Term 2024	Monday 15 April 2024	Tuesday 23 July 2024
May Day	Monday 6 May 2024	
Half Term	Monday 27 May 2024	Friday 31 May 2024

Training Days

Monday 4th September 2023

Friday 6th October 2023

Monday 27th November 2023

Tuesday 28th November 2023

Monday 22nd July 2024

Tuesday 23rd July 2024

The Academic Day – Year 12

8.40am-9.10am	COMPULSORY REGISTRATION
9.10am-10.10am	PERIOD 1
10.10am-11.10am	PERIOD 2
11.10am-11.30am	BREAK
11.30am-12.30pm	PERIOD 3
12.30pm-1:30pm	PERIOD 4
1:30pm-2:00pm	LUNCH
2:00pm-3:00pm	PERIOD 5
3:00pm-4:00pm	PERIOD 6

The Academic Day – Year 13

8.40am-9.10am	COMPULSORY REGISTRATION
9.10am-10.10am	PERIOD 1
10.10am-10:30am	BREAK
10:30am-11.30am	PERIOD 2
11.30am-12.30pm	PERIOD 3
12.30pm-1:00pm	LUNCH
1:00pm-2:00pm	PERIOD 4
2:00pm-3:00pm	PERIOD 5
3:00pm-4:00pm	PERIOD 6

Key Dates 2023 - 24

This is an overview of the key dates and events for students starting in September 2022. It is not comprehensive and there will be much more added in the two years of study.

YEAR 12	
Event	Date/time
Success in the 6 th Form Evening	Thursday 7 th September 2023
Macmillan coffee morning - 6th Form	Friday 29 th September 2023
Y12 settling in evening	Thursday 2 nd November 2023
Y12 assessment week	WB 8 th January 2024
Year 12 work experience week	WB 15 th January 2024
Y12 Parents' evening	Thursday 8 th February 2024
Y12 mock exam week (for limited AS entry only)	WB 4 th March 2024
Official exams start (for limited AS entry only)	TBC
Post 18 Destinations Evening	Tuesday 4 th June 2024
University visits	Friday 7 th June 2024
Y12 mock exams	WB 24 th June 2024
YEAR 13	
Event	Date/time
Macmillan coffee morning - 6th Form	Friday 29 th September 2023
Y13 Parents' evening	Thursday 28 th September 2023
UCAS - early entry deadline (Official)	Monday 16 th October 2023
UCAS deadline (Official)	Wednesday 31 st January 2024
Y13 Mock exams (Papers 1&2)	WB 29 th January 2024
Y13 mock exam (in class)	Friday 22 nd – Thursday 28 th March 2024
Exams Start	TBC
Y13 leavers' assembly / study leave begins	(Clarified when exam timetable/start confirmed)

HOME-SCHOOL LEARNING AGREEMENT

The Learning Agreement sets out our duties and the expectations of you as a member of the Sixth Form. We require confirmation that you have **read and agreed** to the conditions outlined below by signing with your parent/carer and returning a copy of the Home-School Learning Agreement to your form tutor.

What you can expect of us

Ambition

To engender high aspirations through a wider set of experiences that meet with your interests and pathways so you are well prepared for life beyond sixth form

Endeavour

Highly skilled teaching that inspires you to learn and ensures success. To develop your sense of social responsibility so you can actively contribute to our school community. To make sure we carefully monitor your progress and experience so your needs are met

Success

A study programme that helps you allows you to achieve academic excellence and prepares you for your aspirations

What we expect of you

Ambition

To aim high so your successes are real. To seek out opportunities beyond your comfort zone that support your ambitions for the future.

Endeavour

To be resilient in the face of challenges. To become a specialist in my subjects by working hard both in and beyond the classroom. To embrace as many wider opportunities as possible. To be a role model because you can and offer your qualities and skills to the community.

Success

Aim to use opportunities to demonstrate success and to always take the time to reflect on successes so you can understand what success looks like. To share successes and recognising how this strengthens our community. Always celebrate successes of others and be inspired by others.

You are expected to:

- Sign in each day using our inventory systems.
- Wear student ID pass **at all times** when in the building.
- Maintain high levels of attendance (over 96%) and attend all lessons, study sessions and registration punctually.
- Not take holidays in term time.
- Make the most of every lesson through preparation, participation and consolidation.
- Make full use of private study time, contributing towards a minimum of 15 hours of independent study per week.
- Complete all work to the required standard by the deadline by using your time, in school and at home, effectively and to a level appropriate to your ability and target grade.
- Ensure that all work submitted is entirely your own.
- Accept responsibility for your own learning with the support of the sixth form team, your teachers and the study space provided.
- Treat the study and social space provided to you with respect. Keep noise in the study space to an appropriate level for effective study.
- Show each other and all members of our community respect and consideration.
- Get involved in extra-curricular activities, completing the Forge Valley Sixth Form Pledge, to improve your ambitions for the future.
- Act as a positive role model for younger students and behave in a manner which befits a Sixth Form student.
- Adhere to the dress code that students should be smart to ensure you present a positive image both in and out of school. You are role models with increasing positions of responsibility within the school. (See the dress code).
- Mobile phones (and headphones) are only used in the designated area – the Sixth Form Common Room. They are not to be visible in corridors or other workspaces. At break you can use your phones in Café 6.
- Headphones are only used in designated areas – the Sixth Form Common Room, the library, the study room and Café 6 (when you are studying).

Under this agreement Forge Valley Sixth Form will endeavour to provide:

- A programme of courses that are delivered by suitably qualified and effective members of staff using appropriate facilities and resources.
- Regular assessment and feedback on how to develop your work.
- A friendly, caring and supportive environment and a bespoke personal development programme.
- A Sixth Form Team who monitors your progress, provides guidance and assistance in setting targets for improvement.
- The provision of appropriate facilities for both private study and relaxation.
- Support in developing effective study skills.
- Support for any special needs you may have.
- The opportunity to take part in extracurricular activities.
- The opportunity to undertake work experience.
- A UCAS/careers programme for your progression beyond the Sixth Form.
- The opportunity at least once a year for your parents/carers to come to school with you to discuss your progress.
- Progress reports & academic tutorials at least twice per academic year.

By signing this home-school agreement, you are accepting the conditions upon which you have been offered a place. By breaking these conditions, your place in Forge Valley Sixth Form will be in jeopardy.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Forge Valley School believes that attendance and punctuality is the key to the success of our students and their ability to benefit from all the opportunities available to them in school.

There is a clear line between good attendance and achievement alongside the development of social, emotional and personal skills.

Forge Valley is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our students to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Why regular attendance is so important:

Learning: Any absence affects the pattern of a young person's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility.

Safeguarding: Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility. Promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses:

- Attendance
- Behaviour Management
- Health and Safety
- Access to the Curriculum
- Anti – bullying

The Law relating to safeguarding: Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

EXPECTATIONS

As part of the expectations of the Sixth Form, including the Home-School Learning Agreement Sixth Form students must consider the following:

- Aim to have at least 96% attendance.
- Students are expected to attend all lessons and timetabled sessions.
- Students are expected to attend form registration every day.
- Students are able to leave the school when they don't have timetabled sessions. To enforce good study habits, we would encourage students to be present in school all morning. Students should remain free to be in school at our request.
- Students are expected to use non-contact time on their timetable effectively, for private study, homework and enrichment.
- Students must make sure they sign in and out whenever they enter/leave school via the electronic sign in system. This is an important school safeguarding requirement.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Forge Valley School expects parents/carers to:

- Fulfil their responsibility to encourage their children to attend school regularly and punctually.
- Contact the school on each day of absence to explain the reasons and ensure that medical evidence is sent into school.
- Avoid taking family holidays during term time and making non-urgent medical/dental appointments during school hours where possible.

Students are expected to:

- Take an active and conscientious role in being responsible for your punctuality and attendance.
- Arrive at all lessons on time and be ready to learn.
- If you have been absent you must ensure that all missed work is followed up in liaison with subject teachers.

Under this agreement Forge Valley Sixth Form will:

- Provide high quality Level 3 education that is dependent on regular attendance at school
- Recognise and reward good attendance and punctuality.
- Make contact on the first day of absence when a pupil fails to attend without providing good reason.
- Ensure accurate recording of attendance and to keep parents regularly informed about their child's attendance.
- Act promptly and keep parents informed when issues affecting attendance arise
- Involve appropriate outside agencies where necessary when issues arise that are impacting on attendance and learning.
- Ensure that subject teachers complete a register for every lesson within the first 15 minutes on BROMCOM.

Children Missing from Education

Students who cannot be located will be considered missing. The Children Missing from Education Team will be informed and will pursue the matter in accordance with Local Authority procedures.

Looked After Children – Attendance Monitoring

Miss Helen Jackson, Designated Safeguarding Lead, will liaise with the Children and Young People's Directorate Children Looked After Team. Looked After Children will be set up as a discrete attendance group on the school motoring system and individual attendance checked each half term.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A student is classified as a 'persistent absentee' if they miss 10% or more schooling for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parent/carers fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. The school will monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

Understanding the types of absence

All absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents) as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised absences are sessions away from school with an evidenced reason - for example, illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which are not evidenced and for which no "leave of absence" has been granted by the school. Which include (but not limited to):

Non-evidenced illness absences

Parents/Carers keeping children off school unnecessarily

Truancy before or during the school day

Absences which have never been properly explained

Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays

Day trips and holidays in term time

Part time work

Please remember that it is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure the attendance of a child. Any child may be off school because they are ill; sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child.

If your child is reluctant to attend, it is better not to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

- By law, students should not take any leave of absence (holidays) during term time and these will not be authorised.
- Students can take up to two days absence to attend Open Days at universities each school year, but are encouraged to visit at weekends whenever possible.
- Students may be absent for unavoidable appointments such as specialist medical appointments and driving tests. Routine doctors, dental or other appointments should be made outside the school day. This includes driving lessons.
- Under no circumstances should students undertake part-time work during the school day and are advised to limit part-time work to 10 hours per week to limit the impact on study.
- Students may undertake work experience or voluntary activity in support of university or apprenticeship applications with the agreement of the Head of Sixth Form.

In cases of planned absence students are expected to complete an authorised absence form (available from Sixth Form Office) at least two days prior to a scheduled absence, late submission of this form will risk any absence being recorded as unauthorised.

Responding to poor Attendance and Punctuality

In line with school policy, the Sixth Form Manager and Sixth Form Administrator will raise the cases of individual/groups of students with poor attendance/punctuality at weekly meetings where the most appropriate intervention and strategies will be discussed and individual action plans agreed.

REPORTING ABSENCE

- If you need to report an absence a parent / carer needs to call the Sixth Form Team **0114 2348805, Extension 2668** - please leave a voicemail providing full details. Please call before 8.30am daily.
- Absence for illness will only be authorised if contact is made from a parent/carer.
- The parent / carer is asked to provide medical evidence for continuous days' absences or for any medical absence when a child's attendance is 96% or below.
- Any absence which school is not notified about will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.
- Upon a student's return they will be expected to collect and catch up on any work missed. We will not ask your teachers to send you work when you are off. If a student is too unwell to be in school, they should not be completing work until they are well enough to return to school.
- If a student has an ongoing health condition we ask medical evidence be provided to the Sixth Form Manager.

If a student has been off unwell, we would ask they check in with us in the Sixth Form office on their first day back, that we can ensure they are better and ready to return.

IF A STUDENT NEEDS TO LEAVE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

- If this is planned absence, a form should have been completed in advance and we will plan with the student when they need to leave.
- If this is unplanned, for example a student becomes unwell, the student must not leave before speaking to someone in the Sixth Form team. We will then contact home and decide on the best course of action.

ATTENDANCE PROCESS

The Sixth Form team check attendance to each registration and timetabled session through the day.

If a student is missing from registration, and we are unaware of the reason for absence, contact home will be made to check on the student.

If a student is missing from a timetabled session, they cannot be located in school and we are unaware of the reason for absence, we will contact home to ask if you can help us identify the location of the student and the reason for any absence.

Consequences for missing registration / sessions

If a student has missed registration with no valid reason a 20 minutes detention will be issued (on the same or next day).

If a student has missed a timetabled session with no valid reason, an hour (or session length) detention will be issued (on the same or next day).

PUNCTUALITY

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. At Forge Valley there is registration at the start of each day. Therefore, if pupils are late for school then they are late for learning. Students arriving late can also disrupt lessons, this can cause embarrassment which can similarly encourage absence.

How we manage lateness

The school day starts at 8.40am and we expect your child to be in registration at that time. Your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

Lesson punctuality will also be recorded. The number of minutes late will be added to any 'late' marks so a total number of minutes late can be calculated. (This information is visible to parents/carers through MCAS).

If your child has a persistent late record, you will be asked to meet a pastoral member of staff to resolve the problem. Payback of time will be arranged. You can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

ATTENDANCE INTERVENTION PROCEDURE

Communication from the student and parent/ carer is really important to help us understand any potential issues with attendance. There may be extenuating circumstances for low attendance of which we may not be aware. Please do contact the Sixth Form Manager to discuss, we can then individualise support to assist with their education. If information / absence is relating to an ongoing health condition we will request supporting evidence from the relevant medical professional.

The school will implement the following procedure when attendance levels drop below 96% without adequate reason.

Stage 1 – Attendance Monitoring

For attendance below 96% or for clear unacceptable absence from school.

The Form Tutor and Sixth Form Admin Officer will address the issue of poor attendance with the student and issue a warning about their attendance. Parents/carers will be informed of this action by letter. Attendance will then be closely monitored and reviewed after two weeks.

The outcome of this could be:

- attendance has been recorded as above 96% for the two-week period, normal attendance monitoring would resume.
- attendance remains below 96% the student would be referred for further intervention and monitoring with the Sixth Form Manager.
- If the student is repeatedly being monitored at this stage, progression will be made to Stage 2.

Stage 2 - Sixth Form Manager Attendance Monitoring**For continued poor attendance or failure to improve via Stage 1 monitoring.**

Following Stage 1 Monitoring, if an unacceptable level of attendance continues the student will be expected to meet with the Sixth Form Manager. A letter will be sent to parents/carers informing them of the situation. Parents / carers will be involved if a student is being monitored at this level.

Students will remain on Stage 2 monitoring for a period of 4 weeks. At a meeting we will discuss the issues impacting attendance and work together to find clear targets to support the student. This stage will require the student to display excellent, and sustained, attendance habits that will be recorded at 96% or above per week for a period of four weeks.

The outcome of this could be:

- sustained improvement to the attendance is achieved (achieved 96% attendance for the four weeks of monitoring). Normal attendance monitoring would resume, moving back to Stage 1 monitoring if there were further dips in attendance.
- sustained improvement to attendance has not been made, the student would be referred for further intervention and monitoring with the Head of Sixth Form.

Stage 3 - Head of Sixth Form Attendance Monitoring**For continued poor attendance or failure to improve via Stage 1 or 2 monitoring. Failure to meet attendance targets and expectations set and / or falling below 90% attendance.**

A letter will be sent to the parent/carer of the students informing them of the situation and inviting them to a meeting with the Head of Sixth Form. **At this meeting a formal written warning will be issued with a notice to improve attendance for a closely monitored period of 4 weeks. In addition, a mandatory careers appointment will be arranged to discuss full range of options.**

The outcome of this could be:

- Sustained improvement to the attendance is achieved (achieved 96% attendance for the four weeks of monitoring). Normal attendance monitoring would resume, moving back to Stage 1 monitoring if there were further dips in attendance.
- Sustained improvement to attendance has not been made. The following actions may be issued, in stages, for students who fail to show improvement at Stage 3.
 1. Students may be asked to pay for their exam entries.
 2. Student is not entered for examinations.
 3. Student is asked to leave the Sixth Form.

NB: Students whose attendance falls below 80% will be expected to leave Sixth Form.

Where students are absent for medical and/or mental health reasons, supporting evidence must be provided by external health care and/or social care providers.

MONITORING PROGRESS

We encourage every student to work to the best of their ability and aim high academically. We also emphasise the importance of building key skills to support progression to Higher Education, training or a chosen career. Close liaison between departments, the Sixth Form Team, student and home can trigger tailored support. Intervention managed by the Sixth Form Team will be communicated to home and regular contact is encouraged in the form of meetings, phone calls and email.

Please contact the Sixth Form Manager with any queries straight away, however small, so that we can prevent small issues becoming bigger problems.

Student progress will be monitored very carefully in the Sixth Form to ensure all students achieve their very best. Monitoring will be ongoing with students, subject teachers, tutors and the Sixth Form Leadership Team all fully involved and informed. Students will discuss their progress with Teachers, Tutor, Academic Mentor and Sixth Form Manager/Head of Sixth Form on a regular basis. We expect students to take responsibility for reflecting on their own performance, evaluation and setting targets for improvement.

In addition to this, there are three student reports published to parents/carers throughout the academic year where overall performance will be assessed. If a student is having difficulty in any of his/her studies, or problems with time management, he/she is advised to discuss this at the earliest opportunity with a member of staff. This may be a subject teacher or another member of the Sixth Form Team.

If a student's attitude to learning or progress is unsatisfactory in any subject, contact will be made with home and a support strategy will be put in place. High levels of effort and an excellent work ethic will be recognised by teachers and the Sixth Form Team through our reward system.

Academic Mentor

Our full-time academic mentor is responsible for providing academic guidance and support to all of our students. Each student will have 2 hours of independent study on their timetable. In these sessions they will work in the study room, supervised by the academic mentor. This support will help students to develop self-regulation and independent learning skills.

Where students are identified as underperforming or where they feel that they need more support in engaging with independent work, individual support will be offered. This will be tailored to their specific needs and will be on a one-to-one basis with the academic mentor.

LIFE AS A SIXTH FORM STUDENT

Personal Development

One of the most important success measures for any Sixth Form pupil is achieving the necessary entry requirements for Post 18 provisions.

However, academic results alone won't ensure success in selection processes, higher level study and an ensuing career.

All students will attend a one hour personal development session per week. Our personal development curriculum results in well-rounded young people who are **confident**, capable of study and who realise that there is more to life at Sixth Form than lessons; as important as these are.

Here, softer, personal skills will come to the fore; the ability to present, communicate and negotiate, understand team dynamic, manage risk, socialise, empathise, problem solve, be creative, flexible, motivated and resilient, will be crucial factors. Such skills, coupled with excellent examination results, will make Forge Valley Sixth Formers extremely employable.

Forge Valley Sixth Form Student Dress Code Policy

One of the privileges of being in the Sixth Form is not having to wear a school uniform. Our dress code is designed in consultation with student leaders and is framed with the aim that students' overall appearance is appropriate to that of a **formal working environment**. Sixth Form Students at Forge Valley are role models for all of our lower school pupils. The appearance of **all** Sixth Form Students should conform to the expectations of the school which is a professional organisation.

To this end, the following should be adhered to:

- **Clothing must be appropriate for a formal working environment**
- Skirts/dresses/shorts should be at least mid-thigh length. If wearing a shorter skirt, please wear opaque tights (at least 60 denier)
- Tops/t-shirts should reach the hip line and should not be revealing – please do not wear crop tops, off the shoulder / Bardot or backless tops (this also applies to dresses)
- Hoodies are allowed, but hoods should not be worn up in any of the school buildings
- Please do not wear any clothing with offensive logos
- Outdoor clothing should be taken off in formal setting (e.g. lessons/assemblies).
- Hats must not be worn inside the school building
- Lanyards must be worn at all times

Please note that due to Health and Safety concerns and the nature of the building, high heels and sandals are worn at the wearer's risk. Flip-flops are not appropriate.

The Sixth Form Team has final decision over the suitability of a student's attire.

We fully appreciate that fashions change and so we would always advise students to check with the Sixth Form team if they are unsure before buying new clothes for school – that way they can avoid buying an item of clothing that is not permitted.

MOBILE PHONES & HEADPHONES

Phone calls and the use of mobile phones is not permitted within the school building, except in the sixth form areas. This also applies to the use of headphones.

- Common room – full use is permitted
- Study room – use for study purposes only – no social media/texting/videos etc
- Library – should not be seen but you can have headphones on whilst you work
- Café 6 – should not be seen but you can have headphones on if you are studying in this area

The use of mobile phones or headphones are not permitted within lessons unless directed by your teacher.

VEHICLES

The school car park is for staff vehicles only, which are registered with reception. Therefore, if students wish to bring a vehicle to school it must be parked on residential streets. School cannot accept responsibility for these vehicles.

SMOKING AND VAPING

Smoking and vaping is strictly forbidden anywhere on school grounds. If you choose to smoke, you should do so **well away** from the school site.

PHOTOCOPYING CREDITS

Each student is provided with a monthly credit allowance for photocopying. If around examination times you find you have not got enough credit please see Mrs Petters, who will, at her discretion, increase the credit on your account.

CANTEEN

Café Six, the sixth form café is run on a cashless payment system, based on a biometric recognition system, if you are not registered on the system please see Mrs Petters who can arrange registration. Café 6 will normally be open at break and lunch every day, serving snacks, hot drinks and meals.

LOCKERS

There are a number of lockers available in the Common Room on a first come first served basis. Keys are available for a £5 deposit from the Sixth Form office.

CHANGES OF COURSE

It is strongly recommended that changes of course are discussed and implemented prior to the start of term in September.

Changes after this will only be considered in weeks 2 and 3 of the term. Students must discuss this with Mrs Petters at the earliest opportunity.

Any change is subject to the completion of subject grade requirements, subject blocking and class size. It is important to note that students must complete a full programme of study amounting to a minimum of 540 hours per year across the subjects set out within your Sixth Form timetable – the equivalent of three subjects on a student timetable.

COMMUNICATION

Parent and Carers Telephone Numbers

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your up to date contact numbers at all times.

The Sixth Form Team will convey information such as examination dates, school trips etc to students via the following:

- Student e-mail correspondence. Students are responsible for checking their email on a daily basis. Students will be issued with a school email address and are expected to use this.
- Regular compulsory assemblies and *daily registration*.
- Notice boards in the study room and common room.
- Email correspondence and letters to parents/carers.

The school website also has up-to-date information throughout the academic year.

PRIVATE STUDY

Students should *complete a minimum of 15 hours of independent study per week* in order to achieve their academic potential.

Private study is encouraged in the Sixth Form. The following places are available to students for study purposes: common room, study room, Café Six, LRC (library).

Chromebooks are available for Sixth Form use during study periods. These can be signed out from the Sixth Form office or the study room.

Students are able, and are encouraged, to stay and study beyond the end of the school day, but we would ask that they do not stay beyond 6.00pm. Students will receive support in developing their study skills through the Sixth Form team and subject staff.

PART-TIME WORK

This should be kept to a minimum, and should not exceed 10 hours a week. If students exceed this amount they are likely to put their results in jeopardy. The Sixth form year is very busy and students will find very early in the school year that they are struggling with deadlines if they do not allocate appropriate time to their studies.

EXAMINATIONS

All students will be issued with an individual examination timetable, both for their mock examinations and their formal examinations in May/June.

The school pays all entry fees (dependant on satisfactory attendance and work ethic).

Key in-school assessment dates – see page 4.

NB: other informal assessments to be expected at subject teachers' discretion.

16-19 BURSARIES

The 16-19 Bursary Fund provides financial support for students to overcome specific financial barriers to remaining in education.

It is strongly encouraged that any student who thinks they may be eligible for the bursary submits an application form.

Eligibility:

Bursary for students in vulnerable groups

- You may be able to get a bursary if at least one of the following applies:
- You're in or you recently left local authority care
- You get Income Support or Universal Credit because you're financially supporting yourself
- You get Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in your name and either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit
- You get Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in your name and either ESA or Universal Credit

Discretionary Bursary

The student has to either:

- Be in receipt of Free School Meals
- Have a family household income under £17,005 per annum

Due to government regulations that prohibit monetary payments and specify the need for all bursary funding to be clearly spent on resources that support your education we, along with other Sixth Forms across Sheffield, have agreed that the bursary funding will be kept in school and payments will be made for specific resources that you need. We will pay transport costs if you travel by public transport and buy any wider resources that will further your education and progression, such as a UCAS application entry.

Application forms must be completed and returned with a bank statement/bank letter which includes the students address, account number and account sort code and relevant evidence to support the application. Completed forms should be returned to Ms Petters.

Once your application is approved, we will provide you with the equipment that your subject teachers have identified is necessary for your courses and talk to you about any other needs you have to support your education next year.

Please note: Bursaries are dependent on students having no unauthorised absence from school and being fully up-to-date with their work.

Please find the full guidance for the 16-19 Bursary here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2023-to-2024-academic-year>

PROGRESSION TO YEAR 13

Progression to Year 13 is dependent on internal assessments held at the end of Year 12 and through teacher recommendation. To progress to Year 13 a student must achieve a minimum of 2 passes in A level/BTEC subjects (E grade or equivalent). If a student receives a U grade they will not be able to progress to Year 13 in this subject.

POST-18 PROGRAMME

Decision making about Post 18 plans really begins before enrolling to Year 12, throughout the 6th Form students are encouraged to think about what their next steps are likely to be.

We also use Unifrog, an online careers platform, which brings into one place every undergraduate university course, apprenticeship, and college course in the UK, as well as other opportunities, including MOOCs and other school leaver opportunities. This makes it easy for students to compare and choose the best university courses, apprenticeships or further education courses for them. They can also explore exciting opportunities further afield by looking at English taught undergraduate programmes available in Europe and the USA.

Additionally, Unifrog helps students successfully apply for these opportunities by providing advice and support on writing their university personal statement, applications and CVs. Unifrog guides them through the process, allowing teachers to give live feedback.

Throughout the school year an opportunities or events that students could get involved with are advertised by student email and via notice boards. Students are encouraged to get involved as much as they can.

We will have a Post 18 Destinations evening in June of Year 12. This will cover university applications, searching for a university, apprenticeships and making a UCAS application. Students will also be invited to attend a UCAS university fair event held annually at Sheffield Arena.

Any student who is invited to interview for a university must inform us immediately so a mock interview can be arranged if necessary.

We work closely with the careers advisor Sarah Brown, who provides independent advice and support for each student, this can include CV writing support, mock interviews and general guidance. All students have access to an independent careers advisor at drop in times and an appointment can be made with her at any time, by contacting Ms Petters.

OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SIXTH FORM & THE SIXTH FORM PLEDGE

A list of opportunities that we encourage you to get involved with include:

- Duke of Edinburgh Award
- Assisting in departments with lower school students
- Reading with Year 7 students
- Charity and fundraising
- Teaching and learning - working with Y11 who are struggling to narrow options, academic mentoring of Y10/11
- Lead learner (passionate advocate for subject)
- Work Experience

- Volunteering in the community
- The chance to apply to be part of the student leadership team
- Mentoring for younger students
- Sporting events
- Music events
- Departmental visits

There are also many more opportunities throughout the school over the course of the year.

Forge Valley Sixth Form Pledge

To support students to become well-rounded and experienced young people we encourage full involvement in as many extra-curricular activities as possible. To this end, we expect all students to strive to achieve the PLEDGE which consists of 14 experiences that they should take part in over the course of their 2 years in the Sixth Form.

Our PLEDGE initiative ensures that students understand the value of extra-curricular involvement within and outside of school. Through meeting these pledges students gain confidence and valuable life experiences that will help to prepare them for life beyond Forge Valley Sixth Form.

Students will record their plans and achievements during form time. They will be supported, as necessary, by their tutors, the sixth form team and other staff in the school.

The pledges	Example activities
Take part in a sporting event or cultural event	Both sport and cultural events are wide-ranging. All students should be able to find something that appeals to them. This can be in or out of the school setting.
Attend a sporting, academic or cultural event outside of school	This includes academic lectures, festivals, gigs.... The list is endless.
Take part in a formal presentation to an audience	This can be talking part in an assembly (any year group), presenting to your class, presenting to teachers, presenting to an audience outside of school etc
Be actively involved in a community experience	It would be great to see some of you engaging the wider community outside of school, e.g. inviting groups of people into school for an event, litter picking, helping at a food bank etc It can also be in school.
Participate in a fundraising event	There will be lots to get involved in through the year but you can also use your initiative to do something different.
Participate in activities that support others in the school	This could include: Mentoring/buddying, supporting teachers in classes or after school clubs, volunteering to help out at events, setting up clubs that will engage and support others.
Actively participate in improving the school	This could include: Becoming a form rep or contributing to feedback through form reps or questionnaires.
Take leadership of an event or activity	E.g. form reps, lead learners, organising a club or event, leading a meeting etc
Learn a new skill	This can be anything – but 'new' from when you start Sixth Form.
Meet someone who inspires you	Think carefully about this one. Who inspires you? It doesn't need to be someone famous.
Travel outside of Sheffield	Take those home birds out of their comfort zone to see a bit more of the world. Keep a log of everywhere you go.
Read a range of novels	6+ novels. Keep a log.
Complete at least a week of work experience	All students get this experience in January of Year 12. You are welcome to apply for more work experience throughout your time in Sixth Form.
Visit at least one university	You will be given this opportunity towards the end of Year 12. Students can apply for university visits throughout their time in Sixth Form.

HOW PARENTS /CARERS CAN OFFER SUPPORT

Sixth Form is a time when students want to be treated more as adults, with increased independence and ability to make choices for themselves. These choices can be important life choices, such as which A-levels to study, whether to go to university or not and which course or career they wish to pursue. We allow students to take more responsibility for themselves and their choices as they progress through the Sixth Form, but they do still require the support of all of those around them throughout this time. To that end, you can offer support by:

1. Ensuring students get to school in good time for the start of their school day
2. Obtaining from your son/daughter a copy of their timetable and the name of their form tutor
3. Ensuring they are prepared for the day ahead: appropriately dressed (including lanyard), with pens, paper and books as required by subjects
4. Checking progress and discussing any issues that are arising
5. Arranging where possible all medical appointments for outside of school hours – attendance figures to lessons will be commented on in references to universities and employers
6. Making sure part time work does not interfere with schoolwork
7. Ensuring any absences are called in on the day and are backed up by a note from yourselves
8. Helping them to organise their independent study time and revision at home
9. Keeping a close eye on how they are coping during the high-pressure times of the year
10. Contacting the Sixth Form if you have any questions or concerns at all