



**Bishop Vesey's Grammar School**

**Lower 6<sup>th</sup>**

**Parent Handbook**

## Welcome

Dear Parent/Carer

I would formally like to welcome your son/daughter to Sixth Form study at BVGS. This booklet outlines our expectations of students and provides parents with guidelines relating to successful study within our Sixth Form and guidance on UCAS.

I am proud to lead a highly skilled Sixth Form team who are passionate about developing the young people in our care. We strive to create an environment where students can fulfil their academic potential and develop the professional skills required for adult life. We also place a considerable emphasis on care for the individual and offer an extensive and exciting range of extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities.

At BVGS, we pride ourselves on excellent monitoring and early intervention as a means of helping students maximise their academic potential. In addition, we have highly qualified staff who can respond to the emotional needs of students during their A-Level studies. BVGS also provides pupils with an extensive system of advice and support regarding university admissions. If your son/daughter is intending to apply to university, it is in their best interests to get their application in as early as possible.

As a parent, you can support your son/daughter in a number of ways. We urge you to take an active interest in their academic career. The key to their success will be extensive independent study throughout the year and the sensible management of extra-curricular and social commitments.

It is important that you contact a member of the Sixth Form Team if you have any concerns or queries relating to any facet of Sixth Form life. We look forward to working with you over the next two years.

David Goodwin, Assistant Headteacher: Head of Sixth Form

## **The Sixth Form Team**

Pastoral care is a large part of our role as a team and is critical to ensuring safety, personal development, happiness and academic progress of your daughter/son in their time at the school.

### **Head of Sixth Form**

Mr D Goodwin

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### **Head of Lower Sixth**

Mr A Davis

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### **Head of Upper Sixth**

Dr A Reilly

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### **UCAS Adviser**

Mr P Nowek

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### **Sixth Form Liaison**

Mrs J Evetts

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### **Head of Enrichment**

Mr N Yates

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### **Careers Adviser**

Mrs P Knowles

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## Sixth Form Tutor Team

### L6I

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### L6II

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### L6VI

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### L6VII

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### L6VIII

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## Year Ahead

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> October: Baseline testing week

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> October: Whole School Photo

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> October- Lower 6th Information Evening and introduction to UCAS**

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> November- Sixth Form Open Evening

**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December- Lower Sixth Parents Evening**

**Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February- Whole School Review and Careers Day**

**Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March- Higher Education Evening**

**Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April- Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May- UCAS Examinations**

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May- Normal timetabled lessons resume

**Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June-Friday 7<sup>th</sup> June L6th Enrichment Week (work experience)**

Monday 17<sup>th</sup> June- Normal timetabled lessons begin

**Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July- UCAS Examinations Results Morning**

19<sup>th</sup> July- School year ends

**\*Please note throughout the year there will be several assessment data drops in our first four half-terms, with assessment with no full written reports.**

**Any subject related matters/questions should be directed by students/parents to their subject teachers in the first instance. Please allow a minimum of 48 hours for a response.**

## Study Expectations

- Most Lower Sixth students study three subjects and have **10 hours contact time per subject** across a fortnight.
- Some Lower Sixth students who achieved a higher tariff of BVGS points in their GCSEs are studying four subjects
- Every student has the option of taking part in **Games** each Wednesday afternoon, which forms part of the minimum expectation of four hours enrichment time.
- Students are expected to complete a minimum of four hours of **enrichment** activity per fortnight (this includes EPQ and Games).
- Students studying the **Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)** have seminars for this each Monday afternoon and have nominated four additional periods on their timetable to do their EPQ research.
- As a result, students studying three subjects have 14 hours of additional study time per fortnight. Some of these periods are allocated for supervised study and others for independent unsupervised study. **Supervised study takes place in Old Big School.**
- These periods should be used for private study, completing homework or further research, development of their EPQ, reading ahead, researching higher education or future pursuits such as university, gap years, apprenticeships and so forth.
- Outside school, students are expected to complete **15 hours minimum** of study per week (This is the recommended amount based on those students who are able to access Russell Group Universities). This includes homework and/or revision for assessments but crucially this must incorporate consolidation of classroom learning. Students must accept that a level of **independent learning** is expected at A-Level and we will support students by using guest speakers, pastoral time to give examples of how students can embrace and tackle the challenge of A-level study. Wider reading, further research and examination preparation should be common practise and are critical to generate a coherent and extensive knowledge base.
- Students should keep their work **organised**, with separate folders for separate subjects/topics/teachers if relevant. **Folder checks** are common practice throughout Sixth Form.
- Homework and regular assessments will be set for students in order to monitor learning and progression of students, with most subjects completing a minimum of two assessments per half-term.
- Students should attend every lesson on time, equipped with their files, paper, highlighter pens and any specialist equipment required to engage in all aspects of their learning.



## **Year 12 UCAS Examinations**

With the change to linear A-levels, students will only sit external examinations at the end of their Upper Sixth year.

Thus, Lower Sixth students will sit UCAS Examinations Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April to Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2019. The results of these examinations, in combination with subject assessments (from November) will form an overall accurate picture of attainment across the year. This will provide information for staff, students and parents of student's progress during the year and enable us to generate an accurate predicted grade for their university/apprenticeship applications. The responsibility for consistent and a diligent approach to study is paramount if your son/daughter is aiming for predicted grades of A\*/A.

### **How it will be calculated**

**UCAS predicted grades will be calculated by applying the following formula to the academic performance of a student in Year 12. Departments will nominate 6 - 8 assessments in half terms 2, 3 & 4, which will count towards 30% of the final UCAS prediction.**

**The rest of the prediction will be based upon their performance in two Departmental UCAS papers in May of their Lower Sixth Year. Therefore, these two examinations will account for 70% of the final UCAS grade. Once a Year 12 combined 'UCAS Grade' is calculated, one grade will be added to provide the 'UCAS Predicted Grade'.**

Results across the year will also be used as evidence for Year 13 in regards to allocation of home based study afternoons. This will only be offered to students who have performed well and approached their study with the academic rigour expected at Bishop Vesey's Grammar School.

## **Attendance, Punctuality & Study Arrangements in the Sixth Form from September 2018**

### **Basic procedure**

- All pupils should be in form by 8.40am on each School Day.
- Parents must telephone the Main School Office by 9.30am on every day of absence on 0121 250 5400.
- The student planner has a wealth of information for you to refer to and if you are unsure, please contact the Main School Office

**\*Parents please be aware that the majority of correspondence will be through your e-mail regarding any behaviour information concerning detentions. Please do check your e-mail regularly.**

### **Homework**

- Any student who fails to submit their homework, produces insufficient (this can include underperformance in an assessment, where it is evident minimal revision has taken place) or demonstrates a lack of quality in their work, will be placed by their subject teacher into a homework detention the following school day (3.30-4.30pm).
- Repeat homework issues will result in a parental meeting with Mr Davis and subsequent measures put in place to address this. There is ample time to complete high quality work during the day if time is managed effectively.

### **Lateness**

Pupils who arrive after 8.50am should report to the Main School Reception to ensure that they are marked correctly.

Sanction for persistent lateness:

1. Any Member of BVGS staff will record any incidents of late arrival (inclusive of lessons and registration).
2. Once three separate events are recorded on SIMS, this will trigger a 60 minute after School detention.
3. If a student accrues six or more late marks, parents will be invited into school for a meeting with Mr Davis.
4. Please note that all counters are wiped at the start of each term.

### **Uniform**

Uniform and the pride of wearing Bishop Vesey's uniform, is something the staff and students value. Any questions in regards to our uniform expectations can be found in the school planner. There are sanctions in place for students whose uniform falls below the expectations of the school.

1. A student will receive a verbal warning and be asked to sort their attire (if this means a new skirt, jumper, shoes etc) a period of grace will be given to sort this and communicated with parent's
2. A second warning for incorrect uniform will result in parents being contacted and invited in for a meeting with Mr Davis. This will also trigger a 60 minute after school detention.
3. Continued repeated uniform issues will result in a meeting with Mr Goodwin

### Technology and BYOD

All students are permitted to use technology in certain areas of the school and for specific purposes to assist research and learning, particularly in supervised study. Phones are only permitted to be used in the Sixth Form Common Room, Hub OBS and in the Hive, but must be used for learning purposes and not gaming and social media.

BYOD is now available for students with accessibility to student Wi-Fi. Phones are permitted for research and for listening to music (**ONLY** with headphones and at a suitable volume not to disturb other students). Misuse of technology will result in confiscation, including social media, music videos, photos etc. This includes blue tooth speakers, which are not permitted in school. If a student fails to adhere to the above

1. First offence the item will be confiscated and is returned at the end of the day.
2. If a second offence occurs outside of the outlined areas of usage, the item will have to be collected by parents. This will also trigger a 60 minute after school detention.
3. A third offence and there will be an imposed sanction for non-use of the item for a minimum of a week.

### Persistent Absenteeism

The government sets the level of unacceptable non-attendance at 90%. Therefore, if a student's attendance to lessons falls below 90% over a 3-week period, the School will write to each parent to inform them that the attendance of their son/daughter is being monitored and any further absence must be supported with medical proof.

If a pupil's attendance does not improve over the next three-week period or any further time is taken off school, without proof or reason, we will ask parents to attend an 'Attendance Review Meeting' with a member of the Sixth Form Team.

If a pupil's attendance fails to improve after this meeting, this will trigger a disciplinary hearing with the Assistant Headteacher (Head of KS5) where potential sanctions for continued absenteeism will be communicated.

### Holidays

Holidays are usually unauthorised. Parents must submit a request in writing to the Headteacher. Only in exceptional circumstances will a leave of absence be granted.

### Supervised, Home & Private Study

#### Year 12

- Students are only permitted to leave School before 3.25pm on a Wednesday or to take part in an approved Enrichment Activity. **\*Special dispensation is applied for some students but ONLY after discussion with Mr Yates & Mr Davis.**
- Alongside their 3/4 A-Level subjects, students are required to allocate a minimum of 4 hours to Enrichment in half-terms 1, 2, 3 & 4
- Certain periods will be allocated as 'Supervised Study' and students must attend OBS at this time and study in silence for the duration of the lesson time.
- In accordance with Supervised Study students are allocated several free periods. This time is vital to and should be used for enrichment, independent study, including revision, researching apprenticeships or university course and mustn't be wasted.

## Working Towards an A/A\* Grade

- **Keep your work organised**. It needs to be in separate topics and up to date. Make sure it follows the sequence of the specification so it is easy for you to find relevant information.
- Read through your notes and textbook **after the lesson** to consolidate your learning and to ensure you fully understand the topic.
- Read through your notes and textbook **before the lesson** so that you are ready to start the lesson refreshed from the previous lesson.
- Be **proactive** and ask for **help**! You can ask in person or e-mail any questions – if you do this now it will save you a lot of hassle nearer the exams.
- Be organised with **homework** and record the details somewhere safe (i.e. your planner). You need to complete homework to develop your understanding and also to check your knowledge.
- Make sure that if you miss any work you **catch up** – it will affect your understanding in subsequent lessons and it is your responsibility.
- **Revise** in advance and use assessments to focus you and maintain revision. They will all count.
- **Resilience** is critical for success at A-Level. There will be times when something won't be understood or underperformance happens in an assessment. Every student needs to **persevere** and have the resolve to overcome obstacles in their path.

### **Revision Websites:**

[www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)

[www.edexcel.com](http://www.edexcel.com)

[www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)

[www.revisionworld.co.uk](http://www.revisionworld.co.uk)

[www.getrevising.co.uk](http://www.getrevising.co.uk)

[www.thestudentroom.co.uk](http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk)

## Revision Techniques

- “ **Figure out the examination technique:** Many people fail exams simply because they haven't worked out the technique. As soon as you start you need to; a) learn how to manage time in an exam b) learn how to write clearly and intelligently
  
- “ **Analyse the syllabus:** Look at the different modules and find out which ones you will be taking. Print it off and have it with you in class. This way you know what the teacher is going over. And if the teacher has missed something you will know. They can be found on the examination board websites.
  
- “ **Get in the good books of the teachers:** This is not hard to do. Just keep up with the homework and hand in coursework on or before the deadline.
  
- “ **Grade boundaries:** Before sitting each exam make sure you know how many raw marks you need for a particular grade. Practice past papers and make sure your hitting your target. Bookmark the examination board's website and look at grade boundaries.
  
- “ **Look at examiners reports:** Always read the reports examiners issue on examination series. They list common mistakes students make and outline the general performance.
  
- “ **Find out about how the UMS (Uniform Mark Scale) works:** You will have to understand how RAW marks are converted into UMS. And the particular UMS needed for each grade. A quick Google search and it should be made clear.
  
- **Attend Subject Clinics:** Most departments offer drop –in clinics and lunchtime sessions for A-Level students to catch up on any work missed or to go over any other information. Don't hesitate to ask for help.

The first thing you must remember is that your personal statement is your sole contact with the universities you apply to. If you do apply to a programme which invites candidates to interview, your personal statement may also form the basis of your interview.

Your personal statement is an opportunity for you to demonstrate why you think you would be a good student for the course you are applying to and why the University should select your application over those of other candidates. It is primarily an academic statement and you must target it very directly towards the subject in which you are interested, though a University will also want to know something about your more general interests.

### **1. Why this subject? (Opening Paragraph)**

This could be a short sentence and needs to capture the reason why you are interested in studying on the programme you are applying for. Some of the most effective personal statements start simply, for example, "I want to study History because..." With this opening statement you are trying to communicate to the admissions tutor your enthusiasm for your chosen field. You might want to think about these questions and areas:

- Your knowledge of the subject area
- What does the programme entail?
- Why does it interest you?
- What interests you the most?
- Where could studying the programme lead?

### **2. Why You? What have you done in the past that makes you particularly suitable to study the subject? (This forms the main body of the statement and the most important)**

You need to be able to show the admissions tutor that you have the right background in terms of academic ability and the right interest or inclination. For example, if you want to be a primary school teacher but have never worked with children of that age the admissions tutor will wonder what your inclination to study to be a teacher is!

Wider reading and why it has interested you?

Attendance to lectures/master classes/seminars/conferences

Visits to places/museums linked to your chosen field

Individual Research/Project work like the EPQ

Any relevant work experience (e.g. medicine, physiotherapy, veterinary, dentistry)

### **3. Are you interesting and unique? (This is only one paragraph)**

Finally, you should write about what makes you an interesting and unique person;

- Your hobbies, leisure activities
- Sports you participate in
- Other sorts of extra-curricular activities
- Significant responsibilities you hold, at home or in clubs or societies
- Special achievements

**BVGS will be hosting a Higher Education Evening in March 2019 where the full University admissions process will be explained further. We also offer a programme of support to assist students in the completion of their UCAS applications.**

**\*Please click the UCAS icon to be taken to the webpage!**

## Super Curricular

Dear parent/guardian

At Bishop Vesey's Grammar School, we aspire to foster in our students a love of learning. We also aim to provide appropriate support and challenge for our students in order for them to fulfil their potential. Super-Curriculum encapsulates all those activities that nurture academic enquiry beyond the measurable outcomes of examination results. We also know that potential future universities and employers will be interested and impressed by the initiative taken by students who have engaged with super-curricular activities. Engaging in super curricular activities will help students develop a love for their favourite subject or subjects.

Included in this booklet are a collection of 'subject pages', which have been designed by Academic Departments at BVGS, which include a variety of prompts and ideas, which will enable you to explore your favourite subjects beyond the confines of the taught syllabus. These 'subject pages' are by no means exhaustive lists but should offer students a source of inspiration to explore their favourite subjects.

These activities can take many forms including wider reading, watching online materials, downloading podcasts, attending University lectures/masterclasses, arranging Summer School placements, engaging with H.E 'super- curricular' initiatives or visiting museums/places of academic interest. You might also like to join a regional or national club or society related to your academic interests, or enter competitions such as essay prizes or Maths Olympiads.

Mr David T. Goodwin

**\*Please click the icon below to be taken to the page on our school website**

