

St Augustine's

Sixth Form Handbook



September 2018

Luceat Lux Vestra : Let Your Light Shine (Matthew 5:16)

Welcome to St Augustine's Sixth Form and congratulations on your recent examinations results!

St Augustine's is a community whose values are strongly rooted within the Christian tradition. These values are enshrined in our ethos and commitment to developing and celebrating the gifts and talents of each and every individual.

Our Sixth Form motto 'Luceat Lux Vestra' embraces achievement and nurtures a culture of mutual respect in the broadest and most inclusive way. We provide numerous opportunities to engage, challenge and celebrate achievement. Likewise, our vision encourages every student to undertake responsibility and make a positive contribution to the sixth form, school life and the wider community striving for equality and excellence for all.

At St Augustine's our standards are unashamedly high. We strive to provide you with a teaching and learning environment where you have the opportunity to fulfil your true potential. A level study is both rigorous and demanding therefore it is important that you accept your responsibility as an independent 21st Century learner who is committed to the highest standard of excellence.

Despite the challenges you will face it is important to sustain a positive attitude to your studies. From the outset it is important to use the Induction Days, Pastoral sessions and other support systems within the college which are available to help you cope throughout your time here.

The handbook has been designed to support your transition into the sixth form. It should be read alongside the whole college policies.

We wish you every success in your studies and beyond.

Attendance and Punctuality

Students should arrive promptly at 8.50 am and go either to their form rooms for registration or to the Lasallian Centre for assembly. It is expected that students arrive punctually to all lessons and all absences must be supported in writing (letter or email) from a parent or guardian. An attendance record which falls below 96% is a cause for concern.

It is compulsory for Year 12 students to attend all morning (8.55 am) and afternoon (12.40pm) registrations. Year 12 students will allocate independent study periods to specific subjects and must remain on the college premises for their independent study. Year 12 students are allowed to leave the college site at lunchtimes only.

Year 13 students are allowed to sign out of college lunch time and also Period 5 if they have an independent study period. Year 13 students are required to attend all AM and PM registration periods. A signing in/out/late book is located by the Sixth Form Office and it is essential that all students use this. Please remember that in the case of a fire or other emergencies, this is the book which will be used to ensure there are no sixth form students left in the building. If you arrive at college late, please go directly to the Sixth Form Office and sign in, giving a reason for the lateness. Students who are consistently late, either in terms of registration or attendance will be required to explain themselves to the Head of Sixth Form. If this behaviour continues the College reserves the right to ask the student to leave.

If Sixth form students are unwell and unable to attend college, please email attendance@sta.cc or telephone the designated absence line. If a student falls ill during the school day they should go to the Sixth Form Office or main reception and their parents will be contacted and arrangements made for them to return home.

The college does not permit absence to attend Glastonbury, Wimbledon or any other type of event similar to these.

Some suggestions of examples that would/could be acceptable:

- Illness
- Emergency medical/dental appointment
- A medical appointment which cannot be arranged after school or during holiday time
- Driving Test
- A religious holiday compatible with the faith of the student
- Wedding of a close family member
- A Connexions interview or career related interview
- A university Open Day (maximum 3 in Term 6 only)
- Family bereavement
- Official carer duties for a member of the family
- Court appearance
- Official study leave

Some suggestions of examples that would/could not be acceptable:

- Holidays during term time
- Driving lessons and the driving theory test
- Festivals
- Birthdays or similar celebrations
- Babysitting
- Waiting for the post, plumber, decorator etc to arrive
- Routine medical and dental appointments
- Unofficial exam study leave
- Missing a lesson in order to complete unfinished work
- Part time work which does not constitute part of a student's course

Behaviour

Students' attitude to both work and behaviour in this College should be of the highest order. Sub-standard work will not be tolerated and any disruptive behaviour will result in exclusion from the class. Should this behaviour persist, more permanent measures will be put in place in line with the college behaviour for learning policy.

Sixth form students will find that the attitude of staff towards them changes and they will find themselves very much in a working partnership. Every endeavour is made, in the two years that the student spends in the Sixth Form, to encourage the development of the young adult. Each student will be treated with respect and consideration, which staff have every right to expect in return.

Any behaviour which undermines positive relationships (threats, abuse, discriminatory behaviour and bullying) will not be tolerated. Behaviour of this kind is dealt with firmly and could jeopardise your place in the sixth form.

Positive Referral

We operate a system of positive referral to commend students for demonstrating exceptional commitment and dedication to all aspects of college life, academic and extra-curricular.

Bursary

The 16-19 Bursary Fund provides financial assistance for education-related costs that may arise during the school year. Discretionary bursaries are awarded to young people whose parents are on low income and who meet conditions relating to attendance and behaviour. The bursary fund is reviewed periodically throughout the year.

St Augustine's Catholic Academy aims to ensure that discretionary awards are made to students in ways that best fit their individual needs and circumstances. It is considered best practice to pay discretionary bursaries 'in kind' rather than in cash. Consequently, we aim to award financial support via the 16-19 Bursary Fund by purchasing, for example, textbooks, revision guides and contributing towards field trips/university open days.

Students wishing to apply for a bursary, are required to write/apply to the School Business Manager directly. Application forms are available in the sixth form office and will be distributed at parent engagement evenings.

Car Parking

Students are permitted to bring their cars onto college grounds. Students are reminded that the speed limit on school grounds is 5 mph and we reserve the right to refuse parking to anyone who chooses to ignore this. For reasons of safety, students should not drive either in or out of the school premises during break times and lunch times. They should also remain on site until all school buses have left the premises. Students are to park in the spaces behind the sports hall and not in the staff car parks. Registration numbers and vehicle details are to be submitted to the Sixth Form Secretary and students will be issued with a car pass which should be displayed when on site. Parking off site, care should be taken not to cause issues obstructing residents' access.

Careers/UCAS + Further Education

The College has a Careers Suite which is available to all sixth formers. Advice/consultations are available from the Careers Co-ordinator and an Independent Careers Advisor is available by appointment.

All students are given the opportunity to attend a Higher Education Convention to support the extensive research which is required to ensure that students apply for the most suitable courses at the appropriate universities.

Applications to university via UCAS are made online and appropriate training will be given during the Summer Term of Year 12 to all students. Students are given a booklet entitled 'Post 18 Options' which provides all the information needed about the application process, including the writing of personal statements. They will also receive advice from Student Finance England which explains the process of applying for student maintenance loans and fee loans.

Applications can be submitted from early September onwards and all applications to Oxbridge Colleges and either medical or veterinary colleges must be made before 15 October. Some universities require students to sit external tests, for which students need to be registered by the end of September. Details of these colleges are on University websites.

Students are invited to apply for the Oxbridge programme early in the academic year. They have the opportunity to attend an introductory seminar which is followed by a visit to the Oxbridge Conference. All Oxbridge candidates are offered mock university interviews at Prior Park College at the start of Year 13. Furthermore the Oxford Link Liaison Officer from our link college (Merton) supports our Oxbridge programme by providing workshops on personal statements and interviews. The college also endeavours to arrange opportunities for potential Oxbridge candidates to meet with ex-students who are studying at Oxford or Cambridge.

Work Experience is vital for university courses such as medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, nursing, teaching and other vocational related subjects. Students are encouraged to be independent in sourcing work experience placements; absences from college can be arranged with the Head of Sixth Form.

Chaplaincy

Faith Wheat is the whole school chaplain, her responsibilities include the pastoral care of students and parents as well as co-ordinating the liturgical life of the college. Students are welcome to drop in for a purely social visit when they have independent study periods on their timetable. Additionally Faith meets tutor groups for periods of reflection and organises retreats at St Cassian's Centre in Kintbury as well as days of reflection with the sixth form.

Charity Committee

Each tutor group nominates a representative to meet with Faith on a monthly basis to co-ordinate charity fundraising in the sixth form. We are very proud of the charities we support and the generosity of students in the sixth form.

Employment

While it is recognised that the experience of working is of great value to students, research has shown that a workload in excess of 10 hours per week has a detrimental effect on A level results. Students are strongly advised to restrict part time working for the long term benefit of their A level results.

EPQ

The Extended Project Qualification provides opportunities to develop critical, reflective, problem solving and independent learning skills through the planning, research and evaluation of a self-selected project. Students will develop and apply skills creatively to result in producing a dissertation, an investigation, a performance or an artefact. Students expressing an interest in the EPQ will be selected and commence the project in Year 12.

Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion

Each and every individual is expected to take on a role of leadership and responsibility; promoting positive community relations with their peer group and wider school community. Prefect/Mentor training is provided to ensure students have the necessary skills to implement their roles effectively and a leadership structure provides students with a support system. The sixth form motto "Let Your Light Shine" and the positive referral system ensure that all students can achieve on an academic, social and personal level.

Examinations/Assessments

Internal assessments are an important indicator of a student's progress in their chosen areas of study. All Sixth Form students will be regularly assessed within their subject areas and mock A Level exams will be taken to prepare students for the public summer examinations.

Estimated grades are set for each student by an external agency and are based on their GCSE average point score. In addition, students agree a personal ASPIRE grade with their subject tutors .

Students are required to pay for any re-sits in external examinations.

Extra Curricular Activities

In the sixth form a wide range of enrichment activities is available including:

Model United Nations

Sports Clubs

Young Enterprise

Volunteering

Sixth Form students may use the sports facilities within the appointed times, before or after the school day. Sporting activities during lesson time are distracting to the rest of the college and ought not to occur.

Frequently asked questions

Who do I see about any problems I may be experiencing?

Your first discussion should be with your tutor who will be able to help from a pastoral point of view, subject tutors for work related concerns. The Assistant Head of Sixth are also available for discussion on any topic. The Careers Co-ordinator is full time and can assist with any career related questions; and the sixth form secretary is also available to help with any concerns on a range of subjects. If you don't know who to go to, try the sixth form secretary first. You can also see the Lay Chaplain to discuss any personal matters and appointments can be made to see a professional counsellor for confidential discussion.

Who should my parents ask for if they have concerns?

First contact should be with the form tutor for pastoral issues and subject tutors for academic issues. Appointments can be arranged with the Head of Sixth Form.

When can I take driving lessons?

Students are encouraged to take driving lessons outside of school time. They can be arranged during Independent Study Periods but not during lesson time or AM/PM registration. Students must complete a permission form held in the Sixth Form Office.

When can I take my driving test?

You are allowed to take a driving test during school time providing you return to school for part of the day.

Gap Year

Some students prefer to take a gap year in between taking their A levels and continuing Higher Education or starting a training scheme. Some universities prefer students to have taken a gap year – others don't, so do check before you make any definite arrangements.

Students must ensure that their gap year is going to be a productive and beneficial use of their time. It may be worth considering trying to obtain direct experience related to their course, eg medical students may wish to work in a hospital abroad. Other students have found that following the Year in Industry Scheme has been very beneficial.

Holidays

The Sixth Form adheres to the College policy that parents should not take students out of college for holidays during the term. Parents should be advised that such practice must have an impact on student performance and it should be avoided at all costs.

Homework

All students are expected to work independently for a minimum of 5 hours per week for each A level subject in addition to any homework set. Students who have problems with organisation or time management should consult their form tutor and, where necessary, their subject tutor for support in this area. The Head of Sixth Form remains a final point of contact. Consistent failure to complete homework/coursework or meet assessment deadlines will be dealt with through the Behaviour Policy.

Independent Study Periods

In Year 12 all non-teaching time is to be used for independent study. Students can work in the Lasallian Centre, Sixth Form Annex (silent study area), Library or any free classrooms.

Intimacy

It is inevitable within a mixed sixth form for relationships to develop. The College wishes to make it perfectly clear that no form of intimacy whatsoever is permitted whilst on college grounds or in uniform, eg kissing or holding hands.

Induction

At the beginning of Year 12 all students are given a period of induction to aid the transition to A level. The induction sessions, plus the subsequent PSHE lessons and tutorial sessions should equip every individual with the necessary information and study skills to be a successful sixth form student.

Library

At A level, students will need to develop a very different method of studying from that of GCSE level. The Library is a central resource for the use of students. Computers are available in the Library for college work only. It is important to respect the needs of others and return books on their due dates. The Library is a quiet area and sixth form students are expected to set an example of focussed, individual study. The use of mobile phones and talking are both inappropriate. Subject resources are also available through the online library catalogue.

Mobile Phones

Please be aware of the distraction which can be caused by the use of mobile phones. Students are asked to switch off their mobiles in lessons and around the college grounds. Sixth Form Students can use their mobile phones in the Study/Common Room. In accordance with the behaviour for learning policy, mobile phones will be confiscated if used inappropriately.

Open Days

All students are advised to visit colleges before making a selection on their UCAS forms. Permission is automatically given for up to three open day visits in the summer term; if more are required they can be individually discussed with the Head of Sixth Form. Students are required to provide proof of booking in advance of any planned visits. Students are expected to take responsibility for catching up on missed work.

Pastoral Programme

A pastoral programme is in place in Years 12 and 13 to support the students in their wider development as individuals. The programme includes a wide range of topics which are relevant and of interest to young adults. We have access to counselling services and appointments can be made to discuss issues with individual students.

PSHE

Year 12 students are allocated a 1 hour PSHE lesson once a fortnight. The sessions cover a range of topics which includes Post 18 Options, Study Skills and Health & Wellbeing.

Punctuality

We have high expectations of our students at St Augustine's and they are expected to arrive to lessons punctually. Persistent poor punctuality will be corrected through the behaviour for learning policy.

Religious Education

Every student in the sixth form attends compulsory RE lessons.

Reporting System/Assessment

Progress checks and annual reports are issued to Year 12 and 13 for each subject area. Both Years 12 and 13 have a Parents' Consultation Evening and we would expect students to attend with their parent/guardian. All students have a 1:1 interview with their form tutor to support their academic and pastoral needs. If concerns are identified the tutor will implement an Intervention Strategy to support and monitor much more closely the progress of the student. This provides an opportunity for the tutor to oversee the student's performance in all areas of the curriculum.

Spirituality

As a Catholic sixth form all students are expected to support the Catholic ethos and spirituality of the college by attending assemblies and masses. Additionally students in the sixth form are invited to attend retreats at Kintbury as well as Days of Reflection with the Lay Chaplain.

Lasallian Centre

The students have access to a purpose built study room.

This room is equipped with desks and chairs for quiet study and there is a separate area equipped with drinks and vending machine. Stereos/loud music is not to be used during college lesson time.

The Lasallian Centre is a wireless zone and students are encouraged to bring laptops for private study. Additionally there is a wireless area in the canteen which sixth formers may use to study.

Students are responsible for cleaning the Lasallian Centre, on a rota basis, under the supervision of their form tutor.

Uniform

There is an official sixth form uniform available from Scholars in Trowbridge, Bath, Devizes and Warminster; substitutions are not acceptable. Uniform requirements are as follows:

Acceptable items of uniform are as follows:

Male

- Official black fitted jacket
- Black trousers
- Black sixth form tie
- College shirt (white with dark stripes)
- Black or dark grey socks with black shoes (no trainers)
- Long sleeved thin, plain, black jumper

Female

- Official black fitted jacket
- Grey Thompson Tartan skirt (these are available in different lengths)
- Plain white blouse
- Plain black opaque (minimum 40 denier) or neutral tights.
- Plain black shoes (maximum 2 inch heel, no stilettos/sling backs)
- Long sleeved thin, plain, black jumper

Jackets must be worn at all times, unless students are informed otherwise.

Students may wear one pair of discreet earrings

Extreme hairstyles and hair colours are unacceptable and styles must be neat (neutral coloured hair accessories may be worn to achieve this)

Neatly trimmed facial hair is permitted

No tattoos are permitted

Coats should not be worn indoors

Zeal

The difference between GCSE and A level is enormous. The key to success is having a positive work ethic and enthusiasm for your chosen subjects, reading around the topics and engrossing yourself in them.

Personal motivation, passion and zeal are determining factors in individual success at A level and beyond.