



Sixth Form Student Handbook
2018-2019

Head of Sixth Form Welcome

Bristol Free School Sixth Form is a centre of excellence for Post-16 education which opened in September 2016. It provides an outstanding curriculum in brand new facilities shaped and developed by our students, which include exclusive social and study spaces. It is a unique learning environment.

Our Sixth Form provides a fantastic range of opportunities within the curriculum and through our unrivalled extra-curricular programme. We offer a growth range of A Level and BTEC vocational courses in order to provide a flexible curriculum which enables our students to achieve their ambitions and move on to university, apprenticeships or employment. Our students will reach their maximum potential as a result of their commitment and hard work, the support they receive from home, and the expertise, dedication and inspiration of BFS staff who nurture each student so that he or she can fulfil their academic and personal potential.

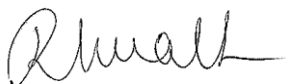
BFS Sixth Form is open to all students, not only from the School itself, but also from schools across Bristol and especially from neighbouring schools. The School's reputation for improving academic standards and excellent support makes us a popular choice for students seeking exceptionally high quality teaching in a nurturing environment, with smaller class sizes and a focus on personalised learning. We offer a high level of support for all students with a personal tutor and brand new facilities for independent and group study, as well as a brand new common room and separate Sixth Form refectory. Students are encouraged to take part in a wide range of enrichment activities including sport, performing and creative arts, outdoor education and peer mentoring. There are also opportunities to get involved in trips, visits and expeditions as well as community and volunteering work, to not only make their time at BFS Sixth Form exciting and fulfilling, but also to strengthen the depth of a CV or university application.

We strongly believe that BFS Sixth Form will provide a stepping-stone to a prosperous and enriching higher level of education, helping students to become well-rounded, driven and successful young adults. We strive to provide the necessary information, advice, support and guidance to make sure students are able to make well informed choices.

BFS Sixth Form is above all, a happy and inclusive Sixth Form, a place where students work hard and where they also find friendship, enrichment and support, preparing them for adult life. We have a commitment to 'life-long learning' and are confident that each student who joins us to study will be well prepared for the exciting challenges of the 21st Century.

For summaries of the courses that are on offer at Bristol Free School Sixth Form, to arrange a visit, or if you would like us to send you a prospectus, please contact us via email: admin@bristolfreeschool.org.uk or telephone: 0117 959 7200.

I look forward to welcoming you to our Sixth Form community.



Richard Walker

Assistant Headteacher and Head of Sixth Form

Sixth Form CHARTER

This charter tells you about the services and standards that we aim to provide.

The staff at Bristol Free School Sixth Form will do their best to provide you with high quality education and training.

We will do our very best to provide:

- ❖ Equal opportunities for everyone
- ❖ Additional support for you if you need and request it to help you succeed on your course
- ❖ Information and guidance about all our courses and services before you come to us
- ❖ A fair and efficient treatment of your application to join a course
- ❖ Good quality teaching and appropriate learning resources
- ❖ Tutorial support for your studies
- ❖ Information about your progress supported by the prompt return of marked work
- ❖ Guidance if you want to change your course
- ❖ Guidance about further education and training, and employment at the end of your course
- ❖ An opportunity to comment on your experience at Sixth Form
- ❖ Access to sport and recreational facilities, as well as social and charity fundraising events.

We can only fulfil our promises to you if:

- ❖ You are serious about your course and therefore attend all lessons and meet all deadlines
- ❖ You respect other students' interest in studying
- ❖ You agree to follow the Sixth Form Learning Agreement along with the Sixth Form Sanctions policy and the **Course Enrolment and Continuation (CEC) Policy**, clearly set out upon enrolment.

CODE OF CONDUCT – SIXTH FORM

We want to be able to build adult working relationships with you, but we can only do this if you are prepared to make a commitment to behave in a mature manner whilst studying with us.

The emphasis is on personal responsibility and you should be prepared to take responsibility for all that you do.

When you sign your enrolment form and learning agreement, it means that you agree to follow the Code of Conduct.

We expect you to:

- ❖ Treat all staff and fellow students with respect and behave in accordance with the Equal Opportunities Policy
- ❖ Not tolerate bullying of any kind whether physical or mental
- ❖ Follow the safety rules and fire drill procedures
- ❖ Behave responsibly with respect to illegal drugs and alcohol and never come into the Sixth Form under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances
- ❖ Not to bring anything onto the premises which can be used to harm any other person
- ❖ Treat Sixth Form property and other students' property with respect.

Student expectations:

As a student you are expected to:

- ❖ Register each day via the registration list. Report to the Sixth Form Admin Office if you arrive late or if your subject teacher is absent
- ❖ Use all private study time constructively
- ❖ Attend all classes punctually and ensure that you are adequately equipped to work
- ❖ Inform tutors of absence and provide any necessary evidence
- ❖ Do all class/homework assignments set, submit them on time and catch up on work missed
- ❖ Participate in Assessment Weeks and Mock Exam periods
- ❖ Take responsibility for your learning and approach your studies in such a manner as to gain maximum benefit and achievement. This includes making full use of support services
- ❖ Show the same consideration and respect which you would expect to receive to all staff and students on your course
- ❖ Inform your tutor of any change in your personal circumstances which affects your status as a student
- ❖ Return all books or equipment when you have finished your course.

If you break this Code of Conduct then disciplinary procedures will be applied. These range from verbal warnings to instant expulsion, depending on the nature of your behaviour.

WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG

If for any reason you are unhappy with the way you have been treated we would encourage you to inform someone as soon as possible.

We welcome constructive criticism and will do our best to resolve minor complaints quickly and informally. All students have the opportunity to voice their concerns via 'Student Voice' which is carried out anonymously during Term 2, 4 and 6.

If you have a more serious issue or concern you should see the Head of Sixth Form immediately.

If things go wrong, you should:

- ❖ Talk calmly to the person immediately responsible for the area of your complaint, for example your teacher or a member of the support staff. They will listen and resolve matters if they are able to
- ❖ If the problem is not solved satisfactorily talk to the person responsible for the area of your complaint, for example the Course Tutor, Head of Subject or Head of Sixth Form
- ❖ In addition, you could talk with a representative of the Sixth Form Student Council who can feed back your concerns.

If you want to change or drop a subject

This is a very important decision and could affect your future so you need to have thought of all the implications before you decide to change or drop a subject. After discussing this matter with your parents/carers, subject teacher, tutor and Head of Sixth Form you must complete the necessary forms ensuring your parents/carers have consented.

DURING YOUR COURSE

Assignments and Coursework

For you to succeed you will need to cope well with the demands of assignments and coursework. In many subjects, the assignments are an integral element of the course. Students who do not complete the set assignments will find that their examination entry will not be supported. All students experience difficulty or stress over work at some time during their course.

How can you avoid problems developing?

- ❖ Ask for support from your tutor, Head of Sixth Form or teacher *AS SOON AS YOU THINK YOU NEED IT*
- ❖ Use your free time during the day wisely
- ❖ Complete work on time: don't leave it until the last minute
- ❖ Seek help from your teachers and/or tutor if you fall behind

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- ❖ Ask about setting yourself realistic targets in an Action Plan. Opportunities for this will be given in tutor time
- ❖ Devise a study plan for assignments and coursework. Your tutor can help you
- ❖ Make full use of the resources such as the Learning Resource Centre and Sixth Form Study Room.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is an important issue as it forms a major part of any reference, whether for employment or university, **so please ensure good attendance!**

You are expected to register at times agreed with your tutor as well as attend all classes and tutorials on your agreed timetable. You must also use your private study time constructively.

If you are ill or cannot attend for other reasons, please contact the School Office Sickness Line on **0117 950 8157** or use the Study Bugs app. If you know you will be absent in advance, e.g. GP appointment, please email supporting documents to admin@bristolfreeschool.org.uk.

Please also email and provide your tutor and/or the Head of Sixth Form with a note from your parent/carer explaining your unplanned absence when you return.

Your teacher will advise you on the work you need to complete to avoid falling behind.

MONEY MATTERS

Bursary Funding

All Sixth Form students aged 16–18 are welcome to apply for additional funding to support their studies. The money pledged by the government aims to:

- Ensure every young person participates in and benefits from a place in 16–18 education and training, irrespective of their background
- Eliminate the gap in attainment between those from poorer and more affluent backgrounds
- Help young people meet the cost of participation in education and training in Sixth Form.

All students who feel they are eligible are encouraged to apply and each application must be supported by relevant evidence and will all be judged on merit. For an application form please come to the Sixth Form Admin Office.

All bursary awards will be regularly reviewed and payments will be dependent on student's attendance, punctuality, work rate and behaviour.

Bursary Payment Guidelines

To receive a bursary payment you must have fulfilled all the following criteria:

- Follow a full-time programme of study (600 hours) consisting of “qualification” and “non –qualification” hours. Qualification hours: this is the time spent in timetabled lessons, studying towards a recognised qualification. Non-qualification hours: this is the time spent attending tutor time, 1:1 mentoring, timetabled study lessons and participating in Milestone Assessment weeks, Pastoral Days, Activity Days, Work Experience Week, Work Shadowing Week , Core Study Lessons and Enrichment.
- Meet all class work, coursework, homework and assignment deadlines to the best of your ability.
- Communicate effectively with staff concerning your work and any absences from tutor time and lessons.
- Use study lessons effectively to keep up to date with all class work, coursework, homework and assignment evidence.
- All students are expected to attend Sixth Form Monday – Friday 8:30 – 15:00 and attend tutor sessions and mentoring appointments when requested.
- Register your attendance via the Sixth Form Sign-in Sheet.
- Punctuality - all students are expected to be on time for their tutor sessions, year meetings and timetabled lessons and arrive with the correct equipment to include text books and files.
- Ensure all work is handed in on time.

Permission for absence may be granted on a limited basis if a ‘request for leave of absence’ form is completed (see staff in the Sixth Form Admin Office) and either an appointment letter/card or a parental letter is given in advance for:

- Hospital appointments
- Medical appointments (Doctors, Dentist, Opticians, etc.)
- Funeral (immediate family only)
- Religious holiday (this must not exceed 4 days)
- University visit, Open Day or Interview
- Attendance at probation meeting or court hearing.

The following are not acceptable under any circumstances.

- If you are placed on Progress Report
- Holidays
- Part-time work not connected with study
- Leisure activities
- Birthdays, Weddings or similar celebrations
- Babysitting younger siblings or looking after family members
- Shopping.

For more details, please visit the school website at <http://www.bfs6thform.org.uk/bursary.php>

SIXTH FORM COURSE ENROLMENT AND CONTINUATION POLICY (CEC)

Stage 1/Letter 1: Subject Leader and Subject Teacher

A letter will be sent to the parents/carers and student to explain the concerns and outline what the student needs to do to resolve these concerns within a time frame as specified by the subject teacher and/or Head of Sixth Form. A copy of this policy will be enclosed so that parents are aware of potential future consequences of failure to respond to the warning. Parents/carers will be invited to make personal contact with the subject teacher and/or Head of Sixth Form. Students will also be encouraged to talk through the issues with staff. Additional monitoring structures will be put into place via the means of Stage 1 Progress Report.

Stage 2/Letter 2: Subject Leader and Member of the Leadership Team

A letter will be sent to the parents/carers and student to invite them to a meeting to discuss ongoing issues. A copy of this policy will be enclosed again. At the meeting an action plan detailing what must happen to resolve these issues will be drawn up. If parents/carers are unable to attend, then the meeting can either be rescheduled, or take place as scheduled with the student concerned. Additional monitoring structures will be put into place via the means of Stage 2 Progress Report.

Parents/carers and student are subsequently invited to the scheduled review meeting of Stage 2. Possible outcomes are:

1. Concerns raised in Stage 2 have been rectified. The review meeting will agree either:
 - No further monitoring is required.
 - Monitoring to continue for a further agreed period of time at which stage there will be a further review.

Should concerns re-emerge in the future, then the process would start from Stage 2.

2. Concerns raised in Stage 2 have been significantly rectified, and there is sufficient improvement for the student not to move to Stage 3. However, the student will remain at Stage 2 for a further period of review with an amended action plan.
3. Concerns raised in Stage 2 have continued. The student will therefore be moved to Stage 3.

Stage 3/Letter 3: Subject Leader and Assistant Headteacher (Head of Sixth Form)

Where the issues raised in Stage 2 are not resolved, or other concerns arise, then a third letter will be sent confirming the current situation, and inviting the parents/carers and student in for a meeting on future options. A copy of this policy will be enclosed again.

The student will be monitored through a subject report or year report as appropriate and a final review date set.

Parents/carers and student are subsequently invited to the scheduled review meeting of Stage 3. Possible outcomes are:

1. Concerns raised in Stage 3 have been rectified. Should concerns re-emerge in the future, then the process would start from Stage 3.
2. Concerns raised in Stage 3 have been significantly rectified, and there is sufficient improvement for the student to remain at Stage 3 for a further period of review.
3. Concerns raised in Stage 3 have continued. The student will therefore be removed from the course. Parents should also be informed that students without a viable programme will be unable to remain on roll.

Please note where a student has been placed previously onto Stage 2, any future concerns within 6 months will mean an immediate return to Stage 2 in that subject.

Where a student reaches Stage 2 in two or more courses, that student will trigger a pastoral review of their suitability for their chosen courses.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

We would not encourage anyone to solely concentrate on their studies. One of the most important aspects of your time here is to develop as a person as well as a student.

BFS Sixth Form is proud of its extra-curricular provision. If there is a sport that is not on offer, but you would be keen to participate in, then we would encourage you to seek out the PE department and see if there is room for this activity to be added.

During Period 7 across the week there is an extensive enrichment programme. As well as these activities there are many other areas of school life that you can get involved in, such as musical and theatre productions, Young Enterprise, Model United Nations and many more.

Sixth Form students are also encouraged to take an active role in fundraising for local, national and international charities through several fundraising activities. This is also the aim of our Sixth Form RAG week in Term 3.

Remember, universities and employers are looking to see you as a person, not just a number so the more experiences and skills that you can offer the better!

REPORTS

You will receive regular reports on your progress. The purpose of these is to keep you and your parents continuously informed about how you are doing so that you will have accurate information about your expected achievements enabling you to plan future work and progress. Further to these reports there will be a Sixth Form Parents Evening where parents and carers get the opportunity to discuss your progress and achievement in accordance with the reports from subject teachers.

CAREERS EDUCATION

You will have to make difficult choices about your career aims, such as which employment path to follow and/or what Higher Education or Further Education courses to apply for. This often means you need some advice from someone who has a thorough knowledge of careers and training opportunities and who is able to help you make decisions. Ms Huzzey and your tutor will guide and support you with Careers.

We have a wide range of helpful information including computer based sessions, guidelines on entrance to Higher Education and most university prospectuses. We also offer help and support with UCAS applications. These sessions are extremely useful in preparing you for applying for a place in Higher Education. This process starts in Term 5 of year 12 and during tutor time.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

BFS Sixth Form recognises diversity and aims to help students to appreciate the values and opinions of others. We have a commitment to providing equal opportunities irrespective of class, gender, race, sexual identity or ability or age.

STUDENT REPRESENTATION – ‘Student Voice’

We would like to provide a forum so that all students feel they have a voice.

There are a number of ways in which you can be heard. One way is through ‘Student Voice’. In Terms 2, 4 and 6 students will receive a card on which they can highlight positive points as well as areas for improvement. The feedback from these cards will then be collated and discussed at Sixth Form Committee.

The other way is through the Sixth Form Student Council. The Sixth Form Council will have more of a hand on social events in the Sixth Form as well as fundraising for charity and inter-tutor competitions.

STUDY ROOM RULES

You must abide by some simple rules when using the Study Room.
Remember you must **not**:-

- Talk loudly
- Eat or drink
- Abuse the use of the internet
- Install any software
- Copy other student’s files
- Use the computer facilities for anything other than work.

If you do not follow these rules you may be excluded from using the facilities and taken onto the disciplinary procedure.

Health and Safety Guidelines

FIRE

When the fire alarm sounds, leave the room calmly and quickly and assemble at the Sixth Form fire assembly points. Your teacher will lead you and, once outside, staff will register students to ensure all students are accounted for.

SMOKING

Smoking is not permitted in any of the buildings or the grounds or within sight of the School grounds.

ACCIDENTS

Aim to prevent accidents by handling equipment sensibly and carefully. Always ask advice from your teacher or technician if unsure about using equipment or if you think there could be a risk to safety.

Tell the teacher about any accident immediately and appropriate help will be provided. If hospital care is needed, the telephone switchboard is informed and ambulance is called, but seek qualified First Aid help in the first instance.

Accident forms (available from the Office) should be completed and then returned.

INSURANCE

The Sixth Form has a general public liability policy, but this does not cover theft and/or damage of bikes and cars, or damage or theft of possessions and money.

While you are away from the premises on visits, every reasonable care is taken for your safety.