



Sixth Form Student & Parent Handbook



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Belper School Sixth Form Centre!

Success in the sixth form requires a whole new approach to studying and learning. It offers new opportunities and experiences, and should prepare you for success in further education or employment.

Learning at this level requires total commitment and motivation, as well as mature and responsible approach. Get this right and you should be able to achieve your best with the support of your teachers and tutors.

This handbook is intended as a guide to both sixth form students and parents/carers of sixth form students. It also forms the basis of the conditions which must be agreed to upon accepting a place in the sixth form at Belper School. You will be asked to sign the attached letter to confirm that you have read and agree to the conditions of acceptance.

Finally we hope that you will enjoy the experiences and benefits that your studies will bring and look forward to you achieving your best in our successful sixth form.

Paul Brumby

Head of Sixth Form

GENERAL GUIDELINES

PARTNERSHIP

Parents/Guardians have a very important role to play in the three-way partnership you are entering into. In the Sixth Form we do not subscribe to the view that post 16 students are entirely independent decision makers. Indeed it is our view that **students entering Post 16 do so in a deliberate partnership with their parents or guardians**, who retain an active responsibility for development and progress. Your Parents have supported you throughout the compulsory stages of education and are encouraging you to continue your studies. Even though you are older, their support is still essential and they will want to share with you the important moments and decisions throughout Post 16, as well as encouraging you to achieve your full potential.

Primarily we will try to deal with students directly as young adults, but out of courtesy information will be shared with parents or supporting guardians. We reserve the right to share with and involve Parents/Guardians even though you are older and in voluntary education. This will happen automatically through reports and consultation evenings, but there is also an open invitation to parents to contact us at any time and this is very much encouraged. **Contact can be made directly to teaching staff for subject specific issues or through the Personal Tutor.**

PROGRESS MONITORING

Students will be monitored throughout the course and at regular intervals progress will be assessed. If a student is deemed to be making unsatisfactory progress parents will be notified by either the subject leader, Head of Sixth Form or Personal Tutor. Entrance to examinations will only be made available to those students that have fulfilled the course requirements and made sufficient progress to pass the course. The decision to enter a student into an examination lies with the Head of Faculty / Subject Leader and Head of Sixth Form. Where a student fails to make adequate progress parents will be notified in advance. Where a student fails to make sufficient progress to pass a course the decision to allow the student to continue further lies with the Head of Faculty and Head of Sixth Form.

PSHE & GUIDANCE

All students are required to take part in the PSHE and Guidance programme which takes place each Tuesday period 3. This will deal with a range of personal, social and health issues relevant to 17/18 year olds and includes topics such as personal safety, driver safety, healthy eating etc. Towards the end of Year 12 the focus shifts towards university and careers guidance. This session is also an essential communication channel for all students.

SIXTH FORM STUDIES

All students will be expected to take up an extra qualification in addition to their chosen courses. This may include re-taking GCSE Mathematics and/or English, or a further AS/A2 level in General Studies.

PRIVATE STUDY

The balance between taught lessons and private study changes when students move into the sixth form. **It is expected that students study individually or in study groups for approximately 5 hours per week in each subject outside of timetabled lesson time.**

We encourage students to use the study facilities offered by the school. Sixth form students have access to a study room with IT facilities and the library is open to them all day, as well as after school. They will obviously also need a place to study at home, if possible with a small notice board for timetables, reminders etc.

COMMUNICATION

It is vital that students take some responsibility for keeping up to date with important announcements/news. This is particularly important in the sixth form where students are beginning to take some responsibility for their own futures. Students should check the Urgent Notice Board outside the sixth form common room daily, attend all assemblies and PSHE sessions, and all morning registration sessions. Students must register in the afternoon, unless they have made alternative arrangements with their tutor. As these are made on an individual basis and at the discretion of the tutor, students must have this authorised by both parents and tutor.

SIXTH FORM COUNCIL

All students have the opportunity to take part in elections for the Sixth Form Council. Each tutor group will have its own representatives. Those elected will play an active role in decisions affecting the sixth form community as a whole.

The Sixth Form Council enables students to air fresh views on a variety of issues. There will be regular meetings with staff to advise or assist with any action which may be required.

The Sixth Form Council debates issues to try and solve any Sixth Form problems, organise social events, encourage others to become involved in charities and the local community.

Serving on the Sixth Form Council provides the student with valuable experience and is also an excellent addition to any university and job application/reference.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

“Sixth formers make an outstanding contribution to the school community...” (Ofsted 2007)

We expect all students to undertake some form of Community Service during their time in the sixth form. This could involve for example:

- Helping younger students in school e.g. with reading, mathematics, etc.
- Carrying out a specific community project
- Charity fund raising
- Carrying out school based voluntary duties

This community service should be carried out in the students’ own time. The school will assist with the organisation of these activities, but will also expect each student to take on some responsibility for this themselves.

Students are required to complete the blue Sixth Form Community Service Record Form and a blue Risk Assessment Form if the service is outside of the school. Both forms should be returned to your tutor. This is very important since it will provide tutors with the information they need to write university or employment references. There is a great deal of evidence to suggest that both universities and employers value such experience.

In addition to this all students are required to take part in Enrichment Week in Year 12, which offers a further opportunity to carry out community service or work experience.

Students are also expected to assist with open evenings, acting as student guides, etc. and support Year 6 students during their transition.

APPROACH/BEHAVIOUR

Clearly all sixth form students are expected to behave in responsible manner at all times. When coming to lessons students should come in a positive frame of mind with appropriate equipment for each lesson. Points worthy of particular note include the following:

- The school is a no smoking site and students should not smoke on school premises.
- The Common Room is an area set aside for sixth form use only. The space should be respected and kept clean and tidy at all times.
- Students who choose to drive to school do so at their own risk. When using the school car park they should drive responsibly.
- Students should generally behave in an appropriate manner, with respect to others and the school environment.

If students behave in a way that is considered to be irresponsible in any way they will face disciplinary action in line with the sixth form’s disciplinary procedure.

MOBILE PHONES AND MP3 PLAYERS

Sixth Form students are allowed to bring mobile phones and MP3 players into school, but do so at their own risk. The school does not accept any liability for the loss or theft of such items. While students are allowed to bring in phones and MP3s they will be for use only in the sixth form common room/corridor and should not be used generally around the rest of the school. Mobile phones should be switched off during lessons, registration, assemblies, etc.

DRESS CODE

There are few restrictions on dress in the sixth form, however students are asked not to wear clothing that is too revealing or offensive in anyway to other members of the community. Sixth form students may wear hats in the sixth form common room / corridor but should not wear these around school generally.

PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

We understand that many students need to earn money in part-time employment and that this can provide valuable experience for them. We strongly recommend that they work a maximum of 12 hours per week, however. Any more than this is likely to prevent them from making a sensible balance between study, social life, exercise and work.

HOLIDAYS

Students should avoid booking holidays during school time as this will have a negative effect on studies, results and attendance records.

COMMON ROOM

Students are free to use the Common Room for social purposes at virtually all times of the day. This area is not staffed as such but students are required to respect this area and keep it tidy. The adjacent study room is equipped with computers and is available to all students at virtually all times for study purposes only.

AWARDS

Each year awards are offered to students for effort, achievement and contribution to the community at an annual awards ceremony. During the course of the year students may also receive a Certificate of Achievement for good work, effort or positive contributions in specific areas.

ADVICE

An open door policy operates in the sixth form whereby student or parents can seek advice at any time. Obviously there may be times where staff may not be available immediately; however, both students and parents can seek advice on any issue. This may involve advice on procedures, study skills, university applications, job applications or careers. We also have a Careers Co-ordinator who offers individual careers advice on an appointment basis.

TIMINGS OF THE SCHOOL DAY

9.00	Registration / Assembly
9.15	Period 1
10.15	Period 2
11.15	Morning break
11.35	Period 3
12.35	Lunchtime
1.30	Registration
1.35	Movement time
1.40	Period 4
2.40	Movement time
2.45	Period 5
3.45	End of school

Term Dates 2009 -2010

Autumn Term Tuesday 8 September to Friday 23 October
Tuesday 3 November to Friday 18 December

Spring Term Monday 4 January to Friday 12 February
Monday 22 February to Thursday 1 April

Summer Term Monday 19 April to Friday 28 May
Monday 7 June to Friday 23 July

Public Holidays 25 & 28 December 2009
1 January 2010
2 and 5 April 2010
3 May 2010
31 May 2010

Inset Days Friday 4 September 2009
Monday 7 September 2009
Monday 2 November 2009
Monday 21 December 2009
Friday 26 February 2010

Other Dates Thursday 22 October Year 13 Parents Consultation Evening
Friday 23 October Internal deadline for UCAS
Thursday/ Friday 26 & 27 November Tutor Review Day
Tuesday 19 January Year 12 Reports home to parents
Tuesday 9th March Year 13 reports home to parents
Thursday 18th March Year 12 Parents Consultation Evening

Timetable

WEEK 1					
Day	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
Period 1					
Period 2					
Period 3					
Period 4					
Period 5					

WEEK 2					
Day	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
Period 1					
Period 2					
Period 3					
Period 4					
Period 5					

ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

ATTENDANCE

By accepting a place in the Sixth Form at Belper School I agree to the following conditions regarding attendance:

- You must attend **all the lessons** which make up your programme of study. If you are in receipt of an EMA, you won't receive an EMA payment for that week, even if you miss one session (without a valid reason).
- You must register **every morning and afternoon** (unless authorised by your tutor).
- You must attend every registration if you are in school at that particular registration time.
- Good attendance is essential if you are to succeed in the job market or progress to higher education. Most employers and universities require the school to comment on attendance in references. Where attendance is unsatisfactory it is our duty to report this truthfully and honestly.

AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

However, in some cases the school will consider an absence to be 'authorised'. When an absence is **authorised**, those EMA recipients will still receive their weekly EMA payment as though you had attended in full.

PLANNED ABSENCE

If you *know* that you are going to be absent from school, you should apply for 'authorised absence' at least 2 days before that date. For example, you could gain authorised absence for a hospital appointment – other examples are listed below. In this case you must complete the blue absence form available from the Sixth Form Office or from your tutor, and get it signed by the teachers whose lessons you are missing, before returning it to the Head of Sixth Form.

If you know that you need to be away, but you *don't* apply for an **authorised absence** and you miss one of your classes, we will always assume you don't have permission to be away and the absence will be marked down as unauthorised. EMA recipients will not get their EMA payment.

UNPLANNED ABSENCE

However, if you are ever away for a reason that you couldn't have predicted, the school will consider whether your absence was really unavoidable - **but you must let them know on the day you're away before 10am. You should phone the School Office (Telephone number 01773 _825281).** Unless you have a really good reason why you *can't* contact them on the day, they will consider your absence **unauthorised** (which will mean that EMA students will not receive their payment).

Examples of reasons to apply for 'authorised absence':

- (a) a medical appointment which can't be arranged outside school hours
- (b) a particular need to look after a family member or another person who you have caring responsibilities for (NB this would be a one off incident and not happen regularly)
- (c) a religious holiday, [subject to school approval](#)
- (d) a visit to a university either to attend an open day or for an interview, [subject to school approval](#)
- (e) an appointment with a Connexions Personal Adviser (although you should arrange these outside of lessons).
- (f) a work experience placement which is part of a course, and which you don't receive a wage for
- (g) if you're taking part in a significant extra-curricular activity, such as community service, drama, music, sport or volunteering. **Authorised absence** will only be given where the activity reflects a significant level of personal achievement (e.g. taking part in a regional or national event), or for some other one-off event.
- (h) a probation meeting
- (i) going to a funeral of a close relative/friend
- (j) severe problems with your transport (for example, where you travel to school by bus and heavy snow means there is no practical way of getting to school)
- (k) a driving test
- (l) a school representatives' meeting e.g. Governors' meeting

You will be asked to give evidence to support your absence where you can e.g. show your appointment card if you have a medical appointment.

This list is not complete and the school has the right to make the final decision on whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Reasons that are not generally acceptable for authorised absence:

- (a) holidays (special requests made in advance may be considered, but this may not be accepted).
- (b) part or full-time work which isn't part of your programme of study
- (c) leisure activities
- (d) birthdays or similar celebrations
- (e) babysitting younger brothers or sisters
- (f) shopping
- (g) driving lessons

Again, this list is not complete and the school has the right to make the final decision on whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Sickness

Absence due to sickness needs to be explained or evidenced in some way. EMA students will not be paid if they are absent at all during the week even if due to illness, unless the absence is authorised. Also the school is entitled to turn down an application for **authorised absence** if [there is a pattern to your absences, you are absent a lot or if they have reason to doubt you!](#) If you are ill you will need to ring the school before 10am. **The School Office (Telephone number 01773 825281). If you ring school before 10am it could prevent your EMA being stopped.**

Study leave

Absence due to study leave is clearly “authorised”. EMA recipients will receive their weekly EMA payment during official study leave.

General authorisations

Sometimes the school may give you a general authorisation of absence in some circumstances – for example, severe weather [or where a class can't run due to illness or industrial action of teachers and/or support staff or problems with your school building.](#)

LEAVING CLASSES EARLY OR ARRIVING LATE

If lateness becomes a problem it will become a disciplinary issue. All students need to be punctual. EMA recipients have to attend **all** the sessions on time. If you leave a session early or arrive more than 5 minutes late without a valid reason then your EMA payment could be stopped.

ATTENDANCE RECORDS

Accurate electronic attendance records will be kept in the form of:

- Tutor Register – recording daily attendance. Recorded by the tutor and held by the main office.
- Reasons for Absence – recording each individual’s reason for absence.
- Lesson Register – will identify absence from specific lessons. Tutors notified, and absence recorded.

6th Form Contract

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

As a sixth form student of Belper School I agree to:

- ✓ Maintain an excellent record of attendance (see attendance contract).
- ✓ Be responsible for getting details of the work covered and set (during my absence) immediately on my return to school.
- ✓ Sign in and out of when I have not been registered by my tutor, recognising that this is an essential health and safety requirement. (Urgent messages for you will be put in registers or placed on the sixth form Urgent Notice Board.)
- ✓ Behave responsibly in the 6th form common room according to its code of behaviour (on the notice board). This includes taking part in the common room tidying rota.
- ✓ Follow the appropriate procedures if I am having problems or am thinking of dropping a subject (details in organisers and on the notice board).
- ✓ Respect the school's policy of not allowing smoking on the school site.
- ✓ Keep my tutor informed about the number of hours of paid employment I do each week.
- ✓ Fill in a registration form if I intend to park a car on the school site and drive safely when using the school car park.
- ✓ Hand in work by the deadline set, or request any extension to a deadline (or help with work) well in advance.
- ✓ Bring the appropriate equipment and materials to lessons.
- ✓ Only use a mobile phone in the 6th form common room and corridor.
- ✓ Check the 6th form Urgent Notice Board every day (just outside the Common Room doors).
- ✓ Take part in Community Service or equivalent activities.

This guide/contract comes with an accompanying letter which both students and parents/carers are required to sign and return to school in order to confirm that the conditions are agreed to upon accepting a place at Belper School's Sixth Form.

Student/Parent Agreement

I agree to accept these conditions of attendance, and understand that disciplinary action may take place if I do not meet these requirements. If I am in receipt of an EMA payment I also understand that my payment will be stopped if I do not satisfy the conditions above.

Name:..... Signed:..... Date:.....

Sd/winword/6thformgt/attendancecontract