

Sixth Form Student Handbook



**The Sixth Form
at St Alban's**

www.st-albans.suffolk.sch.uk/sixthform



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MISSION STATEMENT

The Sixth Form at St Alban's provides an outstanding education to young people of all backgrounds. Our curriculum equips our students with much more than just high academic attainment. We are a friendly and inclusive Sixth Form that cares not just about your grades, but you as a person. We are more than just a school – we are a family.

Our mission means that we are responsible not just for academic success but to ensure each young person leaves us as a confident, kind, considerate individual, equipped to face our ever-changing world.

We are proud that our Sixth Form students are taught to think for themselves, question everything and put across their views intelligently and with a sense of moral purpose. Our young people grow and develop in a respectful and caring environment.

We have an extremely strong pastoral and chaplaincy team to ease the pressure of A Level studies and support any worries that you may have – we want your time at St Alban's Sixth Form to be a happy and successful one.

Welcome

All members of the Sixth Form staff and the Sixth Form student council and sub committees would like to extend a warm welcome to all our students.

The aim of the Sixth Form is to provide each student with the skills and experiences to help them achieve in line with their capabilities and aspirations. We trust that all students will respect each other's learning environment and work together to make the Sixth Form an enjoyable place in which to study.

The Sixth Form staff are here to help the transition between Key Stage 4 and 5 run as smoothly as possible for Year 12 and provide assistance to Year 13 in the continuation of their A Level studies and planning for their post-18 pathways. Please feel free to discuss any issues that arise with a member of the Sixth Form staff.

Sixth Form Staff

Mr Mirshemirani	Head of Sixth Form
Mr Arthur	Deputy Head of Sixth
Rosie Gordon	Study & Support Supervisor
Vicki Farrow	Sixth Form Administrator
Mrs Hind/Mr Silk	Tutor – Magdeline House
Mr Magotte	Tutor – Botolph House
Mrs Colebrook/Mr Kennedy	Tutor – Edmund House
Mr Roche/Ms Ward	Tutor – Audrey House
Mr Goonan	Tutor – Bosco House
Mr Harpur	Tutor – Bosco House
Mrs Nichols	Tutor – Avila House
Mrs Williamson/Mrs Marcus	Tutor – Magdeline House
Miss Sturman	Tutor – Audrey House

Attendance

Attendance and Punctuality

All students are expected to be punctual for morning registration, all lessons and when signing in for study periods. Students are expected to attend all lessons unless permission has been obtained in advance from the subject teacher and Head of Sixth form. This also applies in the case of illness / other authorised circumstances. All absences must be confirmed by a parent / carer. Absence from lessons exceeding 15% without adequate reason is considered severe and will be flagged as a cause for concern, and may lead to removal from subjects.

Absence Procedure

For all absence, parents/carers should contact the school, giving the reason why on the first day of absence. Sixth Form absence should be reported by email to STA6thformattendance@stalbans-staff.org

Students are encouraged to attend as often as possible – missing lessons will impact on achievement. However, illness such as sickness or flu should definitely mean absence from sixth form to ensure the health of other students and staff can be protected. Routine medical or dental check-ups should be avoided during the school day.

Any necessary appointments should always be notified in advance to the form tutor. Students are also expected to inform their subject tutors if they know they are going to be absent and request details of the work to be missed to catch up, the onus for this is on the student. For visits that are taking place, students must see their subject tutors in advance to gain permission to miss the lesson.

Signing in/out

It is expected that all students will remain on the school premises for the duration of the school day unless permission has been granted for them to leave the site for a specific reason. Year 13 students only are allowed to leave school for the day if they have an afternoon study period and if their attendance to date has been excellent. This privilege may be extended to Year 12 students at the discretion of the Head of Sixth Form. Students may leave school at break and lunchtime, but must make sure that they return punctually to lessons and registration. Students should use their ID badges to sign in and out of the site at all times – this is essential for safeguarding and fire regulations.

If students advise that they feel ill, they should see the Head or Deputy Head of Sixth form and will be asked if they are well enough to go home by themselves. For students under 18, a parent or carer will be contacted for permission to leave site.

For long term absence, students or parents/carers should contact their tutor to see whether work can be emailed to them or left at reception for picking up.

Exam Study Leave

Students in Year 13 will have study leave before their Autumn PPEs and final May/June A level examinations. During this time revision classes may still be held. It is expected that students attend these revision sessions and any that are scheduled for after school during their timetabled period. Year 12 students will also have study leave for their PPE examinations in the Summer term.

Visitors

Security is of high priority in the whole school. All visitors must report to the main office and follow the procedures in place. No young person who is not enrolled as a student may be brought onto site.

Dress Code and General Appearance

At St Alban's Sixth Form we adopt a policy of 'smart casual' dress-code. This means that students are expected to dress in a manner which befits a modern working environment. As a role model, you will need to dress appropriately for an organisation which accommodates students aged from 11 years to 18 years. Failure to dress appropriately will result in you being sent home to change, whilst persistent offences will be subject to more formal sanctions.

Dress should be 'smart casual'. You should be comfortable and unconstrained, but bear in mind that you are the public face of St Alban's School amongst the wider community. Generally, a "common sense" approach should be used. Sixth Form students are required to wear their student ID and lanyard at all times and this must be visible. If this is lost, students need to pay for a replacement. As a guideline:

- Jeans are permitted but no ripped jeans showing bare legs. Tracksuit bottoms are not permitted
- Clothing with offensive and/or threatening images and words are not acceptable.
- Hats and hoods should not be worn indoors.
- No over exposed flesh e.g. short skirts/shorts, vests, etc. Midriffs and underwear must be covered
- Students are not permitted to wear sports attire in school, e.g. football tops, etc
- Students' footwear must be safe for the working environment of a school e.g. low heel shoes and trainers. Sliders, flip-flops and backless sandals are not appropriate.
- When participating in sporting activities, students should:
 - Bring appropriate sportswear including a t-shirt, shorts/tracksuit bottoms and trainers
 - Ensure that jewellery, and piercings where appropriate, are removed
 - Where relevant, ensure that hair is tied back safely

Cars/Motorbikes

Cars and motorbikes may not be brought onto the school premises for parking. Students are reminded to park legally and with courtesy to residents and other drivers. We encourage students to use public transport where possible. Students are not permitted to use their study periods for driving lessons.

Part-Time Employment

As a school, we recognise that students can benefit from participating in part-time employment; however, it is also recognised that such employment places pressures on students in terms of time and commitment that can detract from their Sixth Form studies. We therefore recommend that such employment be limited in the following ways:

- Under no circumstances should any student be employed for more than 15 hours per week
- Weekend work is generally less disruptive to study than evening work, but should be limited to Saturday or Sunday work - not both
- Where students do work in the evening it should ideally not be for more than 2 hours per night
- No paid employment can be undertaken within school hours (with the exception of our paid lunchtime supervisors).

The Common Room

This room is a Sixth Form space in which students may study and socialise. All students will need to tidy up after themselves and ensure it is kept in a condition that befits a school. Students may use this room to study during non-contact time and must ensure that every study environment is respected at these times. There should be no music played during non-contact time. Year 12 students will be asked to pay a one off £20 student council contribution at commencement of their entry to sixth form.

The Library and Independent Study Area

Our Library and 'ISA' are quiet study spaces designed to support focused learning. The library is great for group work or projects, with plenty of seating and workspace for collaborative learning to take place.

The ISA is a large computer room with a central study table, and is our designated space for silent independent study. It's stocked with reference books from each of your subjects, any stationery and planning resources you may need and a Study Supervisor is on hand to support. Each student will receive 2 sessions in the ISA on their timetable a week and will be expected to bring work to this study period to focus on. In this dedicated study time, we encourage students to build their independent skills around revision, study goals, effective time management and note-taking in an environment with minimised distractions.

Private Study during Non-Contact Time

This can be undertaken in the Sixth Form Blocks and the Independent Study Area (ISA) as well as the Sixth Form library. Some spaces are silent areas, others are quiet areas and some can be used for collaborative learning. Each student attends at least two timetabled compulsory ISA periods a week which are supervised. During these sessions students are to register and remain in the ISA.

Academic Information

SAIL (St. Alban's Independent Learning or homework)

SAIL will be set in all subjects as appropriate. Each Year 12 student should on average spend five hours on SAIL per week for each subject, some of which may be completed during private study lessons. Year 13 students should on average spend seven to eight hours on SAIL per week for each subject. As well as specific tasks, it is also expected that students will undertake appropriate background reading in their non-contact time and extended research. Each subject has provided a pre-learning booklet for this purpose.

Coursework

All coursework must be handed in by the deadlines issued. Requests for extension should be made via the NEA Extension Request Form.

Parent Consultation Evenings

Parent Consultation Evenings takes place in the Spring term in Year 12 and in the Autumn terms for Year 13 and is an opportunity to discuss student's progress with subject staff and form tutors. Parents / carers are also welcome to make appointments with Sixth Form staff at other times and should telephone or email the school to make an appointment.

Course Changes

If a student wishes to change courses or give up a subject, it is vital that they discuss the situation with the relevant subject teacher, their Form Tutor, the Head of Sixth Form and home as soon as possible. It is also advisable to investigate the implications of the decision on future career plans and future study. A September window is operated within which a student may request a course change.

Computer Access

All students and parents/carers sign a BYOD (Bring Your Own device) form and acceptable use agreement. The 'ICT use' policy is available on the school website. If any student tries to use utilities to get round the network security system this will be deemed as a serious misdemeanour. Students are able to access wireless internet if they bring their own portable devices into Sixth Form. These are brought into school at the student's own risk and should be looked after. There are also plenty of student-use terminals in the 6th form block available for regular use.

Email

All students have a school email address. This is a vital tool used for communication in the Sixth Form. It is imperative that all students check their student email on a daily basis.

The Extended Project Qualification

This is an opportunity for students to undertake an extended piece of research in any area of interest to them. This may be something that they want to go on to study later, an area of general interest, a current social or political issue. It can be a written report, a performance, a video, or any other format that suits the topic. Students will usually start the project at the end of Year 12 and complete some of it over the summer holidays so that it is out of the way before the demands of A level get too great. It attracts the same points score for university entry as other AS subjects and is highly valued by universities as evidence of research based independent study.

Enrichment Activities

Students may opt to take of up any of our excellent enrichment opportunities such as student reading, mentoring or super-curricular activities. To make students attractive to future employers, apprenticeship providers or universities, students are encouraged to diversify their experience, confidence and wider employability skills, our enrichment programme nurtures this. The Sixth Form also operates a weekly wellbeing hour where students can utilise school facilities to help mediate their work-life balance. A range of trips and extra-curricular opportunities are available to students, and we expect students to commit themselves towards these elements of school life.

Preparing for your Future (PYF)

This new programme provides interesting and relevant activities and workshops to address issues of current interest and help prepare students for their future. Through the PYF programme, students will also be guided through the UCAS process via a comprehensive programme aimed at students and parents.

Student Leadership, the Sixth Form Council and House Captains

The Sixth Form Council is an important and exciting part of Sixth Form life. We aim to voice ideas and concerns of students in order to enhance what the Sixth Form can offer us. The Council meets regularly and brings forward ideas about everything from charity events to Common Room furniture choices – it can be very diverse! Our committee system also means that every aspect of Sixth Form life is accounted for and everyone has a voice. Committees discuss ideas, which are then brought to meetings by the committee representative, making the Council very inclusive. These include committees based on finance, events, charity, teaching and learning, environment and integration, which are supported by our Head of school, the Heads of Council and Secretary. Involvement in our Sixth Form Council is extremely rewarding: it not only provides a chance to voice opinions, but also to add to leadership and management skills that will prove essential in later life. In addition, each House has Sixth Form House Captains, and we have a Sixth Form Wellbeing Team. Students are instrumental in supporting the events throughout the year.

Society and Faith

As part of your time at St Alban's 6th Form, you will take part of a course called Society and Faith. As a Catholic school, Society and Faith will be a core part of your journey, both academically and personally. It is a non-assessed course, that looks at a number of religious and secular topics and issues, and how society interacts with them. Whilst we are a Catholic sixth form, beliefs and views from other faiths are welcome and encouraged.

Studying Society and Faith will equip you with the knowledge of issues that will be part of your life, as well as critical and empathetic thinking skills; all things that employers and higher education providers are looking for! You will also find that the content in society and faith will support your education in your A-level subjects.

In Year 12 students will study;

1. Catholic Social Teaching
2. Ethics
3. What is faith?
4. Faith in the Media
5. Personal and Social responsibility
6. Modern issues

In Year 13 students will study;

1. Church history and the spread of Christianity
2. Interfaith and ecumenicalism dialogue
3. Study of scripture
4. Faith and politics

Society and Faith is about more than just learning facts—it's about helping you grow as a whole person. It gives you the chance to explore your faith, understand your relationship with God, and think deeply about what it means to be human.

RE encourages you to think critically, ask big questions, and connect your values with the world around you—from school subjects to current events. It also helps you understand and respect people of different faiths and backgrounds, while developing a strong sense of moral and spiritual responsibility.

The Sixth Form Interim and Report Process

We have a structured system for reviewing student progress and ensuring that appropriate development is taking place. Students, subject teachers and Form Tutors are all involved in the interim and reporting system which is designed to address any problems students might be experiencing in their studies. Interim reports take place in the Autumn Term and a more formal report is sent home in the Spring term.

Students are given 'ALPS' target grades. These are predictive grades based on their performance at GCSE. The grades are estimated externally from national data. They should be seen as a target minimum grade rather than an accurate estimate of A Level performance.

Dates for reports are subject to change each year but may run as follows:

Year 12:

January – Interim reports

April – Parents' Evening

June – Pre-public exams (PPE)

July – Interim reports and predicted UCAS grades

Year 13

November – Parents' evening

December – Pre-public exams (PPE)

January – Interim reports

March – Interim reports

Aims of the Interim and Report Process

1. To encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning.
2. To help students to improve and reach their full potential.
3. To inform staff and parents of current progress.

EFGs (Estimated Final Grades) at the end of Year 12 are the predicted grades that we send to UCAS as part of university applications. They are teacher judgments which consider a range of evidence, with particular reference to the Year 12 PPEs.

Role of the Subject Teacher

Before the interim week, all students complete an assessment in each subject. On the basis of this assessment and the professional judgement of the subject teacher, a current grade and predicted grade (the likely result if the student continues to work at their current level) is awarded for each subject.

Role of the Form Tutor

The involvement of the Form Tutor is crucial to the success of the guidance and monitoring process and tutor and students have valuable one to one meetings. The student and tutor both record their mentoring meetings. Students causing concern (for example, those who are not achieving their potential grades) will be referred to the Head of Sixth Form for support and those who have done particularly well, in terms of exceeding their potential grades, will be commended.

Pastoral Support

Following a report, the pastoral team look at the data for each student to consider what support is needed. This might come in the form of one-to-one meetings to assess needs or areas for development, support through extra tuition or additional independent work to help students overcome any areas of the curriculum they are struggling with. We recognise the importance of considering the needs of the individual before initiating any intervention.

Where poor attendance or effort have affected grades, we may ask parents to meet with us to discuss how to move forward.

Enrolment and High Standards

Each student is enrolled on a full-time pathway, comprised of three recognised courses of study. In addition, students who have not achieved pass grades in Maths and/or English must attend resit classes until such time that they have passed these GCSE subjects. In addition to the mandatory curriculum, students must maintain attendance to all prescribed elements of the school day, including form time.

Students enrolled in the Sixth Form are expected at all times to adhere to our expectations around attendance and punctuality, and engagement with all aspects of the curriculum.

In the event that students in Year 12 or 13 fail to attend and engage with the curriculum, a student may need to resit the year they are currently enrolled in. In the event that students in Year 13 fail to attend and engage with the curriculum, a student may be asked to pay for their own exam entry. Data collected around attendance, assessment and conduct will be used to determine whether these measures need to be explored.

Sixth Form Conduct

This runs as an addendum to whole school conduct policy.

The Head of Sixth Form and Headteacher have overall authority over behaviour in years 12 and 13.

Standards of behaviour are extremely high in the Sixth Form, and our students are expected to model the values and expectations of the school for students in the main school. Sixth Form students are required to abide by the main school behaviour policy and expectations, behaviour concerns and reward points are collected via the "C" system which is used in the main school.

6th form detentions run every Friday for 45 minutes and can be issued by any member of staff.

If concerns persist then students may be permanently excluded from the Sixth Form by the Headteacher.

Smoking

St. Alban's Catholic High School operates a non-smoking policy (including e-cigarettes) for both staff and students. Tobacco, alcohol, vapes and other stimulants are banned from the premises. Possession and use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs is forbidden on the school premises. Substance misuse will not be tolerated under any circumstances and may result in disciplinary proceedings.



St Alban's Catholic High School

6th Form

