



Bishop Ullathorne Catholic School



YEAR 13 PARENT HANDBOOK 2023 - 2024

Dear parent/ carer

As this important year progresses, we continue to provide all of our students with practical ways to prepare for their chosen Post-18 Pathway. They will not only have every opportunity to achieve their very best in academic terms, but make successful applications to either universities, apprenticeships or employment.

For many of our students, their pathway will be applying to universities and we are well under way with this process. For those who will be applying for higher level apprenticeships, bespoke workshops and guidance from Mrs Bellingham will take place during the Autumn term.

We want all of our students to be happy in our Sixth Form. They will have every opportunity to achieve their very best in academic terms and there are a wealth of opportunities to enable them to develop as a whole person during this final stage of their school career.

Our School Mission Statement

Our ***Mission*** is to be an **active Christian community** of **love** and **service**,
where ***all feel*** they belong
and are valued.

We will help each other to recognise
the **gifts of God** within us,
to search for ***excellence***
and to foster the development
of our ***true self***.

Our School Mission Statement is at the heart of all that we do.

Key members of staff for Sixth Form

Mr C Billings	Headteacher
Mrs S Boyle	Deputy Headteacher
Mrs P Casey	Assistant Headteacher and Head of Sixth Form
Ms T Brazil	Student Liaison Officer
Mrs F Grearson	Student Liaison Officer
Mrs W Bellingham	Careers' Adviser

Form Tutors

Mr J Challis
Mrs M Clinton Lees
Miss R Gill

Our curriculum

We rightly seek to educate the whole person and it is our aspiration that each Sixth Form student will develop a genuine sense of who they are and be able to use their potential to make a positive impact on those around them. Everyone in the year group has already proved themselves to be resilient and they are outstanding role models for our younger students.

Alongside the three A level subjects which students are studying, runs our pastoral programme. This comprises the A level Mindset programme, (explained on the next page), enrichment opportunities, outside speakers and mental well-being sessions. There is an extensive programme of careers support and guidance, which has been in place throughout Year 12 and will continue in Year 13, to assist students in their vision for the future.

The majority of students undertook many types of enrichment last year and are encouraged to continue to carry out bespoke voluntary opportunities to serve the community. Their enrichment guide and log book is a valuable tool to record their experiences. It is important that students are **proactive in availing themselves of the opportunities which are offered.**

There is a wealth of online enrichment opportunities that students can undertake.

There is no doubt that A Levels are challenging but they are an incredibly exciting time of personal growth and development. It is a journey which we share together.

The A Level Mindset

During Year 12, students embarked upon a new learning strategy: the A level Mindset, the VESPA model. Students learnt about this approach during form time and their weekly one hour VESPA lesson. Strategies were developed further by their subject teachers. VESPA is a model based on five core principles:

V – Vision – developing a vision for what you want to achieve

E – Effort – the number of proactive independent hours of study you are willing to do

S – Systems – the level to which you organise your learning resources

P – Practice – the level to which you commit to practising and developing your skills

A – Attitude – the way you respond constructively to setbacks

As was the case when students began their A level journey, Year 13 learning is not just dependent on the development of skills but also attitudes and approaches which will enable them to overcome inevitable challenges as examinations draw near. The A level Mindset will support students as they study, plan and revise throughout this year.

Organising time and paid employment

Subject teachers will help students understand how best to work outside lessons, including how to study beyond their homework. We would strongly recommend a minimum of **14 hours of independent study** each week in addition to study periods.

We have a dedicated Sixth Form study area with computer access as well as classroom facilities and our school library. **Students who are making good progress will be able to use some of their study periods working from home.** Independent learning is vital at this stage and students must plan and use their time effectively.

Some students take on paid employment as well as their studies. In these circumstances, we strongly advise that this **should not be more than eight hours per week.** Increasing part-time work hours has a negative impact upon learning and ultimately jeopardises final A Level grades.

Assessment information

Students have been set target grades for each subject and their progress towards these targets will be monitored and reviewed at regular stages. **You will know exactly how your child is progressing following each of our formal data collections. There will be four formal data collections including a mock examination in January. Parents' Evening is planned for Thursday 7 March 2024.**


Parents may also be asked to make consultative appointments in the course of the year to discuss pastoral and/or academic issues which may arise and decide upon a course of action.

Support structure and well-being:

Bishop Ullathorne is a Christian community of love and service. The health and well-being of all of our students lies at the heart of everything we do.

It is of central importance to recognise that our well-being begins with looking after ourselves. Everyone is different but we all need to find ways which work for us. There are extensive structures in place to support students when they face challenges in their lives, be they academic or personal; these are summarised on the next page.

PROMOTING YOUR OWN WELL-BEING	SCHOOL SUPPORT
Getting seven to eight hours sleep each night	Guidance from your Form Tutor
Eating a healthy, balanced diet	Making the best use of Form Time resources
Organising your time so that there is a work/life balance	Guidance and regular one-to-one meetings with Ms Brazil and Mrs Grearson
Taking regular exercise	Appointment and support from Mrs Casey
Playing a full part in the life of our school – worship, extra-curricular activities	VIVA meetings with subject teachers
Taking time out – listening to music, reading, being with friends	Appointment with Mrs Bellingham (Careers' Adviser)
Relaxation – meditation, mindfulness	Support from Lauren, our school Lay Chaplain
Prayer	Mentoring
Making the best use of online resources	UCAS and careers support sessions, support sessions promoting independent learning, enrichment opportunities
Sharing academic concerns	Talking to your teachers

EXTERNAL SUPPORT	<p style="text-align: center;">Kooth online counselling</p> 
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University applications

Students were introduced to the **Universities and Colleges Applications Service (UCAS)** process during the Summer term. They were guided through the online UCAS process and have been provided with bespoke resources to support them in their application. The Form Time programme up to October Half Term will be devoted to UCAS support from tutors. Students also have one-to-one support meetings.

University visits

Students may take up to two days off school during Year 13 to visit universities for their open day/ applicant days. To request permission, they should speak to Ms Brazil or Mrs Grearson. Additional visits must take place at the weekend or in school holidays.

Oxbridge

Students who wish to make an application to either Oxford or Cambridge University will receive bespoke guidance. Students are steered through the early application and subsequent interview process during one-to-one support sessions.

Overseas university applications

Our Sixth Form team is happy to support any student who would like to make an application to an international university. We currently have former Bishop Ullathorne students studying in Boston University and Buffalo University, USA, Sofia University, Bulgaria and Calgary University in Canada

UCAS application deadlines

- Applications for medicine, veterinary medicine/science, dentistry, and Oxford or Cambridge applications must be submitted by **16 October 2023**. The school deadline is **Friday 6 October 2023**. This is to ensure that we have checked the application along with sending our reference (to support the application) to UCAS.
- The school deadline for all other applications is **Friday 27 October 2023**. The UCAS final deadline is **31 January 2024**. However, because of our early school deadline, the majority of students will have already received some of their university offers in November and December.

All of our students have our own very detailed UCAS Application Booklet which parents can access on our school website. Further bespoke resources are provided for students wishing to apply for law, medicine, dentistry, engineering and business.

UCAS provides excellent resources for parents, which can be downloaded from their website: www.ucas.com

Student finance information can be accessed via the UCAS website and we will also provide information on our school website.

Higher and Degree Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships offer a valid alternative to university, with the qualifications to match. Apprenticeship schemes do not follow the same application and deadline patterns as applying to university. The deadline will be determined by individual employers and **students apply for Apprenticeships directly.**

As with the UCAS process, our students will be fully supported through the Apprenticeship process. Mrs Bellingham, our Careers' Adviser, will alert students to the websites and time frame set, to help them make a quality application. It cannot be underestimated that students who are successful have been those who have completed relevant work experience.

Sixth Form dress code

All of our students are expected to wear business dress. Please refer to the following guidelines:

- smart trousers/ skirt, of appropriate length (no bandage skirts)/ dress - no jeans, leggings or shorts
- shirt/ tie/ blouse - no bold branding or wording
- jacket, if required - no hoodies
- shoes/ boots - no trainers.



A is for Attendance

Full attendance in all lessons, form time, and assembly is expected and has never been more important. Attendance records are used in application forms and references for future employers, higher education institutions and universities.

90% attendance means a student will have missed up to four weeks of lessons over an academic year.

Studies show that 90% attendance reduces results by up to one grade.



Punctuality is also very important as crucial information, UCAS support is provided and new learning strategies take place each morning in Form Time.

Please contact the school first thing in the morning if your child is going to be absent. Our Student Liaison Officers contact home in the morning if a student is absent and no information has been provided.

Email: sixthform@bishopullathorne.co.uk

Phone: 02476 414515

Finally...

We are at our best when we are all in full cooperation and collaborating with each other. You can support your child by

- discussing their studies with them and supporting them with their independent study.
- contacting subject teachers or relevant staff if you have any concerns, or want a progress update.

A strong work ethic, in and out of lessons, coupled with outstanding attendance will lead to a successful year.

With hard work and dedicated support from our Sixth Form team, the building blocks for success are all there for every one of our students. You are very welcome to contact the Sixth Form team at any time.

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