



DHSB Sixth Form

Parents' Supporting Success 2020-2021

Notices

Dear Parent / Carer

We have enjoyed welcoming our students this week and following another set of excellent results this summer everyone here at DHSB is excited about the new academic year ahead.

Included in this presentation are several updates for the start of the year. Please remember to access our [website](#) on the [Parents and Students](#) page where you will find everything you need including links to [Wisepay](#) and [Class Charts](#), and folders with copies of school letters, documents and policies.

Mr Roberts would also encourage you to view our new [School Development Plan](#) for this year. These are a result of a consultation with students, staff and parents during the summer term and following the review of the achievements of last year. He will be keeping you updated regularly on our progress towards these priorities in an extended version of the [Head's Blog](#) once each half term. You can view this at any time via the [website](#).

Homeworky, Sixth Form Handbooks and Classcharts

Homeworky

We have an established and effective online system in [Homeworky](#), which teachers, students and parents can all access and are using regularly. You can search for homework set by subject, year group or teacher, however if you would like to see just the homework set for your son/daughter you can input a specific code (this is the same code that you use to access information about your son/daughter on Class Charts). After issue, if you forget this code please contact Lorna Taylor, our Family Support Advisor, lorna.taylor@dhsb.org.

Handbooks

The Handbooks (found on the school website under '[Sixth Form](#)') offer access to information and guidelines about how we work together in the Sixth Form. Parent/Carer returns: please complete and return the various consent forms, Google Forms and data collection sheets to your son/daughter's Form Tutor by Monday 21st September 2020.

Class Charts

Please remember you can access information on attendance, behaviour and rewards through Class Charts. This provides a real time update of the progress of your son/daughter. You already have an individual parent access code (unless you are new to the school in which case you should have received one this week). You can access [Class Charts](#) via a parent or student app available on IOS and android. Please search your app store to download this free of charge and we encourage our students to set this up for themselves too. If they have forgotten their access code they should see their Form Tutor. Once on the Class Charts website we advise that you listen to the short tutorial to assist you in logging in.

Introduction and Ethos

This guide has been written to help parents and carers have a clearer understanding of the procedures, approaches and expectations of Devonport High School for Boys Sixth Form, with a view to maximising student achievement and managing the transition to Sixth Form smoothly.

DHSB values its Sixth Form students very highly and places great value on the contribution that each individual student makes to the school community as a whole. The school believes that it is the good working relationship between parents, carers, students and staff that will help guide students' development to realise their full potential; academically, socially and emotionally.

We aim to develop independent, ambitious and successful individuals who set themselves high expectations and achieve or even exceed their potential. We have a clear focus on preparing students for life after Sixth Form. Whether they choose university or employment, students are given careers guidance and are thoroughly prepared to make effective applications.

Throughout their time with us, we closely monitor their progress and personalise the support that they need in order to achieve their full potential, through target setting, learning conversations and the behaviour for learning policy.

We seek to develop the whole individual and foster a strong sense of community, providing opportunities to pursue ambitions, interests and passions and develop skills and talents, celebrate personal and academic achievements and encouraging students to contribute and make a difference.

Students are also expected to take on wider responsibilities by making a contribution to the wider community of the school and the city. There are numerous opportunities for our students to develop leadership skills and our curriculum is designed to encourage academic and personal growth.

We strive to provide an environment in which students experience the right balance of independence and supportive guidance. We challenge Sixth Form students to take responsibility and exercise leadership for themselves and their own learning.

Life in the Sixth Form is different to that in the lower school. Alongside their increasing maturity they are expected to take increased responsibility for their learning and the management of their time.

We realise that new Sixth Form students will take time to settle in and there are various ways in which we support them to do this.

Maximising potential in the Sixth Form

Through a combination of research evidence and experience, we have compiled the typical characteristics of students who enjoy the highest success in the Sixth Form (in terms of grade outcomes and progression) It is not meant to be prescriptive as each student is an individual, but can be used as a guide to monitor student effectiveness.

Typical characteristics of the successful Sixth Form student include:

- Attendance at ALL timetabled sessions and lessons is 100%
- Completes a minimum of 3 hours of independent study ([guidance here](#)) for each subject studied per week. Where this is not directed by the teacher, students read around the subject, revise and consolidate understanding independently.
- Shares evidence of their Independent study with subject tutors.
- Works no more than 10 hours in paid/voluntary employment.
- Has a goal, knows what they want to do and is proactive in ensuring that they are doing what is needed to achieve their goal. Invests time in setting goals and researching strategies.
- Is effective at time management – uses their planner, to-do lists and timetables in order to prioritise work, meet deadlines and stay on top of work.
- Is organised and always attends lessons fully prepared – paper, pens, equipment etc.
- Engages with teachers and tutors – asks questions and is clear about how to raise their achievement.
- Engages with parents about their learning – what they're studying, how they're doing, what they're planning to do to improve.
- Uses peers to improve own learning and study habits through discussion and collaborative working.
- Uses effective revision strategies (e.g. visual methods, practice papers, collaborative working) and employs them throughout the year, not just prior to examinations.
- Enjoys a healthy work-life balance – devotes time to other pursuits, hobbies, social activities.

All students enrolled into the Sixth Form at DHSB are expected to read and discuss with their parents / carers the contents of their Part 1 and Part 2 learning agreement with the school. A signed copy of this document is maintained in school files.

Contact

DHSB main reception: 01752 208787

DHSB Sixth Form Office: 01752 206173

Sixth Form Office: sixthform@dhsb.org

Website: www.dhsb.org

Attendance

- 100% attendance is expected, as detailed on a student's timetable
- Attendance is compulsory for ALL timetabled periods and independent study sessions. Authorised 'off site' guided self-study is offered to students who have demonstrated effective time management (this is a privilege and is not permitted for all students)
- Registration will be taken in tutor bases for all assembly / tutorial sessions.

School must be informed of all absences before 10.00am on each day of absence. Parents can contact the Sixth Form Office (SFO) on 01752 206173 or email sixthform@dhsb.org. TLP students should contact their host school or ask that the information is communicated to their TLP school. Courtesy demands prior notification to all staff involved whenever possible.

During the school day - in order to comply with fire & safety regulations and for the correct administration of attendance records, the following procedures apply:

Lateness - Students must sign-in to record their arrival time and the reason for their lateness.

Leaving the premises - Students must sign out in either the 'signing-out' folder or the 'lunchtime signing-out' folder.

Ill health - Students must report to the SFO in order that a parent/carer may be informed

Teacher absence - If a teacher is absent and students have private study, it is their responsibility to register their presence with the SFO via the signing in folder. This way attendance records are accurate and bursary payments, if applicable, will not be withheld.

In the event of teacher absence – Sixth Form lessons are NOT covered, but work is set via [google classroom](#) or [homeworky](#).

Reason for Absence	Action Required
Medical/Dental appointments	Copy of appointment card or Medical form shown at the Sixth Form Office (SFO).
Driving Test	Leave of Absence (LoA) form handed in at SFO.
Uni Open days	LoA to SFO
Family emergency	Notify SFO by telephone or email
Job Interviews	LoA
Family Holiday	LoA. Please try to limit the impact on term time as absences impact greatly on course outcomes.
Sickness	Please telephone the school in the first instance, for extended illness provide a letter / email of confirmation.

Absence (from timetabled periods)

Leave of Absence (LoA) forms are available from the Sixth Form reception area (also in letters and documents online) and must be completed and handed in to the Sixth Form office for known absences.

Routine dental or medical appointments can only be authorised, upon return of a stamped Medical form (these can be obtained from the reception area of the Sixth Form centre) or an official appointment card or letter.

Likely authorised absences include:

- An evidenced medical appointment which cannot be made outside school hours
- Attendance at the funeral of a close relative
- An official religious holiday, pertinent to your faith
- University open day visits or careers related appointment
- Driving Test / Theory test
- Organised School trips.

Unauthorised absences include:

- Holidays in term time
- Part or full time work which is not part of the Learner's programme of study
- Leisure activities, birthday, or similar celebrations
- Babysitting younger siblings
- Driving lessons
- Minor Illness
- Any absence from lessons and/or assembly/tutorial sessions not covered by notifying the school through an authorised LOA or medical form
- Any unauthorised study leave, university visits, trips etc.

This is not a definitive list and all absences will be considered on their own merit.

Learning Agreements

In line with DfE regulations, all state school students will be expected to sign and complete a learning agreement at the start of term which confirms their learning aims (full timetable). This document must be held in the Sixth Form office. Any changes throughout the year have to be recorded on this important document.

Home Study Arrangements (always under review in line with DfE regulations).

Students who have demonstrated a strong capacity for independent learning in Yr13 or indeed, Yr12 may be able to apply for the privilege of Guided Self- Study Leave, this is in recognition of their growing maturity and ability to take responsibility for their own learning and as a response to the increased number of non-contact periods in Year 13. Students may apply to study at home at times when they have a block of non-contact periods.

Attendance to, House / whole school Assemblies (Wednesday 11.35am–12.35pm), Tutorials, the Enrichment curriculum (Friday 8.55am-11.10am) and any appointments made by your son's/daughter's tutor, is compulsory.

The Guided Self-Study agreement must be signed by parents and tutors before it is authorised. The agreement can be withdrawn if the student requires increased supervision or support to maintain their academic performance. Where this happens, parents will be notified and a new Study agreement will need to be signed, should it be re-issued.

Target Setting and use of FFT

Targets give students something to aim for, should be realistic and challenging, yet attainable. The problem with basing predicted A level grades on GCSE results is twofold; where students have under achieved at GCSE, it may be that lower grades are set thus reducing motivation. It may be that a student's performance plateaus at GCSE and unrealistically high A level grades are set as targets. A significant number of students are external applicants and so little is known about them apart from their GCSE results. An objective method of setting targets is thus required. At DHSB we base our target grades on FFT targets.

FFT is linked to the Fischer family trust. It provides data and analyses to all schools in England and Wales. The estimates we receive are used by teachers to inform the setting of ambitious and aspirational targets for students.

FFT does not make predictions. It shows that a student has a certain level of ability and that, in previous years x % of students with similar level of ability got this grade. Given this information, it is not unreasonable to expect this individual student to get this grade and this may be used as a target setting tool. FFT does not produce targets. Estimates simply say 'if what happened in tests and exams last year was mirrored this year, these are the most likely outcomes. Every student is unique so individual targets are based on a whole range of information - including a student's personal circumstances, their teacher's knowledge of them, their performance in school tests, their own aspirations and the support they've received at home. FFT estimates are only one element of this.

Target grades (alongside end of year exam performance) form the basis for reporting UCAS predicted grades.

Monitoring

FFT based targets will be used by subject teachers, tutors and students to monitor student progress. Tutors will meet with students regularly, on a one to one basis to conduct learning conversations, where tutors will identify students who are not on track to realise their full potential. The Form tutor / Deputy Heads of Sixth and Head of Sixth will intervene as necessary.

Dress code

Sixth Form students are role models for the rest of the School and are required to uphold and embody the standards expected of them. Students in the Sixth Form must maintain consistently appropriate personal standards of uniform. Failure to uphold a good standard of uniform could instigate further action.

The Enrichment Curriculum (Option block E)

I would like to remind parents and students that attendance in this is compulsory. It is part of the timetabled curriculum. It includes attendance on a Wednesday P3 for assemblies, Friday P1 & P2 for tutorial and the enrichment curriculum. These are periods valued for their contribution to the development of the school community and for the personal development of our 'soon to be independent' young people.

Through the enrichment curriculum we hope to encourage students to reflect on multidisciplinary fields and also some of the most pressing global issues of our times – global inequalities and global justice, climate and environmental change, war and peace, global health, finance crises, intolerance and discrimination and political change alongside developing an appreciation of culture and the arts and an ability to listen critically and communicate their ideas. Our mission is to generate knowledge and understanding that can make a difference, for a fairer, safer, more sustainable and more inclusive world. We will encourage our students to participate fully and to make the most of opportunities for lively debate so that their understanding has been deepened and widened and such that specialist interests are integrated and students are equipped to gather evidence to support their viewpoints.

The programme is supported where possible by guest speakers. We run an in-house 'Question time' event once each half term and invite the students to sit on the panel or contribute opinions and questions through the twitter hashtag from their seats in the audience. Some students will sign up to complete an additional qualification: The Extended Project ([EPQ/WJEC](#)) and may use this time to complete work on their project or meet with their supervisors. Occasionally our students will be notified, in advance, that they are released to supervised study in the learning commons or Sixth Form centre. We encourage all of our students to extend and enrich their studies through wider reading and some may decide to use this time to work on an aspect of the suggested super-curriculum as outlined in the [Sixth Form Handbook](#) such as a Mooc (Massive open online course) see www.futurelearn.com for example.

Preparation for University

All University applications take place through [UCAS](#) (University and Colleges Admissions Service). Approximately 85% of our Leavers go on to University. Preparation for University application begins in Year 12. Students have the WEX / WRL week in November and the HEIR week in June, in addition to tutorial activities to support the consideration of their courses and completion of the personal statement. Parents will be invited to our TLP UCAS information evening (Spring Term– please check the school website for [letters](#) and the dynamic [school calendar](#)), which outlines the application process and student finance. Students will be encouraged to carry out wider reading or gain required work experience throughout the summer holidays. All students will be asked to assess their aspirations and where they stand in meeting the entry requirements. In light of this analysis, tutors will assist students in setting realistic, attainable targets to help them to make successful applications.

Students should make sure they choose at least one course for which they will anticipate comfortably meeting a typical grade offer (Universities typically make offers in UCAS points). Sixth Form tutors are very experienced in the UCAS application process. They will support and guide throughout the application process and compile the information required to write a testimonial to accompany the application.

Students capable of successful application to Oxbridge and or Medicine / Dentistry / Veterinary science are given additional support with their applications and are invited to attend lunchtime study groups. Those students in receipt of bursaries / income support, and who are first generation from their family to attend university, may also be eligible to apply to Sutton Trust Summer Schools.

Students must make sure that they are ready to complete the UCAS application process when they return in Year 13. They will need to have registered on the UCAS Apply site, using the buzzword provided by their tutor.

There is a parents' section on the site, www.ucas.ac.uk/parents with access to a range of information and guides and you can sign up for free newsletters and a parent guide.

There are a lot of very competitive courses besides the obvious ones. These include English, history, psychology, physiotherapy and law. Subject teachers and form tutors are able to advise students on the portfolio of evidence and skills that they should develop to include in such applications.

Thank you for working with us to ensure that everyone succeeds.



Sharon Davidson

Assistant Head - Post 16



FAQ's

1. **How large are class sizes? Typically 16-25.**
2. **Is there a cap? Not as yet. Since practicals can be split, a cap is unlikely but classes invariably average at about 20.**
3. **Are classes streamed or mixed ability? The latter.**
4. **Are all subjects taught by a single member of staff both throughout a year and over the two years if possible? In general, do all staff teach A levels or will it only be some of the departmental staff? Varies in departments. Some classes have paired teachers teaching different topics simultaneously. Most classes have the same teacher(pair) for 2 years.**
5. **Do all staff take on the role of KS5 tutors or does this rotate between a few members of staff? No, this is an experienced team who keep up to date with changes and established routines and expectations for securing future employment and study.**
6. **Do you know who will be KS5 tutors next academic year and how many tutor groups are there? 12 tutor groups of 25-30 students, mixed as Yr 12&13, students from 3 houses in each tutor group. (CEN and PSW mixes will be in each of 6 tutor groups). Staff are as in the Sixth Form handbook on the website.**
7. **Do all "returners" become prefects? Is this down to the students to decide if they wish to take on this role and what level of duties are attached or is this left to the individual to take on as much or as little as they are comfortable with? Up to students to apply. All are encouraged. Some go on to apply for Captaincy roles and receive 5 weeks of Leadership training. There are many other Leadership roles students can apply for.**
8. **Is the Extended Project encouraged but optional? Yes from Nov Yr12 to Feb Yr13. Many sign up and only about 10 complete. A Futurelearn.com mooc may be better for some students.**
9. **Is Friday E time optional? This is compulsory for all of our full time students. In this time we deliver a course of Enrichment which we value hugely for the complementary learning to polarised choices of 'Arts' or 'Science' curricula, personal development and active citizenship.**
10. **Are the enrichment studies offered a compulsory selection for all pupils or is there some individual choice? Individual 'handbooks' of Enrichment and super curricular learning and Leadership can be found on the website.**
11. **What support would you anticipate SEN students receiving in the Sixth Form? Carefully selected tutor who will liaise with SEN team as necessary.**

12. **Why do Medics, Oxbridge students, Dentists and Vets get extra support for their university applications? These individuals are likely to be interviewed and have an application process dependent upon them demonstrating intellectual elasticity and subject knowledge alongside more extensive long term work experience for the medics, dentists and vets. All in this group must be encouraged to prepare early for aptitude tests.**
13. **How many hours of Independent study should a student be doing? This should be approximately 1 hour for every taught lesson. Some of this will be completed on site at school, some will be in the completion of home assignments.**
14. **How do students know what to do in their Independent study? Their teachers have compiled a list of resource materials that is shared in a Google spreadsheet with all students.**
15. **Where can students study if the SFC is busy? The LRC is often available to Sixth Formers but at busy times or if students are noisy, this is closed. Free rooms are displayed in the SFC and students are encouraged to work in these. (Out of courtesy, we ask them to let a nearby teacher know they are there).**

At various points in the year, the SFO will invite students who are U18, to attend an Induction at Plymouth University library so that they can register for guest use of this facility in less busy periods. Students should be vigilant to these adverts.