



*"A High Performing Specialist Academy"*

# Hardenhuish School Sixth Form

## Student Handbook



### CONTENTS

	Page
1. Welcome	2
2. The Senior Sixth Form Team	3
3. The School Day and Term Dates	5
4. Learning and Guided Study Time	6
5. Study Areas	7
6. Organisation	8
7. Core & Enrichment	9
8. The Student Leadership Team	10
9. Tutoring	11
10. Attendance & Absence Policy	12
11. The Social Side of Sixth Form	16
12. Dress Code	18
13. Mobile Phones and Laptops	20
14. Tracking Progress	21
15. Employment & Work Experience	22
16. Looking Ahead	24
17. Frequently Asked Questions	26

# **1. WELCOME**

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to Hardenhuish School Sixth Form. Whether you have been with us in lower school or you are joining the school for the first time, I am confident that you will find your sixth form experience suitably challenging, inspiring and rewarding.

This student handbook outlines our high expectations of you as well as the privileges and opportunities available to all students in our sixth form. By reading through this handbook, we hope that your questions will be answered, and you are even more excited about starting the next stage of your education with us.

At Hardenhuish Sixth Form, you will be encouraged to achieve the highest academic standards whilst being caring and responsible members of our school and wider community. During the next two years, you will receive excellent support, both in your learning and in your own personal development. Your personal well-being and that of the school and wider community are interlinked. Mutual trust, respect, consideration for others as well as a good sense of fun will ensure that your time in the Sixth Form is both productive and enjoyable.

I very much look forward to supporting you over the years ahead.

**Mr M Heffernan**  
**Director of Sixth Form**



## **2. THE SENIOR SIXTH FORM TEAM**

### **Mr M Heffernan**

Assistant Headteacher, Director of Sixth Form  
[mmh@hardenhuish.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:mmh@hardenhuish.wilts.sch.uk)



### **Mr C Wiggall**

Deputy Director of Sixth Form  
[cmw@hardenhuish.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:cmw@hardenhuish.wilts.sch.uk)

### **Mrs J Todd**

Pastoral Manager  
[jrt@hardenhuish.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:jrt@hardenhuish.wilts.sch.uk)



### **Mrs J Auld**

Core and Enrichment Lead  
[ja@hardenhuish.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:ja@hardenhuish.wilts.sch.uk)



### **Ms V Brenton**

Careers and Transition Manager  
[vjb@hardenhuish.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:vjb@hardenhuish.wilts.sch.uk)



The Sixth Form Pastoral Office is open from 8.00am - 4.30pm Monday to Thursday and until 4pm on Fridays.

School Address: Hardenhuish Lane, Chippenham, Wiltshire SN14 6RJ  
School number: 01249 650693  
Absence Hotline: 01249 767390

Website: [www.hardenhuish.wilts.sch.uk](http://www.hardenhuish.wilts.sch.uk)

Twitter: @Hardenhuish6th

## **Staying informed**

On starting Sixth Form you will need to keep in contact via email with all your teachers and the Sixth Form team. If you previously attended Hardenhuish School then you will keep your old email and system log in details. If you are new to the school, we will provide you with these within the first week of term along with an Acceptable Usage Policy which you will need to sign before gaining access to the school's computers and internet. We expect you to check your email every day as this is the main way in which we will contact you with opportunities, news and relevant information. Additionally, it is important to remember that we will contact home in most cases via email. Therefore, please encourage those at home to check their email and contact us if their email address changes. We will send very few letters home and expect you to take ownership over contact with the school.

Homework is set via Show My Homework and it is important that you also check this regularly.

If you have any issues with accessing your emails or SMHW, please speak to Mrs Todd or contact the ICT Helpdesk directly.

### **3. THE SCHOOL DAY AND TERM DATES**

Tutor Time (including registration) takes place every day at 8.30am.

#### **Timings of the School Day**

Tutor Time	8.30am – 8.45am
Period 1	8.45am – 9.35am
Period 2	9.40am – 10.30am
<b><i>BREAK</i></b>	
Period 3	10.50am – 11.40pm
Period 4	11.45am – 12.35pm
<b><i>LUNCH</i></b>	
Period 5	1.15pm – 2.05pm
Period 6	2.10pm – 3pm

You should ensure that you are punctual to lessons. Persistent lateness will be challenged.

#### **Term Dates**

Term 1: Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 – Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020

Term 2: Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020 – Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Term 3: Monday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021 – Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Term 4: Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 – Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021

Term 5: Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2021 – Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Term 6: Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2021 – Friday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2021

#### **Hardenhuish School Staff Training Days (school closed to students)**

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> and Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September – Y7 pupils only

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> July – Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> July

## **4. LEARNING AND GUIDED STUDY TIME**

### **Lessons**

Year 12 students receive five x 50 minute lessons per subject per week. You will be taught by passionate subject specialists who are determined to support you in reaching your full academic potential. In most cases teaching is provided by more than one teacher, enabling you to draw on a range of expertise.

### **The 50:50 mantra**

There is one key ingredient to success at A level: effort. Effort can be measured in terms of the time you spend studying outside of lessons.

The 50:50 mantra is about you committing the same time to your subjects in lessons (5 x 50 minutes) to your time studying outside of lessons (an additional 5 x 50 minutes).

We recognise that this expectation is different to GCSEs where you might typically receive one piece of homework per week, perhaps equating to an hour per subject. Don't worry though: you will receive a lot of support in making this successful step up to A level study from your tutor, teachers, and members of the senior sixth form team. Commit this time and effort to purposeful study and you will achieve great success: it really is as simple as that.

### **Guided Study Time**

When you receive your timetable, you will see that you have been allocated 'Guided Study Time' (GST). During this time, it is expected that you complete quiet purposeful study in one of our recently refurbished study areas.

## **5. STUDY AREAS**

All study areas are open and available for you to use from 8am – 5pm when you are not in lessons.

### **Main Study Area**

This large and inviting study room is equipped with interlinking desks and computers for you to use. This is not a designated silent area, but the area is a quiet space to work – working in small groups is okay as long as the noise is kept down; we want to create a positive, purposeful working environment for everyone. You are able to wear headphones but no music is to be played out loud. This area is not intended for socialising or eating food during lesson time.



### **Silent Study Rooms**

There are two further study rooms located within the Sixth Form Centre which are designated silent study rooms. Food is not allowed to be consumed in here and phones must be turned to silent and put away. If you wish to work with others, you must use the main study area. These rooms are not social spaces, including during break and lunch.

### **Other Study Areas**

The school Resources Centre has a limited number of study spaces for you to use as well as a well-equipped Careers Library. Mr Southwood is happy to help and advise on any books/reading materials/prospectuses etc. that you need access to.



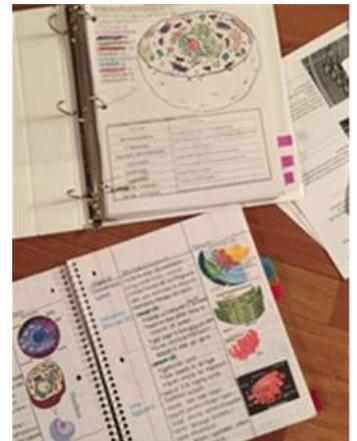
If a Sixth Form classroom is not being used during the day, you are able to work there without supervision. However, as other lessons may be going on in the classroom next door, we ask you to use these classrooms for quiet study only; they are not to be used for socialising. We also ask that you do not sit at the teacher's desk or use any of their equipment, and rooms must be left as you found them.

## 6. ORGANISATION



Being organised is key to success at A level. In the initial weeks of Year 12 in particular, your tutors and teachers will support you with your organisation but here are a few simple things you can do to make your workload easier to manage:

- Record homework and coursework deadlines as soon as they are given to you. This will help you to keep on top of all your work as students can find themselves suddenly very busy if they have not planned their time wisely.
- Have one everyday folder with a section for each of your subjects. This will avoid you needing to carry lots of folders every day. Ensure that you have a folder at home for each subject you are studying. Colour code each folder and divide each one into sections by topic using dividers. Transfer notes from your everyday folder into these folders regularly.
- Make sure that you put the date on every page of your notes. If your file gets in a muddle and you need to get organised, this will make it much easier to put things back in order.
- Find out which exam board you are studying and download a copy of the syllabus so you can see the topics you are covering and also the assessment objectives that will be use



## **7. CORE AND ENRICHMENT**

The Sixth Form experience extends beyond your A Level studies, and you will be offered a wide range of exciting additional opportunities that will enhance your personal development.

### **The Core Programme**

In Year 12 you will participate in the Core Programme, and have three excellent course options to choose from. Each option will enable you to gain a Level 3 qualification and UCAS points, along-side a range of transferrable skills which are highly valued by both universities and employers.

- Core Maths is a course for those who want to keep up their maths skills but are not studying A-level Maths. It has been designed to develop real-life maths skills that can be applied in work, study and life. The course is assessed by two exams.
- The Extended Project Qualification involves choosing a topic and designing and managing a project about this topic. The assessed end product is an essay or investigation presented as a 5000-word written report, or an artefact with a 1000-word written report.
- The Sports Leadership Qualification enables learners to lead unsupervised groups of people in sport and recreational activities in a community setting. The course is assessed by a mixture of practical assessments and coursework.

### **Enrichment**

During Sixth Form, there are many enrichment opportunities for you to engage in, that will help you develop key skills, broaden your experiences and help you gain confidence, whilst providing extra material for university and apprenticeship applications.

Volunteering is a great way to give back to our wider school community, acquire valuable life skills, and grow as an individual. Volunteering is a key part of our school ethos, and during Year 12, you will be volunteering for one period each week. You may volunteer within a lower school class, provide support to various departments within school such as ICT Support, or volunteer with an external organisation, such as a veterinary hospital. Exercise is beneficial to your physical and mental health, as well as being great fun. You have the option to participate in weekly Sixth Form Sport on Wednesday afternoons, competitively or for pleasure. There are recreational sessions including activities such as dodgeball, and competitive sessions with sporting fixtures in netball, football and rugby.

## **8. STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM**

The Student Leadership Team are central to the promotion of leadership at all levels at Hardenhuish School. All Year 12 students are invited to apply for a position on the Student Leadership Team during term 6. There are various roles available that cover 4 main strands: Teaching & Learning, Student Leadership, Charity Events & Enrichment and Wellbeing.

The Student Leadership Team are in post from term 6 of Year 12 until the start of exam season (term 5) of Year 13. Our SLT represent the school and student body at a variety of public functions during the year, including Open Evening, Awards Evenings and Sixth Form options evening as well as fulfilling role specific tasks. They also attend the Staff Leadership Team and Governor meetings once each term.

<b>Student Leadership Team (general responsibilities)</b>	
<b>What does the job entail:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Being a representative for the school for parent tours &amp; special guests, etc.</li><li>• Working as part of the Student Leadership Team</li><li>• Public speaking at events, and answering guest questions</li><li>• Being ambassadors for the school at events, giving tours and sharing your enthusiasm of the school with prospective parents and members of the community</li><li>• Contributing to the 6<sup>th</sup> Form community by organising and leading 6<sup>th</sup> Form events</li></ul>	<b>Would this role suit me?</b> <p>To fulfil this role, it is suggested that you have one or more of the following attributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Confidence</li><li>• Enthusiasm</li><li>• Motivation</li><li>• Reliable</li><li>• Organisation skills</li><li>• Good time-keeping</li><li>• Team working abilities</li><li>• Ability to relate to other stakeholders</li><li>• Able to listen, but also put forward ideas</li><li>• Good knowledge of the school (students who have joined us for the 6<sup>th</sup> Form are welcome to apply)</li><li>• Able to communicate confidently</li></ul>

## **9. TUTORING**

### **Tutors**

Each year group in the Sixth Form is split into tutor groups of approximately 25 students. The tutor stays with the group throughout Sixth Form, thus maintaining continuity of care. You are encouraged to build strong and positive relationships with your tutor, as they are there to offer guidance, advice and support to you in any way they can.

There is an opportunity for you and your parents/guardians to meet with your tutor during a tutor evening which will take place in November.

### **The Tutor Programme**

Morning tutor time will be one of the most important parts of your Sixth Form experience. During this time, you will receive information, advice and guidance on a broad range of topics such as A-Level study skills, personal finance and applying to university / apprenticeships. These sessions will support you in your studies as well as developing your confidence outside of school and beyond your time with us.

Running alongside this programme, you will have a weekly assembly and some healthy competition with other tutor groups!

Such is the value that we place on tutor time, the expectation will be for all students to be in school at 8.30am ready to attend tutor time. Non-attendance will be immediately challenged.

## **10. ATTENDANCE**

### **Signing In/Out**

In September, you will be issued with an ID card and lanyard. Your ID card includes a photograph of you, and this allows staff to easily identify you as a Sixth Form student as well as enabling you to purchase food and drink on site. You are required to wear your ID card and lanyard whilst you are on site. You will also use this ID card to sign in/out of Sixth Form, and Signing In/Out machines are located in the main foyer of Sixth Form.

You will need to sign in before you go to tutor. As long as you remain on our main site, you can stay signed in, even if you are attending lessons outside of the Sixth Form Centre, i.e. in lower school or in S Centre. However, as soon as you plan to leave site you must sign out. This includes leaving site to attend lessons at Sheldon.

The signing in/out system is used in the event of a fire bell. It is therefore incredibly important that you use this system correctly; if you remain signed in whilst off site, and we do have an emergency situation in school, we will look for all unaccounted for students meaning that members of staff or the emergency services will enter potentially unsafe buildings, putting themselves at risk.

If you forget to bring in your ID card/lanyard, you can get a temporary replacement from Mrs Todd. You must do this before you attend tutor. You will need to sign for a temporary card and hand over something valuable to you which you will get back once you return the temporary card (e.g. a mobile phone/driving licence/keys).

If you lose your ID card/lanyard, replacements can be purchased at a cost of £2.50 from Mrs Todd.



### **Being on site**

Sixth Form students are entitled to leave the premises at break times and lunch times as long as they respect the shops they visit and the surrounding areas, and they do not arrive late for lessons.

Students are also entitled to leave school if they do not have a lesson. Students are expected to attend tutor registration and assembly each morning at 8.30am even if they do not have lessons Period 1. Students must sign in when they arrive on site and sign out when they leave as mentioned previously within this handbook. Please be aware that any student who leaves the premises at break time, lunch time or during lesson times does so at their own risk and the school will not be held responsible for any injury or personal damage that occurs when students are off site at these times.

### **Visitors**

Any visitor to the school must sign in at the main house reception; this is for a variety of reasons, as we are not allowed to have individuals wandering around the school site. If there should be an occasion when you and your parents have an appointment with a member of staff, they should sign in at the main reception where they will be collected.

If you are meeting friends from neighbouring schools or elsewhere please ensure this happens off site. Equally friends, whether once at Hardenhuish or not, should not be in sixth form common rooms if they are not a student at this school.

### **ABSENCE PROCEDURE**

Mrs Todd will, in the first instance, speak to you regarding unexplained or persistent absence. If there is a cause for concern or if the absences persist, Mrs Todd will contact parents. If further concern remains, then Mrs Todd will refer this to Mr Wiggall so that interventions can be put in place as necessary.

- **Illness/Unplanned Absence**

If you are unable to attend school for an unplanned reason, you need to phone or e-mail on each day of absence before 8.30am to inform the school explain the reason for it. You can either contact Mrs Todd directly by phone or email, or contact the Absence Hotline.

- **Planned Absence**

It is sometimes appropriate for students to have permission to be absent to pursue activities which are in the interests of their academic or personal development. Activities such as visits to university open days, participation in sporting competitions, driving tests (but not lessons) are such examples. In such cases permission must be sought so that absences can be recorded as

approved. It will be necessary for the student to explain the importance or relevance of the activity and to ensure that they have planned to cover any work that will be missed as a consequence of the absence. Failure to keep up to date with work commitments could affect later permission to attend similar activities. Please note such activities may still count as an absence in some cases, though it will be an approved rather than an unapproved absence.

- **Medical and Other Appointments**

Students should always strive to make medical appointments outside of the school day. This is usually very straightforward. If this has not been possible or it is an emergency the student may be given permission to leave by Mrs Todd. Subject teachers should also be notified and work should be collected. If a student has multiple medical appointments, they may be asked to provide medical appointment slips before these absences are approved.

- **Illness**

In the event of illness occurring during the school day and the subsequent need to go home, a student must inform Mrs Todd, who will decide if it is necessary for them to go home, and if so that they are well enough to get themselves home. If Mrs Todd is concerned about your ability to get home safely on your own, she will contact parents/carers to arrange for you to be picked up. There are going to be days when you feel under the weather; you need to make a judgement call on whether or not you are able to come into or remain in school. We would always encourage good attendance even if you are not feeling 100%, as long as you are able to safely attend lessons.

- **Holidays during term time**

Students are not expected to take holidays during term time. If holidays are to be taken in term time please be aware that absence for any reason is liable to have severely detrimental impact on progress and learning. Also note that holidays taken in term time will count as absence in any future report or reference. In order to receive permission for a holiday during term time a form must be collected from Mrs Todd. All absence requests will be referred to the Headteacher but please note that approval can only be given in exceptional circumstances and in line with Government regulations.

For ease of reference, the table shows what are authorised and unauthorised absences. This list is not exhaustive so we encourage students to check with Mrs Todd or their tutors if they are unsure whether or not a planned absence will be approved.

<b>Authorised Absences</b>	<b>Unauthorised Absences</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Hospital / medical appointments</li> <li>○ A need to look after someone for whom they have caring responsibility</li> <li>○ A religious holiday</li> <li>○ University Open Day/Interview</li> <li>○ Appointment with a Careers advisor or in relation to a WEX placement</li> <li>○ Approved extra-curricular event that may also reflect a significant level of personal achievement</li> <li>○ A driving test</li> <li>○ Attendance at a funeral</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Holidays during term time</li> <li>○ Part or full-time work that is not part of a programme of study</li> <li>○ Driving lessons which start or end in lesson time or over tutor registration or assembly</li> <li>○ Birthdays or similar celebrations</li> <li>○ Babysitting younger siblings/child minding, including arriving late due to taking younger siblings to school</li> <li>○ Looking after pets</li> <li>○ Shopping – social events, leisure activities</li> </ul>

## **11. THE SOCIAL SIDE OF SIXTH FORM**

### **Common Rooms**

There are two common rooms open for you to use. The common rooms have recently undergone refurbishment and are intended for downtime and socialising with other Sixth Form students. You may choose to study in these rooms but please be aware that they may be noisier than the study rooms. The majority of time when you are not in lessons should be spent studying and so these spaces are mostly intended for your use at break and lunch times.

If you use this area during lesson time, whether to study or for downtime, you are asked to keep the noise down and use "indoor voices". Food is allowed in these areas but you must put empty packages and drink bottles in the bin and food must be cleared away – if this space is not respected and looked after, appropriate action will be taken against relevant individual students including the removal of privileges such as use of the common room.

You have access to a kitchenette but it is your responsibility to wash any cups/dishes that you use and keep this area clean and tidy. You also need to ensure that any unwanted food is removed from the fridge.



The common rooms are for both year groups to enjoy. No one year group has ownership over either common room and we expect you to act in a respectful way towards each other and display a level of tolerance that is befitting of a sixth form student. We are lucky to have so much social space within our Sixth Form that is so well equipped – you are asked to treat it with respect at all times and failure to do this will result in you being asked to leave this area.

### **The Hungry Stag Café**

The Hungry Stag Café is located within Sixth Form and is for the use of Sixth Form students and staff only. They serve food that is also available from the main canteen, the Octagon as well as serving food and snacks that you are not able to purchase anywhere else on site. We are also able to serve Costa coffee.

There is limited seating in the Café, and you are able to take food purchased into the Common Rooms, or use the outside space in the Courtyard. Again, we remind you to make sure that you put all rubbish in the bins. The Hungry Stag is open at break and lunchtimes for service but also remains open during the day and you are able to work in this space at the tables provided if you wish.

## Events

Whilst we will be supporting you to achieve your very best academically, life in the Sixth Form extends to taking part in regular events, some of which are specific to the Sixth Form, others which incorporate the whole school. Whether it's Krispy Kreme donut sales, leading on 'Hello Yellow' Mental Health Awareness Day or taking part in the annual staff vs sixth form netball match, we encourage you to get involved and throw yourself into events with enthusiasm!



## **12. DRESS CODE**

Our dress code allows Sixth Form students to have the flexibility to wear casual clothing whilst remembering that they act as role models for younger students and are at a place of learning. It is intended to provide a comfortable learning environment whilst projecting an appropriate image to Hardenhuish School's visitors, outside professionals and younger students.



The following guidelines help to define appropriate casual wear. Please remember that not all casual clothing is appropriate for a school environment, e.g. clothing worn on a night out is unlikely to be deemed appropriate for school. You should apply common sense when making decisions on clothing and jewellery. If in doubt as to the suitability of clothing or jewellery, you can seek guidance from your tutor or Mrs Todd.

The examples below should help you consider what would be appropriate for casual wear to school and also gives some indication as to what is considered inappropriate. The list is not exhaustive but merely a guideline; Sixth Formers are expected to exercise good judgment.

- Trousers – Smart jeans or dress trousers are appropriate. Leggings and jeggings should be worn sensibly with other clothing. Tops must be below the 'bottom'. **Inappropriate** items include ripped jeans and very short shorts. Clothing that reveals too much flesh, bottoms and underwear is also inappropriate for a school environment.
- Shirts – casual collared shirts, smart jumpers and T-shirts can be worn. **Inappropriate** items include T-shirts with offensive logos, tops that reveal too much flesh i.e. strappy tops, strapless tops or tops exposing midriff areas.
- Tattoos should be covered up.
- Dresses & skirts should be a sensible length. **Inappropriate** items include miniskirts, revealing dresses/shirts.

- Hats and caps are not considered appropriate attire for inside the school buildings unless there is a specific reason for wearing them. If you need to wear a hat please speak to Mrs Todd in the first instance.
- Jewellery should be sensible. **Inappropriate** items include excessive visible facial piercings.
- Hair should be of a natural colour only. Hair colour that you could not be born with (i.e. bright red, purple, blue etc.) is not acceptable in Sixth Form. Students who are planning to dye their hair are encouraged to speak to Mrs Todd if they are in any doubt, because if a student does arrive in Sixth Form with coloured hair that is deemed unsuitable, they will be asked to dye it back to a natural tone even if this is at a cost to themselves.

The school does not wish to embarrass individuals by having to point out that their clothing, hair or jewellery is inappropriate and insisting that they modify their dress. The school certainly wishes to avoid sending students home.

For those who have lessons at Sheldon School their school dress code is below.

**Students are expected to visibly wear their own lanyard around their neck when on the school site.**

Shirts / blouses / plain T-shirts / polo shirts / dresses which are not revealing, strappy or strapless

Cardigans / jumpers

Trousers / jeans / tailored shorts (in summer) which are not ripped or frayed

Skirts / dresses which are at least knee length

Smart shoes or smart trainers

## **13. MOBILE PHONES AND LAPTOPS**

### **Mobile Phones**

Sixth Form students carrying mobile phones should use them appropriately at the right times and in the right places. For the benefit of everyone working in a teaching and learning environment, Sixth Form students must support the following arrangements:

- Mobile Phones should be turned off during 'formal' situations, e.g. tutor time, lessons, guided study time study, etc.
- Mobile Phones should not be taken into examination venues under any circumstances.
- If you do bring a mobile phone into school, look after it very carefully and keep it safe. It is your responsibility. If it is lost on the school site, this is your responsibility.
- Students may only use mobile phones in the Sixth Form Centre areas and must not use them where they can be observed by lower school students.

### **Laptops**

Students may choose to bring devices into school to complete work but please be aware that this is done at your own risk. You can connect to our free WIFI network and will be given details of how to access this in September. Our Acceptable Usage Policy, which all students sign, covers expectations of use. There are computer resources within Sixth Form so that you do not have to bring your own laptops into school if you prefer not to.

Other electronic devices such as iPods etc are brought into school at students' own risk.

## **14. TRACKING PROGRESS**

Progress through the Sixth Form is closely monitored. Target grades for achievement at A Level are set early on in Year 12. Progress towards these target grades is closely monitored throughout the Sixth Form by a regular review process with the emphasis being on individual subject help and support.

### **Exams Information**

A Levels are usually a 2 year course, and generally students sit exams at the end of Year 13. However, some students will sit AS exams at the end of Year 12. This will depend on your individual circumstance, but a few reasons to sit AS exams include:

- If you are studying 4 subjects, you will be entered for the AS exam in the subject you intend to drop.
- If you are struggling in a subject, your teacher may suggest that you are entered for the AS exam to test your suitability to continue the subject to full A level. Students are generally entered for AS exams early in Year 12, but can be withdrawn at any time up until exam season if they have made sufficient improvements in their performance.
- If you decide you do not wish to continue studying at Hardenhuish Sixth Form in Year 13, we will enter you for exams in all 3 subjects, plus your core subject.

## **15. EMPLOYMENT AND WORK EXPERIENCE**

### **Part Time Work**

The Sixth Form recognises the value of having a part time job. The extra money, the experience and the skills learned are all useful to you. Problems mainly occur when students work too many hours or during unsociable hours.

We advise that you spend **no more than 10 hours paid employment per week** and these should be outside the school day. Any increase on this is likely to result in your attainment and attendance suffering.

Students may not undertake paid employment that prevents them from attending any school function. This includes, but is not limited to, all timetabled lessons, extra-curricular activities, evening meetings and social functions. Students that do not adhere to this requirement are in contravention of the Home-School Agreement that all students sign upon entry to the school (a copy of which is available at the back of this handbook). As such, students are recommended to arrange for paid employment to commence at a time that allows them to attend any after school commitments and arrive at work in good time.

### **Opportunities**

Throughout the year there are some opportunities for students in Sixth Form to work for the school, supporting events and activities. Details of these and other activities which come to the attention of the Senior Sixth Form team will be sent out to students, who will be invited to submit an application.

### **WORK EXPERIENCE**

Work Experience is seen as an excellent way to gain a valuable firsthand insight into possible careers, finding out what is suitable for you (as well as what might not be!). It provides a better understanding of the world of work and gives you an experience of interacting with life outside of school. Through such experiences, you develop your interpersonal skills and demonstrate a seriousness and foresight that others, against whom you might be competing, may not have shown.

### **Getting a placement**

Securing a placement is not easy, but the effort will be worth it. Ms Brenton will help if you would like support finding an opportunity and she has access to a large database of contacts. We encourage you to

start the process of arranging your placement as early in the academic year as possible in order to have the best chance of securing the right opportunity.

In all cases, it is the quality of the placement that counts. Be prepared to think laterally: for example, lots of medical schools suggest that they'd rather offer a place to someone who has worked in a hospice for six months on a voluntary, part-time basis, than someone who secured a day shadowing a surgeon. The important thing is that placements generate lots of genuine reflection, i.e. different lessons that have been learned about the qualities and skills needed in a particular profession.

### **When does Work Experience happen?**

All students are expected to complete one week on placement at the end of Year 12 as a minimum.

Ideally students will undertake placements during the allocated WEX week; however, if you find a great opportunity that is only available on different dates, you should liaise with Ms Brenton and we will accommodate this where possible.

In order to maximise the learning experience, students are encouraged to do more than this one week and for some courses (e.g. medicine, veterinary science, nursing) universities will expect a minimum of six weeks work experience. The ideal time to do extra work experience is during one of the longer school holidays (e.g. the summer break between Year 12 and Year 13). The half-term breaks and Easter holiday are also worth considering.

Students can also arrange for ongoing WEX placements during term time if they are able to secure a placement that falls within their guided study time. If you want to consider doing this, please speak to Ms Brenton in the first instance. It is worth noting that even if you do arrange an ongoing WEX placement, school remains the priority and you are expected to attend any events in school.

## **16. LOOKING AHEAD**

In the early part of Year 12, your focus will be on settling into your new courses. However, before the end of your first year, you need to start thinking about what you plan to do when you leave school. If you decide to apply to university, you will have to submit your application in the autumn term of Year 13.

Most students aren't sure about their career plans, but during your time in the Sixth Form we will support you in making decisions about what you want to do next. However, it is worth thinking about what you can do from the start to help you get onto the course of your choice or into the kind of job you want. If you have set your heart on a particular career, it is definitely worth talking to our Careers & Transition Manager, Ms Brenton, to be clear about what you will need to achieve your goals.

### **Skills for life**

When applying for university, employment, apprenticeships or further education, you will need to write or talk confidently about the skills you possess and give evidence to support your claims. Key skills include time management, organisation, writing, presentation skills, teamwork and the ability to work independently. Actively developing these study skills in Year 12 will give you a head start, not only during the Sixth Form but in both higher education and the world of work.

Whatever you decide to do next, the next two years will be an important opportunity for you to show what you are capable of. Your tutors will write a reference for your future employers or university/college. Make sure that your teachers have lots of positive things to say about you! If you are doing interesting things outside school, make sure that your teachers know about them so that they can include them in your reference.

### **Advice and Guidance**

All students are entitled and encouraged to use the guidance support available including our careers library and extra-curricular opportunities. Individual help with career choice, UCAS and apprenticeships applications is provided by Ms Brenton. You can email Ms Brenton to make an appointment or you can drop in to her Sixth Form office to ask questions. Ms Brenton can also give you advice and ideas if you are unsure of your future direction.

## **UCAS**

The route into Higher Education can be daunting and seem like a very long way off. Do not be fooled! It comes around faster than you think but there is lots of help at hand. Your tutor will be a constant source of advice as well as the sixth form team. There will be many visitors from the universities giving presentations and you will have the opportunity to visit a university. Finally, there are special UCAS application workshops at the end of Year 12 and into Year 13 to help you complete your applications.

***Whatever you do, do not decide yet that you are not going to higher education or university. Find out all the facts first, see for yourself and then make an informed choice when the time comes. Until then, keep your eyes, ears and options open.***

## **17. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Q. I was previously in receipt of free school meals and/or pupil premium. Is this still available in Sixth Form?**

**A.** You are still able to apply for Free School Meals and you can get an application form from Reception or Mrs Todd. Pupil Premium is replaced by the 16-19 Bursary Fund and you will be given more information on eligibility and how to apply once you start Sixth Form.

**Q. What if I lose any of my property?**

**A.** It depends where you left it. If it was in the common room areas, the cleaners will normally give it to Mrs Todd, so she is always a good first person to check with. Otherwise, we would advise you to re-trace your steps and revisit any classrooms you think you were in. We advise you to look after any equipment you bring into school, as we cannot accept any responsibility for loss or damage.

**Q. I have personal problems and I really cannot cope with life at the moment – where do I turn?**

**A.** Please come and talk to Mrs Todd, your tutor or any member of staff that you feel comfortable with. Mrs Todd is able to signpost you to lots of organisations who are there to help, whatever the issue is. We also have in-school counsellors available, as well as the NHS School Nurse drop in service. There is always someone to help, so please do not suffer in silence – talk to us.

**Q. If I pass my driving test, can I park my car at school?**

**A.** We are fortunate to have designated Sixth Form parking available at the Long Ridings entrance to the school site. Parking is limited, and you will need to apply for a parking permit. Priority is given to students who live further afield. If you live in the local area, you are encouraged to walk to school or use other modes of travel; we also have bike racks located next to Sixth Form. Permits are available from Mrs Todd; you will be asked to provide vehicle registration details. This allows us to easily identify your vehicle if it is park inappropriately and needs to be moved. There is also nearby street parking, but students need to be mindful of our neighbours and be considerate when parking, ensuring that no pavements or driveways are blocked. Students are not allowed to park on the school site at any time, even if all the spaces in the Sixth Form car park are full. Vehicles are parked at your own risk.

**Q. I am not sure I want to study the same subjects anymore and want to change, what can I do?**

**A.** Students should aim to make informed choices at the beginning of their Sixth Form career. Because of the intensity and volume of work at this level, it is not possible for students to change courses mid-year. When you start in Y12, you have a chance to change subjects, but by end of September you just be enrolled on the courses you intend to continue with. If during Y12 you are finding a particular subject challenging or you are not enjoying it, it is really important that you speak to your teacher and/or Mr Wiggall and Mr Heffernan as it may be possible for you to drop this subject and pick up another AS in Y13. Communication is key, so again, please speak to us if things are not right.

**Q. I am behind with my work – what can I do?**

**A.** It is easy to fall into the trap of burying your head in the sand, but you mustn't do this. If you ignore problems, they don't go away, they just pile up and get worse. Talk to your subject teachers, your tutor or a member of the Sixth Form team. We are all here to help. As a Sixth Form student we expect you to take responsibility for your learning and that means talking to teachers if you are finding things a challenge.

**Q. I'm worried about progress in my subject – I don't seem to be doing as well as I should be.**

**A.** As before – talk to all staff that can help you. Revisit your time management plans – are you devoting sufficient time to studying? Do you work for too many hours at your part time job? Is your work out of lessons just a matter of wasting time with the TV/music on in your room, so that you do 20 minutes work in three hours, but think you've actually done three hours' work?

**Q. Can I cycle to school?**

**A.** Yes, there is a designated area where Sixth Form students can keep their bikes under cover, located adjacent to the Sixth Form Centre.

**Q. Can I leave my books and other equipment at school?**

**A.** Yes, please speak to Mrs Todd if you would like to hire a locker within the Sixth Form centre.

**Q. Are there any paid opportunities available to students?**

**A.** Yes, job opportunities are available within our in-house Events Team, as part of the MDSA team and also as part of the catering team, working within the Hungry Stag café. These jobs are advertised at the

start of the year and available to all students. There will be application deadlines, so make sure you read any job adverts carefully because late applications won't be considered!

In addition to paid work, we have our own Student Leadership Team which is made up of 8 students from Y13. Applications are invited in the second half of Y12. This is a great chance to represent Hardenhuish Sixth Form at events throughout the school, and to be involved in some decision making. The Student Leadership Team work closely with Mrs Percy, Mr Heffernan, Mr Wiggall and Mrs Todd.

**Q. Are there any trips available to Sixth Form students?**

**A.** As well as trips available through different subject areas, we also arrange several whole year group trips throughout the year. Sixth Form students are also invited to go on the annual week-long ski trip as well as the 4 week Camps International Expedition that runs over the summer every other year. Details of these trips are often shared with students via email, so make sure you check your emails each day.