

Sixth Form Student & Parent Handbook

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst Sixth Form!

Success in Sixth Form requires a whole new approach to studying and learning. It offers new opportunities and experiences, and should prepare you for success in further education or employment. Learning at this level requires total commitment and motivation, as well as mature and responsible approach. Get this right and you should be able to achieve your best with the support of your teachers and tutors.

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

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

John Bowers
Director of Sixth Form

GENERAL GUIDELINES

PARTNERSHIP

Parents/Carers have a very important role to play in the three-way partnership you are entering into. In Sixth Form we do not subscribe to the view that Sixth Form students are entirely independent decision makers. Indeed it is our view that **students entering Sixth Form do so in a deliberate partnership with their parents or carers**, who retain an active responsibility for development and progress. Your Parents have supported you throughout the compulsory stages of education and are encouraging you to continue your studies. Even though you are older, their support is still essential and they will want to share with you the important moments and decisions throughout Sixth Form, as well as encouraging you to achieve your full potential. Primarily we will try to deal with students directly as young adults, but out of courtesy information will be shared with parents or carers. We reserve the right to share with and involve Parents/Carers even though you are older and may well be above 18 years of age. This will happen automatically through reports and consultation evenings, but there is also an open invitation to parents to contact us at any time and this is very much encouraged. **Contact can be made directly to teaching staff for subject specific issues or through the Personal Tutor.**

PROGRESS MONITORING

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

ADVICE, GUIDANCE & INFORMATION

All students are required to take part in the Information, Advice and Guidance sessions, PSHE, Drop-Down Days and Sixth Form Assemblies. This will deal with a range of personal, social and health issues relevant to 16/19 year olds and includes topics such as personal safety, driver safety, healthy eating etc. Towards the end of Year 12 the focus shifts towards university and careers guidance. This session is also an essential communication channel for all students.

PRIVATE STUDY

The balance between taught lessons and private study changes when students move into Sixth Form. **It is expected that students study individually or in study groups for approximately 5 hours per week in each subject outside of timetabled lesson time.** We encourage students to use the study facilities offered by the academy. Sixth Form students have access to the Common Room, their own Sixth Form Computer Suite and the Information Centre is open to them all day, as well as after academy hours. They will obviously also need a place to study at home, if possible with a small notice board for timetables, reminders etc.

COMMUNICATION

It is vital that students take some responsibility for keeping up to date with important announcements. This is particularly important in Sixth Form where students are beginning to take some responsibility for their own futures. Students should check the Notice Board outside the Sixth Form Office daily; attend all assemblies, PSHE sessions, and all morning registration sessions that commence at 8.30am every day.

WHO TO APPROACH IF YOU FIND YOURSELF IN DIFFICULTIES.

Whenever you are unsure about what you should do about something connected with the academy your personal tutor is the first person to talk to. In addition to your personal tutor you can approach your Subject Leader(s) Director of Sixth Form, John Bowers or Sixth Form Administrator, Safina Ahmed. The academy also has a range of support services. The following list shows who the people who work within this area are and their responsibilities:

Darren Turner	Principal
Lee Parfitt	College Leader
John Bowers	Director of Sixth Form
Christopher Curran	Associate College Leader for Year 13
Jessica Foster	Associate College Leader for Year 12
Safina Ahmed	Sixth Form Administrator
Jade Bull	Learning Mentor
Jo Armitage	UCAS Coordinator
Jacqui Robinson	Careers Coordinator
Helen Cunningham	Careers Advisor
Laura Ridley	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
Beth Bourne	Senior Leader Responsible for SEND

DISABILITY AND INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

The academy is committed to monitoring that disabled students are treated fairly and all reasonable adjustments to provision are made. Students with individual learning needs are offered specific support. For further information contact our SLT member responsible for SEND, Beth Bourne.

SIXTH FORM STUDENT VOICE & STUDENT LEADERSHIP

All students have the opportunity to take part in elections for the Student Leadership. Those elected will play an active role in decisions affecting the Sixth Form community in addition to that of the whole Academy. The Student Leadership enables students to air fresh views on a variety of issues. There will be regular meetings with Associate College Leaders and the Principal to advise or assist with any action which may be required. The Student Leadership debates issues to try and solve any Sixth Form problems, organise social events, encourage others to become involved in charities and the local community. Serving on the Student Leadership provides the student with valuable experience and is also an excellent addition to any university and job application/reference.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

We expect all students to undertake some form of Community Service during their time in Sixth Form (based upon COVID-related health and safety guidance permitting them to do so). This could involve for example:

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

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

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

APPROACH/BEHAVIOUR

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

- The academy is a no smoking/vaping site and students should not smoke/vape on the academy premises. Both items are deemed **prohibited** within the Academy site and would be sanctioned in line with Academy policy
- The Common Room is an area set aside for Sixth Form use only. The space should be respected and kept clean and tidy at all times.
- Students who choose to drive to the academy do so at their own risk. When using the academy car park they should drive responsibly. Details of their vehicle's make registration number should be provided to their respective Associate College Leader.
- Students should generally behave in an appropriate manner, with respect to others and the academy environment. Our Sixth Form student should act as strong role models to the younger members of the Academy at all times in their conduct, behaviour and actions.

If students behave in a way that is considered to be irresponsible in any way they will face disciplinary action in line with the Sixth Form disciplinary procedure.

MOBILE PHONES AND MOBILE DEVICES

Sixth Form students are allowed to bring mobile phones and other mobile devices into the academy, but do so at their own risk. The academy does not accept any liability for the loss or theft of such items. While students are allowed to bring in these devices they will be **for use only in the Sixth Form Common Room only** and must

not be used generally around the rest of the academy site. Mobile phones should be switched off during lessons, registration and assemblies. Earphones of any variety must not also been worn around the academy site other than that of the Common Room.

DRESS CODE

Students are all required to maintain smart attire. Please refer to both Year 12 and Year 13 Dress Code documents published in the TGAK website for further details.

SMOKING

Smoking is not permitted on the academy premises and students are asked to refrain from smoking/vaping in the immediate vicinity of the academy as a consequence of the passive impact that may have on other members of the academy or public, and additionally, sets a poor example to younger students. Students must not therefore smoke/vape in the roads and alleyways near the academy.

PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

We understand that many students need to earn money in part-time employment and that this can provide valuable experience for them. We strongly recommend that they work a **maximum of 10 hours per week**. Any more than this is likely to prevent them from making a sensible balance between study, social life, exercise and work. Any shifts worked must not clash with any part of their timetable and where a student does not have a lesson in the afternoon, must not start prior to the students ability to leave site (at the earliest) at 1.20pm – where students **MUST** sign-out in order to communicate that they have formerly left the premises.

HOLIDAYS

Students should avoid booking holidays during term time as this will have a negative effect on studies, results and attendance records. In accordance to government guidelines no holiday can be authorised during term time.

COMMON ROOM

Students are free to use the Common Room for social purposes at virtually all times of the day. This area is not staffed as such but students are required to respect this area and keep it tidy.

ADVICE

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

ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

By accepting a place in Sixth Form at Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst students must agree to the following conditions regarding attendance:

- You must attend **all the lessons** which make up your programme of study.
- Academic Bursary Fund recipients must apply to achieve access to this intervention. The Sixth Form encourage all students whose parental earnings are around £30,000 per year, are classed as 'looked-after' or are in care or have ever been in receipt of Free School Meals, to apply for this support. Please refer to the Bursary fund page of the website for details (<https://www.kingshurst.tgacademy.org.uk/sixth-form/academic-bursary-fund/>)
- You must register **every morning** (unless authorised by the Associate College Leader or Director of Sixth Form).
- Good attendance is essential if you are to succeed in the job market or progress to higher education. Most employers and universities require the academy to comment on attendance in references. Where attendance is unsatisfactory it is our duty to report this truthfully and honestly.
- Employment and driving lessons must be outside of the academy day (8.30 a.m. – 3.05 p.m.)

Attendance will be monitored closely by the Sixth Form Team and Personal Tutors.

AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

In some cases the academy will consider an absence to be 'authorised'.

PLANNED ABSENCE

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

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

UNPLANNED ABSENCE

However, if you are ever away for a reason that you couldn't have predicted, the academy will consider whether your absence was really unavoidable - **but you must let them know on the day you're away before 10am. You should phone the Academy on 0121 329 300, to inform us of this absence.** Unless you have an appropriate reason why you *can't* contact them on the day, they will consider your absence **unauthorised**.

Examples of reasons to apply for 'authorised absence':

- (a) a medical appointment which can't be arranged outside of academy hours
- (b) a particular need to look after a family member or another person who you have caring responsibilities for (NB this would be a one off incident and not happen regularly)
- (c) a religious holiday, subject to academy approval
- (d) a visit to a university either to attend an open day or for an interview, subject to academy approval
- (e) an appointment with a careers advisor (although you should arrange these outside of lessons).
- (f) a work experience placement which is part of a course, and which you don't receive a wage for

(g) if you're taking part in a significant extra-curricular activity, such as community service, drama, music, sport or volunteering. **Authorised absence** will only be given where the activity reflects a significant level of personal achievement (e.g. taking part in a regional or national event), or for some other one-off event.

(h) a probation meeting

(i) going to a funeral of a close relative/friend

(j) severe problems with your transport (for example, where you travel to the academy by bus and heavy snow means there is no practical way of getting to the academy)

(k) a driving test

(l) an academy representatives' meeting e.g. Governors' meeting

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

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

Reasons that are not generally acceptable for authorised absence:

(a) holidays

(b) part or full-time work which isn't part of your programme of study

(c) leisure activities

(d) birthdays or similar celebrations

(e) babysitting younger brothers or sisters

(f) shopping

(g) driving lessons

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

SICKNESS

Absence due to sickness needs to be explained or evidenced in some way. The academy is entitled to turn down an application for **authorised absence** if there is a pattern to your absences, you are absent a lot or if they have reason to doubt you! If you are ill you will need to ring the academy before 10am. **Please contact the academy on 0121 329 8300.**

ILLNESS DURING THE ACADEMY DAY

If a student feels ill during the academy day they should not leave without seeing the academy's nurse/ first aider and then obtain a Sixth Form Self-Certification form from the Sixth Form Office. One obvious reason for this is our need to know the whereabouts of our students in case of emergency. If this procedure is not followed, this will be classed as an unauthorised absence.

STUDY LEAVE

Absence due to study leave is clearly "authorised".

GENERAL AUTHORISATIONS

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

LEAVING CLASSES EARLY OR ARRIVING LATE

If lateness becomes a problem it will become a disciplinary issue. All students need to be punctual. Associate College Leaders and Personal Tutors will manage the 'stepped' process of supporting students to attend.

ATTENDANCE RECORDS

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

- Tutor Register – recording daily attendance. Recorded by the personal tutor.
- Reasons for Absence – recording each individual's reason for absence and associated evidence, including self-certification forms and requests for absence with the students' respective file.
- Lesson Register – will identify absence from specific lessons. Tutors notified, and absence recorded.

Sixth Form Contract

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

As a Sixth Form student of Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst I agree to:

- Maintain an excellent record of attendance – **above 95%**
- Be responsible for getting details of the work covered and set (during my absence) immediately on my return to the academy.
- **Sign-in, in person** at the Sixth Form Office when late to arrive at the academy recognising that this is an essential health and safety requirement.
- **Sign-out, in person** at the Sixth Form Office when planning to leave site, recognising that this is an essential health and safety requirement.
- Behave responsibly in the Sixth Form Common Room. This includes taking part in the common room tidying rota where one is in place.
- Follow the appropriate procedures if I am having problems or am thinking of changing course.
- Respect the academy's policy of not allowing smoking or vaping on the academy site.
- Keep my Personal Tutor informed about the number of hours of paid employment I do each week.
- Fill in a registration form if I intend to park a car on the academy site and drive safely when using the academy car park.
- Hand in work by the deadline set, or request any extension to a deadline (or help with work) well in advance.
- Bring the appropriate equipment and materials to lessons.
- Only use a mobile phone in the Sixth Form Common Room.
- Check your personal email, the Sixth Form Newsletter (Sixth Sense) for key messages.
- Take part in Community Service or equivalent activities.
- Not behave in any way on or off the premises which brings the academy into disrepute and will respect the authority of all staff and not disrupt the learning of others.
- Not bring visitors on-site unless they have a prior appointment and are properly signed-in at the Visitor's Reception. Disciplinary action will be taken against students who break this rule

This guide/contract comes with an accompanying letter which both students and parents/carers are required to sign and return to the Academy in order to confirm that the conditions are agreed to upon accepting a place at Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst, Sixth Form.

Student/Parent Agreement

I have read the handbook and I agree that the rules outlined in them are reasonable and that I will abide by them.

I agree to accept these conditions of attendance, and understand that disciplinary action may take place if I do not meet these requirements.

I understand that if my attendance falls below 95% without good reason my continuation on my chosen course may be in jeopardy.

I agree to abide by coursework guidelines. I understand that failure to meet agreed deadlines may result in non-submission of my work to the examination board.

I have read and agree to abide by the Academic Honesty Policy. I understand that plagiarism will not be tolerated and may result in immediate exclusion (which will include the withdrawal from any exams and coursework will not be submitted).

Student Name:.....

Signed:.....

Parent/ Carer Name.....

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Please sign and return this form to the Sixth Form Administrator, Safina Kusar-Ahmed