

NEWCASTLE UNDER LYME SCHOOL



SIXTH FORM HANDBOOK

CONTENTS

Admissions and Curriculum	3
Uniform	4
Academic Expectations	5
Arrangements for Private Study	6
Marking and Assessment	7
Reporting	8
Formal Examinations	9
Sixth Form Conduct	10
Motor Vehicles	11
Sixth Form Common Room	12
Wednesday Afternoon Timetable	14
Co-curricular	15
CCF	16
Higher Education	17
Policy for University Visits	19
Prefect Body	20
Enrichment Activities	21
PSHE	22
Appendix A – Colours	

ADMISSIONS AND CURRICULUM

For entry into the Sixth Form it is recommended that students obtain at least **eight** GCSE passes at grade C or above, including at least **five** at grade B or above and including at least grade C passes in Mathematics and English Language. We also recommend that subjects to be studied at Sixth Form level should have been passed with at least a grade B at GCSE.

In the main, students study four subjects in the Lower Sixth and they will take three of these subjects to A level. Currently they will take one subject to AS level in the summer of Lower Sixth. In addition, students have the option of studying a computing qualification or work towards an Extended Project Qualification.

Once they have embarked upon their Lower Sixth courses, students are not necessarily committed as to which subject they will drop at the end of the Lower Sixth, and should regard each subject as having equal importance. They will be asked for a firmer indication of the subject to be studied to AS level and the three subjects to be studied at A level after Christmas in the Lower Sixth.

Once they have embarked on their Lower Sixth courses, students may decide to change their subjects. This decision needs to be made in consultation with members of staff and they should seek the approval of relevant Heads of Department. School advises that changes should not be made after the end of September except in exceptional circumstances.

In the Spring term, students will be asked to choose their A level options. From these choices, the timetable blocks for Upper Sixth will be created.

UNIFORM

The Sixth Form uniform is supplied by Perry Uniform, an online company. All the details of the required everyday uniform are contained on their site. Students in the Sixth Form can wear their own kit for Sixth Form Games lessons; those students who are chosen to play for a team will either be provided with the required kit by the PE department or will be given the option of buying it, if they prefer. Please contact the School or Perry Uniform if you have any questions about the uniform.

Prefects:

Prefects wear a distinctive, eye-catching blazer which uses the school colours.

Colours:

A distinctive addition to the blazer

Designation of Houses:

A single badge identifies a student as a member of the Council, as a House Captain, as well as which House they belong to.

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

The major difference between the rest of the Senior School and the Sixth Form should lie in the quantity and style of work students are required to do. The exact amount that is expected will vary according to the subjects being studied, but in general everyone should aim to spend about sixteen hours each week at home working on their Lower Sixth subjects. There are only about twenty-one months from the time a student enters the Lower Sixth until the A-Level examinations which begin at the end of the Upper Sixth. Moreover, the performance in the Lower Sixth year will provide the basis for the Higher Education reference. Predicted grades at A level are worked out using baseline data which is informed by previous GCSE/IGCSE examination results, a test of developed ability, attitude to work throughout the year and achievements as well as the professional judgement of teaching staff. The baseline data informs the minimum subject predictions..

Students studying subjects which are now linear will need to make a decision regarding the sitting of more than their one AS examination. This decision will be made during the year in consultation with academic staff who will guide students carefully on the course of action needed in their individual case.

The style of work is much more independent than has been the case earlier in the school. Students are obviously guided in coping with this change, but everyone should aim to carry out independent reading, problem-solving or learning at home, even when this is not specifically directed by teaching staff. In short, as a Sixth Former, a student should NEVER be in a position where they say they have “nothing to do”. The level of difficulty of the work is also much higher than at GCSE. This changed attitude to work is all about preparing students for the next transition into Higher Education.

Homework

There is no published homework timetable for the Sixth Form. Tasks set are of an extended duration and students are expected to take responsibility for managing their own time in such a way as to complete tasks by the deadlines set.

Students have work set in each subject to be completed in their own time over the course of the week. This work should take approximately four hours per week per subject in the Lower Sixth and five hours per week per subject in the Upper Sixth. Where a Sixth Form set is shared between more than one member of staff, this time allocation must be shared out between the staff involved. Sixth Form homework should be set at a regular time each week, for handing in by a regular deadline. When the work is to be set and when it is to be submitted is at the discretion of the teacher, but there will be some predictability for students concerning their workload pattern for the week.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRIVATE STUDY TIME

Sixth Form students need to use their private study time wisely and effectively. These are slots in the Sixth Form timetable to allow students to complete extra work in school. It is important that students plan this time and do not spend all of their private study lessons in the Common Room; the recommendation is a maximum of two lessons in the Common Room and the rest in a location suitable for quiet study, wider reading and lesson preparation.

Students should **not** be wandering around the School in these periods, but should make a firm decision as to where they will spend the lesson. The alternatives are:-

1. **Library** – silence will be enforced in here
2. **Computer Facility in Sixth Form Centre (N3)** – for project work or academic Internet research
3. **Sixth Form Common Room** – Small group discussions.
4. **Specialist Subject Rooms** - permission from the relevant Head of Department is needed.

N.B. Any student who is causing problems at these times or not keeping up to date with academic requirements will have their private study privileges rescinded and will be required to attend registered, supervised study during their non-teaching periods. The Librarian will supervise these sessions.

MARKING AND ASSESSMENT

All Sixth Form students are assessed regularly on their academic performance. Assessment may be through a variety of assessments, including direct observation, project work, classwork, homework and test results. Students will receive progress grades, interim reports and full reports in a similar way to the rest of the school, although the pattern is slightly different.

Transition from Lower to Upper Sixth is not automatic and students need to maintain an appropriate level of academic achievement in the Lower Sixth. Students in danger of failing to meet these requirements will be spoken to and supported with strategies throughout their Lower Sixth Year. In addition, students may choose to repeat the year; this decision will be made in consultation with parents and the Headmaster. Prior to starting the Upper Sixth course students are advised to attend the advice session on the Tuesday before the September term begins. Heads of Department and relevant subject staff are available for individual consultation at this time.

REPORTING

Feedback is provided from the school to parents on the academic progress of pupils in five ways. Regular progress grades provide a simple snapshot of how a pupil has worked over a short timeframe. Interim reports include a progress grade with an additional short written report. Full written reports are provided as shown below to enable staff to give more detailed and specific formal written feedback. Examination ('Mock') grades are sent home, and an annual Parents' Evening in the first term gives the opportunity for a dialogue between parents, staff and pupils.

Regular monitoring to support student progress and self-evaluation is part of the PSHE programme. Sixth Form students who receive progress grades that note concern will be asked to attend supervised study periods in the Lancaster Site Library.

PARENTS' EVENINGS

Sixth Form students are encouraged to attend Parents' Evenings with their parents so that the learning process can be a joint effort.

EXAMINATIONS

Lower Sixth

Full Lower Sixth internal examinations take place at the same time as the Year 11 Mocks: in early January. The results of these examinations are sent home.

Lower Sixth external AS examinations for the subject being studied to AS level take place in the Summer examination session. Students are allowed a brief study leave prior to these examination papers and the dates are published by the school in advance of the examinations.

These examinations conclude towards the beginning of June and students will be notified via the school calendar as to when the full programme of lessons resume in June. Students are expected to attend all lessons in the subjects they will continue to A level.

Upper Sixth

Upper Sixth students will have internal examinations in the Spring Term. The results of these examinations are sent home.

Upper Sixth external examinations take place in the Summer examination session. Students usually have formal study leave from the start of the May half term; they only need to attend school after this date to sit their examinations.

Results' Day

AS and A level results are available from the school on the Results' Day in August. Students should attend in person or contact the school with a letter giving permission for a nominated person to collect their results. If students cannot collect their results on the day, they need to contact the Examinations Officer by email. Emailed results are sent later in the morning than paper collected results.

SIXTH FORM CONDUCT

Punctuality and Absence

The combinations of subjects that students study in the Sixth Form will prove very demanding, and it is essential that new Sixth Formers set about their work in an efficient and business-like way from the start. With this in mind, it is necessary that, just as in previous years, all Sixth Formers are in school from 8.45 a.m. to 12.45 p.m. and 1.50 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. They must register with their Form Tutors in the morning and in the afternoon. Sixth Formers are allowed to leave school early, provided they have the appropriate form signed by parents, at the end of their last timetabled lesson. If Sixth Formers are away from school they should, as before, bring a note from home explaining the absence.

If a Sixth Former wishes to request permission to be absent, then they must bring a letter from home in advance of the absence. Such leave of absence can only be granted by a Deputy Head of the school and will not be automatic. If a Sixth Former wishes to request leave of absence for a university Open Day, the letter must be addressed to the Head of Sixth Form and received by the school at least two days prior to the absence.

Assembly Arrangements

Sixth Formers have a formal assembly on a Monday morning in St Paul's Church and a Year assembly on a Friday morning in the Memorial Hall; attendance is compulsory and students must be in full school uniform. Registration takes place during the assembly so students must be seated in their allocated form area by 8.50. In addition, Sixth Form students must attend House assembly every second Tuesday morning after registration.

Lunch Arrangements

All Sixth Formers have access to lunch in the Dining Room; food bought in the Dining Room must be consumed there and not taken away. Kettles can be used in Form Rooms (except those which are laboratories) provided that they are checked beforehand for safety by the caretaker. Packed lunches and drinks in cartons may be consumed in the Form Room (except those which are laboratories). Students also have access to their own Sixth Form café on site which is open throughout the day. There are also facilities for making hot drinks in the Sixth Form Common Room.

Visiting Town

Sixth Formers are allowed to go into town at lunchtime, but they must, of course, conduct themselves in a proper fashion and observe all the usual school rules. Failure to do this will result in the privilege being withdrawn.

MOTOR VEHICLES

Permission is given to some Sixth Formers to drive themselves to school. Application must be made on a special form obtainable from the Sixth Form Office and handed, initially to the Head or Assistant Head of Sixth Form. Under no circumstances can motor vehicles be used at lunchtime without the express permission of the School's Senior Management or the Head/Assistant Head of Sixth Form.

Driving Lessons

Students in the Sixth Form may wish to take driving lessons during school time in addition to lessons booked outside of school hours or during school holidays. This is only allowed during Private Study lessons at the end of the day when the students have received permission to leave school early. Sixth Formers who wish to take advantage of this privilege must sign out before they leave school.

Driving Tests

The school acknowledges that it is difficult for Sixth Formers to arrange their driving tests at the end of the school day and so they can arrange their driving tests for their private study lessons if it is more convenient. A driving test should not take place during a timetabled lesson if at all possible; if a test is arranged for during a private study lesson students must sign in and out of school citing the reason clearly.

SIXTH FORM COMMON ROOM

Sixth Form students have their own purpose built Sixth Form Centre. The centre contains teaching rooms, a Sixth Form computer room and a large common room. All members of the Sixth Form are free to use the centre at all times during the school day outside formal lessons. This exclusive use of the Sixth Form Centre enables students to enjoy a degree of independence more commonly experienced in colleges and universities. The Centre is open from 8am until 5pm.

Alongside the privilege of the Common Room runs the responsibility. As the Common Room is on the top floor of the building with teaching rooms below, Sixth Formers need to keep the noise level at an acceptable level and behaviour needs to be appropriate at all times.

Sixth Form Common Room Committee

The Sixth Form Committee oversees the use of the centre and also presents the views of the Sixth Form to the Sixth Form team. The rules of the Common Room are established and monitored by the Committee. The Sixth Form Common Room Committee is an elected student body from within the Sixth Form with a chairperson, treasurer and secretary. The committee manages a budget funded by Sixth Form members and matched by a school contribution. The committee gives Sixth Formers the opportunity to experience leadership, teamwork and other life skills, especially a sense of responsibility.

Members of this committee or an elected sub-committee are responsible for organising end of school events such as the Leavers' Ball. It is up to the committee, on behalf of the student body, to ensure that these events are managed effectively.

Visitors to the Common Room

The Common Room is for Sixth Form use only and students from the rest of the School should not be present. Visitors to the Common Room from outside school need to be signed in as School Visitors at the School Reception or Victoria site School office. It is important that the Sixth Former who signs the visitor into School remains with them throughout their time in the Sixth Form Centre and in the School. It is their responsibility to return the Visitors' badge to Reception at the end of the visit.

IT Facilities

Sixth Formers have exclusive access to the Computer Lab in the basement of the centre. It is the responsibility of the committee to ensure that the printer has a supply of paper and that behaviour is appropriate. Sixth Form classes can be booked into the facility but it must not be used by students lower down the school. As a result, Sixth Form students are encouraged to use this facility for their IT needs. If Sixth Formers wish to use any of the other labs within the school, they must ask permission of the teacher present and be prepared to be refused permission if it is not appropriate for them to be in the lab during another lesson.

Student Council

Sixth Formers are also represented on the Student Council of the School. The Head Boy and Girl are representatives, alongside two other Upper Sixth students and two Lower Sixth students. These four students are elected at the beginning of the academic year.

Charity Committee

The school has its own charity committee and the majority of these members are from the Sixth Form. However, this is not an exclusively Sixth Form committee and students from throughout the school work alongside the Sixth Formers in identifying the work that the school can do in order to raise money for nominated charities.

Parents' Evenings

Students in the Lower Sixth are expected to assist at Parents' Evenings throughout the year, with the exception of the Lower Sixth Parents' Evening. Students volunteer at the beginning of the year for one of the Parents' Evenings and are given general instructions such as smart appearance, willingness to help etc. Prior to the evening, the relevant Head of Year will contact the students to finalise arrangements. Food is available for those helping, free of charge, between the end of the School day and the start of Parents' Evening. Some Lower Sixth students may volunteer to help at Sixth Form Open Evening as well.

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON TIMETABLE

On a Wednesday afternoon, the Sixth Form students are timetabled for a Games activity. This takes place for the whole afternoon and can include team commitments and practices (rugby, hockey and netball in winter; cricket and tennis in summer) as well as a range of outdoor and indoor activities. Pupils may opt for a lifesaving course (including an award examination), football, badminton, table tennis and basketball; there is also an opportunity for general fitness exercises and yoga. Registration on a Wednesday afternoon is with the member of staff responsible for a student's activity and not their Form Tutor.

Some students choose to take part in Community Service projects which vary from year to year but include working in:

primary schools including special needs schools
nurseries
charity shops

Students make their selection each half term but are required to fulfill commitments to teams first. **It is compulsory for students to take part in an activity.**

CO - CURRICULAR LIFE

Sixth Formers have the opportunity to partake in a variety of co-curricular activities. These include the activities in the list below and students need to consult the School calendar for specific details and availability each term. This list gives just a flavour of activities on offer as new ones happen each year depending on interest.

Badminton
Debating Society which also involves formal public speaking
Drama including acting, stage crew, lighting, sound and directing
Duke of Edinburgh's Award
Explorer Scouts
Mandarin Chinese
Spanish/ Bollywood Dance Club
Young Enterprise

Music Activities

Choir
Orchestra - with concerto opportunities for suitable players
String Orchestra
Brass Group
Wind Band
Chamber music / quartets etc as appropriate to players
Annual Rock and Jazz Night

Team Sports

Athletics
Cricket
Hockey
Life-Saving
Netball
Rugby
Swimming
Tennis

CCF SIXTH FORM

The majority of CCF cadets entering the Sixth Form have already been in their section for three years. They have completed their proficiency training courses.

Many of them will have undertaken the tri-service Leadership course in Year 11. This is undertaken by Contingent Officers and includes an assessment weekend. This will have led to a first promotion to the rank of Junior NCO.

Similarly many will sign up for the BTEC CVQ Course on entering the Sixth Form. This enables them to use CCF experience and School activities along with workbooks to obtain a vocational qualification in Public Service.

As cadets progress through the Sixth Form they play an increasing role in training the Junior Cadets. They also lead teams in the Tri-service Victor Ludorum Competition. At Remembrance they are involved in carrying out parades and services both inside and outside of school.

Outside of school cadets act as leaders at Camps and Field Days. Some will attend National Leadership Courses held by all three sections. In the RAF there are opportunities for Flying and Gliding scholarships for cadets of a suitable standard. The Army and Royal Navy also offer high level training opportunities.

Promotion is competitive with each section having a Senior Cadet. This is decided by October of the Upper Sixth and the post is held for the rest of the Year. In some years an exceptional cadet is promoted to Cadet Under Officer to assist the Contingent Commander in his administrative duties.

New pupils entering the Sixth Form undertake an accelerated recruit's course and by the Upper Sixth can be promoted to a Junior NCO rank. Those that do join are usually very enthusiastic and progress very quickly.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Lower Sixth

The following Higher Education activities take place in the Lower Sixth:

Term One

Introduction to Higher Education: talk by Head of Sixth Form with follow-up from Form Tutors.

Term Two

Discussion with Upper Sixth about the pros and cons of the process.

Individual student research prior to A2 option choices.

Higher Education Day.

Term Three

Meeting for parents about the UCAS system.

Oxbridge information evening – a chance for students and parents to meet Oxbridge Admissions' Tutors.

Introduction to UCAS form and time with tutors in filling in the form, including the personal statement.

Individual interviews with Head of Sixth Form.

Open Day visits.

Upper Sixth

Students should return in the Upper Sixth with a clear idea of their Higher Education intentions. The timetable for the year is as follows:

September	UCAS Apply system opens on-line. School Centre Number:- 12688 and Buzzword (Lancaster plus year of entry eg lancaster18).
End of September	All applications for Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science to be completed to allow time for processing for October 15 th deadline
By end of October	School recommended deadline for applications for competitive entry courses.
Beginning of November	Strongly suggested deadline for other applications

Beginning of December	School final deadline to allow time for processing to complete forms before the end of term, well in advance of UCAS January deadline
March/April	Student finance applications are online at <i>direct.gov.uk/studentfinance</i>
April/May	Students to respond to UCAS with a CF (Firm) and CI (Insurance) acceptance
August	A Level Results published. Clearing begins.

NB It can take up to two full weeks after a student has submitted an application for the reference to be written , the form checked and sent to UCAS.

Students need to be aware of the following input into their UCAS application:

Form Tutors write their reference based on information supplied by subject staff, including the standalone AS subject. Information is also supplied by the students. Students apply online and need to follow the instructions on Firefly (Sixth Form).

POLICY FOR UNIVERSITY VISITS

When Sixth Form students are deciding on their choices of course and university, it is recommended they need to visit some universities for research purposes. However, if too much time is spent away from their Advanced Level studies on university visits this is counter-productive.

The School organises one visit in the summer term, for all the Lower Sixth, after the standalone AS examinations to one of the top redbrick universities; this visit is so everyone has a **good benchmark** to compare other universities with. For the students interested in applying to Oxbridge we also arrange visits to a selection of Oxford and Cambridge Colleges in the last two weeks of the summer term.

We encourage students to attend further **official** university Open Days at the universities they are interested in applying to. We recommend that a maximum of two should be taken during the Summer Term, and the rest at weekends (many universities now have Saturday Open Days) or during the holidays. Permission for absence for these visits should be obtained from the Head of Sixth Form. A letter requesting leave of absence should be sent in from the parents at least two days prior to the visit. Students are then issued with an off-lessons chit that needs to be signed by all staff teaching them on the day. No permission will be granted for unofficial visits to universities during term time and no exploratory visits should be arranged in the Autumn Term.

Except for the most competitive courses, most students will receive four or five offers from the universities they apply to via UCAS. Some of these offers may require the student to attend the University for an Interview or a Group Offer Open Day when the university will show him/her around the particular department and the university in general. As this means most Upper Sixth formers will need to take up to four or five days away from their studies anyway in the Upper Sixth year, this should not be compounded by exploratory visits in September/October. Again a written letter from the parents to the Head of Sixth Form is needed in advance and the same rules apply regarding letting subject staff know of their absence.

PREFECT BODY

PLEASE BE AWARE, THAT THE INFORMATION ON THIS PAGE IS CURRENTLY UNDER REVIEW.

In the Easter term of the Lower Sixth, a prefect body is selected to be in office for just over a year. In their first half-term, they shadow the current prefects and then take over after half term or their standalone AS examinations in June.

Selection of Senior Prefects

The selection procedure is as follows:

All Lower Sixth students select students from their Year Group who they feel have the right qualities to be the school's leaders. All staff select in the same way. This list provides a basis for discussion of the Prefect Selection Committee along with the opinions of Form Tutors.

The selection committee (Headmaster; Deputy Head Pastoral; Deputy Head Academic; Head and Assistant Head of Sixth Form; Head of Year 11 for the current year group) meets towards the end of March to discuss the selections and decide on the Prefect Body.

The names of the students are announced in the final assembly prior to the Easter break. These students are invited to attend Prefect Training prior to the start of the September term and the staff involved in the training advise the Headmaster in his choice of Heads and Deputy Heads of School.

Heads of House

In addition to Prefects, House staff recommend to the Headmaster their Head and Deputy Head of House. These may or may not be Prefects but they cannot be Heads of School.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

In addition to the co-curricular programme of the school, there are a variety of Enrichment activities offered in the Sixth Form.

Castleton

In the first term of the Lower Sixth, students attend a team building event in Castleton. The purpose of this activity, which is new for 2017 is to encourage the students to work together and create a sense of cohesion in the Year Group.

Activity Days

In line with the rest of the school, students not in CCF or Scouts participate in an Activity Day each term. The events for Sixth Formers are as follows:

Lower Sixth

October – Financial Awareness Day

March – Visits organised to areas of general academic interest

June – University Open Day

Upper Sixth

October – Interview skills and UCAS

March – Study Day

Talks

A series of talks are organised as part of the PSHE programme and focus on the varied knowledge base of the Form Tutors.

PSHE PROVISION

Citizenship education is education which aims to help people learn how to become active, informed and responsible citizens. More specifically, it aims to prepare them for life as citizens of a democracy. Democracies depend upon citizens who, among other things, are: aware of their rights and responsibilities as citizens, informed about the social and political world, concerned about the welfare of others, articulate in their opinions and arguments, capable of having an influence on the world, active in their communities, responsible in how they act as citizens.

In the Sixth Form this section of the curriculum is achieved through five separate Strands, delivered through the expertise of the Sixth Form tutors.

Strands are:

- ENRICHMENT - a series of presentations made by tutors to their and other tutor groups
- INSIGHT – 5-7 minute presentations made by tutees to their tutor group
- Citizenship CORE TOPICS - as defined by examination boards and QCA
- PASSPORT essential information for all Sixth Formers
- HEALTH EDUCATION – delivered by PCT nurses

COLOURS

1. GENERAL

- a) Colours may be awarded for participation in the following school activities: CCF, chess, cricket, cross country, debating, drama, hockey, life saving, music, netball, rugby, Scouts, swimming and tennis.
- b) Colours are awarded only to Sixth Form students and will not be awarded to Lower Sixth students before the end of the Spring Term. Participation below the Sixth Form, if at the appropriate level, will be taken into consideration.
- c) There are two levels of award: Full Colours and Half Colours. It is not necessary to hold Half Colours before being awarded Full Colours.

2. GENERAL CRITERIA FOR AWARD

- a) For the award of **Full Colours** the following three criteria must all be met: excellence, commitment and good ambassadorship.
- b) **Excellence** will normally mean that the student is one of the best members of a sports first team (or of the cast / music ensemble etc), perhaps with at least County representation.
- c) **Commitment** will be demonstrated by regular attendance at practices / rehearsals / parades as well as at matches / events.
- d) **Good ambassadorship** will be demonstrated by the student's general attitude to school life as well as by their approach to the activity in question. Students must have a good school disciplinary record and display a positive and cooperative approach to school life. In relation to the activity in question students must display good sportsmanship towards opponents and officials, a supportive attitude towards less talented participants in the activity, a positive and helpful attitude towards staff running the activity, and must help with training / rehearsals.
- e) For the award of **Half Colours** the commitment and good ambassadorship, but not the excellence, requirements must be met.