



Trinity School

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General Guide To Trinity Sixth Form Centre

2013



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Dear Students and Parents/Carers

Inside this booklet there is some general information about day-to-day life in Sixth Form. You will find information about:

- Our pastoral system
- Extra curricular activities
- Service and leadership and community involvement
- Communication with parents/carers
- Our Three Stage Response Process to poor attendance, punctuality and a poor approach to learning
- A guide to our Pathways system
- Compulsory elements of the Sixth Form curriculum

Whether you are currently a student of Trinity School or considering joining us from elsewhere, I hope that you will look through this guide to the Sixth Form and find opportunities that are right for you. Please contact us if you would like any further information and we will be happy to help.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Runciman
Assistant Headteacher (Sixth Form)

Sixth Form Life

The Pastoral System

Each student belongs to a tutor group of about 20-25 students. Form Tutors work with each student individually to support their learning and monitor progress by having regular Mentoring Interviews and mentoring sessions. Each year group is supported by a Student Manager, who is responsible for overseeing this process.

Every term, students will have two timetabled appointments with their tutor in order to discuss their progress, work rate, progression plans and any other matters which may be relevant to their study in the Sixth Form. The interviews are a very useful part of our pastoral programme, and through these we are often able to identify ways in which we can support our students.

Tutorial time is compulsory for all students, and is used for group work on careers, university applications, personal and health education, charity fundraising and a range of other activities. Outside speakers on a variety of topics are also invited into school and assemblies are held each week.

As young adults, Sixth Form students need to be given the chance to take more responsibility for their learning. At the same time, we recognise that the transition to independence is not an easy one and therefore, we provide clear guidance about our expectations of behaviour, study habits and attendance. These expectations are laid out in our 'Requirements for Success' contract which is given to all students on the first day of term in September. In this way, Trinity Sixth Form Centre is an ideal environment to prepare for the transition from school to university or work.

Extra Curricular Activities

We encourage all of our students to get involved in our great choice of extra-curricular activities in the Sixth Form. There is an outstanding range of choices:

- A very lively **Performing Arts Theatre Company** which stages many different kinds of public performances each year. Music varies from 'Stars in Their Eyes' to orchestral and solo performances at Carlisle Cathedral. Drama productions range from classical productions to the more contemporary, and also musical theatre productions.
- Many **successful sports teams**
- An active **Student Council** and **Leadership Team** which meets regularly and is directly involved in making important decisions about life in the Sixth Form.
- A **Debating Society** which competes against other schools in local and national competitions.
- Bi-annual trip to the European Parliament in Brussels, combined with a student conference ('Your Future in Europe') in Paris.
- An annual **Art department trip** to a major European city

Service and Leadership and Community Involvement

We require each student in Sixth Form to fulfil a role in the service and leadership of the school and/or the community. There are many different ways in which a student can contribute, such as working for a charity, helping run a lunchtime club for younger students, supporting younger students through paired reading, lesson assistance or helping to run a homework club. These opportunities provide valuable experiences which can enhance a student's CV, broaden ambitions and help increase confidence and the skills of leadership and organisation.

More details about the different ways in which Service and Leadership can be achieved will be provided by Form Tutors, but each type of participation needs to be recorded and verified in the table provided in the Student Planner.

Communication with Parents/Carers

- **Reports:** Sixth Form students receive **one detailed written report per year**. In addition, an **Interim Report** is issued in November of the Autumn Term. Interim Reports identify each student's target grade, which is based on past performance, an expected grade which is based on current performance and an approach to learning for the current session.
- **Parents' Evening:** For Year 12 students, this is usually held in the Autumn Term. Further information will be given to students by letter nearer the time.
- **Other Matters:** We know that student achievement is maximised when they are well supported both in and out of school. For that reason, we aim to communicate home frequently when there are

things to celebrate and areas of concern. Every student in the Sixth Form is allocated non teaching student manager who you can contact if you have any concerns or queries.

Three Stage Response Process

The **THREE STAGE RESPONSE** to poor attendance, punctuality and a poor approach to learning is used to support and guide students whose approach is below our expectations in terms of attendance, punctuality and work rate.

STAGE ONE: Where absences are not authorised and Heads of Department or Form Tutors report either an attendance rate that falls below 90% during a full school month, or where tutors express concern about a poor approach to learning and work rate, then you will receive a **Stage One formal letter**. This letter will require you to attend a meeting with your Student Manager and/or your Form Tutor, to discuss the causes and consequences of your poor attendance or work rate. Agreements will be made about how you can remedy matters and how we can help you. For example, we may arrange for you to see our Careers Adviser, or to meet on a weekly basis with your Student Manager to monitor progress.

STAGE TWO: If poor attendance and/or poor approach and work rate continues, then you will receive a **Stage Two formal letter** requiring you to attend a panel interview with your Student Manager and Mrs Medley (Assistant Head of Sixth Form), and your parents/carers. Here, we will consider why no progress has been made and what further may be done to support your attendance and learning in Trinity Sixth Form. We may, for example, require that you register regularly with a Student Manager or that you undertake Supervised Study sessions in Carlilol Library.

STAGE THREE: If you receive a **Stage Three formal letter** about poor attendance and/or poor approach and work rate, then we will hold a third meeting to consider whether remaining in Trinity Sixth Form is in your best interests and your place may be withdrawn.

Copies of all letters will be kept on file and may be used when writing references.

Choosing your Pathway: Useful Information

In addition to the notes below, you should also refer to the A3 'Pathways to Success in Sixth Form At a Glance' document, which explains our Pathways approach.

Entry Requirements for Sixth Form

In order to study AS and A level subjects, there is a general requirement that students have 5 A*- C grades at GCSE, including Maths and English Language. In addition to this, we expect to see evidence of a positive approach to learning at GCSE.

What are AS, A Level and Vocational Courses?

- An AS (Advanced Subsidiary) course is worth 50% of an A level. It is usually studied in one year and consists of two assessed modules of work.
- The AS course can be completed and certified after one year.
- Students ordinarily continue with most of their AS levels through to the full A level, although usually, one AS subject is dropped at the end of Year 12, once results have been published.
- An A level is the remaining 50% of the assessment which combines with the AS marks.
- A vocational A level can be taken in the following combination:
 - 3 unit award = one AS (a one year course)
 - 6 unit award = one full A level (over two years)
 - 12 unit award = two full A levels (over two years)
- Vocational A levels are graded exactly the same as A levels, i.e. A, B, C, D, E and are worth the same point score at university.

What is a Level 3 BTEC Course?

A Level 3 BTEC course is a vocational course which is equivalent to a full A level qualification. BTEC's are a particular type of work-related qualification, available in a wide range of subjects. They have been designed in collaboration with industry, so they can equip students with the skills and knowledge that employers are looking for. The qualifications offer a mix of theory and practice, and can also include an element of work experience.

Year 12 Programme of Study

Year 12 students on the Challenge or Advanced pathways will study four AS subjects or equivalent, and then drop down to three subjects at A2, at the end of Year 12 once results have been published. There may be individual exceptions to this, for health reasons. **If a student is on the Specialist pathway, they will study two or three subjects plus a specialist qualification (e.g Sports Leadership award) and/or a resit. Specialist pathway students will also complete a work placement as part of their studies.**

Optional Elements

GCSE re-sits in English Language and Maths will be available to those students who have narrowly missed their GCSE grades at C. These subjects tend to be regarded as a passport for most careers, and we require students to take a re-sit if necessary. A twilight session may run, however, it will not make up one of the four elements in a full programme of study.

The **Extended Project** is an optional additional choice for Sixth Form students, usually completed in the period between the end of Year 12 exams in the summer, and mid October of Year 13. A number of lessons are taught to prepare for this, but otherwise students complete their project in their own time. This qualification is valuable for a number of reasons:

- It is described as half an A level, and students can receive up to 70 UCAS (university) points for an A*.
- It provides an opportunity for students to do something entirely of their own choice. Examples of the kind of work done by previous students include, making a film; building an amplifier; writing an extended essay on 'What is Infinity from a Mathematical Perspective?'; designing and making a red carpet dress; writing a piece of music in a particular style and then performing it to an audience; analysing the history of prosthetics and investigating their future in engineering terms. It is fair to say that all of the students who have completed the Project have enjoyed the task because, within certain broad guidelines, it is entirely under their own

control, and although it is a big challenge and the standards are high, it ultimately gives a great sense of achievement.

- Most universities, including Oxbridge, value the Extended Project because it reflects very well on the ability of students to be independent thinkers who are able to work autonomously to achieve goals. This is great preparation for university study.
- The Extended Project is also useful for students, whether applying to university or going straight into employment, as they can take their work along to discuss at interview where relevant.

Students will be given more information about this option in Year 12.

D of E (formerly the Duke of Edinburgh Award): Trinity School has an extensive and well established D of E unit, with over 80 students participating each year at Bronze and Gold levels. Foot expeditions are offered at both levels whilst Gold candidates are also given the opportunity to complete a canoe expedition should they prefer. A number of staff and friends work hard to train, supervise and sustain the Award at Trinity, particularly the expedition section. Mrs Barker, Dr. Barker and Mrs Ledingham are the key people to contact in school with Mr Wright giving up a large amount of his retired time to train the canoeists! The Award offers students an outstanding opportunity to discover themselves, to make new friends and experience adventure, as well as giving service to others, providing they are genuinely committed and up to the challenge. The Gold level is a highly recognised award by both employers and universities, and could be the factor that sets you apart in your job or university application. Participating can not only be extremely fulfilling but a lot of fun too. For further information, please contact Mrs G Barker or Dr I Barker.

If you would like further information about the Pathways system or the courses on offer in the Sixth Form, you are very welcome to contact us at the Sixth Form Centre.

Making Subject Choices and Changing Choices

Students make their subject choices during the Spring and Summer Terms in Year 11. We hold Induction Days for applicants, which provide the opportunity for students to meet their Form Tutor and tutor group and have introductory lessons in their chosen subjects. These subject choices are then finalised after the GCSE results are released in August; students whose results are significantly different from their predicted GCSE grades should attend the Advice Clinic in the Sixth Form Centre, which is open on and after GCSE Results Day. At this time, it is important to discuss and agree any changes with an advisor. Once the Autumn Term starts, most students are settled with their course choices.

Sometimes, in the first few weeks of Year 12, students find that they are not happy with their choices and wish to consider different options. In these circumstances there is a process to go through, and students need to talk to either their subject teachers, their Form Tutor, Student Managers or Mrs Medley or Mr Runciman. We think it is important that students are happy with their choices and will work with them to resolve their concerns. If a course change is agreed, students must complete a Course Change Form and parents/carers will be informed of the change.

By the beginning of October however, we expect all course changes in Year 12 to be completed. By this time, it is very difficult to catch up all the work missed in the first two months of term.

Course Clashes

We do all we can to try and fit in all the options chosen by students, so that there are no clashes in the timetable. However, occasionally the choices made may clash and it is impossible to fit in all the choices. This can result in disappointment for students who are unable to study all the subjects they had set their heart on at the beginning of the application process. Sometimes, it is possible to look at nearby institutions to see if the clash can be resolved by studying a subject at a different school. We usually manage to resolve matters satisfactorily.

Course Viability

It is very important that we make all prospective students aware that some of the courses listed in this Course Guide may not run if an insufficient number of students opt for them. A final decision on course viability is usually made in September (2013).

Transition From AS to A2

At the end of Year 12 after the Year AS results are released, students may drop down from four to three subjects to carry through to A2. We cannot always guarantee that students will be taught by the same teacher at A2 as they were taught by at AS, although we do what we can to ensure consistency. On occasions it is useful to bring in new teachers with particular expertise. It is also necessary to review group sizes following transition from Year 12 to Year 13.