



sixth form guide

Information for Students and Parents

This guide is designed to give you an overview of what to expect as a Sixth Form student or parent. You will find that Sixth Form students are given more freedom, but there are a few rules and procedures that are essential in order for everyone's time at Maplesden Sixth Form to be a success. We ask that you familiarise yourself with this guide and respect the procedures outlined.

Attendance and Punctuality

Sixth Form students must attend **ALL** timetabled lessons on time. The subject teachers will record attendance to every lesson using the school's electronic system and any absence will be reported directly to the Sixth Form Academic Manager and discussed with Heads of Departments, Sixth Form Mentors and/or the Head of Year. There is a very clear link between high levels of attendance and high levels of attainment. Please note, any student who allows their lesson attendance to fall below 80% is likely to be allocated Supervised Study and risks losing their place at Maplesden Sixth Form.

All students **must** attend school from **9am**—they will either be registered by their subject teacher in lesson 1 or by signing the register with the Sixth Form Academic Manager if they do not have a class first thing.

They must attend from **8.30am** when there is a Sixth Form/Year Group assembly. Once again, if students fail to attend Assembly regularly, they may be asked to stay after 3.10pm on a subsequent day.

If students do not have lessons during the afternoon then they may leave: Year 12 at or after 2pm; Year 13 at or after 1:20pm

Any student leaving school before 3:10 must sign-out in the Study Area.

It is ultimately each student's responsibility to ensure they maintain good levels of attendance to their lessons and their place at Maplesden Sixth Form will be at risk if they fail to do this.

Absence

While we expect full attendance, we appreciate there may be occasions when students are not able to attend school. In these instances, students or parents should inform the school by texting the Sixth Form Absence number listed below. They should inform the school of each day's absence before 9am to avoid being registered incorrectly.

If for similar reasons, students arrive late they must sign in with the Sixth Form Academic Manager and provide the reason for lateness. If a student needs to leave school early, it is essential they **SIGN OUT** with the Sixth Form Academic Manager in the Study Area. Sixth Form students may be asked to provide a note or explanation for their absence, especially if their attendance and/or punctuality have been flagged as an issue. Medical appointments and driving lessons should be scheduled outside of lesson times.

The school day starts at 9am and finishes with Lesson 5 ending at 3:10pm (although there are some rare occasions when students are allocated a lesson 6).

Sixth Form Absence Number: Text 07860 025 457 Phone: 01622 656297

Mentoring

All students in Sixth Form will be allocated to a Mentor group; this group will not meet often as a whole but each individual student will arrange a time to meet with their Mentor (a member of the school's teaching staff). This Mentor will usually be a teacher of a subject which the student is studying in order to maintain some links between academic and pastoral support.

Mentor meetings will be arranged in agreement between the student and Mentor; they will occur every two to three weeks, lasting about 10 minutes in duration. They will be held at an agreed time between 8.30-9am on a suitable, pre-arranged day .

Sixth Form students do not need to attend afternoon registration. However, if they leave school before 3:10pm they must sign out in the Sixth Form Study Area.

Study Sessions – ‘A Privilege, Not a Right’

Students are allocated ‘study sessions’ on their timetable when they are not scheduled for a specific lesson. These sessions should not be viewed as free lessons or ‘frees’.

In the first term (September through to half-term in October) students will have the freedom to choose whether to attend study sessions in the Sixth Form Study Area or work elsewhere in school. In the first term Sixth Form teachers will produce a report on the academic progress of each student. If after the first term a student's report indicates they are ‘on-track’ and up-to-date in ALL of their subjects, they will have earned the *privilege* to continue to decide for themselves if they need to attend ‘supervised study sessions’ in the Sixth Form Study Area. **However, if a student is underachieving in their subjects or if their attendance/work ethic has been flagged as an issue, their attendance to supervised study sessions in the Sixth Form Study Area will be compulsory.** They will need to attend study sessions in the Sixth Form Study Area until they are back on-track or their attitude/attendance improves.

Dress Code

Sixth Form students at Maplesden do not have a formal uniform and enjoy a more relaxed dress code than students in younger years. Nevertheless, it is still very important that students dress appropriately and while they are **not expected to dress in smart office wear, they must still look 'smart'**. The general guidance for Sixth Form dress is that it is comfortable and appropriate in a safe working environment. Sixth Form students should use this guide when choosing what to wear:

- *Footwear should be appropriate for the lesson. Open shoes are not suitable and for health and safety reasons flip-flops are not allowed. High heeled shoes are not appropriate.*
- *Words or images on clothing should not be offensive or inappropriate. Any clothes with references to bad language, sex or drugs should not be worn.*
- *Facial piercings are allowed in principle, but should be discreet and not pose a health risk.*
- *Extremes of hair style are not allowed, including dying hair to an extreme colour.*
- *Jeans and other denim items may be worn, but these should be smart with no holes, rips or fraying.*
- *No leggings or jeggings should be worn without a dress, long top or skirt at a reasonable length.*
- *For girls: midriffs should be covered. Modesty should be considered at all times. Skirts should be of an appropriate length. In warmer weather tailored shorts or three quarter length trousers may be worn. Shorts that are of a short length or hot pants are not appropriate.*
- *For boys: trousers should be full length. In warmer weather, students may wear shorts, however, casual beach/surf shorts are not permitted.*
- *Sportswear is not appropriate. Students should not dress in tracksuits, jogging bottoms or sports shorts or football tops, etc. (Students accessing practical sports courses will need to bring a change of clothes). However, students accessing the Soccer Elite Football Academy may wear their Soccer Elite kit in school.*
- *Combat or cargo shorts or trousers are not permitted.*
- *Hats or hoods are not to be worn in lessons.*

There will be occasions when Sixth Form students are asked to dress in smart business style dress, such as Open Evenings or the Business challenge. Dress on these occasions would include smart shoes and a shirt and tie for boys.

If Sixth Form students come to school wearing clothes that are inappropriate in any way they will be sent home to change. The Head of Sixth Form and Heads of Year 12 and 13 will make the final decision on appropriate clothing.

The Sixth Form Area:

Sixth Form students at Maplesden are fortunate to have a range of facilities including their own study room and dining area. All students are expected to use the facilities sensibly.

Anyone found misusing the Sixth Form area will be subject to disciplinary procedures and in the case of willful destruction/vandalism, will be liable for the cost of repairs.

Study Area

We have three interconnecting study rooms for sole use by Sixth Form students. This area is to be used for quiet, independent study outside of timetabled lessons. There are plenty of computer stations for students to complete work. Eating and drinking in this area is strictly prohibited. The area is supervised by the Sixth Form Academic Manager. Any student misusing this area will be asked to leave and their privileges reviewed.

The Forum

The Forum is the Sixth Form Dining area. They can purchase snacks and drinks in addition to the main school restaurant. We expect all students to clear up after themselves and keep this area clean and tidy.

Assembly

Sixth Form students have assemblies at 8:30 AM regularly and attendance to assembly is compulsory. Some Year 12 or 13 assemblies will be held in the forum (depending on the size of the year group) Whole Sixth Form assemblies are held in the school hall.

Holidays

Students should not be taking holidays during term time and this practice is strongly discouraged. This also applies to students in Year 12 during the Summer Term when students will be starting the second year of their A Levels and partaking in the Business Challenge (End of June-mid July).

The Mentoring system

In the Sixth Form students will be members of a Mentor group with students from Years 12 and 13. The Mentor is responsible for monitoring each student's progress, attitude, attendance and punctuality and they will discuss these issues during the individual Mentor meetings.

Mentors are also there to help students with any aspect of Sixth Form life. Furthermore, when the time comes to consider career choices or applications, the Mentor will write a reference for the student.

Sixth Form Committee

Each year, the Sixth Form has a committee of students who have an input on the day-to-day running of Sixth Form, as well as organizing events and activities. Representing your Sixth Form as a member of the Committee—perhaps as Head Boy or Head Girl - is a real privilege and is certainly something employers, universities and colleges value in a CV/Personal Statement.

The School and Sixth Form as a whole will be represented by one Head Boy and one Head Girl ; one Deputy Head Boy and one Deputy Head Girl; a team of Social Chairs and Committee members, all from Year 13: Committee students must be exemplary Sixth Form students.

Typical tasks that a Year 13 Committee may be involved in are: Public speaking at functions and open evenings, greeting visitors, parents and prospective students, giving such visitors a tour of the school, contributing to the School Newsletter, attending the school's Student Council meetings and organizing the Sixth Form Prom.

Monitoring / Reports

We regularly track progress across all subjects and students/parents will be provided with reports over the course of the academic year. Mentors will discuss issues raised from the reports and students may be given subject specific Action Plans or Contracts if they are underachieving. We will also put students on 'Supervised Study' if we feel they need directed study sessions in order to complete missed or incomplete work.

Enrichment

As well as a range of enrichment tasks, discussions and activities, Year 12 students will also be involved in a project called 'The Business Challenge'. This has been a highly successful project over the years and allows students to get a real insight into the world of work, engaging in real-life scenarios and competing to win significant cash prizes. Students can also choose to complete the Extended Project which is an invaluable qualification, highly regarded by Universities and adding UCAS points to students for future applications/employment.

The Committee will organize various Charity events and volunteering opportunities to further offer the chance of enrichment in the Sixth Form.

Changing /Dropping Subjects

During the first two weeks of term students can make a request to their Head of Year to make changes to their options, however, this should be discouraged. It will be expected that students have spoken to the Subject teacher and parents about any problems and before requesting a change. After the first four weeks of term, requests to drop or change subjects will not be considered.

Exams

Entries for exams are dependent on the students meeting course criteria. Any student who has failed to meet coursework deadlines, or is behind with work, may have their exam entry withdrawn. Equally, if attendance is unsatisfactory, students may be withdrawn and/or will be expected to pay for their exam entries. For re-sits, the school will finance the first re-sit attempt, providing the Head of Department is in agreement. If further re-sits are required, students will need to pay for these.

Progression

Progression from Year 12 into Year 13 is not automatic. Students who are not achieving above a pass grade by the end of Year 12 may not be accepted on to the Year 13 course. Likewise, if a student's attendance has remained a concern over the course of the year, they will not be offered a Year 13 place. However, there may be exceptional circumstances affecting performance/attendance and we will consider each case individually.

Students wishing to complete a further year at Sixth Form must discuss this with the Head of Sixth Form during the year. However, we do not offer a Year 13 re-sit year.

Sixth Form Text Service

To help us communicate with sixth form students effectively we use a text service. Students must ensure the Sixth Form Administrator has the most up to date mobile numbers for students.—please note, we are in the process of introducing a new Sixth Form App/Messaging system and information about this will be released shortly.

Disciplinary Measures

Sixth Form students continue to maintain exemplary behavior and this must continue to be the case. However, there may be occasions when personal conduct or behaviour needs to be challenged. In these instances parents will be contacted. In serious cases, students may be required to enter a formal contractual agreement or asked to leave the Sixth Form. If a contract is issued and then is subsequently broken, this is taken as an indication the student no longer wishes to be a member of Maplesden Sixth Form and they will lose their place in the Sixth Form.

Parent Consultation Evenings

Just like students in all years, it is very important that Sixth Form students and parents make every effort to attend Parent Consultation Evening which is usually held in January or February. These evenings provide the perfect opportunity to review each student's progress and identify any issues or problems that may be a barrier to them achieving their potential.

Parking / Smoking

Unfortunately there are no parking facilities available to Sixth Form students on the school site. Maplesden is also a non-smoking site. Sixth Form students must not smoke on site or anywhere near the school gate.

Part-Time Work / Driving Lessons and Other Commitments

For a number of valid reasons, students may choose to obtain Part-Time work while attending Sixth Form. This does not normally cause problems, however if a student takes on too much part-time work (perhaps due to pressure from their employer) this can have a significant, negative impact in a student's progress and enjoyment at Sixth Form. For this reason, we recommend students do not take on more than 12 hours of part-time work a week.

Students should not be taking driving lessons during lesson time.

Careers and Guidance

Maplesden has a full time Careers and Higher Education Officer, Mrs Mortley. Sixth Form students can drop in for quick questions or book an appointment via the Sixth Form Administrator. Throughout Years 12 and 13 a range of sessions are organized to support students and parents on Post-18 options as well as UCAS and Student Finance for college/university entry. All Year 13 students will be able to book an individual careers guidance interview to help with progression plans.

The Sixth Form Team

Head of Sixth Form: Mr Tom Newcombe

Head of Year 13 and IB Coordinator: Miss Rebecca Moody

Head of Year 12: Mr Stewart Wade

Sixth Form Student Academic Manager: Mrs Beth Griffin

Sixth Form Administrator: Mrs Lorna Tansill

School Address: Buckland Road, Great Buckland, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 0TJ

Sixth Form Number: 01622 656297

Sixth Form Absence Number: 07860 025 457 (text only)

School Reception Telephone Number: 01622 759036

School Email: sixthform@maplesden.kent.sch.uk

Website: www.maplesden.kent.sch.uk/sixth-form