



Sixth Form

**Sir Thomas Fremantle School
Sixth Form Handbook**

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Please read the enclosed information carefully!

1. Expectations

When they join our Sixth Form, students should understand that they are joining **a community which aims to allow each of its members to reach their full potential**. As a key part of Sir Thomas Fremantle School, the Sixth Form has a significant role to play within the school, both **by setting an example for younger students** and by **taking on responsibilities within the school community**.

Sixth Form students are expected to **take responsibility for their own learning**, to work alongside staff and to **continually demonstrate their commitment to learning**.

2. Aims

We recognise that the next two years have the potential to influence the pathway a student decides to follow, whether it is university, employment or a gap year. We also have to take into account that access to these pathways is becoming increasingly difficult given the level of competition that is out there.

With this in mind, we aim to **give our students the edge they need** by providing a range of opportunities and experiences that will ultimately create well-rounded individuals.

The aims of the Sixth Form will be reinforced through three main strands. We believe that if students give themselves fully to each area, they will grow into **well-rounded, well-educated, multi-talented and mature individuals who will truly stand out from the crowd**.

✓ Academic

We will support **a culture of high academic standards and expectations**. Whatever qualifications you choose to take we will encourage you to strive for success that you can be proud of. We will encourage **a culture where academic effort and aspiration is a virtue**, where those who strive to achieve will be recognised and rewarded for their efforts.

✓ Community

The concepts of **making a difference** and **giving back to the community** are fundamental elements of Sixth Form life. Students will be expected to contribute both in school and in the wider community.

✓ Enrichment

There is no disputing that **life in the Sixth Form will be challenging, yet exciting**. If you are joining from STFS, you will already know the benefits of the enrichment opportunities on offer; if you're joining us from another school then you'll learn that **enrichment allows students to develop their interests and skills through a wide variety of clubs, leadership opportunities and other events**. The **Senior Student Leadership Team (SSLT)** will play an instrumental role in many events, both formal and social, throughout the year. Enrichment opportunities give students the chance to **stand out from the crowd** when applying to higher education or employment.

3. Life in the Sixth Form

Work must come first. Students enter the Sixth Form with the purpose of completing a programme of study and their first priority must be to complete this work successfully.

Any course undertaken in the Sixth Form represents a step up from studying in Year 11. **All courses require the same amount of time spent outside of the lesson, as they do inside of the lesson.** We expect you to spend a minimum of five hours on extra study outside of lessons, per subject.

If you are following a 3 A Level programme you will have 16 study lessons a week. This is because you have 5 lessons per A Level plus your core curriculum lesson.

Students will receive some **independent study time**. This is a time when there are no timetabled lessons. All Sixth Form students will be set clear independent study time in which you will be expected to study privately. Attendance (and work completion) will be monitored, though we would stress that the most obvious way of monitoring this will be through your work in lessons: an organised approach to independent learning will always be visible to your tutors and will lead to significant increases in overall attainment.



THE SCHOOL DAY

	START	FINISH
Breakfast club	07:30	08:30
Tutor time	08:35	08:55
Period 1	08:55	09:50
Period 2	09:50	10:45
BREAK	10:45	11:05
Period 3	11:05	12:00
Period 4	12:00	12:55
LUNCH	12:55	13:40
Period 5	13:40	14:35
Period 6	14:35	15:30
ENRICHMENT	15:30	16:30

There is a direct correlation between attendance and progress on courses. At STFS we monitor this closely in order to help each student attain their goals. **Attendance at all timetabled lessons, including mentor time, Core Curriculum, assemblies and enrichment days is compulsory.**

Attendance figures are recorded electronically on each student's file and may be referred to when reference requests are made by future employers or educational institutions. Absenteeism, poor punctuality and truancy will be followed up. In the case of illness, we expect you or your parents/carers to contact the school by 8.30 am on each day of absence.

We understand that during the year, students may need to visit universities and institutions for open days and/or interviews. Please notify your tutor and teachers in advance and make sure you pick up any set work beforehand. **Students will be authorised to make up to three university visits. Students should not arrange any inappropriate engagements in school time**, such as driving lessons, hair cuts, dental appointments or medical appointments.

4. Your Studies

Your main priority is your studies: this means **attending, participating and being appropriately prepared in all your lessons, completing homework assignments, pursuing independent study and revision, using study periods wisely, meeting coursework deadlines, and revising for exams.**

We expect you to actively contribute to your own success. A guiding principle of the STFS Sixth Form experience is that we will help you grow into an **independent and capable** adult who is **fully prepared for the next stage in life**. Managing your workload and completing all work to the very best of your ability is central to this.

Successful Sixth Form students will:

- ✓ **Be well prepared for class** (*this means going over material from the previous lesson the night before, knowing what needs to be known, and feeling confident with skills that have been taught, being one step ahead in reading resources provided*)
- ✓ **Participate actively in lessons** (*ask questions, volunteer answers, listen to what others have to say, contribute to debates*)
- ✓ **Take good notes** (*be well organised by headings and subheadings according to the course syllabus, with enough detail to make sense when revising many months later*).
- ✓ **Have well organised folders** (*including your own notes and handouts from teachers*)
- ✓ **Use a diary to plan work and keep to deadlines.**
- ✓ **Have a copy of the course/exam syllabus** (*kept in the front of the subject folder*), **know what needs to be covered and check-off topics as they are completed in class**
- ✓ **Do five hours of independent study for each subject each week**
- ✓ **Use study time constructively** (*know which work you need to do each time you are in the Sixth Form study area and stay focused so you achieve it*) **and use the Sixth Form study area beyond the required hours for additional independent study**
- ✓ **Complete homework assignments properly and on time** (*having a clear schedule for work at home which isn't abandoned at the slightest social invitation or TV programme*)
- ✓ **Meet coursework deadlines** (*both interim and final - do not let a backlog of work build up*)
- ✓ **Revise for tests and exams** (*knowing when they are and planning a proper revision schedule, creating revision cards or notes, obtaining and attempting past paper questions, specifically seeking the teacher's help with areas of weakness, attending optional revision sessions*)

- ✓ **Take an interest in your chosen subjects** (*in practice this means reading a book or two or following up some topics out of interest – this is particularly important when it comes to writing your UCAS personal statement*)
- ✓ **Know your target grades and understand what you need to do to achieve them** (*make sure you have the grade criteria*) and regularly review how you are doing. You will be set target grades. Your teachers and mentor will help you by explaining what you need to do to achieve your target grades. However, in the end only you can do the work. If you need extra help, ask. You must take responsibility for your studies and for your academic progress.

In the Sixth Form you are expected to be **independent, self-motivated and to organise your own time**. However, we recognise that the transition from GCSE is not an easy one and you must not be afraid to ask for help.

5. Equipment

You are expected to supply your own folders, paper, plastic wallets and file dividers and maintain your folders on a weekly basis. There will be subject-specific equipment requirements but all Sixth Form students must ensure that they have all of the above, in addition to a supply of pens, pencils, rulers, etc.

Progressive technology is at the heart of what makes STFS special. At Sixth Form level we operate a **bring your own device system***, which will enable students to work with our ‘Google Classroom’ IT system, which facilitates a whole range of innovative educational benefits. Any device is permitted providing it has a full keyboard – e.g. iPad with peripheral keyboard or laptop, but *not* a Kindle or phone.

(*If supplying your own device is not financially viable for you, please speak to Mr. Pike in confidence.)

6. Uniform

At Sir Thomas Fremantle School, students are expected to wear ‘**smart dress**’. We have modified standard uniform to take into account the seniority of our Sixth Form students, but we expect nonetheless adherence to a **clear dress code**, which consists of:

Girls:

Blazer – choice of blue, black or grey
 Shirt or blouse
 Tailored skirt, trousers or dress

Boys:

Blazer – choice of blue, black, grey or beige
 Shirt and STFS school tie
 Tailored trousers or chinos

7. Mentor support (personal mentor)

Regular mentor time is very important to your development and success in the Sixth Form. Alongside registration time, your mentor will arrange regular interviews with you that allow you to discuss your progress in a mature and supportive environment.

Your personal mentor will be responsible for **supporting and guiding you during your time in the Sixth Form** and beyond into higher/further education or the workplace. Your mentor is the person who has direct responsibility for your welfare and progress. She or he will help you settle into the Sixth Form,

discuss your academic progress with you, write your reference when you apply for a job or for a course in higher education and generally encourage you to make the most of school life.

8. Progress Reporting

We use a system of 'yellow sheet' marking which ensures that students receive **detailed feedback in each subject at least twice per half term**. We believe that our feedback forms give far more detail than a rather bland and relatively meaningless grade without further explanation. Whilst we currently still use grades for some half term tests, we are increasingly moving away from them so you will note that your child's folder will contain a pack of yellow feedback sheets for each subject to enable both students and parents/carers to **monitor progress throughout the year**.

9. Parents' evenings

In addition to the informal communication which takes place throughout the year, your parents/carers will be invited to a **Meet the Tutor Evening** early in the autumn term, and then a formal **Parents' Evening** during the spring term, at which there will be an opportunity to meet with subject teachers and discuss your progress in more detail.

Parents/carers can be invited in throughout the year as needed, and we would encourage them to contact the school promptly to raise any concerns they may have.

10. Attendance & Punctuality

We want each of our students to reach their full potential. **Each student is therefore expected to achieve at least 95% attendance**, with authorised absence (e.g. illness, medical appointments which cannot be arranged out of school hours) kept to a minimum.

It should be noted that a relatively low absence rate of 5% would still result in a student on a three A Level programme losing around 30 hours of valuable teaching time. **We therefore expect students to demonstrate how seriously they are taking their studies by maintaining excellent levels of attendance and punctuality.**

Both attendance and punctuality are recorded at morning and afternoon registration and at each lesson throughout the day. These may be reported to parents/carers where appropriate.

Your place in Sixth Form may be jeopardised if your attendance and punctuality do not, at the very least, meet the expected standards.

Students must attend all lessons and other Sixth Form events unless an acceptable reason is provided. Reasons for absence must be given in advance if at all possible, and at the very least by 9.00am on the morning of each day of absence.

11. Disciplinary Procedure

High standards of behaviour and dress are expected at all times both during the school day and whilst travelling between home and school and while representing the school, or taking part in trips and visits. The Sixth Form will follow the Sir Thomas Fremantle School *Climate for Learning (Behaviour) Policy* and the consequences associated with poor behaviour. Sixth Formers will be subject to the following disciplinary procedure:

Stage 1: Verbal warning from subject teacher or tutor. This will trigger a 'subject report' and the subject teacher concerned (or tutor if not subject-related) will contact home. A subject-specific report card may be issued if appropriate, or targets may be set relating to conduct within the Sixth Form as a whole. You will be given a two week review period during which you will be expected to improve in the areas of concern identified. This will be recorded on file & the Sixth Form Leadership Team will be notified.

Stage 2: If you fail to improve after the subject report stage (above) or trigger repeated subject reports, further action is then required. You and your parents/carers will receive **a letter from the Director of Studies or Head of Sixth Form outlining the misconduct and the requirement for improvement.** This will be divided into three warning stages, with a time-frame of no less than two weeks agreed for each stage and a report card issued for all subjects. This report card must be signed by subject teachers and tutors to indicate compliance or highlight concerns. If issues are resolved, then no further action will be taken.

Stage 3: Continued non-compliance will result in a **meeting with parents/carers, a Director of Studies and the Head of Sixth Form** to discuss issues of non-compliance and failure to meet the required standard. A final two week warning will be issued.

Stage 4: Following consultation and a review panel with the Headmaster, **the student will be asked to leave the Sixth Form.**

12. Rewards

We will make extra efforts to **celebrate the achievements of students**, both in terms of their effort, their contribution to the community and their academic achievement.

We will hold a Sixth Form Awards Evening and the Senior Student Leadership Team will be instrumental in planning social events to celebrate Sixth Form success across the year.

13. Opportunities and Enrichment

Now that you are the most senior students at Sir Thomas Fremantle School, you have a great opportunity to **make a significant contribution to our community.** Whether you realise it or not, you will be regarded as role models by younger students and you come with an enormous array of talents.

This is your chance to **exercise leadership** and to **give something back to the community** that has supported you until now. If you are new to, Sir Thomas Fremantle School we would welcome the opportunity to share the experiences you have gained elsewhere.

There are many different areas in which you can contribute. You can choose to apply to join the **Senior Students Leadership Team (SSLT).** You can become a **mentor to younger students**, supporting their learning in lessons and taking part in the mentoring programme where you can support less confident students. We also intend that alongside a unique enrichment offer for Sixth Form, there will be the expectation that you can **support enrichment activities for younger students** and **engage in community work.**

The best reasons for taking part in these sorts of activities are the benefits you will be bringing to others and the enjoyment and satisfaction you will gain yourself from taking part, but you will only reap the benefits if you become involved.

14. The Senior Student Leadership Team (SSLT)

The SSLT is an important part of Sir Thomas Fremantle School. They will be **involved with decision making about the direction of the Sixth Form** and will have **responsibility for organising a range of activities and functions** across the year. **Sixth Form leaders will report to the Governors** and bring issues of relevance or concern to the attention of the Governors as appropriate.

In the first year of STFS Sixth Form the SSLT members were chosen in January 2018, and will serve until the end of Year 13.

Students are invited to apply for a position on the SSLT and once an application has been made, students are interviewed by the Headmaster and Head of Sixth Form. Members of staff are also asked for comments on the students who have applied.

15. Progression into Year 13

Students must show **evidence of significant effort and engagement across Year 12** in order to ensure progression into the second year of the course in a particular subject. **Progression from Year 12 to Year 13 is not automatic**, but is based on performance across the year to that point.

Sir Thomas Fremantle School Sixth Form **does not** place undue importance on grades from end of year or AS examinations: **effort is what counts** and in making decisions about progression we will consult with teachers, mentors and with the Directors of Studies, looking at each student's attitude to learning, behaviour and attendance. **Students must demonstrate significant and consistent engagement with the expectations outlined in this document in order to ensure progression through to Year 13.**

Any decisions about progression into Year 13 will not come as a surprise. Students will be informed if they are causing concern to any subject teachers and we will at first focus on providing appropriate support and encouragement to make changes in study habits, or check that the programme of study meets your needs.

16. Study Leave

We do not have study leave in the Sixth Form because we believe that the best place for revision and improving grades is in the classroom with your subject teachers' support.

In Year 12, you will continue to attend all lessons until the end of the summer term.

In Year 13, you will continue to attend all lessons until the final examination for that particular subject has been taken, or until your Cambridge Technicals course has been signed off, which can be up to the first week in July.

17. Financial Support

The Sixth Form Bursary Fund is designed to support students who face financial barriers to them participating in education. The student bursary is used to fund the cost of transport, school books or equipment.

Students must meet set criteria in order to qualify for bursary support. If you think you may be eligible, please discuss this in confidence with Mr. Pike.

18. Useful Links

Higher Education

www.ucas.com – Info on HE courses
www.scit.wlv.ac.uk/uk – Info and maps all Universities
www.qca.org.uk – All about qualifications
www.educationguardian.co.uk – League Tables
www.opendays.com – Open Days
www.push.co.uk – Finding the right university
www.unistats.co.uk – Student opinions
www.thetimes.co.uk – League Tables

Finance/Student Life

www.nusonline.co.uk – National Union of Students
www.studentzone.org.uk – Student life
www.studentunion.co.uk – Student life
www.dfes.gov.uk/studentssupport – Financial Support
www.slc.co.uk – Student Loan Company
www.bu7nk.com – Student Accommodation

Employment/Careers

www.monster.co.uk – Vacancies
www.doctorjob.com
www.prospects.ac.uk – Graduate careers
www.realworkrealpay.info – Modern apprenticeships

Gap Year

www.bunac.org.uk – Gap year with BUNAC (USA)
www.yini.org.uk – Year in Industry
www.csv.org.uk – Volunteering opportunities
www.gapyear.com – Year out ideas
www.gap.org.uk – Planning a gap year
www.worldwidevolunteering.org.uk – Volunteering opportunities



Sixth Form

Student Agreement

I acknowledge that I have read and agree to abide by the expectations outlined in this document.

I understand that failure to comply with these expectations will damage my studies and may lead to my Sixth Form place at Sir Thomas Fremantle School being withdrawn.

Signature (student): _____

Date: _____

Signature (parent/carer): _____

Date: _____