



Welcome to
BCS Sixth
Form!



Buxton Community School Sixth Form

Firstly, congratulations on your achievements and welcome to BCS Sixth Form! We hope that your time with us will be a happy and successful one. The recipe for success at Sixth Form is simple; work hard, develop good study habits, listen carefully to and act upon advice and develop resilience to cope with setbacks. Hard work and determination really do pay and we can guarantee that students who make the most of the support that is offered in school reap the rewards.

Starting a new phase of your education and new courses is exciting but can also be daunting and we're sure you will have lots of questions. Hopefully this pack will provide you with some of the answers, but if not, please do not hesitate to contact me at: jackie.cruse@buxton.derbyshire.sch.uk and I will do my best to help.

On your first day (**Monday 8th September**) you'll need to come to the **Study Centre for 10:00 am** and bring with you: stationery (pen, notebook, laptop or tablet if you have one), some lunch or money for lunch, the completed biometrics and permissions forms enclosed in this pack, a winning smile and a positive attitude!

The Sixth Form Team

There are many staff here to help you in the Sixth Form:

Head of Sixth Form	Ms Jackie Cruse
Senior Learning Advisor	Mrs Becky Hall
Exams Officer	Mrs Heidi Bryan
School Counsellor	Mrs McDonald-Webb
School Business Manager	Mr Nick Bondeswell

Year 12 tutor team

Mr Gardner
Mrs Holman
Mr Jones
Mrs Pickford

Year 13 tutor team

Mr Buckley
Ms Carr
Mr Griffin
Mr Ward



There will be lots of new information for you to process and it is really important that you engage and respond to all methods of communication which will be delivered:

- Via email. You will be responsible for checking your email on a daily basis so make sure you sync your phone to Outlook 365
- During regular assemblies on Mondays or Tuesdays
- In tutor registration and Personal Development time
- On notice boards in the Sixth Form area

Tutor Programme

Your tutor will help you make the best use of your Sixth Form experience and you will enjoy developing a good working relationship with them. They are your main point of contact and are there to support you through your Sixth Form journey. During tutor time and personal development sessions, you will have the opportunity to discuss and explore a variety of important content including:

- Personal Development including physical health and mental wellbeing
- Applications to University and access to platforms such as Unifrog and UCAS
- Application support and guidance for apprenticeships
- Employment skills and application processes
- Student finance and financial planning for leaving home
- Revision techniques that work and exam preparation

Enrichment programme

Our enrichment programme runs alongside your academic qualifications and is intended to not only hone your study skills but also develop strength of character that will prepare you for your future in higher education, work or further training. It is important that you are able to develop your skills outside the classroom and we will set aside specific time for you to take part in a wide and interesting range of enrichment opportunities that may include:

- Duke of Edinburgh Bronze, Silver or Gold Award
- Sports participation
- First Aid certification



- Health & Wellbeing workshops
- Super curricular Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)
- Extended Project Qualification
- Befriending service
- Volunteering both in school and in the wider community
- Charity & Prom committees
- Young Women's group
- Virtual and real work experience



Attendance

There is a direct correlation between attendance and success and at Buxton Community School we expect 100% attendance and punctuality to ensure you reach your potential; this applies to all lessons, registration, assemblies and timetabled study periods. It is important that you sign in for study periods using Live Register otherwise this will be classed as an unauthorised absence. Please note that the school will not authorise holidays in term time.

Attendance %	Absence %	Days/weeks absent in a year
100	0	0 days off = Excellent! Everything needed for success
95	5	10 days off = Fair chance of success but equates to 2 weeks off school
90	10	19 days off = Worrying risk of underachievement as this equates to almost a month off school
85	15	29 days off = Serious concern – risk of dropping an A level grade in all subjects as this equates to 6 weeks off school or almost half a term
80	20	38 days off = Extreme concern – risk of dropping 2 grades in all subjects as this equates to almost 2 months off

Study Periods (SP) and Independent Study Periods (ISP)

You should be in school for all of your study periods and should sign into the Study Centre using our biometric register, Live Register. When you have a Study Period, you can work in the Study Centre, Refectory, the Common Room, the Hub, the Study Zone or any free classrooms. If you are allowed Independent Study Periods (ISPs) you can study where you prefer and this includes at home.

All students are expected to meet with their form tutor and be registered by them every morning and to attend Personal Development sessions once a fortnight on Wednesdays at 11:30.



Absence protocol

On the first day of absence, you should notify the Sixth Form team using sixthformabsence@buxton.derbyshire.sch.uk with brief reasons for your absence. You should also, as a matter of courtesy, let the appropriate teaching staff know.

If you are absent for more than one day, your parent or carer must either let the Sixth Form Team know using the email:

sixthformabsence@buxton.derbyshire.sch.uk or ring the main reception on: 01298 23122

Parents should ring or e-mail every day of their child's absence or let someone know the duration of said absence.

Students whose absence is prolonged and causing concern may be asked for medical proof of their absence such as a letter from their GP.

On returning from a period of absence, you will be expected to attend a 'back to work' meeting with either Mrs Hall or Ms Cruse who will check your wellbeing and, if necessary, negotiate an action plan with clear targets for improved attendance.

If concern over your absence continues, your parents/carers will be asked to meet with Jackie Cruse, Head of Sixth Form and you will be put on an attendance contract and have specific targets to meet.

Illness

If you are ill and unable to attend Sixth Form, you should email: SixthFormAbsence@Buxton.Derbyshire.Sch.Uk as explained above.

If you are ill during the school day and wish to go home, you must let your subject teachers and the Sixth Form team know and sign out in the Study Centre. If we feel that there are too many instances of illness and the associated absence has the potential to lead to underachievement, then we may ask for a doctor's certificate.



Dental and Medical Appointments

Dental or medical appointments **should not** be made during school hours. In exceptional circumstances they may be made in ISPs. Hospital and orthodontist appointments are permitted but please bring in an appointment letter to show us.

Driving Lessons

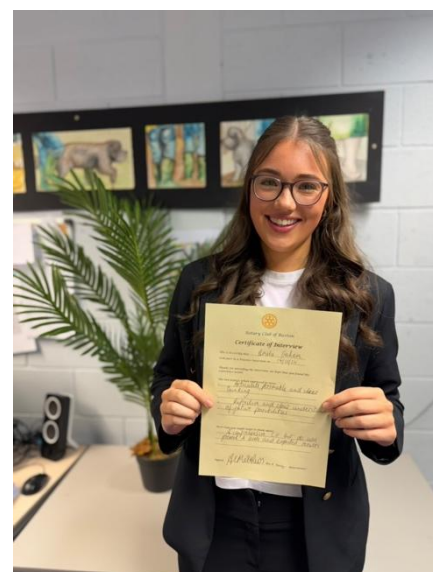
No driving lessons are to be taken during lesson time, study periods, year briefings or registration time. However, they can be arranged in your ISP time and we do make exceptions for driving tests.

University Open Days

We will allow you to attend 4 university open days per academic year. You must get permission from Ms Cruse or Mrs Hall, your subject teachers and tutor in advance.

Job/Apprenticeship and University Interviews

We will of course authorise these interviews and if you inform a member of the Sixth Form team in advance, we will also help you prepare for them.



Behaviour & Conduct

Dress Code

There is no uniform in the Sixth Form. However, you should come dressed appropriately for a working environment. Treat your classroom as you would the office or workshop by dressing comfortably and sensibly for work.

Identification Badge

You will be given an identification badge which is attached to a lanyard when you start in the Sixth Form and these **must be worn at all times**. When entering or leaving the site you may be asked to show it as proof of I.D. and they are now mandatory in all examinations.

Cars

As there are not enough car parking spaces, students are not permitted to park their cars on the school site. Any cars parked off the site are not the responsibility of the school and you need to ensure for safety reasons that you park well away from the school entrances.

Smoking

The school site is a non-smoking area for everyone. If any students choose to smoke they must leave the school site completely but we really do discourage this. The same rules apply to vaping.

Mobile Phones

As part of the whole school policy on mobile phone usage, mobile phones are only allowed to be used in Sixth Form areas in B block. They should only be used to support learning and must not be used for social purposes in the Study Centre during study times. They must not be visible in lessons or in areas where younger students are. Headphones and earbuds should not be worn in class.



Lockers

There are a small number of lockers provided in and around the Sixth Form area. Students can rent a locker for £8. Keys are available from Helen Dinardo in the front office and should be returned to her at the end of your time in Sixth Form.

Fire Alarm Procedure

If the fire alarm sounds, we ask that all students immediately vacate the building by the nearest exit and assemble on the astro. You should meet your tutor there and ensure that you are lined up in alphabetical order and are standing in a quiet and orderly fashion setting the standard for the rest of the school.



Shared Expectations

At BCS, we have a very effective and caring team supporting our Sixth Form students. There may be times when you are not on target and struggling to meet deadlines, for example. You will be referred to your tutor in the first instance who will then decide whether they need to refer you to the Learning Advisor or the Head of Sixth Form. In cases of persistent failure to meet deadlines, further action may be taken requiring extended attendance in school and parental involvement.

Our shared expectations are outlined below and you will be required to acknowledge and agree to them:

What can I expect?

- To be treated with courtesy and respect.
- To receive well planned and challenging lessons.
- To have any work handed in to be marked and returned promptly containing feedback on how to improve.
- To receive regular feedback and guidance on progress generally.
- To be given guidance and support with NEA and exam preparation.
- To receive support with academic, financial, social, personal and careers issues.
- To be given opportunities to go beyond the academic curriculum.
- To expect appropriate intervention to address underachievement or poor study skills.
- To expect parental involvement where your teacher or tutor believes additional support is needed at home as well as school.

What is expected of me?

- To treat everyone with courtesy and respect and maintain high standards of behaviour.
- To aim for 100% attendance and punctuality.
- To complete any homework, coursework or other task by the deadline set to a standard commensurate with your target grades.
- To respond to any feedback provided by your teacher, seeking help or support as required.
- To use your independent study times effectively to enhance your learning.



- To attend individual tutorials, assemblies, Personal Development sessions and all lessons, taking a full and active part in these activities.
- To participate fully in the enrichment curriculum.
- To complete one week's (or equivalent) work experience.
- To ensure that part-time work does not hinder school performance and does not exceed 10 hours per week.
- To not take holidays in term time and to arrange any external appointments and activities outside of school hours.
- To make full use of the Study Centre and other working areas throughout the day as a learning environment.

As senior members of the school, you are ambassadors and should act as role models for younger students. We expect you to set a good example to the rest of the school in terms of your behaviour, attendance, attitude and dress.



Tips for Sixth Form success – from past Sixth Formers

1. Get organised right from the start!

Use a diary or calendar to keep a track of when your work is due in and make sure you meet deadlines. You'll be bombarded with information so try and be organised and deal with things one at a time.

2. Get involved.

You've chosen to be here so make the most of your time because it will go really quickly. Join a club or team or start a new one. Never say no to any opportunities even if you don't like them; every experience is a useful one. Try and tick off as many things on your 'to do' list as it'll enhance your CV and make university and job applications much easier if you've done stuff.

3. Don't waste time!

Avoid the temptation to chill with your mates in Study Periods; it's important to relax but not that much! Try to surround yourself with other motivated students who will help establish a good working atmosphere.

4. Prioritise your learning.

As Ms Cruse is always saying, 'Your A levels are your wages' and they need to be your number one priority. Make sure your part-time job and social life fits in with your study schedule, not the other way round.

5. Ask for help!

You are definitely not alone in Sixth Form. There are lots of people who can help - from family to friends to teachers to pastoral staff. If you are struggling with school work or mental health issues, the worst thing you can do is not tell anyone.



Some useful websites

EXAM BOARDS

www.ocr.org.uk

www.aqa.org.uk

www.edexcel.org.uk

www.wjec.co.uk

www.pearson.com

STUDY

www.ucas.com

www.unifrog.org

www.ukcoursefinder.com

www.studentfinance.org.uk

www.university.which.co.uk

www.opendays.com

www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk

www.thestudentroom.com

WORK

www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk

www.notgoingtouni.co.uk

www.apprenticeships.org.uk

www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

MENTAL HEALTH ADVICE

www.youngminds.org.uk

www.mind.org.uk

www.nhs.uk/conditions

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.kooth.com

www.ru-ok.org.uk

www.actionforhappiness.org





What is AI?

- AI stands for artificial intelligence and using it is like having a computer that thinks
- AI tools like ChatGPT or Snapchat My AI can write text, make art and create music by learning from data from the internet, but watch out – they can also make things up and be biased



How can AI be misused in assessments?

AI misuse is when you take something made using AI and say it's your own work.

THIS IS CHEATING!



How do I make sure I don't misuse AI?



1 Know the rules

- You're **not allowed** to use AI tools when you're in an exam
- Your teachers will tell you if you're allowed to use AI tools when doing your coursework – the rules will depend on your qualification
- Even if you're allowed to use AI tools, you can't get marks for content just produced by AI – your marks come from showing your own understanding and producing your own work

2 Reference reference reference!

- If you're allowed to use AI tools, you must reference them clearly
- Name the AI tool you used
 - Add the date you generated the content
 - Explain how you used it
 - Save a screenshot of the questions you asked and the answers you got

3 Declare it's all your own work

– When you hand in your assessment, you have to sign a declaration. Anything without a reference must be all your own work. If you've used an AI tool, don't sign the declaration until you're sure you've added all the references



What happens if I misuse AI?

If you've misused AI, you could lose your marks for the assessment – you could even be disqualified from the subject.

DON'T RISK IT!



REMEMBER
Misusing AI is cheating!
Know the rules
Talk to your teachers
Reference clearly



Term Dates

HOLIDAY	SCHOOL CLOSURES:	SCHOOL RE-OPENS:
		Mon 8 th September 2025
Half Term	Friday 24 th October 2025	Monday 3 rd November 2025
Christmas	Monday 19 th December 2025	Monday 5 th January 2026
Half Term	Friday 13 th February 2026	Monday 23 rd February 2026
Easter	Friday 27 th March 2026	Monday 13 th April 2026
Half-term	Friday 22 nd May 2026	Monday 1 st June 2026
Summer	Thursday 23 rd July 2026	

School will also be closed to students on the following days for staff INSET:

- Thursday 4th and Friday 5th September 2025
- Friday 7th November 2025
- Thursday 29th January 2026
- Monday 9th March 2026
- Friday 26th June 2026

The School Day

Registration	08.50 – 09:10
Period 1:	09.10 - 10.10
Period 2:	10.10 - 11.10
Break:	11.10 - 11.30
Period 3:	11.30 - 12.30
Lunch:	12.30 - 13.20
Period 4:	13.20 - 14.20
Period 5:	14.20 – 15.20



“THERE IS NO
MAGIC TO
ACHIEVEMENT.
IT IS REALLY ABOUT
HARD WORK,
CHOICES,
AND PERSISTENCE.”

~ Michelle Obama

