



Welcome To Oasis Academy Coulsdon Sixth Form

We welcome you as the senior members of a large and thriving 11 – 19 comprehensive Academy. We hope your time with us will be successful and enjoyable and that your experience of the Sixth Form will be memorable.

This Student Handbook has been put together to help you get to know the Sixth Form, its procedures and personnel. It is part survival guide, part reference book to turn back to on many occasions throughout the year. It includes important dates to help you plan ahead.

Please keep it carefully: the more regularly you use it, the more valuable to you it will become! As you settle into the Sixth Form, there will be a great deal of information to take on board – the handbook contains most of what you need to know. Please use it to remind yourself of how things work and what is expected of you.

Mr McCullagh

Assistant Principal and Head of Sixth Form



Sixth Form Tutors

One of the most important people you will meet in the Sixth Form is your tutor. Everyone is part of a tutor group and your tutor will be your first line of contact throughout the course. She will get to know your hopes and aspirations as soon as possible and review your progress on a regular basis. Do your best to get to know your tutor and enjoy the daily contact you will be having with her.

Year 12 Tutors:



Mrs Booth



Ms John



Mrs Davies



Sixth Form Council

This group comprising students representing each tutor group promotes your views and sixth Form and Academy opinions to the Sixth Form Team. The Council will be active in organising a number of events including a Charity's Week. If you want to enjoy a fulfilling time in the Sixth Form and enhance your CV, it would be worth your while to stand for election.

Sixth Form Mentors

Sixth Formers are expected to take on a mentoring role which will enable leadership skills to be exercised in a number of ways with younger students while providing a good example of the benefits of effective learning and community service.

A Typical Week

The taught part of the timetable in Year 12 is made up of 4 periods each week. In addition to the taught part you will also be expected to participate in sport, Duke of Edinburgh, community service, cultural or other types of activity after school. These extra-curricular activities can be some of the most enjoyable parts of your time in the Sixth Form.

The remaining periods on your timetable are devoted to in-school private study. Your presence in the Sixth Form Study Centre will be monitored. You will benefit from internet access, research opportunities and quiet study areas. Clarity on any number of issues highlighted during these times can be gained from staff on site before embarking on private study at home at the end of each day.

One further free period each week is allocated for you to devote yourself to a curriculum area of your choice, probably one of the subjects you are taking in the Academy or possibly an area that interests you, for example in the Special Educational Needs department. The Curriculum leader responsible will negotiate how your time is spent in that area. It may be that you support the learning of younger students or that you are given a specific project to benefit the learning of others such as organising an event, speaker or visit outside of the Academy. Such opportunities will enable you to develop leadership and mentoring skills, further your specialist interests and give valuable service to our community.

Students will have a formal tutor time once a week where a number of administration and other issues can be worked on as a group and there will also be one formal assembly each week. There will also be an opportunity each week for students and tutors to arrange one to one meetings if necessary.

One special privilege that Sixth Formers are allowed is that they can go off site at lunch time.

Year 12 students are not allowed off site during the day.

Lunch arrangements

Light snacks and sandwiches will be available from the main Academy kitchen. Alternatively, students may bring their own food. On no account should food be taken into the Sixth Form Study Centre.

Procedures

Registration

Full and punctual attendance is required of all students and failure to observe requirements in this respect is regarded as very serious. Students register with their subject teachers at the start of every lesson. Lateness and absence are recorded carefully and form an important part of our assessment of a student's progress. Every request for a reference that we receive, whether for a part time jobs or full time careers, asks us to comment on your record with this regard. Our software systems are very precise and enable us to add your exact percentage attendance score to references. Indeed, our software allows us to record your whereabouts for every single lesson. Potential employers and Higher Education Institutions take a very dim view of poor attendance.

Please note that if you do arrive late, you must first sign in and then immediately go to your timetabled lesson even if it has already started. In the case of an emergency – or even a fire drill – we must know exactly who is on site.

Figures for punctuality and attendance are produced weekly. The figures will be printed for tutors to use in tutor time. The data will include the weekly picture and the cumulative position as the year progresses.

Students whose punctuality and attendance is of concern will be identified and a negotiated improvement plan will be devised.



Punctuality

The tutor will identify and highlight students who have 2 or more lates in a weekly period. The following protocol will be followed:

- The tutor will meet with the student in the first instance
- If the same or worse pattern is repeated in the next fortnight period the student will be seen by the tutor and require to improve their record within an agreed period of time. An **Academic Cause for Concern** will be issued by the tutor, informing Mr McCullagh, Head of Sixth Form. The tutor will email parents/carers alerting them to our concerns.
- A further infringement results in a **Referral** being issued by the tutor. The student will meet with Mr McCullagh and the relevant tutor. Parents/Carers will be informed by letter sent by the tutor expressing our concerns and further implications.
- Any further infringement will result in the student being placed on **Punctuality Report**. Parents will be expected to meet with Mr McCullagh, the tutor and student to discuss the way forward.

Attendance

For those students whose attendance is between 90% and 95% the tutor will be asked to address the issue; i.e. speak to the student and request a letter of explanation from the Parent/Carer. The student will be asked to improve the situation.

If a student's attendance figure falls below 90% the following protocol will be followed:

- If there are no extenuating circumstances, an **Academic Cause for Concern** will be issued by the tutor, informing Mr McCullagh. The student will be seen by the tutor and required to improve within an agreed period of time. The tutor will send an email home to parents/carers alerting them to our concerns.
- If no improvement is seen at the next check a **Referral** will be issued by the tutor. The student will meet with Mr McCullagh and the relevant tutor. Parents will be informed by email sent by the tutor expressing our concerns and further implications.
- Any further infringement will result in the student being placed on **Attendance Report**. Parents/Carers will be expected to meet with Mr McCullagh, the tutor and student to discuss the way forward.

Signing out

Whenever students need to leave the site at any time other than lunchtime, you must seek permission from Mr McCullagh before you sign out so that in the event of fire or if a member of staff needs to speak to you urgently, we have a clear idea of where you are. The system is simple but vitally important:

- You will only need to sign out if you are taken ill or have an unavoidable appointment at the orthodontists or the hospital. Please take care to arrange such unavoidable appointments outside of teaching time.
- Go to reception and ask to sign out.
- Fill out fully the details of your departure in the signing out book and make sure Mr McCullagh has authorised your departure.
- To make sure that your absence does not get recorded as unauthorised, it is most important that you bring a note from home at least one day in advance to request permission.
- **Signing in is as important as signing out:** if you happen to be arrive during the morning or afternoon session, you must sign in. Again, the procedure is simple:
- Go to reception and fill in the details in the signing in book, explaining why you have arrived late.
- Please remember that you must ensure that your lateness is covered by giving a note to your tutor so that your absence from any registered lesson does not count against you.
- Once you have signed in, go straight to your lesson.

Absence

All absence must be explained by a note from home addressed to your tutor and brought in on the day of return. If you are ill your parent/carer must contact the Administration Office to explain the situation. In some instances it may be appropriate for us to send work home where absence may be prolonged. For us to do this, we do need to be kept well informed by the student and home throughout a prolonged illness.

Family Holidays

Holidays during term time are not allowed

Your time in the Sixth Form is remarkably short compared to all you have to do. We cannot state too strongly our view that time taken out for family holidays at any stage of the year has a detrimental effect on student progress and we do not view requests of this sort lightly. This is particularly true of the second half of the summer term in Year 12. Progression to Year 13 is not automatic for any student. Any holiday taken in term time, will be marked as unauthorised and will be recorded as such on future references.

Finance

The Education Maintenance Allowance has been replaced by a 16-19 Bursary Fund. Details about the administration of the funding have yet to be finalised.

Cars and motorised bikes

As you progress through the Sixth Form, many of you will pass your driving tests and may want to travel by car or bike. You must notify the Academy of your bike or car registration number and park considerately in local roads. *Students are not allowed to park any motorised vehicle on site.*

Coursework and Classwork

Coursework and classwork are essential parts of your course. For most courses, coursework makes a significant contribution to the final grade you receive. Classwork and home learning are just as important as coursework. To succeed on your courses you must complete all work that is set according to the deadlines given. Plan ahead. Get used to organising your time from the start. Deal with difficulties as they arise – discuss them with your teacher as soon as you can – do not leave them until after a piece of work is expected to be completed. That way you will get the support and understanding of your teacher and find solutions much more easily. A key to meeting deadlines is to keep on top of the work as it progresses by setting yourself lots of short- term targets. Successful students keep a diary to help them plan their time; it's a good strategy and one well worth developing to suit you.

Course Changes

The process by which you have chosen your courses for Year 12 has been a long and thorough one and we anticipate that for the majority of students these choices will remain in place throughout your time with us. In a few cases, however, there is sometimes a strong and clear case for exchanging one subject for another. It is important to realise that this is a major undertaking involving teachers, yourself and parents and we will need to know that you have thought through the change in detail and are aware of the potential consequences in terms of career choices, for instance.

What should you do if you feel a change is necessary? First, give your original choices enough time to settle down. You can't safely judge a subject straight away as the transition to Sixth Form study doesn't happen in a few days and takes different lengths of time for different subjects. If you continue to feel that you want to change course, talk it through first with all your teacher and then also with your tutor. Explain why you are finding the course difficult; are you just encountering the difficulties that all other students are also experiencing? Have you given the subject enough of your time outside of the classroom? Why did you choose the subject in the first place? What has changed since then?

If you still feel that you need to change the subject, ask your tutor to raise the matter with Mr McCullagh and he will arrange a time when you will be able to explore the possibilities. We cannot guarantee that you will be able to swap to a new course: that will depend on whether there is room available in the course you wish to change to, whether it clashes with your other choices in the option blocks and so forth. However, if we agree that your change of mind is appropriate, we will do our best to make the change possible in consultation with the relevant members of staff. **Any changes must be agreed within the first 4 weeks of study, and it is the students responsibility to catch up with the rest of the class as quickly as possible.**

Paid Work

Some students take on a part-time job (evenings or weekends) during their time in the Sixth Form. Whilst this brings financial reward and a valuable insight into the world of work, it does come with a warning! Courses post-16 are demanding and require consistent effort and application. If you are applying for part-time employment, you must avoid excessive or late hours. Your priority must be your academic work – the next two years is your chance to prove yourself!

Parent/Teacher Evenings

“Parents evenings” will continue to take place during the academic year for all Sixth Form students. In the first term, tutors will be involved in a settling in meeting and in the Spring term subject teachers will meet parents/carers. For 2011/2012, the date of the Year 12 evening will be communicated to students in September. The purpose of the evening is to let parents know how students have settled in to the Sixth Form and to build the partnership between us. It is helpful to involve students in the discussion and you are therefore invited to come along too. Of course should they wish to do so, all parents and carers are welcome to arrange appointments at any other time.

Assessments

During the first two weeks of study your teachers will be observing how you have settled into your new courses. You have continual assessments and these will provide general feedback to parents at the Parents evenings. This will be an important check on your progress. In between these progress checks there will be other forms of assessment. The information gained through close monitoring will be compared to information we have on your previous achievements and statistically predicted future achievements.

Mock examinations

Students will be informed in September when their mock examinations will take place. This allows you to get the feel for the types of examination papers that you will sit in the summer and take heed of any advice about examination revision and techniques.

Reports

As well as termly progress checks, all students will receive a reports which will frankly but fairly summarise how things are going. These comments need to be received and acted upon constructively. They also form an important input into references which we are often asked to write about you, for example as part of a UCAS application. Frequently it's not the level of achievement but the way you have worked and your ability to respond to advice that prospective employers or admissions tutors are eager to discover. So again, they form an important part of your overall record and progress.

Academic Cause for Concern

During your time here there might be concerns about your work and your tutor will need to be informed. In these situations teaching staff will let your tutor know using an **Academic Cause for Concern Sheet** which will outline the nature of the worry and what action has been taken. Mr McCullagh will be notified but your tutor will guide you through the situation. When matters are of a more serious nature a referral is issued (see below).

Referrals

To help support you through your course, we need to know of any notable achievements as well as of any areas of serious concern. We use **referrals** to do this. They are a written record between teachers, tutors and Mr McCullagh and they form part of our record on each student. A teacher might send a positive referral to recognise significant achievement, improvement or contribution to Sixth Form life. When a serious difficulty, which might be academic or behavioural has not been resolved between a teacher and student, a negative referral will be issued. If the difficulty continues, the student is then referred to Mr McCullagh who considers the seriousness of the matter and gains a commitment from the student to resolve the issue. Should the difficulty persist and the student is referred a third time, the parents/carers of the student are invited in to discuss the difficulty with Mr McCullagh and to reconsider the student's future – this may ultimately include the student being asked to leave.

Missed Deadlines

Should work not be available to hand in on time you will be required to fill out a **Missed Deadline Slip** detailing why you have missed the deadline and noting when the work will be delivered. One missed deadline may not be significant but beyond this there will be cause for concern.

Higher Education and Careers

All students are involved in a programme of higher education and careers education and advice. The purpose is to enable you to make informed decisions and to support you in a successful transfer to university and working life beyond education.

Through a process of group and individual interviews with Sixth Form staff, University staff and members of the careers service, you will be able to devise your own action plan of research and application. There are many resources available to students situated in the Sixth Form Reference library. A range of talks covering specific areas, such as applications, CVs, interviews, specific careers, etc., will be given throughout the year.

If you have specific queries, you should see Mrs Butcher who takes responsibility for university entrance and careers in the Sixth Form.

After Hours

The Sixth Form contribute to events organised by the whole school – particularly at Christmas. Several options are available to get involved in the life of the Academy including a performance element. We like to encourage as many students as possible to become involved, either as performers, back stage or simply to come along to watch.

There are also a number of trips during the year – many connected to subject study but others of a more leisurely variety too. We hope that you will be able to participate in some of these as they contribute much to the enjoyment of your time in the Sixth Form.



Dress Code

Students must at all times be aware of their role as role models to the rest of the Academy. Accordingly, students will be expected to dress in a dignified manner, to be clean and tidy at all times. Please be advised that clothes which over expose flesh or expose underwear are not deemed appropriate forms of dress. For example, thin straps, low tops, low slung trousers, short skirts or dresses and cropped tops are unsuitable. Jeans may not be worn and clothes should not display slogans. Hoods and hats may only be worn outside in inclement weather. Tracksuit bottoms, shorts and three quarter length trousers may not be worn. Sportswear may be worn by PE students as appropriate during their lessons. We reserve the right to issue guidance on matters such as make up, jewellery, tattoos and piercing as necessary. Please familiarise yourself with the Academy Sixth form dress code and rules for appearance.

Behaviour Code

On enrolment, students agree to be bound by our behaviour code and for those taking courses at Coulsdon College, the behaviour code which exists on at Coulsdon College. Generally we expect our students to be mature, courteous, helpful, industrious, honest, respectful of our Academy and those within and around it, and reasonable at all times. Specifically, students are not allowed to smoke, bring alcohol or drugs onto or near the premises or engage in any behaviour which is deemed unacceptable by the Academy. Student ID cards must be worn and remain clearly visible at all times.

Examination Entries

Examination entries are paid by the Academy for all subjects taken as part of a student's timetable. This does not include retakes. However, where a student's level of commitment or standard of work is below that expected by the Academy, they may be asked to pay for their own entry or, in extreme cases, they may be withdrawn from the course altogether.

Withdrawals

Whilst we expect students to succeed and do our utmost to ensure a good match between students and the subjects/courses they study, we do recognise that there may be changes of circumstance that mean that some students find themselves on courses which turn out not to be so well-matched to their interests, aspirations and attitudes to learning. If teachers and tutors feel that this is the case and that the situation is irreparable, the Academy may elect to

withdraw the student from a course and not enter them for that examination. This would not be done lightly, and there would have been repeated contact between the teacher and tutor with the student, and also with the parents or carers, before this.

Possible triggers for this level of concern might include any of the following;

- Several unresolved concerns about the quality of academic work;
- Concerns regarding attendance and/or punctuality;
- Concerns regarding the students study habits which may include poor quality home learning assignments;
- Two successive progress checks which show that the student is performing well below expectation, either in terms of the level of attainment or the rate of progress being made.

A student might be withdrawn from one or more courses. A letter will be sent to parents/carers alerting them that a withdrawal is under consideration. The letter will detail issues and highlight expectations to redeem the situation, within a time limit.

Appeals may be made, in writing, to the Principal.

As you can see, we expect a high standard from all our students – and this is important to your success. Your time in the Sixth Form will present you with many opportunities: seize them!! Give as well as receive (be a host, not a guest), make a contribution, take part, be aware of others and their needs, take pride in the Sixth Form Centre and seek to continue to build up its atmosphere and reputation. Get involved, don't sit on the side-lines, set out to make new friends – and don't forget to give your learning your very best time and effort. Use your time here to the full – and if you do I am sure it will be a rewarding and enjoyable experience.

We wish you all the best!

