

WELCOME TO WALTON SIXTH FORM!

We are delighted that you have chosen to study with us here at Walton. Given that study at this level and in this setting will be new to all of you, we have put this handbook together to help familiarise you with our systems and generally how we do things. It is intended to be used as a guide for you to refer to as and when you require the relevant information.

Studying in the Sixth Form requires a committed and motivated attitude. This approach from you, along with the support of your teachers, tutor and the Sixth Form team, will combine to help you achieve your best.

Our Sixth Form is an exciting and happy place to study and we hope that you will make the most of what we offer here and that you enjoy your time with us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Cooper', with a stylized, cursive-like script.

MRS K COOPER
Director of Sixth Form

SIXTH FORM HANDBOOK

	PAGE
1. Access to Walton	3
2. Assembly	3
3. Attendance	3
4. Changing Courses	4
5. Computer Access	4
6. Dress Code	4
7. Driving Lessons	5
8. Financial Support	5
9. Holidays	5
10. Illness/Absences	6
11. Library	6
12. Maths/English GCSE Retake	6
13. Medical Appointments	7
14. Open Day Visits	7
15. Organising your work	7
16. Oxbridge/Medical Applicants	7
17. Pastoral Support	8
18. Personalised Programme of Study	8
19. PSHE	10
20. Performance Monitoring/Mock Exams	10
21. Retakes	11
22. Sixth Form Centre	11
23. Sixth Form Council and Sixth Form Prefects	12
24. Smoking	12
25. Tutor and Registration	12
26. University Applications	12
27. Work (Paid)	13

SIXTH FORM HANDBOOK

1. ACCESS TO WALTON

All Sixth Form students are issued with an I.D card and Sixth Form lanyard.

This card is programmed to gain entry to the Sixth Form Centre, to gain entry via our electronic gates and to use the school printers.

It is mandatory that you wear your lanyard whenever on the school site – this is a SAFEGUARDING requirement.

2. ASSEMBLY

You will be expected to attend our Sixth Form Assemblies, this is compulsory for all. These are held every Friday in the school hall where registers will be taken by your tutor.

3. ATTENDANCE

Attendance at all tutor sessions and classes (including twilight) is compulsory. The Sixth Form Team will continue to monitor this throughout the year and should this become a concern you will be required to attend a meeting with your Head of Year.

Good attendance is essential not only for Sixth Form but if you are to succeed in the job market or progress to higher education. Most employers and universities require the school to comment on attendance in references. Where attendance is unsatisfactory it is our duty to report this truthfully.

4. CHANGING COURSES

There is a small window of opportunity during the first half term for you to come and discuss any change between courses they may want to make. Heads of Subjects are open to this idea as a way of maximising the achievement and experience of new Sixth Formers. Alternatively, subject staff may have reservations about your suitability for a subject.

It is not an option which can automatically be granted, either because of timetabling or because of a discussion with one of us in the Sixth Form management team but it is there as a pragmatic potential solution.

5. COMPUTER ACCESS

The Sixth Form Centre is the main study “hub” for our students. There is a classroom and offices, a place to have conversations even refreshments but its key role is as a place where students can study and work. There is one large room for quiet work away from the more general areas of the centre. The provision of Wi-Fi means that most students will invariably use that facility to work on their own equipment, laptops, tablets, and phones etc. We also have a bank of laptops available for you to borrow either on a short- or long-term basis.

The rules of getting access to Wi-Fi will be explained in detail at the beginning of term. Obviously, we expect all facilities to be used appropriately in an academic setting.

6. DRESS CODE

You are not required to wear uniform – however as Sixth Formers you must dress smartly and appropriately for Walton’s wider school environment. Your lanyard is part of your uniform. If you do not adhere to our dress code policy, you will be asked to return home and change before returning in clothing in line

with our dress code. Wearing your own choice of clothes is a privilege and we therefore ask for you to be sensible and deserving of this.

7. DRIVING LESSONS

Whilst we encourage you to take driving lessons and pass your test, where possible lessons and tests must not be booked during your school lesson times.

8. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Anyone needing financial support to help them stay in education can apply for the 16-19 Bursary Fund. This is means tested based on household income and administered by the school. Payments are authorised based on attendance and behaviour whilst in Sixth Form.

Applications Forms will be available at the start of the academic year from the Sixth Form Office and any financial concerns should be raised with your Tutor or Head of Year.

9. HOLIDAYS

It is a legal requirement that schools ensure no holidays can be taken during term time.

Requests for leave in genuinely exceptional circumstances should be made in writing, addressed to the Director of Sixth Form. These will be assessed case by case.

Attendance is also compulsory at PSHE sessions and Activity Days.

10. ILLNESS/ABSENCES

The procedure for reporting an absence because of illness is the same as lower down the school. **Students cannot “self-certificate”** absence and contact with Mrs Wellings (Sixth Form Office) must come from the person with parental responsibility either by email or phone and not the student.

You must do your best to ensure your work is up-to-date and email your teachers. This is not an excuse for not giving in homework and good communication helps both you and us.

In some cases, you may be asked to produce a Doctor's Note.

11. LIBRARY

This is a quiet place for you to work in and conduct research.

Please follow the rules for the library with regards to bags, noise etc.

12. MATHS/ENGLISH LANGUAGE GCSE RETAKE

If you have not gained a Level 4 in Maths **or** English Language it is crucial that you do so. For certain careers or further study GCSE Science Level 5 or 6 is also required.

Walton will offer appropriate support to students in gaining these qualifications and these classes will appear on your timetable from September. Attendance at these lessons is compulsory in order to continue on in Sixth Form and to be entered for the retake.

Retakes for Maths and English take place in November and then again in the summer.

13. MEDICAL/DENTAL APPOINTMENTS

Limit these to after school time or in your non-contact time as much as possible. However, we understand that hospital appointments usually cannot be negotiated. The same rules as for illness apply: we must have contact from your parents and you should inform your teachers in advance.

14. OPEN DAY VISITS

If you plan to visit a University or College your absence must be confirmed to the Sixth Form Office by a parent at least one week in advance. However, be selective. You don't need to visit all the Universities you think you may want to apply to in Year 13. Therefore, we authorise just three visits in term time. Many universities now hold open days on a Saturday.

After you have applied to the universities of your choice you will be invited to Applicant Days in some cases where Universities and their Departments will hold seminars, often inviting current students to be present and talk to you so that you can make an informed choice.

15. ORGANISING YOUR WORK

It is important that you take an independent approach to recording and planning your work and making a note of key dates. Some subjects will ask you to keep wider reading logs etc. Tutors, subject teachers and Heads of Year will monitor your progress and File Checks will be reported home.

16. OXBRIDGE/MEDICAL APPLICATIONS (Early Entrants)

If you wish to apply to Oxford/Cambridge or for Medicine or Veterinary Science you will be offered advice and support in June/July of Year 12.

Your application then must be processed by the end of September and sent off to UCAS by 15th October of Year 13.

17. PASTORAL SUPPORT

Should you experience any worries and anxieties during your time in the Sixth Form, please be aware of the Pastoral Support System in place to help you. In the first instance, you may feel comfortable to raise this with your tutor as they will be able to offer you advice and strategies for coping with the demands of studying at this level.

In addition, we want you to know that you can approach any member of the Sixth Form Team with any worries you have at any time or you can see our Wellbeing Counsellor. We are often available in our offices or you can see Mrs Wellings to make an appointment. Alternatively, you can email us directly so that we can arrange a mutually convenient time to meet. Please do not feel you have to try and cope with everything if you are feeling overwhelmed; we are very much here to help and support you in any way we can and are used to doing this having had years of experience. **You will not be bothering us as we are here to help you.**

18. PERSONALISED PROGRAMME OF STUDY

You will have a Personalised Programme of Study during your time in the sixth form. This will consist of your registration sessions, taught learning hours for your chosen subjects along with additional compulsory elements to achieve your 580 hours.

Work Experience

You will be required to take part in meaningful work experience. There is a calendared work experience week for Year 12 in December, the specific week will be communicated to you at the beginning of Year 12. You are expected to organize this work experience yourself and it should be purposeful and linked to your career aspirations. We will be using the Unifrog platform to log evidence of this and we will receive feedback from your employer based on your performance.

Youth Social Action

We will encourage you to take part in activities that will help improve your work-related skills and will have a positive impact on the community. You can achieve some of this through our Enrichment opportunities which we will talk to you about in September, although some information is also listed below.

Enrichment

As well as your subjects, work experience, Higher Education and Careers' Advice and timetabled PSHE sessions, your personalized programme of study must contain Enrichment activities.

Our Enrichment programme offers the opportunity to try something new or to extend your experience in a certain area to prepare you for your chosen career or university course.

Some of the enrichment opportunities include Youth Parliament, STEM club, Spanish, Core Maths, Creative Writing, Debating Club, Sports and Arts Award. Additionally, you can take part in voluntary/charity work in the local community, Walton support, Extended Project and the English-Speaking Board.

The Extended Project Qualification

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is a research-based project that is looked upon favorably by universities as it carries UCAS points and prepares you for university level research. It is an opportunity for you to develop and extend from one or more of your study areas and/or from an area of personal interest or activity outside your main programme of study.

It will be based on a topic chosen by you and then agreed by the center coordinator (Mrs Cooper). You may choose to take the EPQ as an extension of your academic studies, but it must not duplicate anything that is covered anywhere else on your taught curriculum of A Level subjects. Delivery of the EPQ will involve some teaching of the necessary skills, supervision and assessment of your progress as well as lots of independent study on your part.

Walton Support – students liaise with Departments to take on classroom support and peer mentoring during independent study time and to contribute to the whole school and wider community.

All the Enrichment activities outlined above provide excellent evidence of skills and relevance when applying for work experience, employment C. V's and University applications.

19. PSHE

Attendance is compulsory at PSHE sessions. It will be held every Monday Period 3 and will deal with a range of topical personal, social and health issues relevant to 17/18-year olds.

20. PERFORMANCE MONITORING/MOCK EXAMS

The mock exams you take in Year 12 are vital and must be taken seriously.

As you will not be taking any public exams this year these will be a key indicator for teaching staff about your progression into Year 13. These will be followed by our UCAS Assessment Week in September.

They will also be the basis for any academic reference we provide for your University applications.

Periodically, your subject teachers will provide data about your academic performance and your approach to learning. Sometimes this will result in conversations or more formal appointments with a member of the Sixth Form Team to discuss.

21. RETAKES

Most of you will achieve at a good standard in Sixth Form. The worst-case scenario and one very seldom met is where a student has to repeat the year in that subject and work harder.

This may be possible if the department agrees but after the recent funding changes to Sixth Form and Further Education there is now a cost for tuition which currently stands at £900 per subject.

22. SIXTH FORM CENTRE

- This is your centre for you to relax in/meet your friends/discuss work etc. You are now a large group and for this space to work for you, you must treat it with respect.
- There are rooms specifically designated for quiet study and should be used as such. No food or drink is allowed in these areas and must be pre-booked with Mrs Wellings.
- Put the litter in the bins provided.
- Important information and notices will be communicated to you via your tutors and the "Notices" Board in the Centre as well as via text/email. It is therefore vital you keep us updated with changes to your mobile phone number and email address.

FAILURE TO ADHERE TO THE ABOVE WILL RESULT IN YOUR ACCESS TO THE FACILITIES BEING REMOVED OR SUSPENDED.

23. SIXTH FORM COUNCIL AND SIXTH FORM PREFECTS

There will be an opportunity to take part in our Sixth Form Council, looking into and discussing all aspects of Sixth Form and our school and implementing positive change. Following this, there will also be the opportunity to represent Sixth Form at the School Council meetings.

In addition, you will be invited to apply for a number of Sixth Form Prefect roles in the Spring term and will stay in post until the end of Year 13.

24. SMOKING

No smoking or Vaping is permitted anywhere on the school site.

25. TUTOR AND REGISTRATION

Your Sixth Form Tutor is your first point of call for all matters.

You are required to attend morning registration every day where you will take part in a variety of activities which will support your achievements in Sixth Form. The only exception to this is Friday when you will attend as Assembly in the school hall.

26. UNIVERSITY APPLICATIONS

We will assist you in completing your UCAS application or other applications requiring C. V's, interviews etc. Time will be spent during the summer term in preparing you for your application.

When you come back in September of Year 13 you need to get on with your application quickly as time is short. We prefer it completed during September and early October as we then must prepare references for it.

It is important that you meet internal deadlines.

27. WORK (PAID)

Whilst we encourage you to gain experience and independence by taking on part-time employment you need to realise that, unless you are sensible about the number of hours you choose to work, it will invariably have a detrimental effect on your studies. BEWARE! The maximum recommended number is 9 hours, preferably at weekends.

We have found that one of the biggest factors contributing to students struggling with their academic workload is the number of paid hours they work.

Your achievement and welfare are our main concerns in supporting you whilst with us.

From time to time, issues and worries affect everyone.

Don't let pressures build up. Your tutor and the Sixth Form Team are there to help you and to listen and advise.

Contact details for your Sixth Form team are;

Mrs Cooper, Director of Sixth Form
Sixth Form Office

kate.cooper@walton.staffs.sch.uk
j.wellings@walton.staffs.sch.uk