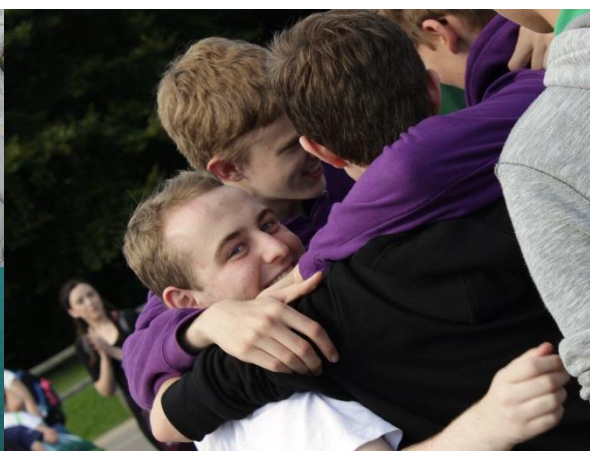




Alderbrook School
& Sixth Form

AMBITION | BRAVERY | KINDNESS



2025-27 Student Handbook



Alderbrook School
& Sixth Form

AMBITION | BRAVERY | KINDNESS

CONTENTS

<u>Page</u>	<u>Section</u>
3.	Introduction Sixth Form Aims and Vision
4.	Expectations
6.	Attendance, Punctuality and Illness
7.	Lunch-time Arrangements Dress Code
8.	Information, Advice and Guidance
10.	Programme of Study Use of Independent Study Time Independent Study Guidance (Homework)
11.	Tutor Programme
12.	Enrichment Opportunities Sixth Form Leadership and Student Voice Work Experience
13.	Holidays and Part-time Employment Examination Information
16.	Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our Sixth Form at Alderbrook. We hope that the next two years will prove to be challenging, enriching and worthwhile. During your time here, Alderbrook will provide you with a high quality education, in order to prepare you for a fulfilling career, whatever your future aspirations. Our core principles of Ambition, Bravery and Kindness will continue to underpin the 2 years you study with us at Sixth Form.

We will also offer you opportunities to exercise initiative and responsibility, which are essential aspects of your growth to maturity and independence. You will be part of a thriving school community where there is a sense of mutual respect and partnership, which will be conducive to successful academic work. You will be treated as a young adult, with more freedom, but with more responsibilities. In return you will be a role model for younger students both inside and outside the school community and you will adhere to the school and Sixth Form policies. **Take advantage of the opportunities awaiting you.** You need to begin well and meet all deadlines – if you fall behind with your work, it is difficult to catch up at this level. **Please read this information carefully as it gives you an outline of the way the Sixth Form operates.** Refer to it at all times.

Sixth Form is very different to the school experience in years 7 to 11. A-Level courses place greater demands on students which you haven't experienced before. The priority is obviously to achieve the best academic results possible but our Sixth Form also offers opportunities to develop in other ways to encourage you to become a well-rounded individual.

We want you to enjoy your time in the Sixth Form and there will be many opportunities for participation in a wide range of activities. The support you give to the whole school will make a huge impression on younger students, who will be looking to you for leadership and inspiration. We look forward to your contribution, making the school a happy and productive environment for all.

SIXTH FORM AIMS AND VISION

Our vision is to continually sustain an outstanding Sixth Form that not only provides a high quality learning environment with a broad, innovative curriculum, but also develops our students in all aspects of their lives.

In order for our students to reach their full potential we will aim to:

- ✓ **support you** in aspiring to excellence in your chosen career pathways
- ✓ **nurture you** as part of a caring community with its own identity and individual approach
- ✓ **develop you** as both learners and individuals through a range of enrichment opportunities
- ✓ **provide you** with an unwavering commitment to ensure you experience the perfect platform to a brighter future

EXPECTATIONS

- **Accept that the responsibility for your learning lies, in the first instance, with you**
- Arrive before the lesson is due to begin
- Have appropriate equipment for all lessons
- Respect the learning environment
- Have high expectations of yourself and others
- Complete all work, preferably before the given deadline
- Do your best at all times
- Organise your learning through the use of planners, timetables, revision
- Adhere to the discipline, security and health & safety standards of the Sixth Form and School
- Attend all timetabled lessons and any others at a teacher's reasonable request
- Maintain an attendance record of an average of at least **95%** on a half-termly basis or your place may be withdrawn
- Maintain a high standard of attire at all times, both in school and on the way to and from school
- Wear identity lanyards / ID cards at all times
- Attend tutor period every day
- Use the bins and recycling bins provided in the Sixth Form areas, keep rooms tidy and respect the facilities as they are designed for the comfort of all Sixth Form students

In addition, please note the following:

Punctuality

Parents may be contacted regarding this matter if your punctuality at the start of the school day or in-between lessons becomes a habit. At Alderbrook we believe that excellent punctuality is a life skill of the utmost importance and will contribute to your success at A-Level and in the future.

Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

The school is a non-smoking area; students, staff and visitors are expected to respect this. This includes the use of e-cigarettes. Alcohol should not be brought on to the school site. You will appreciate there is no place in school for any substance that could damage your health, impair your judgement or lessen your capacity for study. Your place will be lost if you are caught not abiding by these rules.

Unauthorised Visitors

Unauthorised visitors to the Sixth Form are not allowed. There are security and insurance implications.

Car Parking

Unfortunately, we are unable to accommodate students who wish to drive themselves to school and park on the school site. Students can park – respectfully – in the local residential area should they wish.

Personal Electronic Equipment

Mobile phones should be switched off during lessons and tutor sessions unless sanctioned by your teacher for use, for example to complete a piece of research. Headsets, wires and air pods should be out of sight at all times. Expect your equipment to be “looked after” for the rest of the day if it is used at the wrong time! Phones can only be used by you in the designated Sixth Form areas at break and lunch times, and not during independent study periods or around the school site.

Rewards

Students will be rewarded for excellent attendance, attitude to learning, attainment and significant progress. This will be demonstrated in a variety of ways with the highlight of the year being the Year 13 Prize Giving evening in September.

Consequences

Failure to fulfil Sixth Form expectations will be dealt with seriously. We expect there will be a degree of flexibility between our A-Level teaching staff and students, but failure to complete tasks or attend regularly, will lead to a withdrawal of privileges and, ultimately, parents being invited into school to discuss your future with us. Discussions will take place regarding the nature of any problem which arises to find a positive way forward.

Standards

Sixth Form students are expected to set high standards as they will be under the continual scrutiny of staff and younger students. There are so many ways in which students can set a good example. Some are obvious such as dress, good behaviour and respect for all pupils and staff, but another less obvious way is to get involved in the life of the school. **It is expected that all students will involve themselves in extra-curricular activities with Year 7 – 11 students on a regular basis.**

Use of Facilities

The facilities are for you to use and look after. Please observe the following:

- No sitting on tables or feet on chairs.
- No moving of furniture.
- Put all rubbish in the bins and leave the room tidy.
- No throwing of balls, rubbish or any other items indoors.
- No hats to be worn around the building.
- No eating in M04/M06 & M07.

ATTENDANCE, PUNCTUALITY AND ILLNESS

You have chosen to enrol as a full-time Alderbrook Sixth Form student. This means that we expect you to be on time for all timetabled lessons, study periods, tutor periods, assemblies and enrichment activities, as well as additional lessons which may be required. **Students must sign in by 8.30am if they have an independent study period lesson 1**, for safeguarding and fire purposes. If you are late 3 times in a half term you will lose the leave early privilege for 2 weeks.

Government statistics indicate that if your attendance falls below 95% you will not achieve your full potential at the end of year 13. **If your attendance falls below 95% your place in the Sixth Form may be at risk and you will be required to attend an interview** with a member of the Sixth Form team and your parents. Permission to be absent and notification of illness are essential requirements.

If you are ill during the day you must seek permission from the Learning and Wellbeing Manager, Head of Year or Director of Sixth Form in order that you can be signed out if necessary at either first aid or Sixth Form Reception. If you are too ill to come to school your parents should telephone the school on **0121 704 2146 before 8.30am** to report the absence, otherwise they will be contacted by the school if you are absent during period 1. If they fail to do this, your absence will become unauthorised and a letter will be sent home to complete. We require either a telephone call or note from your parent/carer to explain **all** absences. If you qualify for the '16-19 Bursary Fund', absences and poor punctuality will affect this.

On your return to school after an absence, it is essential you see your subject teachers immediately to obtain any work missed. Do not wait until the next lesson to collect work.

We understand that throughout the school year, students may need to visit universities and institutions for open days and/or interviews. These will be pre-arranged absences and you must **complete a Leave of Absence Request Form**. Students should not arrange any inappropriate engagements in school time such as weekly driving lessons, job interviews for part-time work, eye, dentist, doctors or hair appointments! If you are granted permission for a pre-arranged absence and it means leaving during the school day, you will need to sign out for safeguarding and fire purposes.

Please note: attendance and punctuality figures are recorded electronically on your student file and will form part of any reference for UCAS, job (full or part-time) and apprenticeship applications.

Sixth Form School Day (please note these times change during exam periods)

Sixth Form day begins	08.25 – 08.30
Period 1	08.30 – 09.40
Period 2	09.40 – 10.40
Assembly/Tutorial	10.40 – 11.00
Break	11.00 – 11.20
Period 3	11.20 – 12.20
Period 4	12.20 – 13.20
Lunch	13.20 – 13.55
Period 5	13.55 – 15.00

Year 12 students are expected to **be in school for the whole day 08.25 – 15.00** for the first half-term, and will then be offered leave early privilege if they have met all the requirements around attitudes to learning, attendance and punctuality. Year 13 students are expected to **be in school for all lessons**, but will begin the year with their leave early privilege, allowing them to leave, if they have no timetabled lessons, after 11:20am. This privilege will be removed on an individual basis for example if students are underperforming academically, or if attendance & punctuality is poor. Students are not permitted to sign in / out at will.

LUNCH-TIME ARRANGEMENTS

Students are welcome to use the Sixth Form Edge Cafe to order hot food and drink throughout the school day. The Sixth Form Café takes both card payments and Parent Pay payments. The Café serves a selection of pastries, cakes, drinks, hot and cold food, alongside our very popular coffee machine. The Café is open from 8.30am until 2.00pm.

If you have an independent study period during period 4, you are also allowed to go to any food area in the school 5 minutes early at 13.15. It is not permitted to order takeaway food to be delivered at the school gate during the day. **Sixth Form students are not allowed to leave the school site at lunch time.**

DRESS CODE

One of our key principles at Alderbrook Sixth Form is to prepare students for the world of work and this is reflected in our dress code. **The way students are presented is very important to us**, as they are role models for the lower school and ambassadors in the wider community. We therefore expect our students to maintain a high standard of appearance at all times and to adhere to the Sixth Form dress code. To enable us to reinforce and maintain these high standards it may be necessary on rare occasions to use appropriate sanctions.

Students who wear items of dress which do not fit in with the requirements that are outlined will be required to replace them. **Students and parents are therefore urged to read the following information very carefully so that there can be no misunderstanding.**

Monday-Friday

- Wear student ID lanyard/card at all times
- A smart business suit comprising of a jacket and equivalent colour trouser/skirts (of appropriate length)
- A smart blouse/shirt with sleeves
- Shoes (no trainers/flip flops/open sandals/UGG boots or equivalent) should be flat or have a sensible heel.
- Appropriate outdoor coats – no denim/leather jackets

Appearance

- Extreme hairstyles/very bright colours are not acceptable in school, including when part or all of a student's hair is cut or shaved.
- Jewellery: the wearing of jewellery in school should be kept to a minimum. Small earrings and other jewellery (watches/small rings) are allowed. A simple nose stud or ring is acceptable.
- Tattoos must not be visible and should be covered at all times.

The final decision on suitability of dress rests with the Director of Sixth Form. **Students who are dressed inappropriately will be required to return home to change.** The dress code is part of the Learning Agreement and therefore, both students and parents agree to support our policy.

INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

Director of Sixth Form

Mr Frankie Bryan

s201fbryan@alderbrook.solihull.sch.uk

Head of Year 13

Mrs Shinead Desjarlais

s201sdesjarlais@alderbrook.solihull.sch.uk

Head of Year 12

Mr Robert Hall

s201rhall@alderbrook.solihull.sch.uk

Learning & Wellbeing Manager

Mrs Margaret McNamara

s201mmcnamara@alderbrook.solihull.sch.uk

Sixth Form Administrator

Ms Gigi Wong

s201gwong@alderbrook.solihull.sch.uk

Year 12 Tutors

12:01 Mrs Oliver
12:02 Mrs Howard
12:03 Mrs Griffiths
12:04 Mrs Merriman
12:05 Mr Gartland

Year 13 Tutors

13:01 Mrs Stocks
13:02 Mrs Fisher
13:03 Mr Palmer
13:04 Mrs Edwards
13:05 Dr Price

All students will have a Sixth Form Tutor whom they will see every day at 10.40 – 11.00am. All students will attend Sixth Form assembly on a designated day, usually a Wednesday. You are encouraged to discuss any personal or academic problems with your Sixth Form Tutor and you will also have opportunities for extended one-to-one interviews with them and our Learning & Pastoral Manager.

Progress will be reviewed in each subject in line with your agreed targets. These reviews should enable you to recognise your own strengths and, thereby, enable you to devise strategies for overcoming any difficulties at an early stage.

Your progress will be monitored through your academic profile and your meetings with your Tutor, our Learning & Pastoral Manager, Head of Year and subject teachers. We will endeavour to build strong student-teacher relationships as we all aim for high academic and personal standards. These relationships and realistic target setting will be crucial when applications for university courses are made. Information, advice and guidance is a very important part of the preparation that Alderbrook Sixth Form will give you for later life. Having made decisions about your post-18 intentions, you will be guided through the completion of your UCAS (University and Colleges Admissions Service) application and/or Curriculum Vitae. If you decide not to apply for university you will be given advice and support in applying for jobs or apprenticeships. Support will be given throughout this application period and staff will be available during and after results are published. Mentoring will also be provided by our Careers Coordinator, during the summer term of Year 12, should students request it.

PROGRAMME OF STUDY

The subjects you study in the Sixth Form – your Programme of Study – is decided by the Director of Sixth Form in conjunction with you, your parents, your subject teachers and your Sixth Form Tutor. As you are a responsible student, under no circumstances should you decide to drop, change or start a subject without the correct consultation and ultimately, the permission of the Director of Sixth Form. Your subjects will be the key to university applications and your future career.

USE OF INDEPENDENT STUDY TIME

Your timetable will include **Independent Study Periods** – these are ALL compulsory and you are not granted permission to leave the school site early or to come in late if you have IS period 1. Year 13 may have earned the privilege to leave during lunch (13.20) should they have IS period 5. Independent Study sessions will be supervised regularly. It is a requirement that students register for an ISP outside the Sixth Form office on the designated boards – apart from Period 1 where you will register with the Learning & Pastoral Manager/ Sixth Form Administrator. Spot checks will be carried out at random by the Learning & Pastoral Manager. You should use these periods as time to prepare and complete work, to research and read, to collate notes and to revise work recently studied in class. This private study does not replace homework but is an important addition to it. More than ever before, you will be expected to organise yourself and to take responsibility for your own work and learning. You can choose from silent study in M04 (Year 13 only), quiet discussion in M06 / The Edge Foyer or to use the ICT suite in M07. Wherever you choose, it is essential you respect the learning of other students and ensure you respect the atmosphere of a working environment.

INDEPENDENT STUDY GUIDANCE (HOMEWORK)

There will be high expectations of you in terms of lesson preparation and research. Independent work and coursework deadlines (use your planner to list deadlines) will be set by your subject teachers, who will also set homework. Homework in the Sixth Form will reflect your individual learning programme and there are many good reasons for it, not least:

- To encourage you to develop the skills needed for independent learning.
- To help you develop self-discipline in work habits including working to deadlines (this is an important preparation for Higher Education).
- To consolidate, reinforce and extend the skills, knowledge and understanding developed in the classroom.

The time required for homework will vary but DfE guidelines recommend at least four hours per week per subject. In addition, all non-timetabled periods at school should be devoted to private study/extension work. At home, you need a suitable quiet space in which to work.

Homework **must be completed** on time unless you have a valid reason supported by a letter from home. Failure to complete homework will be challenged by your subject teacher who will know the appropriate time to involve your Sixth Form Tutor and Head of Year and your parents.

If you are finding it difficult to cope with the demands of the homework set, **act immediately**. Don't wait until the problem becomes severe – speak to your Subject Teachers and Sixth Form Tutor.

TUTOR PROGRAMME

The tutor programme is designed to enable every student to make the most of the opportunities available to them and to move on confidently to the next stage of their education. This programme is delivered by the Sixth Form Tutor Team during tutor sessions.

In Year 12, much emphasis is placed on study skills such as making notes, essay writing, effective writing and time management. Individual monitoring and mentoring sessions will facilitate early assistance for any student having difficulty facing the demands of A-level study.

In the summer term of Year 12, post-18 opportunities will be looked at, exploring employment, apprenticeships and applications to higher education establishments. Visits to universities are encouraged but will need to be agreed in advance by the Director of Sixth Form (complete a Leave of Absence Form / NO more than 3 per year). Grants, sponsorship and student loans will also be explored.

All students will be expected to organise a week of work experience in Year 12, related to future careers or courses. It is a good idea to arrange this as early as possible.

Year 13 students are given further advice about the university application process and advice about living away from home and budgeting.

Alongside this, throughout the year a 'Power Hour' lecture series will run where we will host a range of guest speakers – from CEOs to sports people, medical professionals to broadcasters - who provide a range of views and opinions on topical issues or careers. The purpose of this is to expand your perspectives on real-life issues, and provide you with valuable knowledge and experience which will be beneficial when it comes to applying for careers and university. Attendance at lectures is compulsory and we hope you will enjoy the variety.

ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Enrichment activities are offered to all Year 12 & 13 students. Ideas from individual students are obviously considered for those who wish to organise their own external enrichment. A full list of activities that we provide can be found in the enrichment opportunities booklet, updated each term, but could include:

- KS3/KS4 Learning Mentors
- GOLD Duke of Edinburgh
- Oxbridge Society
- Debating Society
- Sports Society
- Photography
- Driving Theory School

SIXTH FORM LEADERSHIP AND STUDENT VOICE

The key purposes of our Sixth Form Leadership Team, comprising two Head Students, alongside a team of Deputies and Assistants, are as follows:

- To provide student leadership to the Sixth Form and to be an outstanding example of the ethos, vision and expectations of the Sixth Form
- To role model expectations to students in the lower school and operate as a key link between the Sixth Form and students in Year 7-11
- To organise, chair and minute the Sixth Form Committee meetings and liaise with staff around lower school student voice
- To represent and lead student contributions at school events

Applications for the Sixth Form Leadership Team will open for Year 12s in the Summer Term. Appointments of roles will be made by Sixth Form Staff following the interview process with the Sixth Form team.

We want your opinions, so we will provide opportunities and outlets for students to have their say on issues affecting the Sixth Form. Not all suggestions can always be implemented of course, but we feel it is important to have open communication with students in order to provide the best possible experience for both you and future students.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Work Experience takes place in the summer term for Year 12 students. The week designated for 2026 is **wb 29th June**. This is your opportunity to gain real life experience in a workplace that relates to your career ambitions, and also a chance to enhance your personal statement in UCAS applications.

Start looking for placements early in order to secure the best one, and remember this set week doesn't stop you finding alternative placements in other holidays or, more regular placements at weekends!

HOLIDAYS AND PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

It must be understood that Sixth Form study is extremely demanding and that holidays must not be taken in school time. Your A-level courses will necessitate approximately sixteen hours of private study per-week in addition to the school day, so please bear this in mind when considering part-time employment and social commitments. For most students, more than eight hours of work per week would adversely affect their results. It is important to leave time before examinations completely free of other commitments.

EXAMINATION INFORMATION

AQA, Edexcel, OCR

Information for candidates for written examinations

This has been written to help you. Read it carefully and follow the instructions.

If there is anything you do not understand, especially which calculator you may use, ask your teachers or the exams officer.

A: Regulations – Make sure you understand the rules

- 1 Be on time for all your examinations. If you are late, you must see the Exams Officer before entering any examination room.
- 2 Do not become involved in any unfair or dishonest practice during the examination.
- 3 If you cheat, or break the rules in any way, you could be disqualified from all your subjects.
- 4 Only take into the examination room the materials and equipment allowed. All pens must be black.
- 5 Do not take into the examination room any unauthorised materials or equipment which might give you an unfair advantage. This includes notes, calculator cases/instruction leaflets, bags, digital equipment, reading pens, electronic communication / storage devices, **including mobile telephones**, iPods, MP3/4 players or any other products with text/digital facilities. Any pencil cases taken into the examination room must be see-through. **Remember:** possession of unauthorised material is breaking the rules, even if you do not intend to use it, and you will be subject to penalty and possible disqualification.

- 6 Do not use correcting pens, fluid or tape, erasable pens, highlighters or gel pens in your answers. Highlighters may be used on the question paper.
- 7 Do not talk to, try to communicate with, or disturb other candidates once the examination has started.
- 8 Do not borrow anything from another candidate during the examination.

B: Information – Make sure you attend your exams and bring what you need

- 1 Know the dates and times of all your examinations.
- 2 Arrive at least ten minutes before the start of each examination.
- 3 If you arrive late for an examination, report to the Exams Officer.
- 4 If you arrive more than one hour after the published start time for the examination, you may not be allowed to take it.
- 5 Only take into the examination room the pens, pencils, erasers and any other equipment which you need for the examination.
- 6 You must write in black ink. Coloured pencils or inks may be used only for diagrams, maps, charts, etc. unless the instructions printed on the front of the question paper state otherwise.
- 7 It is your responsibility to have all the equipment you need for your exam.

C: Calculators, Dictionaries and Computer Spell-checkers

- 1 You may use a calculator unless you are told otherwise.
- 2 If you use a calculator:
 - It must comply with exam regulations
 - make sure it works properly; check that the batteries are working properly;
 - clear anything stored in it;
 - remove any parts such as cases, lids or covers which have printed instructions or formulas;
 - do not bring into the examination room any operating instructions or prepared programs.
- 3 Do not use a dictionary or computer spell checker unless you are told otherwise.

D: Instructions during the examination

- 1 Listen to the invigilator and follow their instructions at all times.
- 2 Tell the invigilator at once:
 - if you think you have not been given the right question paper or all of the materials listed on the front of the paper;
 - if the question paper is incomplete or badly printed.

- 3 Read carefully and follow the instructions printed on the question paper and/or on the answer booklet.
- 4 Fill in all the details required on the front of the question paper and/or the answer booklet before you start the examination. Make sure you fill these details in on any additional answer sheets that you use.
- 5 Remember to write your answers within the designated sections of the answer booklet.
- 6 Do your rough work on the proper examination stationery. Cross it through and hand it in with your answers. Make sure you add your candidate details to any additional answer sheets that you use.

E: Advice and assistance

- 1 Ensure you read / keep the students handbook provided by the Exams Officer.
- 2 If on the day of the examination you feel that your work may be affected by ill health or any other reason, tell the Exams Officer.
- 3 Put up your hand during the examination if:
 - you have a problem and are in doubt about what you should do;
 - you do not feel well;
 - you need more paper.
- 4 You must not ask for, and will not be given, any explanation of the questions.

F: At the end of the examination

- 1 If you have used more than one answer booklet and/or any loose sheets of paper, place them in the correct order. Remember to fasten them together with a treasury tag before you leave. Make sure you add your candidate details to any additional answer sheets that you use.
- 2 Do not leave the examination room until told to do so by the invigilator.
- 3 Do not take from the examination room any examination stationery, (i.e. the question paper, answer booklets used or unused), rough work or any other materials provided for the examination.

CONCLUSION

There are many challenges in the transition from GCSE to A-Level study. We aim to make this transition as seamless and successful as possible in order to assist students to move to the next level of their education or into employment.

The benefits and rewards of a successful Sixth Form experience cannot be overstated and we aim to support, encourage and inspire all of our Sixth Form students so that they can reach their full academic and social potential.

**We hope that the two years spent at Alderbrook Sixth Form
will be both rewarding and enjoyable.**

Email: enquiries@alderbrooksixthform.org

Tel: 0121 704 5671

