

The Blue School

Sixth Form Handbook

September 2017

www.theblueschoolwells.co.uk

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Introduction

Welcome to The Blue School Sixth Form. We are very much looking forward to working with you over the next two years.

This handbook has been prepared to answer some of the questions you might have concerning life in the Sixth Form and to clarify our expectations and routines. We hope that you will find it helpful.

Please note that the expectations as described are intended to help all students meet their personal targets and have been formulated in the best interests of the whole school community. We hope you find the time to read this information and please do ask if you require further clarification.

Life in the Sixth Form

Times of the day

Registration - Assembly	08.45 - 09.05
Lesson 1	09.05 - 10.05
Changeover 1	10.05 - 10.10
Lesson 2	10.10 - 11.10
Break	11.10 - 11:30
Lesson 3	11.30 - 12.30
Changeover 2	12.30 - 12.35
Lesson 4	12.35 - 13.35
Lunch	13.35 - 14.15
Lesson 5	14.15 - 15.15

Registration

08:45 – 09:05	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Year 12	Information and attendance review	Quiz	Assembly	PSHE	Current affairs discussion
Year 13		Post 18 Preparation		Mentoring	Mentoring

Y13 Mentoring sessions will typically be arranged during the previous week. Students who do not attend the compulsory slots will be recorded as absent for the morning registration period. This will count as a half day of absence when your attendance data is calculated for reference purposes.

Communication

Effective communication is an important aspect of Key Stage 5 success. All students are issued with a school email account. Staff may use this account to send direct messages to you and a Sixth Form Bulletin will be emailed to you every Friday. If you would prefer the Friday email to be sent to an alternative email account, please notify Mrs Moody. The Sixth Form Bulletin is also emailed to parents.

Sixth Form staff can be contacted at BlueSixthForm@educ.somerset.gov.uk The Sixth Form Assistant will ensure your message is forwarded on to the most appropriate member of staff. A list of key contact details is at the back of this booklet.

Student Attendance

Our students are expected to maintain a 100% record of attendance/authorised absence in registration and lessons. All known absence needs to be approved in advance by your tutor. In the case of unforeseen absence, please ring the Sixth Form Assistant (01749 678799 extension 413) **before 10.30** on the day of **each** absence to ensure the tutor is informed. Students are able to authorise the first two days of absence. Students will be registered electronically in every lesson and this will enable us to keep a complete picture of attendance for the whole week. Students who do not arrive promptly to lessons will be marked as late.

Routine medical and dental appointments should take place **outside of lesson time** although we appreciate that in the case of emergency treatment this is not always possible.

It is not appropriate to take holidays during school time. Such absence will be recorded as unauthorised and will be recorded as an absence in your attendance data. In exceptional circumstances, students may request term time leave using the form on the school website.

If a student's attendance or punctuality is considered inappropriate for employment or university, we will comment on this in the reference. The government classes students whose attendance is less than 90% as persistent absentees. This equates to 1 day of absence every two weeks and is an unacceptable pattern of attendance. If students are concerned about their attendance record they should discuss this with their tutor in the first instance. Absence of more than 3 days will only be authorised if it is accompanied by medical evidence.

Unexplained/recurrent non-attendance or lateness at lessons will be referred to your tutor.

Attendance at University Open Days is authorised and you should observe the normal courtesies and ask permission of your tutor and subject teachers. Please inform the Sixth Form Assistant in advance of any planned absence.

Students should sign in and out with the Sixth Form Assistant if they are leaving the school site during a period where they would normally have lessons.

Teacher Absence

You should collect the work set and sign the register in the absent teacher's room.

Sixth Form Dress Code

As Sixth Form students, you serve as role models for younger children and should therefore set standards in your dress and appearance which are appropriate for a school and which reflect a positive attitude to study. Your dress and appearance should meet the accepted requirements of a place of work and study, and not those which are more suitable for a casual social environment. The following points should be noted:

General:

- Dress should be clean and tidy at all times.
- Hair should be of natural appearance. Irregular hairstyles are not permitted. Students who are in doubt as to the acceptability of a certain style should check beforehand.

Specific:

- Hats and/or hoods must not be worn inside the school building.
- Only plain shorts are allowed.
- Garments which are excessively revealing or immodest are not permitted.

Driving and Parking

Sixth form students may sign out during free periods in order to take driving lessons with a qualified instructor or to take the driving test.

Lessons may be missed only in order to take the test.

Students who wish to drive to school must provide Administration with full details of the vehicle.

Insurance conditions make it inadvisable for students to give lifts to others during the school day without very careful prior examination of their policies.

Students driving/parking on the site do so entirely on their own risk.

Parking is restricted to the designated car parks on the Kennion and Milton ends of the school campus.

The speed limit on the school site is 10 mph.

Learning

Learning Expectations

You will have four hours of teaching per subject per week. If your qualifications are equivalent to three level 3 qualifications, you will receive twelve hours. You are expected to spend an equivalent amount of time working independently. This work could include reading around the subject, watching programmes or videos which develop your understanding, improving class notes, revising work or completing homework.

Successful learners often have a routine of working. Think about how you are going to use the time available to complete the expected work. Ask your subject teachers about how they expect you to organise your folders. Use small sections of time effectively. If you are concerned about your ability to manage your time effectively, please book a mentoring appointment with your tutor.

Target Grades

Students are set challenging target grades based on their GCSE attainment. These are the same in every subject and will be written on reports. Students should aspire to attain or surpass these grades in all subjects.

Tests and Examinations: Access Arrangements

For some students, additional arrangements and adjustments can be made to enable them to fully access a range of tests including GCSE and A Level. This might include additional time, rest breaks or the use of a scribe or word processor. If you are concerned about any aspects of your learning or have had support in the past please feel free to make an appointment with the SENCo in Hanwell.

Changing Subjects

If you wish to change the courses you are studying, you must complete a Course Change Form which can be obtained from the Pastoral Office. You must continue to attend your original programme of subjects until the change is authorised. Any change of course must be approved by the Pastoral Team Leader. Year 12 students are expected to study three subjects or equivalent and EPQ.

Learning Spaces

Free periods may be spent in the Learning and Resources Centre, the Sixth Form Study Area, the Sixth Form Common Room, the Social Areas or in other rooms that may become available for Sixth Form study during lesson times. Please be aware that although you may be free, lessons will be taking place throughout the school. Respect other students who are trying to work around you. The Learning and Resources Centre and Study Area are for quiet independent learning. Please do not use these spaces if you need to have detailed discussions with other students.

Learning Support System

Should you struggle to meet the demands of the Sixth Form, your tutor will monitor you more closely using the Sixth Form Learning Support System. This is our way of alerting students to staff concerns and supporting you as you try to improve. Students on the Support System will have regular meetings with their tutor to discuss the issues which may be the cause of the problem and to offer practical solutions and advice. Students who are struggling with aspects of learning may make a self-referral. Please speak to your tutor if you feel you would like to have this programme of support

The Learning Support System process is outlined below:

Stage 1

Where a Teacher has concerns about organisation, attitude to learning or progress of a student this will be logged on SIMS. Your subject teacher or subject team leader will inform you about these concerns and you will be issued with a letter outlining the issues to be addressed. This letter will be copied to your parents. Your progress will be monitored over the next 2 weeks using a SIMS report card. During this time you are also encouraged to ask your tutor and teacher(s) for help to help you understand and resolve your learning issues.

- If you are successful in completing stage 1, you will receive a letter from the Pastoral Team Leader congratulating you on the progress you have made.
- If you are unsuccessful you will proceed to **stage 2**.

Stage 2

If your subject teacher(s) and the subject team leader(s) still have concerns with your learning, they will complete a stage 2 referral. A learning contract will be set up with you by your tutor which you will take responsibility for. This must be completed by all your subject teachers over a 2 week period. This will be copied to your parents and will include specific areas on which you should focus. Your Tutor will review the contract at the end of the 2 weeks. The results of this will be shared with your parents and your Pastoral Team Leader by your Tutor. During this time you will be expected to attend all of the supported study sessions on your timetable.

- If you are successful in completing stage 2, you will receive a letter from the Pastoral Team Leader congratulating you on the progress you have made.
- If you are unsuccessful you will proceed to **stage 3**.

Stage 3

Your Pastoral Team Leader will contact your parents to explain that we have been unsuccessful in working together to resolve your learning issues. Your parents will be asked to attend a meeting. At this meeting, you will be set specific targets by your PTL which will need to be achieved written in the form of a learning contract. A copy of this contract will be given to you and sent to your parents. Your progress and targets will be monitored by all staff over the next 4 weeks. During this time your tutor will aim to meet with you every week to help you check that you are on-target to complete stage 3 successfully. You will also be expected to attend all of the supported study sessions on your timetable.

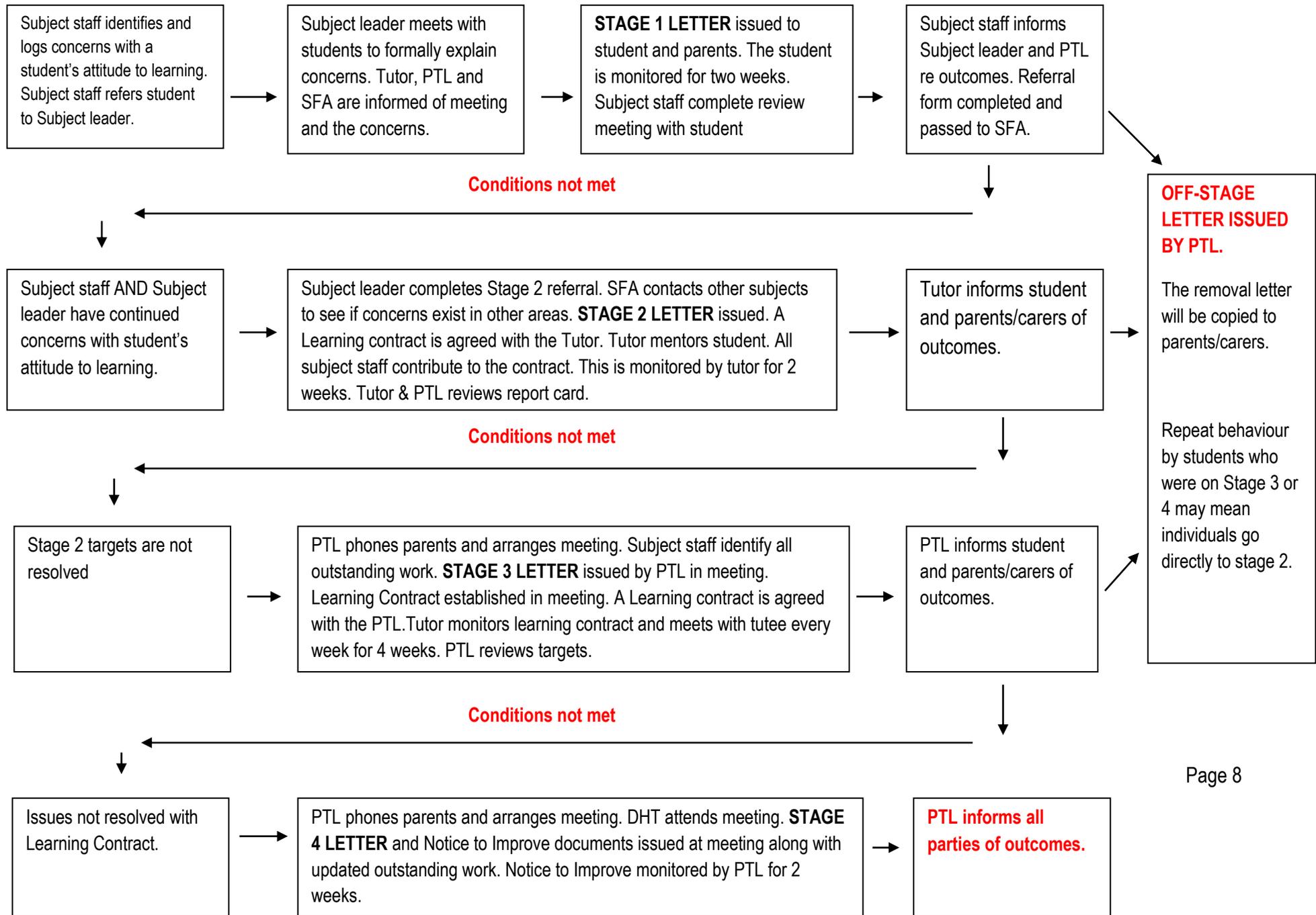
- If you are successful in completing stage 3, you will receive a letter from the Pastoral Team Leader acknowledging the progress you have made. You should be aware that any future issues will result in you having to complete stage 3 again.
- If you are unsuccessful you will proceed to **stage 4**.

Stage 4

The Pastoral Team Leader and Assistant Headteacher will meet with you and your parents. In this meeting, a Notice to Improve will be issued, the terms of which must be consistently met during the following 2 weeks. Your progress and targets will be monitored by the Pastoral Team Leader during these 14 days.

- If at any point during the period, the terms are not met, further action will be taken. You should be aware that if you are unsuccessful in completing stage 4, you may be asked to discontinue a specific subject which is causing concern or leave the Sixth Form. Before any student is asked to leave the Sixth Form, the Senior Leadership Team will meet in order to review the student's documented progress against the terms of the Notice to Improve. As a Sixth Form team, we hope this is an unlikely event.
- If you are successful in completing stage 4, you will receive a letter from the Pastoral Team Leader acknowledging the progress you have made. You will then be placed on a report card for 2 weeks to ensure you are able to embed the changes to your learning behaviour.

Sixth Form Learning Support System



EPQ

The Extended Project Qualification involves the timetabled teaching of the skills which will allow students to:

- **Manage:** identify, design, plan and complete a project (or task within a group project), applying organisational skills and strategies to meet their stated objectives.
- **Use resources/research:** obtain and select information from a range of sources, analyse data, apply it relevantly, and demonstrate understanding of any appropriate connections and complexities of their topic.
- **Develop and realise:** use a range of skills, including using new technologies, to solve problems, to take decisions critically, creatively and flexibly, and to achieve their aims
- **Review:** evaluate the outcome, including their learning and performance

EPQ lessons will be timetabled at the same time each week. The sessions are compulsory and will involve students embarking on a largely self-directed and self-motivated project. Students must choose a topic, plan, research and develop their idea and decide on their finished product. Students must also keep a production log of all stages of the project production, reviewing and evaluating their progress. For the final part of the project students prepare and deliver a presentation which they then review. The qualification is highly regarded by universities and is worth more UCAS points than any other AS level.

The Duke of Edinburgh Award

Students moving into Year 12 in September 2017 have the opportunity to begin the Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award. Details of the full D of E offer will be shared with students in September by Mr Shaw, our D of E Coordinator.

Progression

Year 12 - Preparing for University, Furthering Training, Gap Year or Employment

The school will encourage you to start thinking about your future from the moment you arrive in the Sixth Form. You need to be proactive and take advantage of the various opportunities available to you. We have independent careers advisors who are able to offer impartial advice and guidance throughout the year.

Use the bullet points below to prompt your research.

Autumn (Sept – Dec)

- Start looking at the full range of options beyond sixth form.
- Review your choices and evaluate your GCSE results. Check if you may need to resit, alter your choices or take additional subjects. (Note: subject changes must be agreed before the end of September) Speak to a careers adviser about the impact of any changes on your career options.

Spring (Jan - April)

- Begin to research potential courses in Higher Education and employment and training opportunities that will be available at the end of sixth form.
- Register for a UCAS Card – to keep up to date and save money with student discounts!
- Prepare for and attend a UCAS HE Convention – the school will organise this visit.
- Complete the skills quiz on National Careers Service - Next Steps/JED and look at Higher Ideas or similar to expand ideas (links on The Blue School website).

Summer (May – July)

- Continue to research details of HE courses – use websites to check entry profiles and requirements. Begin to draw up a shortlist of HE courses for more detailed research. Attend at least TWO open days.
- CKUS applications for music conservatoires should be submitted between mid-July and 1 October.
- Plan courses for next term – consider your organisation, study and time management skills.
- Arrange work experience or visits to explore careers in which you are interested. Essential for medical, paramedical or teaching careers and advisable for many other vocational HE courses.
- Arrange volunteering or work experience opportunities to enhance your experience and personal statement/CVs.
- If you are considering sponsorship or taking a year out, start writing to companies and organisations that may be able to offer opportunities.
- Develop ideas and collate material in preparation for writing your personal statement and/or CV.
- Research financial support and discuss with parents/carers and advisers.
- Check closing dates and registration arrangements for any subject or institution specific HE entrance tests (UKCAT, LNAT, TSA) and access courses.

Post 16 Bursary Fund – Allocation Policy 2017/18

(1 September 2017 to 31 August 2018)

This section outlines The Blue School's policy in relation to the allocation of its share of the Government's Post 16 Bursary Fund. Payments under the fund are made to support an individual student's costs specific to continuing their studies in The Blue School Sixth Form. The total amount of Bursary funding provided by Government is finite with no additional money available, regardless of actual demand. Accordingly, the school has had to determine the level of discretionary payment amounts based on anticipated take-up for categories 1.2 and 1.3.

1) ELIGIBILITY

Enrolled sixth form students will be eligible for payments from the Bursary Fund if they are aged over 16 and under 19 by 31 August 2017. [If a student turns 19 during their programme of study they can continue to get the bursary until the end their programme or 31 August 2018, whichever is sooner].

Eligible students must fit into and/or apply under any one of the following three categories:

Category 1 – maximum grant £1,200.

- a. Students in care, (including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children),
- b. Young care leavers,
- c. Young people in receipt of income support or the equivalent Universal Credit (UC) in their own right
- d. Disabled young people in receipt of both Disability Living Allowance (or the new Personal Independence payments) and Employment Support Allowance (ESA) (or Universal Credit as a replacement for ESA) in their own right.

Category 2 - maximum grant £680.

Students who are (and have applied for and have been approved as) eligible for receiving free school meals.

Category 3 - maximum grant £250.

Students not falling into or applying under the above two categories, and where the School's Pastoral Team support the requirement for public transport to get to school - contribution towards the cost of the annual payment for a Somerset County Bus Transport Ticket (for use on Public Transport) or Somerset Student Contract Bus Ticket. Evidence of purchase will be required before the grant is awarded.

Enrolled sixth form students will not be eligible for continuing instalment payments of the Bursary Fund if:

- Total authorised/unauthorised absence exceeds 15%.
- There have been causes for concern regarding conduct.

2) FURTHER DISCRETIONARY PAYMENTS

Due to the overall limit on funding, further discretionary payments to individual students will not be considered during 2017/18. If the expenditure is appropriate, students will be advised to seek support from the Governors' Foundation Trust as a one-off payment alternative to the Bursary.

3) EXISTING STUDENTS - CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES

Category 1 students are entitled to their allocation but must notify the school of their eligibility via the application process.

An individual may only apply once under categories 2 or 3 as specified above during the academic year. However, an exception will be considered where an individual's circumstances change during the year and they become eligible under a new category. In such cases their grant payment will be:

- Pro-rated by calendar month, from the 1st day of the month following date of application and or receipt of evidence of eligibility.
- Reduced by any amount of the fund already paid under a previous category.

Bursary payment for the academic year will be assessed at the time of application, and will not be withdrawn if an individual's circumstances subsequently change and they become ineligible under one of these categories.

4) NEW STUDENTS

Bursary payments will be pro-rated as above for any eligible students who join The Blue during the academic year. In such cases, any payment will be reduced by the amount of any retained bursary paid to the individual from their previous institution during this academic year, (if/as appropriate).

5) PAYMENT METHOD

In the majority of cases, bursary payments will be made to the individual student's bank account. In exceptional circumstances, (and only after the agreement of the student has been confirmed in writing), payment will only be made to parents/carers. Bursary payments will not be made to other family members, friends or companies/third parties.

6) PAYMENT FREQUENCY

Category 1 and 2 Bursaries will be made and continue to be made on the basis of:

- 50% in September/October 2017
- 50% in January 2018

Payments will be subject to the student remaining enrolled on their course at The Blue and consideration of attendance and conduct as indicated above (1e/1f).

An exception will be made to those individuals applying under Categories 2 and 3, who have to pay an upfront annual payment for their Somerset County Bus Transport Ticket or Somerset Student Contract Bus Ticket. Evidence of purchase will be required to receive payment as a one-off and the refund will not be made until after the student has enrolled or started on their course year on Tuesday 5 or Wednesday 6 September 2017.

7) DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS

The deadline for applications to be submitted for claims to be paid in the 2017/18 academic year, for all categories, will be Friday 23 March 2018.

8) SURPLUS FUNDS

After the application closure date, any surplus funds remaining in the Bursary Fund will be shared out on an equal allocation basis to those students who remain enrolled as at 30 April 2018 and who have previously claimed for Bursary Funding under category 3 (above) since 1 September 2017. This allocation of surplus funds being applied only if the resulting amount per claimant exceeds £5.

9) APPLICATIONS

Bursary applications must be made using the form attached and be submitted to the Finance Office.

THE BLUE SCHOOL – 2017/18 16-19 BURSARY FUND APPLICATION FORM

Name _____ Tutor Group _____

I am applying for a 16-19 Bursary Fund payment under the following category, (*please tick one box only, as appropriate*):-

Category 1.1 - £1200. I am in care, a care leaver, in receipt of income support, or am disabled and in receipt of Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance.

Category 1.2 - £680. I am currently eligible for Free School Meals.

Category 1.3 - £250. I am requesting support towards the cost of an annual payment for a Somerset Bus Transport Ticket. I attach proof of purchase.

Bank Details:

Bank Account No: _____ Bank Sort Code: _____

Bank Account Holder Name: _____

Bank Name and Address _____

Declaration

I understand that my eligibility for a Bursary payment will be verified by the school and I have provided evidence if/as appropriate.

Under Categories 1.2 and 1.3, I wish to receive the Bursary Payment as a one-off payment in Sept/Oct 2017 to support the purchase of my Somerset Bus Transport Ticket. Please tick if appropriate

I confirm that the bank details I have provided above are for my personal bank account. I confirm that I will use this Bursary Payment solely to support my studies at The Blue.

Signed _____ Date _____

PLEASE RETURN TO THE FINANCE OFFICE IN MAIN RECEPTION.

Office Use

Eligibility/Transport Checks _____

Pastoral TL

Payment authorised _____ Date _____

Useful Websites

www.theblueschoolwells.co.uk The Blue School Sixth Form Website (select the "Sixth Form" menu option)

What and where to study

<http://university.which.co.uk/>

www.ukcoursefinder.co.uk

www.UCAS.com

www.push.co.uk

www.prospects.ac.uk/

www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk

<http://unistats.direct.gov.uk/>

www.applytouni.com

www.unipodadvice.com.

University application information; Online HE applications

The "ruthlessly independent" guide to UK universities

Graduate jobs, postgraduate courses, work experience and careers advice.

University and subject league tables, university profiles.

Compare universities; Statistics including subsequent graduate occupations

All about university applications - open day dates, league tables, clearing

Direct interaction with current students through social media

Careers and graduate opportunities

www.graduate-jobs.com

www.get.hobsons.co.uk

www.milkround.com

www.notgoingtouni.co.uk

www.careersbox.co.uk

Apprenticeships and Employment

www.apprenticeships.org.uk

www.gov.uk/apprenticeship-guide

www.learnsomerset.co.uk

Admissions Tests

www.spa.ac.uk

www.ukcat.ac.uk (medicine)

www.lnat.ac.uk (law)

www.admissionstests.cambridgeassessment.org.uk

Professional Scholarships

www.iop.org

Institute of Physics Undergraduate Bursary Scheme

www.theiet.org

Institution of Engineering and Technology

www.imeche.org

Institution of Civil Engineers

Finance

www.ucas.com

(click on student finance)

www.gov.uk/studentfinance

Gap Year

www.prospects.ac.uk/gap_year.htm

www.gapyear.com

www.csv.org.uk

(Community Service Volunteers)

www.yini.org.uk

(Year in Industry paid work placements before uni)

www.vinspired.com

(volunteering opportunities)

Study Abroad

www.britishcouncil.org/erasmus

(British Council)

www.fulbright.co.uk

(USA)

www.braintrack.com

(international index)

www.ukcosa.org.uk

(advice for UK students studying abroad)

Sixth Form Calendar

Year 12

Autumn Term 2017	
Year 12 Start of Academic Year	Tuesday 5 September
KS5 Welcome Evening	Thursday 28 September
Deadline for Course Changes	Friday 29 September
Half Term	Week beginning Monday 23 October
Year 12 Autumn Reports	Week beginning 6 November
Year 12 Parents Evening	Thursday 16 November
Spring Term 2018	
Start of Spring Term	Monday 8 January
Half Term	Week beginning 12 February
Summer Term 2018	
Start of Summer Term	Monday 9 April
Year 12 Mock Exams	Week beginning 30 April
Half-term	Week beginning Monday 28 May
Year 12 start Year 13 Classes	Monday 11 June
Year 12 Futures Days	Tuesday 10 & Wednesday 11 July
GCE Results	Thursday 16 August

Year 13

Autumn Term 2017	
UCAS Applications open	Wednesday 6 September
Year 13 Start of Academic Year	Wednesday 6 September
Year 13 Autumn Reports	Week beginning 16 October
Closing date for applications to Oxford, Cambridge, medicine, dentistry, veterinary science/medicine	15 October (18:00)
Half Term	Week beginning Monday 23 October
Year 13 Parents Evening	Thursday 2 November
Blue School deadline for UCAS applications	Thursday 14 December
Spring Term 2018	
Start of Spring Term	Monday 8 January
Year 13 Mock Exams	Week beginning 29 January
Apply for student finance at www.gov.uk/student-finance	January
Half Term	Week beginning 12 February
Year 13 Spring Reports	Week beginning 5 March
Year 13 Parents Evening	Thursday 15 March
Deadline for applications to art and design courses (except those listed with a 15 January deadline)	24 March
Summer Term 2018	
Start of Summer Term	Tuesday 9 April
Half-term	Week beginning Monday 28 May
Deadline for student finance applications to receive funding by the start of 2016 academic year	Thursday 31 May
Year 13 Leavers Ball	Friday 13 July
GCE Results	Thursday 16 August

Contacts

Sixth Form tutors

12EBR	M23	Mrs E Bridgman		13ALE	B4a	Miss A Lees
12GEE	MG4	Mr G Eyers		13BHW	KG16	Mr B Howarth
12JBO	K11	Mrs J Boxall-Legge		13JOW	KG4a	Mrs J Owens Smith
12KTO	B5a/b	Mrs K Towey		13MPA	K112	Mr M Pajak
12RCO	M11	Mr R Cowper		13RWE	MG11	Ms R Webster
12RME	MG5a	Mr R Meyrick		13SHO	K16	Mrs S Holland
12SBN	K21	Miss S Bennett		13SWO	K12	Miss S Woodley
Mr N Pearson Pastoral Team Leader – Year 12				Dr S Jamieson Pastoral Team Leader – Year 13		

Careers Education & Guidance	01749 678799 extension 439	Ms S Barnes
Learning Support Centre	01749 836216	Mrs S Chinn
Examinations Officer	01749 678799 extension 444	Ms S Allan
Examinations Assistant	01749 678799 extension 255	Mrs V Poyner
Reception	01749 678799	
School Chaplain	01749 678799 extension 208	The Revd. J Hawes
Sixth Form Assistant	01749 678799 extension 413	Mrs A Moody