



6TH FORM @PA

DISCOVER
YOUR FUTURE

Student Handbook 2026–2027

Discover Your Future

Welcome to Sixth Form @ Plympton Academy

This handbook contains everything you need to know about life at Plympton Academy Sixth Form.
Please read it carefully and keep it for reference throughout the year.

Name: _____

Tutor Group: _____ Year Group: _____



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A**Welcome to Sixth Form @ Plympton Academy****Welcome to the Sixth Form @ Plympton Academy!**

We are delighted to welcome you — whether you are joining us for the very first time in Year 12, or returning to begin Year 13. We know how important the next year is for you in achieving your aspirations, which is why our focus is on helping you Discover Your Future.

As a student with us, you will embark on educational opportunities that can provide truly life-changing outcomes — opening doors to world-class universities, degree apprenticeships and exciting careers. You can be confident that our staff know how best to support and challenge you. Follow their guidance, especially when it comes to independent study. Your future self will thank you for making those flashcards after each lesson, rather than the night before your exams.

We are immensely proud of our Sixth Form students, who go on to an extraordinary range of destinations including Higher Level Apprenticeships, universities and conservatoires, the armed forces, and directly into careers. As you begin the year, keep your end goal in sight — it will be your greatest motivator.

We also know that to succeed you need a strong team around you. Through your daily tutor meetings, the support of our Student Support Manager, and the guidance of our Careers Lead, there will always be someone on hand to help. We operate an open-door policy — we will always take the time to listen and to guide you.

Finally, remember that Sixth Form is about far more than grades and destinations. It is about discovering lifelong passions. We look forward to introducing you to opportunities that go beyond the classroom — from Sports Leadership and Performing Arts to the Student Council; Charity events and our trips and visits. Say yes to those green-light opportunities. They are the things that set you apart.

We hope you are excited to get started and ready to take the first steps towards your future. We are absolutely delighted to have you with us.

Mr Ian Hartley

Assistant Headteacher — Sixth Form, Plympton Academy

B**The Sixth Form Team**

There is a large and dedicated team of staff ready to support you throughout your time at Plympton Academy. Your form tutor is your first point of contact for day-to-day matters, but all members of the team will help wherever they can — please do not hesitate to reach out.

Name	Role	How they can help
Mr Hartley	Assistant Principal — Head of Sixth Form	Academic progress, next steps (university/careers/apprenticeships), Sixth Form life
Ms Lewis	Sixth Form Student Support Manager	Attendance monitoring, bursary support, pastoral care, Unit Award Scheme, ID badges and Year 12 Work Experience.
Ms Davenport	Year 13 Tutor	Sixth Form life, day-to-day support, UCAS references
Ms Gent	Year 13 Tutor	Sixth Form life, day-to-day support, UCAS references
Mr Taylor	Year 13 Tutor	Sixth Form life, day-to-day support, UCAS references
Ms Lang	Year 13 Tutor	Sixth Form life, day-to-day support, UCAS references
Ms Strachan	Year 13 Tutor	Sixth Form life, day-to-day support
Ms Brake	Year 12 Tutor	Sixth Form life, day-to-day support
Dr Jamison	Year 12 Tutor	Sixth Form life, day-to-day support, work experience
Mr Knight	Year 12 Tutor	Sixth Form life, day-to-day support
Ms Anderson	Year 12 Tutor	Sixth Form life, day-to-day support
Mr Taylor	Year 12 Tutor	Sixth Form life, day-to-day support
Your subject teacher / Head of Department		Subject-specific queries and academic concerns

Not sure who to speak to? Start with your tutor — they will always point you in the right direction, or find the right person to help.

C

What You Can Expect From Us

Plympton Academy Sixth Form is committed to providing you with an outstanding post-16 experience. During your time with us, you can expect:

- A full-time programme of study delivered by specialist, effective members of staff using appropriate facilities and resources
- A friendly, caring and supportive environment that encourages every student to reach their full potential
- A personal tutor who monitors your progress, provides guidance and helps you set and review targets for improvement
- Support with progression, including help with developing good work habits, study skills and stress management
- Broader opportunities for personal development through a wide range of community, enrichment and extracurricular activities
- A careers programme tailored to the needs of each individual, with access to independent and impartial careers advice
- Support in securing meaningful work experience that is, wherever possible, linked directly to your career aspirations
- Opportunities each year for your parents or carers to meet with the Sixth Form team and your subject teachers to discuss your progress
- One set of written progress reports per year, supplemented with additional interim reports as appropriate
- A planned and purposeful programme of study across the full academic year 2026–2027

Our commitment to you is simple: we will work hard to ensure you have every possible opportunity to succeed. In return, we ask that you play your full part.

D**Our Expectations of You**

A positive approach to your studies is absolutely essential if you are going to excel at Plympton Academy Sixth Form. Choosing to continue in education is a significant commitment and we expect you to honour it fully.

We expect every student to:

- Demonstrate positive learning behaviours throughout your time at Plympton Academy
- Accept responsibility for your own learning and progression, with the support of your subject teachers and personal tutor
- Arrive at every lesson ready to learn — on time and with the correct equipment and materials
- Show positive commitment and engagement in every lesson
- Complete all work set to the required standard and by the published deadline, including both homework and coursework
- Make effective use of private study time, both at home and within the Sixth Form Centre
- Abide by the rules and procedures of the Academy, and of any training provider or work experience employer you attend
- Respect the right of others to study without disturbance
- Respect the individual rights of all members of the Academy community and behave in accordance with the whole-school Code of Conduct
- Act as a positive role model for younger students in the Academy
- Act as a courteous ambassador for the Sixth Form when dealing with visitors to the school

Important — Consequences of Not Meeting Expectations

Failure to adhere to these guidelines will result in the implementation of the Behaviour Policy. This may include supervised study, additional timetabled lessons, or — for students who demonstrate a persistently poor attitude to their studies — being required to fund their own examination entries.

E

The Academy Day

The Academy day is structured as follows. Please ensure you are on site, ready and signed in before the warning bell at 8:35am.

Time	Session	Notes
8:00	Sixth Form study rooms open	<i>Study rooms available — make productive use of this time</i>
8:35	Warning Bell	<i>Academy gates locked — do not be late</i>
8:40	Tutorial	<i>Compulsory for all Sixth Form students — registers taken</i>
9:05	Period 1	
10:05	Period 2	
11:05	Break 1	<i>You may leave site and return via main reception</i>
11:35	Period 3	
12:40	Period 4	
13:40	Break 2 / Lunch	<i>You may leave site and return via main reception</i>
14:10	Period 5	
15:15	End of timetabled school day	<i>Period 6 begins / Study Café opens in the Sixth Form block</i>
15:15–16:15	Period 6 / Study Café	<i>Period 6 timetabled for some students; Study Café open to all</i>
16:30	Sixth Form closes	

Year 12 students will be expected to remain on site until their induction tasks have been completed and signed off by the Sixth Form Student Support Manager. The use of study periods to leave site will be monitored and may be adjusted at the Head of Sixth Form's discretion.

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Attendance

Attendance is one of the most significant factors in achieving success in Sixth Form. Research consistently demonstrates a direct link between attendance and outcomes — the more lessons you attend, the better your results will be. We take attendance seriously because we want you to succeed.

Attendance Expectations

- Attend all lessons, tutorials, timetabled examinations and compulsory Sixth Form activities
- Attend meaningful work experience — this forms a compulsory part of your Guided Learning Hours
- Attend registration, assemblies, enrichment sessions and all planned visits and trips
- Inform a member of staff as soon as possible if any problem may prevent you from attending
- Make every effort to arrange dental, medical and other appointments outside of Academy hours

Level	Status	Consequence
96% or above	Excellent	Recognised and celebrated; eligible for all trips, visits and enrichment activities
90–95%	Cause for concern	Tutor discussion; increased monitoring; warning letter issued
Below 90%	Significant concern	Formal intervention; not eligible for enrichment; attendance review meeting arranged
Below 80%	Unacceptable	Formal warning; exam funding under review; students may be required to pay their own exam fees
20+ consecutive days absent (no evidence)	Risk of unenrolment	Urgent contact; meeting offered; written confirmation of unenrolment in line with DfE regulations

Signing In and Out

- Register for every subject and attend all timetabled classes
- If you leave the Sixth Form at any time when you are not in a timetabled lesson (e.g. break / lunch or independent study) sign out at main reception
- If you leave due to illness during a lesson, sign out at main reception **once you have seen Ms Lewis or Mr Hartley**.
- If you are going to be late, email ahead wherever possible. On arrival, report to sign in before going to your lesson

Signing in and out is a safeguarding requirement — it ensures we know who is on or off site at all times, including in the event of a fire or other emergency.

Reporting Absence

- Report all absences to the Attendance Officer by 9:00am on each day of absence: 03333 602 220 (answerphone available)

- Medical appointments should be made outside of timetabled lessons wherever possible; supporting evidence should be provided where this is unavoidable
- All holidays during term time will be treated as unauthorised, unless agreed in advance with the Head of Sixth Form
- Driving lessons are not an acceptable reason for absence from lessons, tutorials or assemblies — these will be treated as unauthorised. Practical driving tests (not theory tests) will be authorised
- Students in receipt of the 16–19 Bursary should be aware that absences or persistent lateness will result in a deduction of payments — please refer to your Bursary Contract or speak to Ms Lewis.

Part-Time Employment

We fully understand the need and desire to work part-time. However, to succeed in Sixth Form the following guidelines must be followed:

- No paid employment between 8:00am and 4:00pm on a calendared Academy day, unless you have the express written permission of the Head of Sixth Form (this permission may be withdrawn at any time)
- All part-time work must be carried out within the law, including in relation to hours worked per week
- Academic studies must always come first — part-time work is undertaken on this understanding
- All part-time work must be carried out with the full knowledge of the Academy — please inform your tutor

Whilst part-time work provides valuable experience and develops important skills, research consistently shows it can have a detrimental impact on academic outcomes at this level. Please balance your commitments carefully.

G**Homework and Personal Study**

Homework and independent study are essential components of your Sixth Form programme. You should expect to receive approximately 9 hours of homework per subject each week, in line with exam board expectations.

- Homework takes many forms: pre-reading, completing classwork, research tasks, assignments, preparing for assessments and flipped learning activities
- Whilst some homework can be completed during study periods, you will also need to work independently at home
- All homework is set and recorded on ClassCharts — always check ClassCharts first. Supplementary resources may be posted on your subject's Microsoft Team
- If you cannot meet a deadline, speak to your teacher in advance — do not leave it until the work is late
- If homework is not completed, you will be expected to attend a catch-up session, held every Tuesday to Friday in the study room from 3:15pm to 4:30pm

What Happens if Homework is Not Completed?

Step 1 — A 24-hour extension will be granted.

Step 2 — If the work remains incomplete, you will be placed in Sixth Form Compulsory Study Café the next school day (3:15–4:00pm). The subject teacher will inform parents/carers.

Step 3 — If you do not attend Compulsory Study Café, your tutor will contact home and you will be placed in Extended Study Café with the Assistant Headteacher: Sixth Form (3:15–4:30pm).

Step 4 — A second failure to attend Extended Study Café will result in you being placed in Reset the following school day.

How to Use Your Personal Study Time Effectively

When your set homework does not add up to 9 hours, or when your teacher asks you to complete personal study, use the following guide:

After every lesson:

- Organise your notes into the correct folder
- Read back through your notes and highlight key terms, thinkers and concepts
- Check your understanding — make a glossary of key terms and note any questions to ask next lesson
- Make flashcards summarising key terms, thinkers and concepts, and quiz yourself

Towards the end of a unit:

- Compare your notes against the specification or PLC — catch up on any gaps
- Quiz yourself on the whole unit using your flashcards
- Produce a single-side A3 revision summary of the unit
- Complete past exam questions — available on your exam board's website
- Produce a diagram showing links between this unit and others — synoptic connections earn marks in most exams

Throughout the course:

- Stay informed about the world — relevant, current examples earn marks in most exams and assignments
- Read online newspapers such as The Guardian (free online) and note examples relevant to each of your units
- Work your way through the 'Read to Succeed' books for each of your subjects — these are an important part of your supra-curricular activity

H**Dress Code and ID Badges**

Plympton Academy Sixth Form has adopted a dress code rather than a uniform. This reflects the fact that we consider you to be young adults who have chosen to study with us and who are preparing to enter professional environments. These expectations were developed in partnership with the Student Council.

Area	Expectation
Coverage	Midriffs and backs must be covered at all times. Clothing must not be sheer or transparent. Necklines must cover all underwear.
Length	Clothing length should be closer to the knee than the hip.
Footwear	Safe, supportive footwear required. Flip flops are not permitted. Footwear must have a backstrap as a minimum.
Jewellery	Jewellery permitted but must be removed during practical lessons when requested by staff.
Headwear	Caps and hats may be worn on site but must be removed indoors. Head coverings worn for religious reasons are exempt.
Graphics	No images or text promoting alcohol, drugs, violence, smoking, vaping, hate, or offensive messages.

Dress Code — Sanctions Procedure

First warning: Challenged by staff; logged on Arbor; tutor contacts home; clear guidance given.

Second warning: Logged on Arbor; Sixth Form Compulsory Study Café; Student Support Manager contacts home.

Continued non-compliance: Formal meeting — student, parents/carers and Assistant Headteacher: Sixth Form; may be sent home to change or placed in Reset.

ID Badges and Lanyards

- You must wear your Sixth Form lanyard at all times whilst on site — it must be clearly visible
- This is a compulsory, non-negotiable safeguarding requirement
- If you forget your badge, collect a visitor's badge from main reception immediately
- If you lose your badge, speak to Mr Allin to arrange a replacement — a charge will apply

Repeated refusal to wear your lanyard will be treated as a safeguarding concern and will be escalated accordingly through the behaviour policy.

I Tutorial Sessions

Morning tutorial sessions are a compulsory part of your programme of study. Registers are taken and tutorial attendance counts towards your overall attendance figure. Please treat these sessions with the same level of commitment as your subject lessons.

- Morning sessions focus on developing study skills, preparing you for Work Experience (Year 12), and supporting your next steps (Year 13)
- Afternoon sessions cover a range of personal development topics, including e-safety, finance and budgeting, relationships, and health and wellbeing
- A whole Sixth Form assembly takes place every Friday afternoon

Terms	Year 12	Year 13
Terms 1 & 2	Developing a Sixth Form mindset	Next Steps — UCAS / Apprenticeships / Employment
Terms 3 & 4	Work Experience preparation	Study Skills
Terms 5 & 6	Study skills and careers	Study Skills

AQA Unit Awards

Twice a week, tutor groups come together and students select from a range of short award options. At the start of the year you will choose 8 different awards to complete during Terms 1 and 2, with further choices for subsequent terms.

In theory, all students can complete at least 4 Unit Awards during their time in the Sixth Form, with most achieving 5. These are recognised by universities and employers and make a strong addition to your CV and UCAS personal statement.

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The Supra-Curricular

Participating in extracurricular and supra-curricular activities enriches your time in Sixth Form and gives you powerful, concrete examples to include in UCAS applications, apprenticeship applications and job applications. Many university and apprenticeship admissions teams place significant weight on these activities.

Extracurricular	Supra-curricular
<i>Activities outside the classroom that are not academically focused.</i> • Sport, fitness suite, school productions, charity work • Develops social skills and leadership qualities • Demonstrates strengths beyond the classroom	<i>Activities extending beyond the specification that are still academically focused.</i> • Online courses: Open Learn, UCL MOOCs, Coursera • Reading journals, broadsheets, watching TED talks • Visiting museums, attending university lectures or open days • Directly supports your personal statement

Opportunities available to you at Plympton Academy include:

- Being part of the Student Leadership Team
- Sixth Form and Academy charity fundraising activities
- iDEA Awards and VInspired Award
- Inter-school events, competitions and academic challenges
- Academy extracurricular activities: sport, performing arts, and academic clubs
- Sixth Form trips and visits — both curriculum-linked and enrichment
- Planning and running House Charity Events
- Assisting with Sports Day and other whole-school events
- University Summer Schools and open days
- The Lessons from Auschwitz / Holocaust Education Ambassador scheme

All available activities are publicised on your Year group Teams pages, tutor noticeboards and the Sixth Form study room display boards. Keep an eye out regularly — and say yes whenever you can.

Work Experience

Work Experience is a compulsory element of the Year 12 course for all students, whether you are following A Level, BTEC or a vocational programme. A significant part of your tutorial programme will focus on preparing you for and reflecting on your placement.

- If you are following a BTEC course, aim to secure a placement within that subject area, or the course most closely aligned to your career plans
- The careers team will support you in finding your placement during tutorial time
- If you have any questions about Work Experience, speak to Ms Lewis in the first instance

K**Behaviour and Conduct**

We have high expectations of all Sixth Form students. You are role models for the rest of the Academy and you are afforded additional freedoms in recognition of your maturity and the level of study you are undertaking. With those freedoms come additional responsibilities.

We actively celebrate positive behaviour through Arbor, using both whole-school and Sixth Form-specific positive behaviour categories such as 'independent study' and 'problem solving'. We encourage you to note your positive behaviours and redeem points in the ClassCharts store.

Key Conduct Expectations

- Behave in a mature, responsible and respectful manner at all times, both on and off site
- Treat all staff, students and visitors with courtesy and respect
- Uphold the reputation of Plympton Academy in all settings
- Keep the Sixth Form Centre tidy, clean and welcoming — take pride in your shared professional space
- Mobile phones, AirPods and earphones must not be used on site, except within the Sixth Form Centre. Devices used in other areas will be confiscated and further sanctions may apply for repeated misuse
- Plympton Academy is a strictly no-smoking and no-vaping site. This applies to all Sixth Form trips and visits, regardless of age
- Students must not park personal vehicles on the Academy site
- Bullying, intimidatory or prejudicial behaviour of any kind will not be tolerated and will be treated as a serious concern

Rewards and Recognition

Plympton Academy values and actively celebrates positive behaviour and contribution to Sixth Form life. Students who engage positively may be recognised through:

- Celebration assemblies and praise postcards home
- Invitations to special curriculum enrichment events
- Opportunities to represent the Sixth Form at internal and external events
- Priority consideration for leadership roles, trips and visits

Sanctions and Escalation

First Warning	Meeting with tutor to reinforce expectations; behaviour recorded on Arbor; tutor contacts home
Second Warning	Meeting with Sixth Form Student Support Manager; placed in Sixth Form Compulsory Study Café; parents/carers contacted
Third Warning / Non-compliance	Formal meeting with student, parents/carers and Assistant Headteacher: Sixth Form; placed in Reset; expectations and consequences agreed and recorded in writing

Your behaviour record — including conduct, engagement, punctuality and adherence to this Code of Conduct — may be referenced in university, apprenticeship and employer references. Positive behaviour will be reflected positively. Persistent or serious breaches may also be referenced where appropriate.

L**Your Next Steps — Planning Your Future**

Whatever your post-18 destination — university, degree apprenticeship, higher apprenticeship or employment — the earlier you begin planning, the better placed you will be. At Plympton Academy Sixth Form, we are committed to helping every student identify, reach and thrive in their next steps.

At the end of Year 12 and the beginning of Year 13, the majority of tutorial sessions will focus on planning for your future, using Unifrog and UCAS as key tools. To get the very best support from us, you need to engage actively in these sessions and put in work outside them so that you arrive with ideas, questions and a growing sense of direction.

UCAS Applications

- It is vital that you meet our internal UCAS deadlines — these are slightly earlier than the UCAS website deadlines to allow time for your tutor's reference and for the application to be checked and submitted
- Your personal statement is one part of the application — your predicted grades, attendance, and conduct record all contribute to the overall picture presented to universities
- We are very happy to discuss your ideas, ambitions and options at any point. Please speak to your tutor or to Mr Hartley

Degree and Level 4 Apprenticeships

- Degree Apprenticeships and Level 4 Apprenticeships are outstanding pathways, combining professional work experience with academic study — often to degree level — without tuition fees
- Applications typically open early in Year 13. Start researching your options now, using Unifrog and dedicated apprenticeship search tools
- Ms Lewis is available to support you with researching options, preparing applications and preparing for interviews

Careers Support

- All students have access to independent, impartial careers advice through Ms Lewis — our qualified Careers Lead
- One-to-one careers interviews can be arranged with Ms Lewis directly or via your tutor
- Unifrog is your primary platform for exploring pathways, tracking your activities and building your applications — make regular use of it throughout the year

Whatever your next step, we will support you in getting there. Speak to your tutor, to Ms Lewis, or to Mr Hartley — our door is always open, and we are genuinely excited to see where you go.

My Notes and Questions

Use this page to note any questions as you read through the handbook, or as things come to mind during induction.

Key Contacts at a Glance

Absence reporting (by 9:00am)	03333 602 220 — answerphone available outside office hours
Sixth Form Student Support Manager	Ms Lewis — via main reception or the Sixth Form office
Head of Sixth Form	Mr Hartley — via main reception or the Sixth Form office
Careers Lead / Work Experience	Ms Lewis — via main reception or the Sixth Form office
Arbor (Timetable; Homework; School Messages etc)	App or Arbor website.
Unifrog (pathways & applications)	unifrog.org — explore all post-18 options and build your applications