

A group of students in school uniforms are sitting at a desk in a classroom, smiling and working together. They are using calculators and a tablet. The background shows a bulletin board with various papers and charts.

**SIXTH FORM**  
**HANDBOOK 2025 - 2026**

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# WELCOME

Your time in the Sixth Form is an opportunity to explore your interests, enjoy new challenges and establish your direction for the future. It is the pinnacle of your school career and we are determined that it should be a fulfilling and happy two years.

Rather than maintaining a performance level across the fullest range of subjects at GCSE, you will be specialising in A Level study and exploring a wide and enriching curriculum to prepare you for life at 25. You will be expected to adopt a much more independent approach to your studies than at GCSE. But don't worry, we are here to support you over the next two years and to help prepare you for life at university and beyond.

We are also keen to make your time in the Sixth Form the happiest two years of your educational career so far. There is a lot on offer and much to enjoy. This handbook is designed to help you to find your feet in the Sixth Form. Read it through carefully and feel free to raise any queries with your Tutor.

# HELP AND ADVICE

One of the most important pieces of advice that an outgoing member of the Sixth Form would give to an incoming member is to **communicate** – concerns, progress, pressures – as the need arises and before things feel like they are getting too big.

Most problems can be dealt with by your Tutor but there are a whole range of people that you can talk to. It is very much up to you to decide how to share your thoughts and with whom. The Sixth Form Team, the Health and Wellbeing Centre and the School Counsellors are all available to support you.

**Mrs Rebecca Clay**  
Head of Sixth Form



023 9236 4287  
[r.clay@pgs.org.uk](mailto:r.clay@pgs.org.uk)

**Miss Amy Chaplin**  
Head of Year 13



023 9236 4288  
[a.chaplin@pgs.org.uk](mailto:a.chaplin@pgs.org.uk)

**Mr Tom Fairman**  
Head of Year 12



023 9268 1302  
[t.fairman@pgs.org.uk](mailto:t.fairman@pgs.org.uk)

**Mr James Burkinshaw**  
Head of Careers  
and Universities



023 9236 4217  
[j.burkinshaw@pgs.org.uk](mailto:j.burkinshaw@pgs.org.uk)

**Miss Sarah Pearce**  
Careers, Universities and  
Sixth Form Administrator



023 9236 4261  
[s.pearce@pgs.org.uk](mailto:s.pearce@pgs.org.uk)

## Peer Support

### The Senior Prefects

The Senior Prefects are available to have a chat and to help you find your feet.

### The Sixth Form Council

The Sixth Form Council is elected by the Sixth Form to represent the Sixth Form as a whole.

They are responsible for contributing to the running and development of the Sixth Form Centre, as well as raising issues relating to the life and experience of the Sixth Form. As a group they co-ordinate a variety of charity and social events throughout the year, including the Christmas Charity Appeal and the Sixth Form Leavers' Ball.

Representatives from the Sixth Form Council also sit on the Whole School Council.

## Health and Wellbeing Centre

023 9236 4243 or 07736 143449

[nursing@pgs.org.uk](mailto:nursing@pgs.org.uk)

### School Nurses

Sister Sue Toms and Sister Susan Edgar

### Health Care Assistant

Mrs Michelle Kays and Mrs Wendy Heyes

The Health and Wellbeing Centre has a full-time nurse who pupils may see if they feel unwell. Only the nurse may give permission for a pupil to go home if they are too unwell to stay.

Pupils can be seen at the Health and Wellbeing Centre for non-emergencies at the following times:

08:15 - 09:00

10:50 - 11:15

13:00 - 14:00

15:45 - 16:00 for the collection of medication.

The Health and Wellbeing Centre is always open for emergencies.

## Counselling Service

The School Counsellors are Dr Niki King and Mrs Tina Moulard-Collins. Pupils may see the School Counsellor by making an appointment through email [school.counsellors@pgs.org.uk](mailto:school.counsellors@pgs.org.uk) or by going to the drop-in session on Wednesdays at 13:00 - 14:00. Referrals can also be taken through the Health and Wellbeing Centre, tutors or teachers. All arrangements are totally confidential.

# Who else can help?

## Head

Mr David Wickes is available to see any pupil between 8.20am and 8.30am without appointment.

## Senior Deputy Head

Mr Richard Bristow  
[r.bristow@pgs.org.uk](mailto:r.bristow@pgs.org.uk)

## Deputy Head (Teaching and Learning Development)

Mr Jon Andrews  
[j.andrews@pgs.org.uk](mailto:j.andrews@pgs.org.uk)

## Deputy Head (Academic)

Mrs Samantha Haslam  
[s.haslam@pgs.org.uk](mailto:s.haslam@pgs.org.uk)

## Deputy Head (Pastoral)

Mrs Laura Ryan  
[l.ryan@pgs.org.uk](mailto:l.ryan@pgs.org.uk)

## Drama

Mr James Robinson  
*(Director of Drama)*  
[j.robinson@pgs.org.uk](mailto:j.robinson@pgs.org.uk)

## Music

Mr Alex Goodwin  
*(Director of Music)*  
[a.goodwin@pgs.org.uk](mailto:a.goodwin@pgs.org.uk)

## Sports and Games

Mr Simon Copeland  
*(Director of Sport)*  
[s.copeland@pgs.org.uk](mailto:s.copeland@pgs.org.uk)

## Learning Support

Mrs Caroline Smith  
*(Head of Learning Support)*  
[c.smith@pgs.org.uk](mailto:c.smith@pgs.org.uk)

## Surmaster

Mr David Doyle  
[d.doyle@pgs.org.uk](mailto:d.doyle@pgs.org.uk)



# YOUR TUTOR AND TUTOR GROUP

**For most Sixth Formers, the Tutor Group is the main point of contact and support and the relationship between Tutor and Tutee is a strong one.**

## **What you can expect from your Tutor**

- To be in regular contact with you in Tutor Group sessions or in 1:1 meetings
- To be available to help with any problems as they arise
- To give advice on study skills as needed
- To monitor and help with your planning and time management
- To help you set academic and personal targets and to help you achieve these, liaising closely with your subject teachers
- To help you complete your UCAS form, offering advice and guidance through the draft stages
- To take an interest in and to support your co-curricular activities wherever possible
- To maintain contact with your parents as appropriate
- To listen and to provide encouragement and support at every stage of your Sixth Form career
- To be your advocate in case of difficulties

## **What your Tutor can expect from you**

- Regular and punctual attendance at all Tutor Group and 1:1 sessions
- Registering and signing in diligently
- A commitment to your own learning and academic success
- To make the most of the opportunities offered to you
- A positive and co-operative approach to the advice given by your Tutor
- To be kept informed by you or your parents of any problems developing, which may affect your work and progress
- To be consulted at each stage of your university application or career-decision-making process
- To draft your UCAS form in good time to allow for checking and discussion
- Regular communication and contact from you
- Full engagement in your 1:1 meetings
- To have a positive approach to school life so that your Tutor can be supportive

# TIMETABLE

## The Times of the Day

The school day is the same for all year groups. It is important that pupils are punctual and ready for lessons and activities.

## Monday to Friday

am	08:30	Bell
	08:35	Registration
	08:40	Assembly
	09:05	Period 1
	10:00	Period 2
	10:50	Break
	11:10	Bell, Move to Period 3
	11:15	Period 3
pm	12:10	Period 4
	13:00	Lunch
	13:55	Bell, Move to Period 5
	14:00	Period 5
	14:55	Period 6
	15:45	End of School

## The Sixth Form Week

Monday	08:35 – 09:00, Tutor Time
	14:00 – 15:45, Community Action Workplace (Year 12)
Tuesday	08:35 – 09:00, Sixth Form Assembly
	14:00 – 15:45, Sixth Form Games (register in your activity)
Wednesday	08:35 – 09:00, House Assembly & Tutor Time
Thursday	08:35 – 09:00, Tutor Time
	14:00 – 15:45, Ignite (Year 12)
Friday	08:35 – 09:00, Tutor Time

# TERM DATES 2025 - 2026

## **Autumn Term 2025**

PDD\* Monday 1 & Tuesday 2 September  
Induction Day, Wednesday 3 September  
Term Begins, Thursday 4 September  
Half Term, Saturday 18 October - Sunday 2 November  
Term Ends, Friday 12 December

## **Spring Term 2026**

PDD\* Monday 5 January  
Term Begins, Tuesday 6 January  
Half Term, Saturday 14 - Sunday 22 February  
Term Ends, Wednesday 25 March

## **Summer Term 2026**

PDD\* Monday 13 April  
Term Begins Tuesday 14 April  
Bank Holiday, Monday 4 May  
Half Term, Saturday 23 May - Sunday 31 May  
PDD\* Monday 1 June  
Term Ends, Friday 10 July

PDD\* - Professional Development Day, staff only.

# THE SIXTH FORM YEARS: A TIMELINE OF KEY EVENTS

## Autumn Term, Year 12

September	All Year 12 induction Reception Event for Parents of Year 12
October	Half Term Feedback Peer Mentors appointed
November	University Evening for parents and pupils
December	Parents' Evening End of Term Feedback

## Spring Term, Year 12

March	Prefect Appointments Year 12 Reports Specialist Subject Advisor meetings commence
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## Summer Term, Year 12

May	EPO and Extend deadlines Year 12 internal examinations Year 12 Parents Evening
June	Practice interviews UCAS Day Finalised UAGs

## Autumn Term, Year 13

September	UCAS Medical and Oxbridge applications deadline Year 13 Parents Evening
October	UCAS deadline

## Spring Term, Year 13

January	A Level Mock Examinations and Results
February	Year 13 Parents Evening

## Summer Term, Year 13

May	A Level Examinations begin Leavers' Day and Leavers' Ball
June	Leavers' Celebration
August	A Level results

# HIGHLIGHTS

## **Privileges and Responsibilities**

The PGS Sixth Form is full of opportunities, enjoyment and challenges – and as the most senior pupils in the school, you get to lead and to be role models for many of the activities that you enjoy. In particular, the Sixth Form years provide opportunities for leadership such as:

- Prefect Training & School and House Prefecting
- Sixth Form Council
- Peer Mentoring
- Sports Captains (at School or House level)
- Leadership roles in Music and Drama
- CCF
- Outdoor Leadership
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme
- MUN Leadership
- Portmuthian Editorial team
- Organising a society or club
- Organising charitable events

The Sixth Form years are also a lot of fun. Here are just a few of the events to look forward to in the Sixth Form calendar.

**Christmas Charity Appeal** – each year the Sixth Form donates an impressive number of toys, goods and food to support local charities.

**Secret Santa** – experience the joy of Christmas, complete with decorations and carols in the Sixth Form Centre, as mystery gifts are exchanged!

**The Sixth Form Leavers' Ball** – one of the big social events of the year as students and staff celebrate the end of their school careers on a high (literally) in the Spinnaker Tower.

**Leavers' Day** – a service for pupils and parents following the March Through the Arch in May

**Leavers' Celebration** – held at Hulsea Playing Fields for parents and pupils in June

As the school's oldest pupils you are the role models for the whole school community. All Sixth Formers have a responsibility to themselves and other members of the Sixth Form to establish and maintain the highest standards of behaviour, dress and approach, as well as leading the extra-curricular life of the school.

### **Registration and leaving the school site**

The school has the responsibility of knowing where its pupils are at all times. Apart from anything else, in the event of an emergency it is vital that staff and members of the emergency services do not spend time looking for a pupil who is not on the school site, but who has not signed out.

- Pupils are required to register every morning by 8.35am or before allocated time on 1:1 session days. for Year 12 this is 9am, for Year 13 at 11am.
- **Pupils are not allowed to leave the school site before 12:50 (this includes travel to Games activities on Wednesday), unless with permission from their Head of Year, Head of Sixth Form or from the Health and Wellbeing Centre**
- Pupils may leave the site at lunchtime. They must sign out in reception. Pupils may leave at 12:50 and must be back at 13:55.
- Pupils may also leave the site at 12:50 and go home, only if they have no afternoon lessons, activities or other requirements and sign out at reception.
- **If you are ill, you need to visit the Health and Wellbeing Centre to see a nurse who will determine whether you need to go home. You can not sign yourself out.**



## **Cars and Driving**

All regulations related to cars and driving are designed to ensure the safety of pupils who use their own transport to and from school, and to activities at Hilsea or elsewhere. We have a responsibility to you and your families to do all we can to advise and support in this matter.

- You may only travel by car to and from school activities (as a pupil driver or a passenger of a pupil driver) after completing the appropriate driving forms (available from Miss Pearce) and obtaining permission from the Head of Sixth Form.
- Pupils are not allowed to park their cars on school property during the school day. Pupils are specifically requested not to park in Pembroke Park – the small estate behind the Museum, or Penny Lane – next to the nearby Junior School. We seek to maintain good relations with our neighbours – many of whom are elderly or have young children – and not to take up the parking spaces immediately outside their homes.

## **Uniform and appearance**

Being part of the Sixth Form means wearing the appropriate uniform – and wearing it well. If expectations are maintained, we will not spend excessive time discussing what is and is not appropriate. Pupils are expected to wear school uniform at all times, including to and from school and games facilities. Please see the full expectations on pages 17 and 18.

# SIXTH FORM UNIFORM

The PGS Sixth Form dress code is designed for pupils to be both smart and comfortable, reflecting a modern business style environment. Pupils are expected to wear their suits with pride, to reflect their standing in the school community. Pupils are able to reflect their individuality through their style of suit and choice of shirt and accessories but are expected to adhere to the common themes below:

## Suit

A smart grey, black or navy skirt or trouser suit. Suit jackets must match the accompanying skirt or trousers in both colour and material. Trousers should be tailored but can be in a variety of styles. Skirts should be tailored but not be tight fitting (no lycra) and must be no more than 10cm above the knee. Suit jackets should be worn whilst in school.

## Shirt

A smart, white or pastel coloured shirt, with the option of subtle stripes or checks, with a collar and sleeves. Girls may wear a fitted shirt with an open collar. Boys' shirts must be long enough to be tucked in. Shirts should be modest in style and not tight fitting.

## Jumper

A plain dark V-neck knitted jumper may be worn. Motifs should not be visible. It should be able to be worn comfortably under your suit jacket. Sweatshirts, hoodies or chunky knits are not permitted.

## Tie

Boys must wear a PGS School tie (Sixth Form, Colours, Prefect etc.) at all times, with their top buttons done up. Ties would not be worn during hot weather at the direction of the Head of Sixth Form.

## Badge

Pupils will also wear a PGS Badge to indicate that that they are members of our community

## **Sport**

### **Games Representative**

When representing the school pupils are expected to wear the appropriate representative team kit.

In addition pupils will require: PGS Sport Tracksuit Trousers or leggings (unbranded/ plain black sports leggings). These should be worn at all times if in sports kit around school. Mouthguard: compulsory for Rugby or Hockey. Shin pads required when playing Hockey. Boots with moulded or screw-in kite marked safety studs for Rugby players only

### **Games Non-Representative**

PGS polo shirt (red or white, available in the Uniform Shop)

PGS Sport Tracksuit Trousers or leggings (unbranded/ plain black sports leggings). These should be worn at all times if in sports kit around school.

Black branded PGS Shorts or skort

Sport trainers or Astro shoes

Shin pads (Football)

Optional: Black waterproof PGS Sport Jacket, PGS Sport hoodie. Black sports leggings may be worn under a skort or shorts whilst playing sport

## **Guidance and expectations applicable to both uniforms**

### **Tights**

These should be dark coloured if the skirt is worn above the knee and free from holes and ladders.

### **Socks**

Should be chosen to complement the trouser suit, shirt and tie, but black, dark grey or navy socks are encouraged.

### **Shoes**

Smart leather shoes in black, navy or dark brown should be worn by all pupils. There should be no trainers, boots or heels higher than 5cm.

### **Hair**

Should be neat, well groomed, off the face and be non-ostentatious in style. Long hair should be tied back for practical lessons. Hair must be of natural colour and, if dyed, of natural tones. Facial hair must be smart and well groomed.



### **Make up**

Discreet make up is permitted.

### **Jewellery**

Should be discreet and professional. Jewellery will need to be removed for Games.

### **Belts**

Should be smart, leather style belts without ostentatious buckles.

*If pupils choose not to meet these standards, they may well be asked to replace the relevant item of clothing. Thus, care should be taken when originally buying your Sixth Form suit to ensure it meets the requirements. Further clarity can be sought from the Head of Sixth Form. The school reserves the right to determine whether a pupil's appearance meets the school's expectations.*

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## Study Periods

Academic life in the Sixth Form also involves having study periods within your timetable. Aside from certain expectations about being able to manage your workload, these can be spent studying in a way that you see fit. The following locations are suitable for study periods:

- The Sixth Form Centre Library – a place for silent working
- The Memorial Library – a place for silent study
- The Project Room – a place for collaborative working
- The Sixth Form Cafe – a place for collaborative working

## Games

It is important to note that Games in the Sixth Form is not optional. We believe that a short burst of physical activity at least once a week (preferably more) is as important to your health and well-being as anything else. It is important to feel that you are maximising this time each Tuesday so please speak to Mr Copeland or a member of the Sixth Form Team if you would like an alternative activity added to the wide selection on offer.

- We do understand that there are times of the year when you may feel under pressure with academic requirements. It is vital that you speak to your Tutor and a member of the Sixth Form team and do not simply decide to miss a games session.
- Firstly, you are likely to find us sympathetic to your concerns if you can communicate these in advance. Secondly, members of staff (and external coaches) give up time to supervise your activities – please ensure that you respect and honour commitments made.
- In the event that you are 'off games' please bring written confirmation to your Tutor; please also take this to the Games Office (E Block) to ensure that the register is amended. If this is sent in electronic form from your parents to your tutor, please copy Mrs Helen Grist [h.grist@pgs.org.uk](mailto:h.grist@pgs.org.uk). The responsibility for communicating 'off games' lies with you – please do not assume it will be known. All 'off games' pupils must go to the Memorial Library.

## Part-time jobs

Whilst earning some money might seem like a good idea, experience – and national evidence – shows us that having a part-time job during school term-time has a significant negative impact on studies. Please consider carefully what you are taking on and the impact that it is likely to have on your academic progress and your ability to balance other interests and commitments.

Please continue to communicate effectively with you Tutor or members of the Sixth Form Team on this front and be honest about your commitments at all times.



# THE SIXTH FORM CENTRE

The Sixth Form Centre is a wonderful addition to the PGS campus and a dedicated space for Sixth Form pupils.

## **Ground Floor**

The Head of Year 12 office is on the ground floor of the Sixth Form Centre.

The Sixth Form Centre Café and social area is open at the following times:

- Breakfast, 07:45-08:25
- Morning break, 10:30-11.10
- Lunch, 12:30-14:00

Sixth Formers are reminded that the atmosphere at all times, and especially during Study Periods, should be calm and purposeful.

The Sixth Form Careers Centre is run by Mr Burkinshaw and Miss Fewings and is always open for you to drop in and to have a chat with the Careers staff, who will help you to research the latest information on university choices, careers and opportunities for work experience and Gap Years. Miss Fewings, the Careers, Universities and Sixth Form Administrator, is available during the school day in the Careers Office.

## **First Floor**

The Library in the Sixth Form Centre is designated as a quiet work space.

The offices for the Head of Sixth Form and Head of Year 13 are also located on the first floor.

# ACADEMIC LIFE IN THE SIXTH FORM

## Independent Study

With the freedom to choose your own subjects at A Level and to work with much more flexibility, comes the responsibility of managing your own studies.

In addition to your work in class, you are expected to work in your own time. At A Level this is about an hour per subject per day. This means that you should be aiming to spend **at least fifteen hours each week** on homework and independent study. This will include: reading and research, note-making, essay planning and writing, problem solving and practical coursework.

The academic life of the Sixth Form depends upon the quality of each student's preparation for active participation in learning. What happens in class largely depends on what you have done before the class begins.

It is very important that you attend all of your timetabled lessons. You will find that there is a great deal to cover at A Level in a relatively short time. If you do miss a lesson without permission, then the teacher will report it to your Tutor and action will follow.

## The Library

Sixth Formers spend a good deal of their time in the Library and will find its support during study periods useful. The Head Librarian, Dr Webb and her team will be pleased to help with enquiries, pupil research and general use of the facilities.

Sixth formers have two dedicated spaces for their use: the Sixth Form Centre Library and the Memorial Library which are open from 08.00-18.00 daily.

In the Memorial Library there is a strict rule of silence. In the Sixth Form Centre Library pupils should work quietly with only occasional whispered questions. Sixth formers may also use the other Library spaces in G Block which includes the Project Room for group work. Please note that bottled water and covered hot drinks are permitted in these spaces but food should always be consumed in the Sixth Form Café. Good etiquette requires that a desk is left ready for the next user so clearing litter into the bins provided is essential.

Headphones may be used in support of study but volume must not be audible to others. Phones should not be visible. There is a mobile phone drop available to aid distraction-free study.

If you cannot find what you need, always ask and the team will track down the required items to support your studies.

## **Digital Learning**

All Year 12 and Year 13 pupils will be expected to bring a tablet (the school's preferred device being an iPad or laptop) with them to school. The devices will be used in a variety of ways both in class and for homework with the aims of promoting both collaboration and personalised learning as well as enhancing and augmenting teaching within the school. In addition to allowing for improvements in the way tasks can be undertaken, the introduction of tablet devices will also facilitate tasks that previously would not have been feasible in the classroom. While these will not necessarily be used in every lesson, the expectation is that pupils should bring them to all of their classes, however the devices should not be used for social or gaming purposes during the school day.

All devices will need to be registered with ICT Services and the school's device management system. For further details please refer to the Digital Learning page of our website, [www.pgs.org.uk/about-us/digital-learning](http://www.pgs.org.uk/about-us/digital-learning).

# ESSENTIAL STUDY SKILLS

The exact study skills you will need to develop will be dependent on the subjects you are studying and your own strengths and weaknesses. It is difficult to generalise about study skills, and you will need to work with your Tutor and subject teachers to find your most effective approach to study.

- **Get yourself organised** – keep a work diary (ideally using the 'To-do list' on Google Classroom) detailing work set, work completed and work outstanding
- **Try and stick to a regular work rota** – study a little and often, rather than leaving huge amounts of work to the eleventh hour. Late work is often rushed, incomplete and of inferior quality. Avoid stress and start an assignment well in advance of a deadline, giving you the chance to ask staff for help if you need it
- **Work in a studious environment** – not somewhere where you will be distracted. In school, use the Sixth Form Centre Library or the Memorial Library. At home, work somewhere where you will not be disturbed and where you can leave books and folders safely
- **Define your work tasks** – Make sure you understand what is expected of you. Seek clarification if you are uncertain about essay titles, the parameters of note-taking etc
- **Don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it** – don't suffer in silence and don't pretend you understand something when you do not!
- **Use all the available resources** – teachers, textbooks, libraries (the school, University of Portsmouth, local), periodicals, the Internet, newspapers, television and radio, other students
- **Motivate yourself** – Have a goal to aim for; on a micro scale this might be a favourite TV programme in half an hour after some revision; on a longer scale a university grade offer
- **Work in attention span units** – Few students can work effectively for more than one hour before their concentration starts to ebb (particularly with revision). Divide your working time up into attention spans units (40–60 minutes) punctuated by short breaks
- **Use a dictionary** – Many examination boards penalise poor spelling and grammar. Accuracy of expression improves the quality of your response
- **The more you put in, the more you get out** – both in terms of results and enjoyment





THE  
PORTSMOUTH  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL  
SIXTH FORM