



ST HELEN &
ST KATHARINE

**LOWER 6 HANDBOOK
2017-18**

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All school policies, including the Code of Conduct, are available on the school Extranet or from the School Office on request. These consist of all policies related to teaching and learning as well as those concerned with pastoral care, Child Protection and Health and Safety. The School Complaints Procedure is also available.

Introduction

Welcome to St Helen's Lower Sixth. We hope that you enjoy your two years of post GCSE education and gain the results you need to go on to the next stage beyond St Helen's, whatever that may be.

Joining the Sixth Form represents a fresh start for you all, whether you have come from our own Year 11 or from another school. The Sixth Form at St Helen's is a cohesive unit in its own right within this 9-18 school, with its own facilities, guidelines, privileges and responsibilities. The Sixth Form Centre provides your social and study focus with its common rooms, kitchens and gardens. An additional Sixth Form quiet work room is available off old school hall and a silent working area is in the library.

High academic standards are sought and achieved by our Sixth Form students and the majority move on to higher education at the end of their two years here. There are numerous opportunities beyond the examination curriculum and most girls extend and add to their sporting, dramatic, musical or other interests that have been developed in earlier years.

The transition from GCSE work to Advanced level work is not always easy and in some subjects the jump in standard required may seem considerable, initially. The change from the pressure of GCSE where work is often highly organised, to the greater freedom of the Sixth Form can be disconcerting. It is often not possible, especially perhaps in Arts subjects, to set much written work until some ground has been covered in lessons. This may give you the impression that there is little to be done. From the beginning of each course, there will be considerable background reading: this is essential if you are to gain a real understanding of the subjects you are studying. Staff will guide you in your reading but you will also have to use your initiative in using the school library and other resource centres effectively.

In some subjects extended answers and the essay will become the chief area of written work. Essay construction is a skill that will improve with practice but you should not hesitate to ask for help if you feel you need it. Another basic skill that you will need to master is note taking: to sift and sort information, whether orally transmitted, read or from observation, into a coherent record is not always easy. Keeping clear and informative notes is something you will appreciate when you come to revise for examinations.

Sixth Form work is generally arranged in smaller teaching groups than in the rest of the School. This allows a more informal atmosphere but also makes it desirable that all students make a personal contribution to the group by taking part in discussion and asking questions. Try not to be intimidated by the more vocal members of a group: everyone's views are valuable and contribute greatly to general understanding.

You will be able to enjoy the freedom to plan and organise your extended study time within a supportive school framework, allowing you to grow in academic and personal confidence. The Sixth Form is viewed as a bridge between the necessary constraints of school life and the exciting but daunting complete freedom you will experience at university.

This handbook contains much of the factual information you will need. Please refer to it, but ask your form tutor if you need additional guidance.

General Information

Contact Details

Main School telephone number: 01235 520173

School Fax: 01235 532934

Email: info@shsk.org.uk (or personal staff email address)

Website: www.shsk.org.uk

Bursary telephone number: 01235 520657

Absences: email attendance@shsk.org.uk

Head of Sixth Form

Miss H Doherty
hdoherly@shsk.org.uk

Deputy Head of Sixth Form

Mr J Smart
jsmart@shsk.org.uk

Head of Higher Education and Careers

Mrs J Armstrong
jarmstrong@shsk.org.uk

Tutor groups 2017 – 2018

Form	Tutor	Room
L6A	Mrs S Scott-Malden sscottmalden@shsk.org.uk	Room 24
L6B	Miss D Smith dsmith@shsk.org.uk	Sixth Form Study
L6C	Mrs L Probert lprobert@shsk.org.uk	D14
L6D	Mr T Bownass tbowmass@shsk.org.uk	SFC
L6E	Mrs L Turner lturner@shsk.org.uk	D2
L6F	Dr F Macdonald fmacdonald@shsk.org.uk	Room 1
L6G	Miss H Spencer hspencer@shsk.org.uk	D5
L6H	Mrs H Wigginton hwigginton@shsk.org.uk	SFC

The School Day

Registration Assembly/chapel	8.40am – 9.10am
Period 1	9.10am – 9.50am
Period 2	9.50am – 10.25am
Break	10.25am – 10.45am
Period 3	10.45am – 11.25am
Period 4	11.25am – 12.05pm
Lunch	12.05pm – 1.15pm
Period 5	1.15pm – 1.55pm
Period 6	1.55pm – 2.35pm
Break	2.35pm – 2.45pm
Period 7	2.45pm – 3.25pm
Period 8	3.25pm – 4.05pm
Form time/registration	4.05pm – 4.10pm

Registration, Attendance and Signing in Procedures

The school day starts at 8.40am with registration. All girls are expected to be with their form tutors in their form rooms at this time. You should aim to arrive in School by 8.30am to give you time to organise yourself for the day before registration. This period provides a key point of contact between staff, form tutors and girls and there are often important messages to be passed on.

Afternoon registration with form tutors takes place each day at 4.05pm in the Atrium for the Sixth Form. You should not leave before you have been registered by your form tutor or his/her representative. You must not sign yourself out before your form tutor arrives at the end of the day.

If you for any reason arrive in School after registration, you must sign in on the sheets outside Reception and then go and join your form in assembly. Late arrivals will be recorded in the form register. Persistent lateness will be viewed seriously and may result in loss of privileges.

If you are too unwell to attend School, we ask that a parent telephones the School before 9.00am to let us know. Although most of you will be 18 before you leave and therefore legally adults, we ask your parents to continue to write your absence notes and to make the phone call/email about absence as we are responsible to them for your education at this important time.

It is a Sixth Form privilege to take one regular early afternoon each week if your timetable allows and this is arranged on an individual basis with your form tutor provided it is not considered detrimental to your work. It is intended to provide you with the opportunity to study quietly at home or visit

libraries, museums or exhibitions that may not be open at the weekend. There may be occasions when we ask you to remain in School for all or part of this afternoon hence please do not arrange driving lessons during this time. As attending morning assemblies and form time are important parts of our community life, late mornings are not permitted, even if you have no timetabled lessons first thing.

You are permitted to leave the School premises at lunch times, if your parents agree, between 12.00 and 2.00pm if you have no lessons or other commitments. You may also leave the site for other authorised reasons such as community service, lessons at Abingdon School or to take your early afternoon. On each occasion, you are required to sign out and in on the sheets provided outside Reception. It is important that we know who is on the premises in case there is a fire alarm, or in case we need to find you for any reason. You should not leave the site for any other reasons unless you have requested and received permission from Miss Doherty or your Deputy Head of Section. Again, under those circumstances, please do not forget to sign out.

Absence Requests

Letters from your parents concerned with requests for absence for routine medical or dental appointments, university open days and interviews or significant family events should be addressed to the Head of Sixth Form, Miss Doherty.

As the timetable is more flexible for you in the Sixth Form and you will have a number of study periods, routine appointments, where possible, should be arranged so that you do not miss timetabled lessons. Please note that while driving **tests** can be taken during school time, driving **lessons** should be arranged out of school hours or during the lunch hour, and not during study periods.

Requests for leave for 'taster' courses such as Medlink should be made via the Careers and Higher Education Department which will liaise with your form tutor and the Head of Sixth Form. Form tutors will monitor your university open day attendance and advise on visits. As a general rule, you are restricted to two such visits a term during school time in L6 to avoid missing too much teaching. Form tutors will be able to advise about alternatives such as holiday or weekend visits with St Helen's Old Girls. Please ask your parents to confirm in writing any proposed absence for open days and taster courses well before the event takes place. You should also talk to teaching staff as a matter of courtesy if you will miss their lessons.

Any requests for your absence other than the above should be addressed to the Headmistress.

Term Dates 2017 – 2019



ST HELEN &
ST KATHARINE

TERM DATES 2017/2019

Michaelmas Term 2017	Student Induction	Monday 4 September Yrs 5, 6, 7 and L6
	Term begins	Tuesday 5 September, 8.40am
	Open Day	Saturday 30 September
	Half Term	Monday 16 – Friday 27 October
	Term ends	Friday 15 December, 12 Noon
Lent Term 2018	Term begins	Tuesday 9 January, 8.40am
	Half term	Monday 12 – Friday 16 February
	Term ends	Thursday 29 March, 12 Noon
Trinity Term 2018	Term begins	Monday 23 April, 8.40am
	May Day	Monday 7 May
	Half term	Monday 28 May – Friday 1 June
	Term ends	Friday 6 July, 12 Noon
Michaelmas Term 2018	Student Induction	Wednesday 5 September Yrs 5, 6, 7 and L6
	Term begins	Thursday 6 September, 8.40am
	Open Day	TBC
	Half term	Monday 15 – Friday 26 October
	End of term	Friday 14 December, 12 Noon
Lent Term 2019	Term begins	Tuesday 8 January, 8.40am
	Half term	Monday 18 – Friday 22 February
	End of term	Friday 29 March, 12 Noon
Trinity Term 2019	Term begins	Tuesday 23 April, 8.40am
	May Day	Monday 6 May
	Half term	Monday 27 May – Friday 31 May
	End of term	Friday 5 July, 12 Noon

Please note:

Some dates are different from those of Abingdon School. We hope they will not cause undue inconvenience to anyone. Please note that there will be some days when girls who usually travel on late buses from Abingdon School will need to make alternative travel arrangements.

Since the holiday allowance is already greater than that in the state sector, we do ask parents not to request extensions to the St Helen's published holidays.

Lower Sixth Year Outline

(Please refer to termly calendars for up to date information which may include changes and confirmations of dates)

Michaelmas Term 2017

Monday 4 th September	L6 induction
Wednesday 13 th September	Welcome Evening for all L6 parents
Thursday 12 th October	Grades published on Parent Portal
Tuesday 21 nd Nov	Parents' meeting

Lent Term 2018

Thursday 8 th February	Higher Education Evening for all girls and parents (7.00pm start)
Friday 23 rd February	Outreach Event for applications for Veterinary Medicine and Medicine
Friday 16 th March	Joint Abingdon Schools' Careers Convention, at SHSK
Thursday 27 th March	Short reports published on Parent Portal

Trinity Term 2018

Monday 21 st May	Internal exam week starts
Mon 11 th June	Futures week starts
Wednesday 13 ^h June	Parents' meeting

Please notes that dates may change – please check website and newsletters regularly.

Sixth Form Dress Guidelines 2017-2018

Students should aim to be smart, neat and presentable at all times and to dress in a way that is appropriate for the school day.

Choice of dress for school is a matter of careful judgement for students and they are able to express their personal taste in their clothes. However, they must ensure that they do not dress in such a way that may cause offence or embarrassment for pupils, staff and visitors.

All members of the Sixth Form undertake tours of the school for visitors, and should make sure that their dress is suitable since they could be called on at short notice.

General Guidelines

- Jeans (and denim skirts) may be worn provided they are not torn, patched, ragged or written on.
- Skirts should be mid-thigh or longer, this also applies to tops worn over leggings.
- Tops or dresses should not be low cut, reveal ample cleavage or expanses of bare flesh. Midriffs should be covered at all times. Bandeau and halterneck tops are not acceptable.
- Shorts and playsuits to mid-thigh are acceptable but short shorts, cut-offs and hotpants are not.
- Active wear is not permitted except when playing sport.
- For safety reasons, open-toed shoes and flipflops cannot be worn for lessons in science laboratories.
 - Make up should be discreet, nail varnish is permitted.
 - Hats, hoods and other head coverings may not be worn in lesson or for assemblies unless special permission has been obtained from the Headmistress.
 - Body-piercing, other than for ears, is unacceptable. Any girl presenting herself at school with unauthorised body-piercings will be required to remove the stud/ring irrespective of when the piercing was carried out, or cover with a medicated dressing.
 - Any tattoos (henna or other) should not be visible. NB it is an offence to tattoo anyone under the age of 18.

Smart dress

All students must have one smart set of formal clothes. This should be a mid-thigh length skirt or dress, or **tailored** trousers with a shirt, sweater, jacket or equivalent and shoes appropriate to the occasion. No denim or black jeans please.

Smart dress will be required on the following occasions:

- Open Day
- Sixth Form Open Afternoon and Evening
- Practice Interviews
- Radley Conference
- Prize Giving
- St Helen's Church Eucharist service
- Any out of school visits or trips if requested by staff
- Other formal occasions as informed

Staff will ask students to change or cover up if it is considered that their dress or appearance is in any way inappropriate for the working school day.

Assemblies and Form Time

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Section Assembly	Form time	School Assembly	Form time	Chapel

House meetings will take place on Thursday mornings every few weeks. Occasionally, Section assemblies will be held jointly with other Sections.

Timings

Chapel and whole School assemblies start at 8.45am. This means you need to leave your form room immediately after registering at 8.40am in order to be there on time. Section Assemblies start at 8.55am; you leave your form room at the 8.50am bell and go to the relevant location.

Silence

All movement around the School between 8.40am and 9.10am is in silence. This means you are silent from the moment you leave your form room, no matter where you are going or why. The Sixth Form Hall team will be on duty around school to help you remember to be silent, as will all members of staff.

Bags

Sixth Formers may bring their bags to assembly but must store them carefully out of the way in YPH Foyer. Bags should not be left anywhere else, and especially not in the Long Gallery or Atrium.

A quiet, contemplative start to the school day helps all of us approach our work with a positive and calm outlook. These rules help everyone in preparing themselves for the day ahead, and it is important that the whole community works together to uphold them.

If you are late for school for any reason, you should join assembly immediately after you have signed in on the sheet outside Reception.

The pattern of assemblies is published each half term by the Chaplain. There will be opportunities to organise assemblies and Sixth Form Chapel on Fridays and possibly for the younger forms on other days. Please see the Chaplain, your form tutor or Miss Doherty about these.

The Chaplain offers confidential advice and pastoral care to any member of the School.

Cars and Parking

Many of you will become car drivers during your time at school. Please note that while **driving tests** can be taken during school time, **driving lessons** should be arranged out of School hours or during the lunch hour and not during study periods.

For this academic year we will not be able to provide parking on-site for students, however, some parking is available at Wantage House. If you park in a residential road, in the interests of both safety and good neighbourliness, you must be careful that you do not obstruct driveways and garages. Residents also need room to manoeuvre their own cars so be sure to leave at least two metres on each side of any entrance. Please be courteous. If necessary, move your vehicle to an alternative location to help avoid bad feeling arising. Leave enough time to walk from your car to School in the mornings.

Girls who have lessons at Abingdon School should note that they are not permitted to drive cars onto the Abingdon School site and that parking round Albert Park is restricted to residents. Similarly, Abingdon boys are not permitted to bring their cars onto the St Helen's site.

If you carry passengers in your car, you must take responsibility to ensure that your insurance cover is appropriate. You should check that any Sixth Form girl intending to travel with you has her parents' permission to do so. Any girl in Year 11 or below intending to travel with you **must carry a note giving written permission** from her parents to do so.

Pastoral Information

Mobile Phones

It is accepted that mobile phones are important for safety, particularly on the journey to and from school. You may use them in your free time in social areas of the Sixth Form Centre, although extensive usage beyond checking for messages is not encouraged, and you may not use them around school e.g. in the Refectory or corridors. You may be given permission by your teacher to use them in lessons (for example using an internet-enabled device for research), but otherwise phones MUST always be turned off during lessons. Your phone will be confiscated if you do not follow these guidelines. Phones should be used appropriately, in compliance with the anti-bullying policy, ICT Acceptable Use Policy and good etiquette.

Personal Electronic Equipment

You may also bring in electronic readers, such as Kindles. Please remember that all these devices are your responsibility, so look after them and use them sensibly.

It is a Sixth Form privilege that iPods and personal electronic equipment can be used in the Sixth Form Centre and in the Sixth Form area of the library. We cannot take responsibility for the safety of this equipment if you do bring it to School. It goes without saying that you must not use it in the rest of the School buildings or grounds during School hours, and failure to comply will result in confiscation. If you would like to use your own laptop in school then please complete the permission form on the Pupil/and Parent area of the website and return to Miss Doherty.

Sixth Form Tutor System

Each Sixth Form year group is divided alphabetically into small tutor groups. This means that you may find yourself in a different group of girls than in Year 11. Although this may not seem immediately appealing, most welcome the change: it is a time when new friendships are formed with girls who were in different forms and with girls who join us from other schools.

Each tutor group is supervised by a form tutor. He or she is responsible for your academic and social welfare for the two years that you will be in the Sixth Form and it is to your tutor that you should refer in the first instance for advice and guidance. Miss Doherty, Head of Sixth Form, Mr Smart, Deputy Head of Sixth Form, take an overview of the Sixth Form supporting the work of the tutors and are happy to see you individually about any matters that may concern you. As you start planning university applications, Mrs Armstrong, Head of Higher Education, and the higher education team can advise you.

In the Sixth Form, we hope that you will develop an easy and friendly relationship with the staff. A number of formal points of communication between the School and your parents are arranged during the two years in the Sixth Form to help to enable you and your parents to monitor your progress and to pick up any difficulties early so that they can be addressed. Please, though, do not wait for a Parents' Meeting or a report if you feel that you might need extra help or guidance. Equally, we welcome contact with your parents. They should contact Miss Doherty, or your form tutor by letter, telephone or email. Staff can be contacted by email, using the staff member's initial and surname e.g. hdoherty@shsk.org.uk or as given in the front of this booklet. As staff are usually teaching during the school day, it is possible to request, via the school office, that telephone calls are returned at a mutually convenient time.

We invite you to accompany your parents to Parents' Meetings. It is often a useful time to work out a strategy to assist you with input from all concerned with your welfare.

Throughout the Sixth Form there are regular informal checks on your progress and regular discussion with your form tutor or the Head of Sixth Form where appropriate. Each girl should expect to have a discussion with her form tutor following each assessment session and examination results, and when reports have been written.

Taking responsibility in the Sixth Form

A successful Sixth Form career relies heavily on you accepting the responsibility that more freedom and independence brings for your own actions, learning programme and behaviour. At St Helen's, there are few rules and regulations beyond the law of the land. Those that are in place are there to ensure that a calm and safe working environment is maintained for the whole community. Formal disciplinary action is rarely necessary and rarely taken at Sixth Form level and this reflects the responsible atmosphere within the section as students prepare to move between school and university.

Sixth Form Responsibilities

Members of L6 are responsible for hall team and common room/study room clean up on a daily basis. A rota is drawn up with each tutor group taking this in turn. This is your first chance to show how reliable you can be – a very important characteristic!

In the Michaelmas term you will be invited to nominate your interests for other school responsibilities. The first of these is the selection of the Sixth Form Mentors which takes place early in the term. There are many other responsibilities, such as being a junior form assistant, running a junior society etc, many will assist in some way with the musical life of the school or in sport or drama. Every girl in L6 is assigned a responsibility and this enables you to provide evidence of commitment within the school and provides a sound basis for any employment or higher education references. These responsibilities are taken up in January for a full year.

The prefects are elected at the end of the Lent Term in their L6 year and take over from the retiring team during the Trinity Term. Normally about 20 prefects are appointed. The voting system reflects the wishes of both the L6 year group and also the staff. Those elected can therefore rely on the genuine support of their peers when carrying out their duties. The Head Girl and her deputies are elected by the newly appointed prefect team.

Girls standing for election to the prefect team are urged to consider with great care whether they are likely to be able to continue to cope with their academic work as well as fulfilling prefect duties. These will include help on a small number of Saturdays in the year and being representatives of the School on public occasions. Absolute loyalty to the School is assumed.

Although being a prefect is a recognised and public way of contributing to school life, there are many other ways of also doing this through the responsibilities outlined above.

House Captains are also appointed at the end of the Lent Term in L6.

Common Room and Study Room

The Common Room is for relaxation: it is not the right atmosphere in which to study and so, as a general rule, you should not expect to spend study periods there. In your private study periods, you should be in the study room or in the library. The Common Room has facilities for making coffee and other hot drinks and a selection of newspapers is provided daily. The year group as a whole is responsible for keeping the Sixth Form Centre tidy. However, each should assume responsibility for clearing away dirty mugs and personal mess: please have the courtesy and consideration to tidy up for yourself so that the cleaners can work easily. Old newspapers can be taken to the waste paper recycling point for disposal. Two tutor groups for each year group registers for a short period on a rota basis in the common rooms in the afternoon for a final clear up before going home.

Girls are not permitted to play music in the Sixth Form Centre or gardens. You may, if you wish, use personal music equipment in these areas, but only if only you can hear it. You must not use personal music equipment in other parts of the School, apart from the Sixth Form area of the library.

The message board in the Common Room is often used as a means of communication so please scan it regularly for new notices. Information about universities and open day bookings will be put on notice boards too.

Outside friends and visitors are not normally permitted in the Sixth Form Centre. As with other parts of the School, this is not a public place. Abingdon School boys attending lessons at St Helen's may use the centre. You can also socialise with any official visitors and Abingdon boys in the Atrium area if you wish. If, however, there is an occasion when you wish to invite someone into the Common Room, you must follow this procedure:

- Permission must be both sought from and given by either Miss Doherty or the Director of Students.
- The visitor must have signed into the School at Reception in the usual way.

Please make sure that both you and your friends are clear about the situation.

The Health Centre

The School Health Centre is staffed, between 8.30am and 5.30pm, by three registered nurses who will care for you should you be involved in any kind of accident whilst on school premises or if you are taken ill during the day.

If you are unwell during the school day, you must report to the Nurse. **You must not absent yourself from lessons or leave the premises without her advice and permission.** She may suggest that you sit quietly in the Common Room, but you should not make the decision to do so without her guidance. She may ask you to stay with her in The Health Centre. Confidential records are kept by The Health Centre of all visits from girls.

Girls lower down the School are required to give any medicines or tablets they need to take to the Nurse who will dispense them as necessary. The School recommends that senior girls should also follow this procedure and would enforce it if there were any reasons for doing so.

Helplines – Outside agencies

For a few of you, there may be times when you need to seek advice and support from an outside agency. Here you will receive objective and impartial advice. We do urge you, however, to talk in the first instance to someone who knows you well – your parents, or someone from School. Often, problems that loom large to an individual can be put in perspective through talking – please do not worry about issues by yourself. There are plenty of people out there to help you!

Name of Agency	Nature of help	Contact number
Abingdon Family Planning		01235 205761
Oxford GU Clinic, Churchill Hospital	Advice about HIV and STIs/Contraception	01865 231231 www.sexualhealthoxfordshsire.nhs.uk
Options Pregnancy Crisis Centre		0300 4000 999
Face to Face	Youth Counselling	01865 304214
Long Furlong Medical Centre		01865 231231
NHS Choices	Health advice	111
National Drugs Helpline FRANK	Alcohol and drug difficulties	0300 123 6600
Oxford Counselling Centre	Counselling	01865 403221
Oxfordshire Smoking Advice Service	Giving up smoking	0845 4080300
Kidscape	Advice if you are bullied	www.kidscape.org.uk
Samaritans	24 hour help	116 123
Cruse	Coping with bereavement	0808 8081677
Oxford Counselling Centre	Counselling	01865 403221
Oxford Friend	Gay helpline	01865 726893 Tues, Wed, Fri 7-9pm or confidential@oxfordfriend.co.uk
Abingdon Bridge	Youth support	01235 522375
BEATS Youthline	Youth helpline , eating disorders	0808 8010677
Meningitis Now		0808 8010388
PAPYRUS	Support, information and practical advice for young people who may be at risk of harming themselves.	HOPElineUK 08000684141 Text: 07786209697 Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org

Curriculum Information

Students choose three, four or five subjects to study at A level. There are also other two year options to provide breadth and depth. All girls undertake the St Katharine's Study, an independent research project which includes the option to take the Extended Project Qualification. Other breadth and depth options include courses in Arabic, Mandarin and Coding, There is also the option to take an AS in mathematics taught over two years for those who wish to study mathematics Post 16 but do not wish to take the full A level.

A range of 22 different subjects is offered in sets of a maximum of 16 students although many are taught in smaller sets. Students are encouraged to study a programme which encompasses breadth and gives them a range of options at university. The school week has 40 periods, so each day has eight periods Each AS and A Level course has 7 lessons per week. A Level art and drama and theatre have 8 in recognition of the predominantly practical nature of these subjects. Drama and theatre and government and politics are taught in mixed sets with boys from Abingdon School.

A programme of non-examined general studies is compulsory for Sixth Form students and comprises a varied programme including personal safety (including internet safety), presentation, pre-university skills, critical thinking, specialist lectures with outside speakers and preparation for Higher Education. As part of their general studies programme, all Lower Sixth students have a series of double lessons of Critical Thinking. The lessons cover aspects of the critical thinking in university admissions tests and help all students develop their ability to analyse arguments critically combined with developing their understanding of how we acquire knowledge and the differences between scientific and artistic knowledge.

Sixth Formers are encouraged to pursue their studies beyond the confines of their A Level subjects. They are given the opportunity to study university level courses, offered by a variety of institutions. These courses are intended either to deepen their understanding of a topic studied within their core curriculum, or to complement their examined subjects. A considerable number of courses are provided free of charge online by providers such as Coursera and FutureLearn. They are also encouraged to take part in subject related competitions, such as Oxbridge Essay Prizes and the ARTiculation Prize, which is a public speaking competition about the arts for school students. Students are offered these opportunities as educationally valuable in their own right, and as opportunities to develop their independence of thought, self-discipline, motivation and research skills.

Since the Sixth Form curriculum is designed to meet the needs of the individual, other combinations are made available where ever possible, e.g. DT. Please note however, that we are not able to offer any curriculum subject that requires an oral or practical element unless it is in a subject offered here or at Abingdon School. Additionally, a candidate may not enter for an examination at another centre without the prior permission of the Headmistress.

The curriculum is designed to be accessible by all those who meet the criteria for admission. It is the School's intention to improve the accessibility of its education to those with disabilities and we will make any reasonable adjustments possible to facilities and curriculum to achieve that.

Conversation classes for modern languages are timetabled in addition for the relevant girls.

Further information on the curriculum content for each subject can be found on the relevant Your St Helen's pages on the extranet.

L6 Blocks for 2017-18 as at 7th July 2017

Subjects in italics indicate joint lessons with Abingdon School students either at Abingdon or St Helen's.

P	Q	R		S	T	
Biology	Biology	Biology		Art	Chemistry	
Chemistry	Chemistry	Chemistry		Biology	English Literature	
<i>Economics</i>	French	<i>Politics</i>		<i>DT</i>	Geography	
German	Geography	<i>Politics</i>		English Literature	History	
Maths	History	<i>Theatre Studies</i>		Further Maths	Latin	
PE	Music			Maths	Maths	
Physics	Physics			<i>Politics</i>	Maths	
Psychology	Psychology			<i>Politics</i>	Religious Studies	
Spanish				Psychology		
				<i>Theatre Studies</i>		
Breadth and Depth						
		Arabic (4)	Coding (3)		AS Spanish(4)	Coding (3)
		Mandarin (4)				
		AS Maths (4)				
		PreU (4)				
EPQ (2)	EPQ (2)	EPQ (2)	EPQ (2)	EPQ (2)	EPQ (2)	EPQ (2)

Managing your work

If any aspect of your work is giving concern you will be asked to discuss the problems with your form tutor and/or Miss Doherty or Mr Smart. These might include time management, attitude to work and difficulties in understanding as well as disappointing achievement. Most of you though will make good progress and you can assume that you are on target for good grades at the end of the year! In each case, your form tutor will discuss the outcome of each assessment with you and keep you informed. Sometimes, strategies for resolving issues will be put in place and this may involve contacting your parents so that they can support you. However, at this stage in your school career, we will always keep you involved in the decision making. Report and Parents' meeting dates are published in the school calendar and indicated in the year outline.

In the Sixth Form you may be set work to complete during the October half term and Christmas holidays. This should amount to no more than four hours per subject.

The Use of Study Periods and Facilities

As a general guideline, you should expect to spend about five hours on each subject outside lesson time on preparation work, written assignments and background reading.

The pattern of work will be less regular than formerly. Work is typically set well in advance – two weeks are often allowed for an assignment so that you may research and plan it properly. It is obviously important that you manage your time effectively and meet work deadlines. If you are having difficulty with an assignment, discuss the problem with staff in good time and well before the deadline. Several subjects run lunch time 'clinics' to give you extra support and all teaching staff will be happy to help you at a mutually convenient time. It would be sensible to use your planner to help you to remain organised!

As well as the study rooms, you should make use of the IT rooms and the Sixth Form section of the library for quiet study. A list of free classrooms will be put in the Common Room so you can make use of these as well. The School has many facilities for you to access, but it is your responsibility to make full and sensible use of the resources available, and to prepare yourself for the independent study that will be expected at university.

Managing Coursework Deadlines

You will know that coursework and practical work are integral parts of some A level courses. Each department sets internal deadlines for particular pieces of coursework in order to both pace the work for you through the year and to allow that department sufficient time to process it effectively. Some is marked by your teachers and moderated by the examination board and some is sent away to be assessed externally.

You must keep to the deadlines for each piece of coursework. It is possible that there may be good reasons why you will find it difficult to meet a deadline. If those reasons are sufficiently serious, like prolonged illness, the Department may, exceptionally, be able to consider an extension to internal deadlines in individual cases. You should, however, speak to the relevant Head of Department in advance of the deadline. A failure to adhere to published deadlines without sufficient reason may result in the coursework being marked in its unfinished state. Failure to meet an internal deadline is regarded very seriously and you are likely to be required to work under supervision in school until the coursework is completed. You will understand that others, who have been organised and handed in completed work on time may well feel aggrieved that you have been given extra time – and this is something that you would have to handle. In extreme cases the school reserves the right to enter a mark of zero for a piece of coursework not submitted by the published **internal** deadline. In many cases the deadlines for internal submission are significantly in advance of examination board's

published deadlines, this is partly to spread the workload of subjects for you and partly to allow time for marking and moderating.

External deadlines are set by the examination boards and failure to meet them will almost certainly mean that your work will miss that assessment session.

Examination boards require that teachers sign to authenticate your work when it is submitted. For this reason, the progress of the work will be overseen by teaching staff and some may have to be undertaken during lessons. In some subjects, you will be advised to keep a log book charting your progress to help to verify that it is your own work. Where it is allowed under QCA subject regulations you may be given opportunities for re-drafting coursework after your teacher has made comments and suggestions. The amount of support given to each girl will vary depending on her teacher's judgment of what needs to be improved. This process may mean that different girls are seen at different times by a teacher, and staff may choose to see you in lesson time, in lunchtimes or other mutually convenient times. They may provide you with written feedback or they may discuss your work with you. You can expect to be given a copy of the assessment criteria for both written and practical coursework elements of courses.

Basically, although you may see coursework as a cause of increased stress, if you follow the suggested timing that your teachers will give you and work steadily, all should be well. You will receive surprisingly little sympathy if you leave much to the last few days and then stay up late in a desperate effort to finish it!

Extracurricular Information

At St Helen's we place great emphasis on our broad extracurricular programme. Life beyond the classroom is so important in offering the opportunity to explore and extend wider interests, make friends across age groups and to build confidence. It is this combination which embodies the ethos of the School. Life beyond the classroom here is full. A wide range of sports, clubs and societies, music, drama, educational visits and expeditions are available. Full details of the extracurricular programme are outlined in the 'Beyond' 2017 – 2018 booklet, which students will receive at the beginning of the academic year, and is also available on the school website at www.shsk.org.uk.

We look forward to welcoming you to School to support the many matches, events and productions that take place each term but would remind you that any photographs taken at such events are for private record *only* and should not be posted in any public forums, such as Facebook, without the express consent of those involved.

There is also a significant enrichment programme available through the St Katharine's Study, such as YASS and Coursera courses.

Sport

Health, fitness, competition and FUN!

Sport in the Sixth Form offers a wide range of opportunities for both competition and recreation, aimed at encouraging life-long participation. School teams in activities such as lacrosse, netball, tennis, basketball and gymnastics continue to compete at the highest levels, and you are able to participate in a large number of additional activities during the weekly PE session and as part of the extracurricular programme.

Possible activities include:

Badminton	Indoor rowing	Trampolining
Basketball	Lacrosse	Ultimate Frisbee
Biathlon	Netball	Volleyball
Cheerleading	Netball Youth Umpire Award	Yoga
Climbing	Pilates – external instructor	Zumba
Cross-Country running	Rugby	
Fitness suite	Sailing (after school activity)	
Football	Squash	
Golf	Swimming	
Hockey	Tennis	

Sample extracurricular timetable for L6 and U6:

	Lunchtime	After School
Monday	Trampolining	Lacrosse Squad, Netball Squad
Tuesday	Fitness suite, Badminton	Gymnastics Club, Fixtures
Wednesday	Netball	Lacrosse Squad, Fixtures
Thursday	Basketball, Senior Gym Squad, Lacrosse	Fencing Club, Tennis
Friday	Fitness Suite, Running Club	Tae Kwon-do
Saturday	Fixtures, Private Tennis Lessons	

We also encourage you to become involved in coaching the younger girls. If you have any questions or ideas, please come and talk to the PE Department.

Part Time Work

Many of you undertake part time work at the weekend and in the evenings out of school. This usually gives you an insight into the rigours, realities and responsibilities of holding down a job and as such is good experience, and may give you useful transferable skills. It also of course earns you extra money!

Please however, be cautious about the extent of your outside work commitments and be careful to balance it with the demands of your academic work. When you approach the run up to public examinations, it is right to review the need for a job. It may be that you should come out of work for a while so that you can give your full attention to revision.

Beyond St Helen's

Advice on Careers and Higher Education (HE)

There is a programme of opportunities to help you to make informed and appropriate choices about your post school career. Please consult as many people as you can when you are planning the future, including the staff who teach you and your form tutor. Do keep your form tutor informed of your plans, however tentative, so they will be in the best possible position to assist you.

Careers and Higher Education Guidance

Mrs Armstrong (Head of Careers and Higher Education) is available to give you direction and advice about careers and HE, and there is a wide range of literature and software available in school. There is a well-stocked Careers Library and there is up to date information on the notice boards in the library. The Careers and HE department also holds information on 'gap' year opportunities. Each year St Helen's joins with Abingdon School and the Our Lady's Abingdon to run the Abingdon Independent Schools' Careers Convention where there are around 60 representatives of careers and professions to consult.

The Careers and Higher Education Department organises opportunities for girls to attend courses to give a 'taste' of a career, profession or degree choice. Please read the careers department notice boards for more information.

The School strongly advises relevant work experience during the holidays in L6 and is most willing to help those girls who are unable to arrange this for themselves.

All girls in L6 have an individual interview by a member of the HE team.

Mrs Armstrong is also able to give you specific information about applications to higher education including universities, but you would also be wise to consult the staff who teach you to obtain a realistic idea of the standard you are likely to reach so that you make sensible choices in your applications. Predicted A level grades will be issued towards the end of L6 to help your planning. Your form tutor will be closely involved throughout the two years and you should consult him or her in the first instance.

In the course of the two years, a structured programme of guidance will be offered, which will include planned independent visits to University Open Days, interview practice and individual counselling. The school is compiling a register of Old Girls who are willing to be contacted for information about the courses that they are taking and the institutions in which they are studying. This register, together with prospectuses, DVD prospectuses and other HE information and guidance is available for consultation in the Careers Library. Up to date feedback from the universities is a valuable source of information and a number of Old Girls, representing the most popular courses and universities, are invited back to school in the Summer term to talk with those making higher education decisions.

A Higher Education evening is held for L6 girls and parents.

It is recommended that applications to higher education courses through UCAS are made early in U6 year. To assist you in your plans, there is a parents' meeting in the Trinity term of L6 to which both you and your parents are invited to discuss your decisions and applications. Full explanations of procedures will be given to you at the appropriate times.

Mrs Trump will follow up queries about applications and will deal with many procedural questions you might have.

University and other higher education references are compiled in School and will usually go out under the signature of the Headmistress. All girls are invited to read their references before submission.

University Open Days

It is obviously sensible to make applications to universities having researched courses and facilities carefully. We encourage you to visit Universities but, because we also want you to achieve the best possible grades, ask you to restrict your visits **on school days** to a maximum of two each term in L6.

Many universities run Open Days during our school holidays and on Saturdays and you should consider these as the preferred option. We have many contacts with Old Girls who are current students. Consider visiting them to find out about courses, accommodation and the social life. It is often possible to arrange to talk to Admissions tutors on these informal visits. This opportunity would not be likely during crowded Open Days.

In the Lent term of L6, your form tutor will help you to plan a programme of visits and keep a record of that programme. Please remember that, as with other absences, a note from your parents is required **before** the visit takes place. You must also excuse yourself **in advance** from lessons that you will miss and avoid absence on days when there are scheduled visits, tests or practicals in your subjects.

Key Higher Education Activities in the Lower Sixth

Michaelmas Term

- Work experience/taster courses e.g. Medlink

Lent Term

- Higher Education Evening
- Joint Abingdon Independent Schools' Careers Convention
- Open Day visits to universities (individually organised)
- HE interviews
- Update on facilities in Careers Library including computer software
- Work experience/taster courses

Trinity Term and Summer Holiday

- Organisation of applications for choral and organ awards for Oxford and Cambridge
- Open Day visits continue (individually organised)
- Drafting personal statements for UCAS applications
- Early discussion with possible Oxbridge candidates.
- Organisation of extension work.
- Parents' Meeting to discuss University applications
- Visit from Old Girls currently at university or on gap years.
- Work experience in summer holidays (individually organised)

Post A Level Applications

Each year, some of you will elect, for a variety of reasons, to delay application to university until after your A levels and you have left St Helen's. The School will of course continue to support you and to provide an academic reference for UCAS and to help you with the application procedure. We encourage you to complete a draft personal statement in L6 along with the others, so this can be updated the following year. If this will apply to you, you will be advised to contact your last year's form tutor at the beginning of September to make an appointment to discuss your application.

SHSK Society

When you leave school you will automatically become a member of the SHSK Society. It is administered by the Alumnae Office within School and aims to develop the relationship between St Helen's and its wider constituency, creating a sense of community and belonging for anyone with a connection to the School.

Through the Society you will have easy access to a network of friends, receive news on a regular basis about St Helen's and its former staff and students, and also invitations to reunions and other school social events. It is a way of keeping in touch with old school friends long after you have gone your separate ways to university and into work.

The Parents' Association

The Parents' Association Committee have daughters across all years in the school and strive to create an enthusiastic, supportive and active community to benefit pupils, parents and staff.

You'll meet the Parents' Association Committee at the welcome events for your daughter's year group in the first term of school. We're always keen for parents to join the committee, so please do talk to us at the event.

Events

Throughout the year, we help at school events and also run social and fundraising events. Over the last year this has included a wine tasting evening and a star gazing night, both of which proved very popular.

We also arrange interesting and informative talks for parents; in the last three years we have heard from four different speakers on the challenges of parenting teenagers, including changes in the teenage brain, sex and relationships and setting boundaries for our children.

Traditionally we serve refreshments at school events such as the Open Day, and Christmas Carol services.

We have some ambitious plans for 2018-2019, including a parent's Ball, quiz night, perhaps a sponsored colour run/family fun day, and we hope to host joint events with Abingdon Boy's parents too.

Our Funds

The money raised at school events and through your subscriptions we support a range of school needs. We sponsor Volunteering Awards to help girls in the Sixth Form who are embarking on projects in holidays or gap year and girls can request equipment for their extra curricula clubs and societies

We also make grants to the school to help fund specific large projects. In recent years with funds totalling over £50,000 we have provided floodlights for the new netball and tennis courts, the spinning

bikes in the fitness centre in our new Sports Centre and in September 2017 we will have contributed to the new Art installation in the science atrium,

In addition the Parents' Association have always been proud to be able to make a generous donation to the Schools' charity, the organisation is chosen by the girls each year.

Get Involved

There are a number of ways in which you can directly participate.

Just as your journey with St Helen and St Katharine Sixth Form is about to begin, others are saying an emotional farewell and for the Parents' Association this means empty seats around the committee table! The time commitment is small and the opportunities to feel more involved with the School and the charities it supports are great.

Alternatively, if you do not wish to join the committee, we would really appreciate it if you could be a 'Willing Helper'. Events such as our Christmas Fair or a Ball require a lot of work on the day and your commitment of an hour or so can make a huge difference.

Each form also has a nominated representative to help promote social events and disseminate information and we will be looking to ensure that every form is covered.

If none of the above appeals, your presence at any of our events is always appreciated!

Other activities

The Parents' Association also helps organise and fund an 'At Home' evening. These evenings offer you the chance to meet parents from your daughter's form in the home of a host parent in your daughter's form. We look for a volunteer parent in each form to offer to host the event, usually a 'bring a dish' supper, to which all parents in the form are invited.

These evenings have proved very successful and are an ideal way of getting to know each other in a relaxed setting, during the Michaelmas term.

Finally, you can become a member of the '200 Club'. For only £4 a term you will be allocated a number and be included in a monthly draw for prizes of £45, £30 and £15.

We do hope that you enjoy being part of the School community. Please do join us at one of our events, they can be an excellent way of meeting other parents and becoming involved in the School community.

To volunteer as a willing helper, or join the committee or simply find out more, please fill in the appropriate section of the online form, or just drop us an email at shskpa@gmail.com.

With very best wishes for a happy and successful time at St Helen and St Katharine.

Mat Scalpello
Chair, Parents' Association

Sharon Cooper
Vice Chair, Parents' Association

School Charities

Charitable giving is a key component of the ethos of the school and is co-ordinated by Charity Reps from the Sixth Form with the support of the school Chaplain. We are keen to foster in the girls a generous attitude towards those around us who are in need, as well as intelligent charitable giving. We also seek to encourage and support each member of the community in their individual efforts to raise money for other charities.

The chosen charity in 2016 was Whizz-Kidz. Whizz-Kidz work to transform the lives of disabled children by providing them with vital mobility equipment, support and life skills. By the end of 2016 the school community raised an amazing total of £13,224.44. There was also an additional £1,260.88 raised for our local branch of the Riding for the Disabled, Southmoor.

This year our school charity is 'Asylum Welcome', an Oxford based charity that supports refugees, asylum seekers and detainees fleeing danger and persecution in their own countries and who are seeking refuge in Oxford. During Refugee week in June, the sixth form led chapel services for all year groups raising awareness, explaining what the charity does and how we can get involved in fundraising. We had a visiting author, Jill Lewis, come into school to share her book **'A story like the wind'** (a retelling of a Mongolian folk tale told by a refugee boy in a flimsy boat at sea, fleeing war) **with the girls during lessons**. The senior Christian forum group knitted a blanket and coordinated furnishings for a refugee child's room and girls and staff have been busy raising money through a variety of different events from marathons and learning a new instrument in a term to cake sales and home clothes days.

All students are encouraged to participate in the fundraising events that are organised across the school year such as cake sales, charity dinners, home clothes days in addition to the key whole school events such as St Kate's Day and the Parents' Association Christmas Fair.

Alongside our main school charity, at SHSK we sponsor four children's education through World Vision in Swaziland (each House is responsible for keeping in touch with their child and girls from SHSK will be visiting the sponsor children in Swaziland in July 2018). Throughout the year, the school community also has the opportunity to respond financially to major world disasters as well as through prayer in Chapel and we are committed to supporting the local Abingdon Foodbank through our harvest collection.

Who to Ask?

If you need information or advice

Absence requests

Careers and Higher Education

Chapel, Confirmation

Charities

Common Rooms

Dress Guidelines

Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme

Gap Year information

General Studies

Going off site

Help with work

Helplines (outside Agencies)

Illness

Information Technology

Late for School

Life Drawing Class

Lockers

Lost Property

Music

References for jobs, gap year

Reference for UCAS

School Council

School Magazine

Sport

Stationery

You will find it here

Routine – Miss Doherty
Special requests – Miss Doherty, Headmistress
Holiday – Headmistress
Please follow published guidelines

Mrs Armstrong

Chaplain, Reverend Windle - Chapel Notice Board

Reverend Windle

Miss Doherty, Mr Smart

Miss Doherty, form tutor

Mrs G Wilson

Careers and HE Department

Mr Smart, Deputy Head of Sixth Form

If in agreed hours, sign out and in on sheet in Reception. If out of agreed hours, see Mrs Armstrong or Year Head first.

Subject staff, form tutor, Miss Doherty, Mr Smart

Notice in The Health Centre, list in Handbooks

School Nurse, The Health Centre

IT support

Sign in outside Reception

Mrs McDonald

Miss Doherty

Prefects, Mrs Bedford, General Office

Ms Rakowski

Headmistress, Miss Doherty, form tutor

Miss Doherty, via form tutor

Ms Meuleman

Mrs Askgaard

Mrs Turner

General Office, break time only

UCAS

Mrs Armstrong, Miss Doherty, Mrs Trump, form tutor.
Notice Boards in Common Room. UCAS resource material
in Careers Library

Work Experience

Mrs Armstrong

School Policy Documents

If your parents would like to consult policy documents, they are available on request to Miss Prior, Executive Assistant to the Headmistress, or can be viewed on the school extranet.