



Sir Thomas Picton School



Sixth Form Student Handbook

2009/2010

Foreword

Dear Year 11 pupil

Living as we do in a climate of lifelong learning, continuing in full-time education at 16+ is a natural progression for the majority of students. Decisions you are about to make regarding your route forward are vital ones and it is important that you explore all possible opportunities available to you.

At Sir Thomas Picton School we have a flourishing Sixth Form. The entry requirement is normally 5 A*-C grades at GCSE (or their equivalent). You also need a genuine desire to return to school to further your education and a willingness to work hard. You will also need to have achieved the base line requirements for your chosen programme of studies, as this will ensure that your proposed route forward is realistic and achievable.

We offer a full range of subjects at AS and A2 levels, some of which are delivered through the local federation. This collaboration ensures maximum opportunity for individuals to follow their chosen combination of subjects. The greater number of students staying on, the wider the range of courses we are able to offer.

Before you choose, seek the advice of students who have followed the subjects in which you are interested. Speak to the staff teaching the subjects, the careers advisors and other external agencies. Mrs Edwards and Mrs Pritchard, teachers in charge of Year 12 and 13, are also available to give advice.

The value of the Sixth Form lies not only in the courses offered but also in the development of informal relations with fellow students and staff, whilst at the same time making contacts with people in the wider world. In the Sixth Form, you will follow the prestigious Welsh Baccalaureate course and there are opportunities for continuing to contribute to school life, to enjoy privileges and increased freedom, remembering that this brings increased responsibilities. As a senior student, the image you promote to younger pupils is important, and you will have many opportunities to prepare yourself for your next step beyond school.

Whatever you gain from studying in the Sixth Form will depend on what you contribute to making it a success. I know you will get the support of staff. I hope you will accept the challenges of the Sixth Form at Sir Thomas Picton School.

J Bessant
Headteacher

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A word from the Heads of Sixth Form:

The Sixth Form at Sir Thomas Picton School offers you a unique opportunity to continue your education in a familiar environment, with continued support from a range of specialist experienced staff, while broadening your choices through our collaborative arrangements.

As a member of a relatively small tutor group, you will have daily contact with your personal tutor, who will offer advice and guidance. Additional support can be sought from us in the Sixth Form office.



Although you have some private study periods you will find that your timetable is very full. In addition to your chosen subjects you will complete other qualifications and gain a range of experiences. Sixth Form parties will further develop your social skills and the year culminates in a glitzy Leavers Ball!

Although there are inevitably a number of rules, you will experience a range of privileges too, and we hope that you will enjoy all that our Sixth Form has to offer, making your time at the school a rewarding, enjoyable and worthwhile experience.

Mrs Pritchard

Mrs Edwards

THE POST 16 STRUCTURE: CHOOSING YOUR PROGRAMME OF STUDY

We provide a range of courses for all levels of ability:

Range of courses available:		
Entry requirements	Course	Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 A* - C 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AS A Level (AS + A2) 	Access to Higher Education for those who choose it
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GCSE 'G' plus good school record 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Preparing for Employment' (Vocational taster course) 	NVQ 1 or Level 1 courses

- You will note that there is no re-sit programme as such; this is because the emphasis is upon progression. However, the opportunity to re-sit English, Mathematics and Science will be available

Advanced and Advanced Subsidiary Levels



Students choose 3 or 4 AS subjects in their first year and specialise by studying fewer subjects in their second year.

The development of the AS qualification, which also represents the first half of a full A-Level and contributes half the weighting, should secure better progression from GCSE, and encourage more students to embark on Advanced Level studies.

- A-levels consist of 2 parts; the first half is the new AS; the second half is the A2
- The AS is a qualification in its own right
- Students can decide to take an AS and not continue on to the A2
- A-Levels will normally consist of 4 - 6 units of assessment; the first 2 - 3 comprise the AS; the second 2 - 3 the A2
- Students may sit exam units in January and May of each year
- The AS qualification will be graded on the scale A - E and U and A-Level qualifications will be graded on the scale A* - E and U



Key Skills

- All post 16 students are expected to develop and gain recognition for their achievements in Key Skills, whatever courses they are taking
- Key Skills recognise achievement in Communication, Application of Number, Information Technology, Problem Solving, Improving Own Learning and Performance and Working with Others
- In these Key Skills' areas, all students will be assessed by a combination of portfolio work and external examination
- Evidence in the portfolio will come from AS/A levels and from activities undertaken in and outside school
- Students will be able to gain the Key Skills qualifications with a 'Profile' of achievement (i.e. achievement at different levels in each Key Skill is possible)



Single units			GCE and VCE A level/AS		Score
Key Skills ¹	1-unit award ²	GCE & VCE AS	GCE & VCE A level	VCE Double Award	
				AA	240
				AB	220
				BB	200
				BC	180
				CC	160
				CD	140
			A	DD	120
			B	DE	100
			C	EE	80
					72
		A	D		60
		B			50
					48
					42
		C	E		40
					38
					35
Level 4		D			30
					28
Level 3	A	E			20
	B				17
	C				13
Level 2	D				10
	E				7

¹ The scores shown are for individual key skills units in Application of Number, Communication and Information Technology, which are ungraded. For the Key Skills Qualification, the individual scores are aggregated, i.e. a student obtaining the Key Skills Qualification at level 3 in each unit would achieve a points score of 60.

² Covers freestanding Mathematics units at level 3, and Vocational A Level units over and above those required to achieve the 12-unit award.

Welsh Baccalaureate



Sir Thomas Picton School is one of the first schools in Wales to offer the prestigious Welsh Baccalaureate qualification. This advanced level qualification will run alongside your selected subject choices. All students follow the course and so it does not need to be chosen on your option sheet.

The Welsh Baccalaureate adds a valuable new dimension to subjects and courses you will follow by encouraging independence and adding 'real life' experience to the curriculum. By combining personal

development skills with established qualifications like A Levels, it is a wider award that is valued by both employers and universities.

The Welsh Bac combines experiences and projects that help you to develop as an individual and will equip you for your next steps – for work, university and for life. The qualification proves you have developed the Key Skills considered important by employers and universities. It also shows you have furthered your personal and social education, undertaken individual research, gained work experience and participated in a community project.

What does it involve?

The Welsh Bac has a strong focus on building your strengths and you will be encouraged to think and study independently. You receive support from a personal tutor who will give you the guidance you need to help you stay focused.

Rather than adding to your workload, evidence shows that the Core activities improve your understanding and performance in your Option subjects. Teachers often say that skills gained through the Welsh Bac help students achieve their Option qualifications.

To fulfil the requirements of the qualification you must complete a Core Programme of activities which help you develop Key Skills through a greater breadth and balance of experience. It improves your existing skills and builds on your interests. You take part in practical activities because the emphasis is on learning by doing.

The five components of the Core Programme are:

- **Key Skills** – the Key Skills are Communication, Working With Others, Problem Solving, ICT, Application of Number, and Improving Own Learning and Performance. You develop these through your Options and the four components below.
- **Wales, Europe and the World**– your chance to learn more about Wales and its relationship with Europe and the world. This includes a language module at a suitable level.
- **Work-Related Education** – includes working with an employer and taking part in a team enterprise activity to help you understand how businesses work.
- **Personal and Social Education** – helps you explore issues in the modern world: family, health, relationships, citizenship and sustainable development. It also includes an activity in the local community.
- **Individual Investigation** – an opportunity for you to carry out personal research into an area of interest from your optional studies or the core programme.

What is the Welsh Baccalaureate worth?

To achieve a Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced Diploma a typical student may combine two or more A Levels and the Advanced Core Programme. The Welsh Baccalaureate Core within the Advanced Diploma attracts **120 UCAS points**, which is the equivalent of an **A grade at A Level**. It is included in offers from Universities across the UK and is formal recognition that the experiences and skills gained are valuable when studying at degree level and beyond.

Federation 'A' Level Provision

Although students will be enrolled at Sir Thomas Picton School, they may choose subjects that are offered at Tasker Milward School or Pembrokeshire College. This approach allows students from the three institutions access to a wider range of subjects, some of which have not been available previously.

Additional information can be obtained from the Federation website at <http://www.pembsfederation.org.uk/>



Preparing for employment

A course suitable for students who require supported learning

Would you like to?

- Learn about getting ready for life after school?
- Be able to have independent time?
- Plan and make meals?
- Enjoy a variety of Technologies?
- Run your own business?
- Work with students from other schools?
- Plan a journey?
- Work with computers?
- Go out and about in the community?
- Make new friends?
- Have a taste of work experience?



If your answer is YES to most of these, this is the course for you. We do lots of hard work, but we also have lots of fun!

Do we need to do coursework?

Yes, we do our coursework together as a group, you will have lots of help if you need it. We like you to try your best and complete as much as you can on your own.

Do we have to do an exam?

No, you don't have to do an exam. You will have a little test at the end of each unit of work.

Staff: Mrs Nicola Rogers 6th form Course co-ordinator
Mrs Allison Lewis 6th form Teaching Assistant

Examination results

Sir Thomas Picton School is justifiably proud of its academic success, which is a vital part of its commitment to provide the quality of education, which would allow everyone to reach their full potential. The school operates an open entry policy so nearly all students who embark on a course complete it by sitting an external examination. It is all too easy to improve percentage results by selective entry, but this is not our policy.



In recognition of this academic success a Prize Evening is held at the school in December. Prizes awarded for Sixth Form results include:

- David Lewis Mathematics Prize.
- Elf Science Prize
- Elf Technology Prize
- Elizabeth Kelleher Cup for French
- Graham James Art Trophy
- Haverfordwest Old Boy's Prize for the Best 'A' Level Results
- Jane Harvey Media Studies Shield
- Pat Evans Prize for History
- Perrotts Trustees Award for Endeavour
- Taskers Old Girls Cup for Best 'A' Level Results
- The Getvoldsen Cup for English
- Victoria Bookshop VCE Prize

Life in the sixth form

School Uniform

We see the school uniform as an important means of creating a sense of community in the school, and we feel that the Sixth Form can play an important part in this. We hope that you will identify with the school through its uniform. This consists of the following items:

Boys

- Navy polo shirt with STP crest
- Plain Navy jumper or sweatshirt
- Black Trousers

Girls

- Navy polo shirts with STP crest
- Plain Navy jumper or sweatshirt
- Navy Skirt/Navy Trousers

Outdoor garments should be plain Navy Blue or Black

Pupils who have represented County or Country may wear the appropriate badge on the school sweater. Jewellery, if worn, must be restricted to a signet ring and ONE sleeper or stud in each ear. These will need to be removed for safety reasons in some activities. No other body piercing is acceptable.

Hair styles must conform to standards which are acceptable to the vast majority of staff and pupils alike. Long hair will need to be tied back for certain activities for safety reasons. Badges or motifs which have no association with school or school based activities must not be worn.

Facilities



The Sixth Form area consists of a library and study area, with its own computers, tutorial lesson rooms and a common room with facilities for making coffee and enjoying conversations in a relaxed atmosphere. This is your area and the responsibility for its care and appearance rests with you. From time to time, members of staff, including the Headteacher, will join you in the Common Room to meet you in an informal and friendly atmosphere.

Private Study

Whilst we believe that you should have a relatively full subject timetable, all Sixth Formers will have some periods of PRIVATE STUDY. It is important that you realise from the outset that your own private exploration of a subject is as important as anything done in class. Private Study periods should be spent chiefly in the library. The Common Room is mainly intended for relaxation at break and lunchtime periods.

In addition, Upper Sixth Formers are allowed to select study time, when, with parental agreement, they may study at home. These sessions should be agreed with your personal tutors at the beginning of the year. Any changes during the course of the year must be re-negotiated, and the appropriate forms updated.



Rules

Whilst we wish to keep the number of rules to a minimum, we will expect:

- a) That you will not smoke whilst wearing school uniform
- b) Sixth Formers are normally allowed to go into town, if they need to, during the Dinner Hour without permission. Any Sixth Former who wishes to be out of school during school hours, must sign the appropriate book before leaving school and on their return. Adherence to this rule is essential in the interest of safety.
- c) Sixth Formers who wish to drive cars or motorcycles to school or ride as passengers will be permitted to do so providing that their parents sign the appropriate consent forms.

N.B. All drivers of vehicles should remember that the school grounds are private and normal insurance cover does NOT apply to anyone who enters the school premises. No pupil should drive his or her car through the school grounds until the school buses have left.

It is hoped that Sixth Formers will realise the importance of these rules and that the nature of discipline imposed from above will be seen to be constructive rather than restrictive.

Monitoring Student Progress

- On a regular basis all staff submit an effort and attainment grade for each student
- Students whose grades are less than satisfactory are followed up
- An annual report is completed by all subject teachers and students. This outlines progress to date and sets agreed target
- An annual Parents' Evening for Years 12 and 13 is held
- Parents are encouraged to contact school at any time to discuss progress or matters of concern

Sixth Form Council

The Sixth Form elect their own council each year. It comprises a Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer and one Representative from each tutor group. The Head Boy and Girl are co-opted members. The Council chooses the Sixth Form Charity Event and decides to which charities the money raised will be donated. The council helps the Head Boy and Girl to organise social events and at the monthly meetings raises points with the Head of Sixth Form that the Sixth Form wish to discuss.

Decisions are made concerning uniform, the running of the common room, its furniture, maintenance and decoration. The council, therefore, is your mouthpiece and through it you can see that your views are given an airing and are seriously considered by us all.

Enrichment

All students are offered the opportunity to take up an enrichment activity on a Wednesday afternoon. For those that would wish to continue with sporting activities specialist staff offer various activities (below). For those that wish to pursue alternative interests students are given the opportunity to do the following: Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award, Surfing on Newgale Beach, Media Related Activities eg. Podcasting, or Community Work which can be followed in or outside school

Physical Education

The school is justly proud of its reputation as one of the premier sporting schools in Wales. Facilities include six tennis courts, four netball courts, gymnasium, sports hall, squash courts, specialist weight training facilities, rugby and soccer pitches, running track, astroturf hockey pitch and an artificial cricket wicket. The facilities are the best in the area and help the school to achieve its reputation for sporting excellence.



A wide recreational programme is offered to all Sixth Formers:

Mixed Aerobics	Table Tennis	Self Defence	Boxercise
Mixed Hockey	Basketball	Swimming	Rugby
Volleyball	Athletics	Soccer	Weight
Training	Tennis	Netball	Golf
Squash	Badminton	Step Aerobics	Trampolining

In their free time Sixth Form pupils are also allowed to use the squash courts and, provided they have taken an induction course, the Pulse Star multi-gym. The major winter team sports are hockey, rugby, netball, soccer, basketball and cross-country. In the summer the team sports are tennis, athletics, cricket and rounders.

In addition to these enrichment activities all Sixth Form students are offered the opportunity to obtain an Active Young Persons certificate by assisting in the running of a variety of sporting activities for younger pupils.

Tutorial Programme

Within the Sixth Form tutorial programme time is spent preparing students for Higher Education and their future careers. A structured course enables students to evaluate their current performance and to set goals for the future. There are dedicated sessions on how to complete the University Application (UCAS) forms. Advice on personal and social issues is also offered eg. Well woman and well man workshops, personal safety and drug awareness.



The sixth form and higher education

An increasing number of young people now progress into Higher Education and recent initiatives by the government have been directed towards encouraging this trend. While we accept that not all Sixth Formers will want to follow this route, for those who do we provide structured, accurate and supportive guidance.

Most Sixth Formers do progress to Higher Education at the end of their second year in the Sixth Form. When application forms are completed, the school is asked to estimate a candidate's A' Level grades. Obviously this can only be done using Year 12 performance as a guideline, and it is therefore vital that students appreciate the importance of this year. Commitment to their chosen courses begins from the start of Year 12 and must be maintained throughout.

All students are introduced to the Higher Education application process during the second and third terms of Year 12. Visiting speakers from various institutions address them during Tutorial lessons, and make them aware of the range of courses available, the factors they should take into account, and how the all-important UCAS form should be completed. Students are constantly given up to date information for Open Days, and are fully aware of the process involved in the process of application, and the UCAS forms are completed in the first half-term of Year 13. All students are given support on interview techniques, and for those who wish, mock interviews are arranged.

Careers and work experience

All Year 12 students are entitled to a period of work experience. The aim is to link this with either their specific course of study or their future career. Additional work experience may be arranged if required. Students are also encouraged to participate in Careers based projects e.g. The Engineering Project organised by the CITB.

Careers and Higher Education advice is available in the Library and Sixth Form office, and there are also networked programmes available on the school computer system. Internet access enables students to research careers in more detail. Advice on Modern Apprenticeships, NVQs, training schemes and employment is readily available for students not following the Higher Education route.

During the year all members of Year 12 are offered interviews with the school's Careers Wales West Advisor and other interviews are available on request. Individual support is also available to students with the completion of application forms and personal statements.

A view from the inside

When you are in 6th form you gain not only an increased respect and status, an awesome common room in which to relax, and the prospect of joining higher education but an amazing social life as well.

Crossing the threshold from GCSES into 6th form can be daunting. However, we have tried to make it easier with the warm and friendly atmosphere, where staff and fellow students create a sense of community.

In the 6th form you are able to enjoy privileges and increased freedom, although always remembering that this brings increased responsibilities, such as prefect duties. As a senior student, the image you promote to younger pupils is important.

We have found the years in the 6th form to be both exciting and challenging. Planning your academic programme, managing study time and finding a route through all the possibilities which await you when you leave school are aspects of 6th form which you will need to overcome. However, there is much support to help you.

The 6th form presents exciting and demanding new challenges. Students are given the opportunity to develop their independence and take on much greater responsibility for their own work within a familiar atmosphere. During your 'study periods' you will have the opportunity to make use of the common room and the library. The common room has a range of facilities including a microwave, fridge, radio, vending machines, comfy chairs and tables.

You will also have the opportunity to use the gym facilities free of charge and a 'fast pass' for the canteen queue.

Quite obviously the 6th form is not all fun and games. The purpose of these last two years of school is to gain qualifications that will help to lead you to a prosperous future and this is something that will have to be worked for. Therefore, your studies will often have to take precedent over social activities, but don't despair. There are relatively frequent Sixth Form parties and the infamous Sixth Form Ball to look forward to and help you unwind.

Sara Williams (Head Girl)

Nikita Lewis (Deputy Head Girl)

Sam Pettit (Head Boy)

Matthew Price (Deputy Head Boy)

Your next step

Choosing to stay on into the Sixth Form is an important decision to make.

In the months ahead you will find all staff ready and willing to give you advice about your subject choices and to help you adjust to the more mature approach necessary in your academic studies.

We place a high priority on pastoral care in the Sixth Form and you will be given guidance and encouragement on your Induction Days and continuing support and advice in your tutorial groups from your Personal Tutors and Heads of Sixth Form.



With your Personal Tutor and all your subject teachers, you will draw up your own Individual Action Plan. This is a negotiated course of study for your time in the Sixth Form and is designed to ensure that you derive maximum benefit from this time. Subject teachers will advise on the best course of action for you, and advice is offered from the Careers Service. When you have decided which path you wish to follow, you then enter into a Contract of Study. This can be amended by agreement if you feel it is necessary. Once you embark upon your studies, regular review sessions will be held with Subject Teachers and Personal Tutors, where progress is outlined, problems highlighted and targets set. The whole process is centred on YOU, giving you increased responsibility for your studies and ensuring that you can have an honest exchange with your teachers about your progress.

Traditionally the Sixth Form is the flagship of the school and as part of this prestigious group, you will become one of the school's leaders. Do take the opportunity to become involved in all of the school's sporting, dramatic and cultural activities. Not only will this develop your own self-confidence, but you will experience a genuine fulfilment and enjoyment which will enable you to look back on your time in the Sixth Form as literally "the happiest days of your life".

What happens next?

In January each student will have an interview with a member of the Sixth Form pastoral team to discuss their Learning Pathway. Here you will be advised as to the most appropriate route forward.

Note that you may only select one subject from each of the option lines. You should aim to have both breadth and balance in your programme of study.

Timetables must be discussed with and approved by your personal tutor before they are finalised. No changes may be made in sixth form timetables without the agreement of your personal tutor and Head of Sixth Form.