
WELCOME TO ST LEONARD'S SIXTH FORM

I would like to offer you a warm welcome to St Leonard's Sixth Form and thank you for your interest. Alongside the information in this pack, we hope you will explore the virtual Open Evening that is available on the school website (www.st-leonards.durham.sch.uk) where you will have a chance to listen to both staff and students talking about the different opportunities students will have in studying A Level and BTEC subjects in our Sixth Form.

We would love to be able to show you round the Martyrs' Building and welcome you into the close-knit community which exists in our Sixth Form. While this is not currently possible, we hope you find that the video clips together with the information in this pack capture the energy, ambition and friendly atmosphere in our Sixth Form and provide a flavour of the pastoral support we offer to ensure that all students achieve their full potential.

Bridging the gap between GCSE and the Sixth Form is challenging for students in any year but was particularly difficult this year with Year 11 out of school for so long. We were very proud of the support that we were able to offer both internal and external students through an initial 'Bridging Week' in June which gave students a taster of the subjects they were interested in. Following the success of this week, and in response to student requests, we also ran a 'Bridging Follow-Up Week' to allow students to explore and ask questions about courses and the different requirements for both A Levels and BTEC, and also to enable them to explore the super-curricular opportunities available in different subjects. The response from students to both weeks was superb and the very positive feedback from teachers to the pre-course material submitted this September clearly demonstrates that Year 12 are well on the way to making the transition to bridging the gap and becoming independent learners.

When Lockdown was announced in March 2020 A Level lessons were delivered 'live' online via MS Teams and both students and staff commented on the success of these lessons. Currently, with some students having to self-isolate, we are offering blended learning with lessons being broadcast 'live' to ensure that anybody unable to come to school is not missing out.

For our students, we hope that their experience of Sixth Form at St Leonard's, even at this most challenging of times, is the springboard to future success at university, through an apprenticeship or in the world of work. We are proud of the achievements of our past students and look forward to hearing of all you will come to achieve after your time here.

Mr Q J Hughes,
Head of Sixth Form

SIXTH FORM LIFE

As members of the Sixth Form Working Party it is our pleasure to give you an insight into St Leonard's Sixth Form, a challenging but supportive environment which will help you to achieve your goals no matter what they may be. We have a wide range of A-level and BTEC courses, as well as offering lots of extra-curricular activities and strive to create a community that looks out for every individual, echoing the strong Catholic ethos of the school.

Our Sixth Form Martyrs' Building gives us a comfortable and safe environment to enable us to succeed in our academic study and also enjoy social activities. In the common room we have a fantastic new café offering barista prepared coffee as well as a pizza oven and much more delicious food, beautifully prepared by our new Italian Head Chef Luca. Our exclusive and well-stocked library provides a quiet and spacious room to work during study periods contributing to the friendly and accepting environment of our Sixth Form.

Outside of lessons we have numerous super-curricular opportunities including societies such as the Medical and Engineering Societies, a debating group and Common Roomers our Sixth Form magazine written by students. At St. Leonard's we are very lucky to have a large amount of support with university (UCAS) and apprenticeship applications. What really stands out about the school for us is the support and help that we receive from teachers on a daily basis, with opportunities to contact them about any worries both in and out of school and unending support with any academic issues.

Inter-house events run throughout the year allowing a bit of banter and friendly competition with a range of activities including dodgeball, quizzes and a bake-off. Contributing to our Catholic ethos we also have numerous opportunities to fundraise for charity such as taking part in the reverse Advent calendar at Christmas supporting Durham Food Bank.

For us, St Leonard's is not just a Sixth Form but a community of people who want to help each other on the next stage of their academic journey. Whilst being challenged and stretched, you will also receive the best support and care available always finding a friendly face ready to help. Our Sixth Form provides a dedicated pathway that will give you both the qualifications but most importantly the confidence, to face life and fulfil your potential.

**Hannah and Keona, Year 13 2020-2021,
Sixth Form Working Party**

STUDYING IN THE SIXTH FORM

Most students at St Leonard's will either study 3 A Level subjects or a BTEC Extended Diploma though there is the opportunity to add a fourth A Level or to combine a BTEC course with one A Level. Details of the entry requirements for these courses can be found on the school website. The best advice to give to all Year 11 students as they consider their choices is to work as hard as they can during this important year to leave lots of options open. The Sixth Form Library is an excellent working environment to help students to develop the independent study skills necessary to excel in the Sixth Form.

The general rule for Sixth Form students is to match every hour of teaching time with an hour of independent study. The work Sixth Form students complete outside of the classroom to secure their understanding of learning in lessons is perhaps the most important factor in students achieving success. Establishing this work ethic from the start, with the knowledge that teachers and departments are there to support and intervene when things get difficult, has helped our students achieve excellent results.

There have been many challenges in trying to support students during a global pandemic but the adaptations we have made at St Leonard's have also provided lots of opportunities to help Sixth Form students in different ways. Alongside the very successful teaching that took place through Teams, the creation of individual 'Teams' for year group, tutor group and individual subjects and classes has enabled teachers to share resources and provided a very easy way for students to make contact with teachers and receive individual support.

Another opportunity that emerged because of Lockdown was the number of super-curricular resources that became available free of charge and we were able to direct students to online resources such as Massolit, which the school now has a subscription for, and register with EtonX online courses run by Eton College to help students develop skills such as resilience and interview techniques. For the first time this year, we have also been able to organise for two Year 12 students to study Further Maths through Newcastle University to enhance their curriculum alongside their school timetable.

Finally, alongside the support that is given to students by teachers and departments, there is the opportunity for students to receive additional free tutoring from Durham University through Castle Community Action and Next Steps, two groups where current Durham University students have been running online tutorials for students who have requested extra help.

STUDENT VOICE

Student feedback from Year 11 Bridging Week, June 2020

- 'I found it helpful finding out a bit more about each subject and it was also nice getting to know some of the teachers.'
- 'I have enjoyed the lessons in the bridging week and have found them very informative on the course content but also the style of teaching.'
- 'I've really enjoyed the bridging week so far, I have two more taster sessions this afternoon and I think that they have been really engaging and useful!'
- 'It was so great to hear from the teachers and it was incredibly helpful and reassuring to hear from older students about their experiences.'
- 'The Bridging week was informative and overall enjoyable.'
- 'Very engaging and it was lovely to get a taster of the lessons.'
- 'An incredibly helpful and insightful week. Thank you so much!'
- 'It was a great week and an amazing learning opportunity! Looking forward to joining the Sixth Form and the possibilities and challenges that come with it.'

Student feedback from the start of Year 12, September 2020

- 'I have loved my first four weeks of Sixth Form. The staff are very helpful and friendly and in general it is an exceptional working environment. I feel comfortable and safe and I am aware of many new opportunities open to me through being here. I have loved doing subjects that I am passionate about and enjoy. I thoroughly look forward to attending Sixth Form every morning.'
- 'I felt that the induction days allowed a good transition into Sixth Form life, especially after having been away for so long. There was enough time to meet new people and tutors and there was a very welcoming atmosphere.'
- 'I really enjoyed the two induction days it was nice to see my year group as well as meeting new students joining Sixth Form from different schools. The staff were friendly and made me feel very welcome! I also enjoyed my first few lessons of each of my subjects as all the teachers gradually eased us into the course which helped us get used to the workload!'
- 'After looking at several options, I found St Leonard's felt the most welcoming and cared about you personally rather than just grades. I also thought that having been through lower school, I was confident that the teaching quality was excellent and enabled me to get my best possible grades.'

WHAT MAKES ST LEONARD'S DIFFERENT?

St Leonard's is a Catholic School in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle and we strive to provide outstanding holistic education for every student in our Sixth Form, welcoming students of all faiths and none. Our aims at St Leonard's are to:

- **Pursue excellence in all and for all**
- **Take Christ as the model for life**
- **Strive to create community**

These aims encapsulate the experiences and opportunities which we want to give to Sixth Form students in educating and developing the whole person.

- **Pursue excellence in all and for all:** Through stretching and challenging students in every aspect of school life, every student at St Leonard's is encouraged to become the very best that they can be. However, in encouraging students to pursue excellence, we recognise how difficult this can seem at times. Teachers and tutors offer strategies both in lessons and in pastoral time to help students to navigate through Sixth Form life and to prepare them to move into the world of work or further study.
- **Take Christ as the model for life:** The Catholic Church teaches that we are 'created to praise, reverence and serve God' and we ask students to put the needs of others above their own and to think carefully about how our actions and attitudes affect the well-being of the whole community that surrounds us. God is not only to be found in our Churches and our school chapel. When we work, when we play sport, when we serve others, when we unwind and enjoy ourselves, we are called to dedicate all the activities of our lives to the greater glory of God.
- **Strive to create community:** At the heart of our Sixth Form community are young people who take care of and 'look out' for one another. We are very proud of the many ways our students contribute to the different communities that we are part of: Through raising money for charities both national and local including CAFOD, Macmillan Cancer Support and 'If U Care, Share'; Through the key role students play in supporting lower school as a Year 7 tutor group 'Buddy', at homework clubs and in department enrichment activities; Through involvement in the local community, for example collecting for Durham Food Bank. Sixth Form students are role-models for the rest of the school and we value their leadership.

SIXTH FORM PRAYER

Grant us a vision, Lord,

to reach out beyond ourselves

to see what we can achieve

to share our lives with others

to stretch our capabilities

to increase our sense of purpose

to be aware of where we can help

to be sensitive to your presence

to give heed to your constant call.

PROFILE OF A ST LEONARD'S SIXTH FORM STUDENT

By the end of their time in St Leonard's Sixth Form it is hoped that young people are:

- developing and deepening a relationship with God, and are able to find God in reflection on their own experience.
- happy, friendly, and self-confident, with a sense of humour and an awareness of their gifts and the need to fulfil their potential for good.
- seen to have a generosity of spirit and a readiness to place their talents at the disposal of others, especially the most needy.
- well prepared to take their place in wider society unmotivated by prestige or selfish ambition and aware of how fully they can contribute to the common good.
- ready to ask 'What more can I do, what more can I give?' in every area of life.
- proud of having belonged to a Catholic school community with respect for its values and those who taught them.

SUBJECT OVERVIEW

Our Sixth Form offers a wide range of subjects and we are always looking to expand that provision. Following consultations with students, parents and departments, we will be considering other subjects we may be able to offer in addition to the list overleaf. In the past we have had fixed option blocks, but in order to cater for individual choices, we will be shaping our option blocks around the individual needs of students after the application deadline on Friday 6th November to enable as many students as possible to study their chosen combination of subjects.

Since the examination governing bodies moved from AS and A2 (where there were examinations in both Year 12 and Year 13) to a linear A Level (where all examinations take place at the end of Year 13) we, like many schools, have advised the majority of students to study 3 A Levels. There are a number of reasons for this, but the demanding workload in the new specifications and the fact that no university will make an offer for more than 3 A Levels are the major factors. There is an exception to this for students who might want to study Further Mathematics alongside Mathematics and Science subjects and also for some students applying to the most competitive universities. There are also some students who find it difficult to decide on 3 A Level subjects and so initially start with 4 for a trial period before deciding which 3 subjects they will continue with into Year 13. In the summer term of Year 12, students are invited to sign up to complete an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) which is worth half an A Level and is an excellent way for students to develop their independent study skills.

Typically, students will be required to achieve a minimum of a GCSE Grade 6 in each of the subjects they wish to study at A Level, but Grade 5 in some arts and humanities subjects. We set this entry criteria based on students' final performance over a number of years to try to ensure that students do not embark on a course to which they are not suited. For BTEC Level 3 students the entry requirement is a minimum of 4 GCSE Grade 4s or BTEC Level 2 equivalents. However, there are students who have met the A Level entry but decide that they are better suited to the modular element of the BTEC course. Any student who does not achieve a Grade 4 for either Maths or English will have the opportunity to study and re-sit alongside their other courses.

It is the quality and dedication of the teaching which we are most proud of in St Leonard's Sixth Form and, together with small class sizes, this enables expert individual support for every student to enable each individual to achieve what he or she is capable of.

WHAT IF I HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT MY COURSES?

One of the most useful aspects of attending an Open Evening is the opportunity to ask questions and this is still available to all students who are applying this year. Please email any questions you have about courses to sixthform@st-leonards.durham.sch.uk and we will direct them to the relevant Head of Department as listed below. In your email please indicate whether you would prefer an emailed response or a telephone call.

Subject	Head of Department
Fine Art	Mr P Sutcliffe
Biology	Mr N Robertson/ Mrs A Stewart
Business Studies	Miss L Maughan
Chemistry	Mr N Robertson / Dr S Massen
Computer Science	Miss L Maughan
Design & Technology (Product Design)	Mr M Dunford
Design & Technology (Fashion & Textiles)	Mr M Dunford
English Literature	Mrs B Grehan-Bradley
Geography	Mrs V Stone
Government & Politics	Mr J Curry
History	Mr J Curry
Mathematics & Further Mathematics	Mr N Hamilton
Media Studies	Mrs B Grehan-Bradley
Modern Foreign Languages	Mrs H Munro
Music	Mr M Grehan-Bradley
Physical Education	Mrs P Hockaday
Physics	Mr N Robertson / Mr A Moran
Psychology	Mr D Attrill
Religious Studies	Mr N McTernan
Sociology	Mr D Attrill
BTEC Business Studies	Miss L Maughan
BTEC ICT	Miss L Maughan
BTEC Health & Social Care	Mrs N Henderson
BTEC Sport	Mrs P Hockaday

We are also exploring a partnership with St Bede's Catholic School and Sixth Form College for students to study a BTEC (equivalent to 1 A Level) in Science or Law or an A Level in Creative Arts. Please indicate on the application form if you would be interested in this.

WHERE CAN I GO FOR HELP AND ADVICE?

Mr Q Hughes
Mr M Hughes
Mrs L Mole

Head of Sixth Form
Head of Recruitment and Transition
Careers' Adviser

YEAR 11 INTO YEAR 12 PROGRAMME

In order to provide support to Year 11 students and inform them of all of the opportunities available in our Sixth Form there are a number of events organised to engage and involve students and to help the transition into Sixth Form – a number of these events will run online this year.

Open Evening

- Assembly and Pastoral Time: Where will St Leonard's take you?
 - Monday 5th October – Introduction to Sixth Form Assembly
 - Wednesday 7th October - Sixth Form Life – led by Year 12 students
 - Wednesday 14th October - Making the most of Sixth Form
- Sixth Form 'Virtual' Open Evening – Available from Thursday 15th October
- Deadline for applications – Friday 6th November
- Tutor Group support during Pastoral Time – January/February
- Tutor Group visits to Sixth Form Common Room – March/April

University Preparation

- Russell Group support sessions – November
- Oxford University Outreach – November
- Oxbridge group support set up on Teams – November

Vocational Support

- Vocational group support set up on Teams – January/February
- Ex-students invited to speak to Year 11 students about their experiences in the first year of their apprenticeships – March/April

Enrichment

- Careers' Fair - January
- Year 11 students to join Sixth Form Working Party – March
- Year 11 Bridging Weeks – June and July 2021

SIXTH FORM ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

In the current circumstances we are trying to keep as many of the usual opportunities available for Sixth Form students but there are obviously adaptations that have had to be made.

Academic

- Durham University Tutoring of Year 12 students – Wednesdays in Sixth Form Library during university term-time
- Oxford University Outreach for Year 13 and Year 12 – November
- Admissions' Test Support – e.g. BMAT for Medicine, HAT for History, LNAT for Law – bespoke support offered by Oxford University Outreach and Durham University students
- Student-led Societies – e.g. Engineering, Medical and Biology Societies
- 'Life Beyond St Leonard's' – evening for Year 12 students and parents – November

Extra-Curricular Activities

- Operation Wallacea
- Rowing – St Leonard's Boat Club
- Senior Choir and Orchestra
- Sixth Form Netball and Football teams
- Sixth Form Theatre Trips
- Inter-House Events: to be discussed with Sixth Form Working Party
- John Paul II Award

Sixth Form Leadership Opportunities

- Head Girl/Boy and Deputy Head Girl/Boy
- Sixth Form Working Party – meetings every other Tuesday lunchtime
- Supporting lower school students – homework clubs, Buddying Year 7 tutor groups, open evenings, mentoring in lessons, leading department enrichment activities
- Leading assemblies – Year 13 leading an Opportunities at St Leonard's assembly for Year 12; Year 12 leading a Sixth Form assembly for Year 11

Support of Charities

- Reverse Advent Calendar – Durham Food Bank – December
- CAFOD Summer of Hope Appeal - July
- Macmillan Cancer Support – Bake Sale – led by Year 12 and 13 students

NEXT STEPS

At St. Leonard's Sixth Form we take great pride in the support we offer to provide a clear pathway for students leaving the school. In the first term of Year 12 students are asked to give an indication of areas of study and work they would like to go in to. This is used to ensure each individual student has considered what is necessary for the course or career they want to pursue. This is followed up with a 'Life Beyond St. Leonard's' evening for students and parents to outline opportunities available to students after leaving school and to introduce the university application process (UCAS); plans are in place to run this online this year.

In Year 12 students also have the opportunity to use the careers' guidance programme at www.startprofile.com to explore areas of study and work they might be interested in. Our school Careers' Advisor, Mrs Mole, oversees this and is available for individual sessions to offer information, advice and guidance.

In the summer term of Year 12, students have 2 days off timetable to consider the possibilities available to them after leaving school. Labelled 'GRIT' (Get Ready It's Time), speakers from universities, industry and local business provide students with advice and to help students begin to prepare themselves for UCAS. For the first time this year these sessions ran through MS Teams and, again, this was a very successful pilot with very positive feedback both from students and from the speakers themselves.

Pastoral time in the first term of Year 13 is spent writing Personal Statements and completing UCAS forms, with tutors offering support in every session. Through the drafting of Personal Statements, individual guidance is given to ensure that students are able to create a competitive application and all forms are checked by the Head of Year before being sent off. Support with Admissions' Tests for early entry candidates and mock interviews are for those students who are called to interview are also both provided to ensure students are fully prepared.

While the majority of students in our Year 13 cohorts move on to take up university places all over the country, including Oxford, Cambridge and other Russell Group universities, we also have a number students who take up apprenticeship opportunities. The number and type of apprenticeships has increased recently, with many schemes able to offer an undergraduate degree as part of the programme. Support is also provided for students applying for an apprenticeship and our Mrs Mole passes on upcoming apprenticeship places to those Year 13 students who have expressed an interest.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Summary of A Level Results

A*-B	65.4%
A*-E	100%

BTEC Extended Diploma

DDD and above	16.7%
PPP and above	100%

Examples of Profiles of Students going to University

Student A – Chemistry: Chemistry A*, Geography A*, Maths A, History B

Student B – Veterinary Medicine: Chemistry A*, Biology A, Maths A,

Student C – English: English A*, History A*, Politics A*

Student D – Economics: Maths A*, Further Maths A*, English Lit A*, Physics A

Student E – French: French A, English Lit A*, History A, Art A

Student E – Applied Sports Science: BTEC Sport D*DD

Student F – Event Management: BTEC ICT DMM

DESTINATIONS: 2020

Russell Group Universities	Universities and Higher and Further Education Courses
Queen's University Belfast	Aberystwyth University
University of Bristol	Brighton – Falmouth Performing Arts
University of Cambridge	Birmingham City University
Cardiff University	University of Chester
Durham University	University of Dundee
University of Edinburgh	University of East Anglia
University of Leeds	Heriot-Watt University
University of Liverpool	Keele University
Newcastle University	Loughborough University
University of Nottingham	Leeds Beckett University
Oxford University	University of Lincoln
University of Warwick	Manchester Metropolitan University
University of York	New College
World of Work	Nottingham Trent University
Apprenticeship – Harrison & Harrison Ltd - Organ Builders	Sheffield Hallam University
Apprenticeship - Law	University of Stirling
Apprenticeship – Administration	University of Sunderland
Apprenticeship – Business	Swansea University
Apprenticeship - Healthcare	Teesside University
RAF	York St John University