



LOWESTOFT
SIXTH FORM COLLEGE



PARENT & CARER HANDBOOK 2011-2012

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Welcome to Lowestoft Sixth Form College!

We are delighted that your son/daughter has chosen to become a member of our first ever cohort. This is going to be an exciting, creative and very special year and we hope their time with us is both productive and enjoyable.

This booklet has been prepared for parents and carers, to provide key information about the college and how we work to support all our students.

We know that the transition to college can be thrilling, demanding and a little daunting. So we provide close individual care and monitoring and will work in partnership with you to ensure your daughter/son achieves their full potential. We are ambitious for our students. We want them to leave Lowestoft Sixth Form College proud of what they have contributed and achieved; ready to do more.

College is not like school. Students are given more freedoms to manage their own time and learn to become independent, this is vital if they are to be successful when they move on to university or employment. However, with these freedoms comes responsibility. We treat our students as young adults and expect them to behave accordingly.

We ask for your support in ensuring your son/daughter:

- commits to their studies and completes work on time
- maintains full attendance, not taking holidays in term time
- respects the College's commitment to equality and celebration of diversity
- cares for the College environment and facilities
- abides by the Code of Conduct

If you have any questions, queries or concerns please do not hesitate to contact us, you will find all the details on page 4.

I look forward to meeting you at the next Parents' Consultation Evening in December.

Yolanda

Yolanda Botham
Principal

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KEY COLLEGE CONTACTS

Lowestoft Sixth Form College
Rotterdam Road
Lowestoft
NR32 2PJ
01502 537000
WWW.L6FC.ORG
INFO@L6FC.ORG

Principal	Yolanda Botham	extn. 5675
Vice Principal	David Gartland	extn. 5661
Director of Faculty	Keith Shiels	extn. 5663
Director of Faculty	Alison Ashby	extn. 5662
Tutor Team Leader	Steve Beckingham	extn. 5668
Additional Learning Support Coordinator	Dave Robson	extn. 5677
Personal Tutor Team	Tom Cooper	extn. 5680
	Robin Hainsworth	extn. 1061
	Sally Hirst	extn. 1062
	Ann McGovern	extn. 1067
	Jan Measures-Brown	extn. 5682
	Katherine Moore	extn. 1069
	Martin Parsons	extn. 5683
	Philip Spencer	extn. 5684
Student Services Team	Cavell Beckham	extn. 1051
	Christine Crisp	extn. 1056
	Coral Gibbs	extn. 1060
Finance Team	Claire Eaton	extn. 5665
	Tina Wilson	extn. 1076

LOWESTOFT SIXTH FORM COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The College Governing Board complies with the Articles and Instruments of Governance laid down in the Higher and Further Education Act of 1992 and it is the Board's responsibility to ensure that the College adopts appropriate strategies to achieve its mission as a designated sixth form college. The Board comprises 14 members, including 1 staff member, 2 student members and 1 parent member. Members of the Board are all volunteers and are not paid for their duties. Members meet approximately six times a year as a whole group and they are also involved in smaller committees, such as Audit and Finance. The Chair of Governors, David Bye, can be contacted via the Clerk to the Governors, Bryn Davies at the College b.davies@lowestoftsfc.ac.uk Further information about all our governors is available on the college website WWW.L6FC.ORG

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

We welcome your involvement as parents and carers in the life of the College. If we have concerns about your son's/daughter's progress, we will discuss this with you and, where necessary, will contact you to arrange a meeting. If you wish to discuss anything with us, please contact your son's/daughter's Personal Tutor or Steve Beckingham, Tutor Team Leader. We will respond to your request within three working days.

While your son/daughter is studying at College, you will receive progress reviews. We will issue at least three reviews for all students. We will invite you to parents' consultation evenings twice per year. The first parents evening will be in November/December. A separate Higher Education Evening is offered to parents of students in the Spring Term of their first year. We also keep in touch with you through our termly newsletter and one parent represents your views on the College's Corporation. If you feel unhappy with the service that we offer, please get in touch with us to share your concerns.

TERM DATES 2011/2012

Autumn Term 2011	1 st September	to	16 th December
Half Term	24 th October	to	28 th October
Staff Professional Development Days	1 st September, 2 nd September, 21 st October		
Spring Term 2012	3 rd January	to	30 th March
Half Term	13 th February	to	17 th February
Staff Professional Development Day	3 rd January		
Summer Term 2012	16 April	to	20 July
Half Term	4 June	to	8 June
Staff Professional Development Day	17 th July		

PARENTS' CONSULTATION EVENINGS 2011-12

More information about each of the events will be provided closer to the date

Consultation Evening	Wednesday	7 th December 2011
Consultation Evening	Tuesday	13 th December 2011
Consultation Evening	Tuesday	17 th April 2012
Consultation Evening	Wednesday	25 th April 2012

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

College UCAS Application Deadline 30th November 2011

Higher Education Evening May 2012

Public Examinations generally occur in January/February and May/June

OUR COMMITMENT

We promise you:

- careful advice and guidance in choosing your course to meet your needs, ambitions and qualifications
- qualified, caring and supportive staff
- well prepared, interesting and challenging lessons
- regular homework, supported independent learning and feedback to support your studies
- regular reviews to inform you and your parents/carers of your progress
- a specialist personal tutor to support, check and review your progress
- additional learning support when needed
- outstanding facilities to support you in lessons, in independent study and in your personal development
- a Learning Resource Centre, IT facilities and a virtual learning environment
- a commitment to the promotion of equal opportunities and to treat you fairly and with respect
- expert advice and guidance to support you with your university / higher education application and with your progression to employment
- opportunities to take part in enrichment activities – sport, social and cultural
- opportunities to contribute to College decisions and developments

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

You promise to:

- respect each person as an individual, observing the College's Equality and Diversity policy
- show commitment to full attendance and punctuality, to give maximum effort and to work to the deadlines set
- behave and use language appropriate to the College environment
- comply with the law
- show respect for College property and that of all members of the College community
- comply with the College regulations and procedures, such as those on smoking, production of ID cards, litter, vehicle parking and emergency procedures
- give a prompt and constructive response to all reasonable requests made by members of staff, both teaching and support
- comply with the fire regulations and procedures and with the wider Health and Safety Policy, which confers on each individual the responsibility to contribute to the health and safety of all;
- show respect for members of the local community, adopting appropriate behaviour and language in Lowestoft and when travelling to and from College and on all off-site College activities
- show consideration for the good reputation of the College in the wider community and the media (including internet sites and communications)

Students are asked to sign a copy of the Code of Conduct.

COURSES

Students at College may be studying for A Levels, AS Levels, BTEC courses or GCSE's. Whatever course they are taking, they are a full time student and are expected to commit fully to their college work. During the College week each student will have timetabled lessons to attend in the courses they have chosen. They will also have timetabled Tutor sessions which they must also attend. In addition they will receive weekly Directed Independent Learning which is directed study to support them to achieve and to develop study skills which will help them in both higher education and employment. They will also receive homework.

Please support your son/daughter in attending and in completing all work set – it will make a difference to their enjoyment of their course and to their results.

ATTENDANCE

We expect our students to attend **all** their lessons, tutorials and additional support sessions. Please call us on 01502 537000 if your son/daughter is too ill to attend college. If your son/daughter has a serious illness, please let his/her Personal Tutor know and we can arrange support for them when they return to college. If a student is taken ill at College, s/he should report to Student Services. An authorised absence will only be given for a higher education or full time employment interview, work experience; a hospital appointment (written evidence will be required), a driving test or college approved religious observance. All absence must be explained. If a student's attendance is unsatisfactory, we will help them to improve it and contact you if it does not. If a student misses an examination without authorisation, s/he will be asked to pay for the entry. Persistence absence could mean the student loses his/her college place.

HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME

Sixth Form students' programmes are demanding and the time available to prepare for AS and A Levels is relatively short (around 30 weeks). Students should not take holidays during term time. If students require leave of absence during term time this request must be supported by parents. It will also involve consultation with the Assistant Principal and the completion of a Holiday Request Form. It should be noted that all AS students will be expected to return to College in mid-June after their examinations as A2 teaching will begin. It is a precondition of progression into the second year that students attend these lessons and satisfactorily complete the work.

PART-TIME WORK

We recognise that many students have part-time jobs and may gain personal and financial benefit from them. However, we strongly recommend that students should not take on more than **8-10 hours** part time work per week during term time.

TIMETABLE

Your son/daughter is studying subjects that are 'blocked' as below. Therefore all lessons that occur in Block A will follow through Block A for the week. The same applies for all subjects in each block.

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
9.00 to	10.00	A	C	F	E	D	
10.00 to	11.00	B	A	E	D	B	
11.00 to	11.15	Morning Break					
11.15 to	12.15	C	F	C	B	A	
12.15 to	12.45			A			
12.45 to	1.15	Lunch Break			Lunch Break		
1.15 to	1.30			Lunch Break			
1.30 to	1.45	D	B		F	E	
1.45 to	2.00						
2.00 to	2.30			Enrichment			
2.30 to	3.30	E	D		C	F	
3.30 to	4.00				Student Support		

MONITORING PROGRESS

Teachers set a minimum number of formally assessed and recorded assignments each year, marks from which are used to monitor each student's progress towards their target grade. Feedback is provided to students on each piece identifying strengths, weaknesses and what needs to be done to improve the grade. Progress is reported to parents each term via the Progress Review, this followed by a Parents' Evening when you will have the opportunity to meet teachers to discuss your son/daughter's progress. All students have an online Personal Learning Plan which they and their teachers and Personal Tutors add to as the course progresses.

VALUE-ADDED

A student's overall achievement at GCSE is the best indicator available to predict how s/he might perform at AS/ A/ BTEC National level. However, grades at GCSE and A cannot be directly compared. Students who average a grade C at GCSE will need to 'overachieve' in order to get better than a D/E grade at AS/ A level, and in practice, many will. Students who achieve A or A* at GCSE should also not automatically assume that they will achieve grade A or A* at AS/ A level.

COURSEWORK/CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT

Coursework (or controlled assessments) generally consists of pieces of written work that are set and marked internally within the college. Before the marks are submitted to the examination boards they must be standardised between different teachers of the same subject. They are then subjected to a checking process by the examination boards themselves. These procedures are known respectively as internal and external moderation.

Internal Deadline – this is the date by which a piece of coursework should be completed and handed to the subject teacher. The date will be set by the subject team. This will normally be earlier than the date on which coursework must be sent to the examination board in order to facilitate marking and standardisation.

Work submitted after the college deadline may not reach the examination board by the external deadline and this may result in a delay in the award of a grade.

PAYMENT FOR EXAMINATIONS

Provided students have attended College regularly and worked to the best of their ability, they will take the first sitting of the examinations free of charge. We will notify parents/carers if attendance and/or work are less than satisfactory and, in some cases, a charge may be made for entry to examinations. It is normal College policy to charge for all re-sit examinations that students choose to enter.

PROGRESSION FROM YEAR 1 TO YEAR 2

In order for students to progress from an AS course to an A Level course they will need to achieve a pass to grade E in their AS Level examination. BTEC National students will need to have passed all their first year assignments. All students will also need to demonstrate satisfactory attendance and commitment. It is essential that students attend College from mid-June to the end of the summer term. BTEC work continues and A2 work will start during this period. Additionally, assignments will be set for the summer holiday. Students should be aware they may be in different teaching groups for A2.

COLLEGE FACILITIES

The Learning Resource Centre (LRC) is open 8.30am to 4.30pm during term time. The Centre has over 1,500 resources including books, DVDs, videos, audio books/plays, magazines, websites and daily newspapers. Resources are issued to students (3 items each) if they have their ID cards and no resources will be loaned if they have fines or overdue items on their accounts.

Food and Drink: The Café is open daily in term-time from 8.30am to 3.00pm. Edwards & Blake are a privately owned local catering company who specialise in providing freshly cooked healthy meals using fresh ingredients from local suppliers. Hot pizza slices, bacon rolls and other sweet and savoury treats are available all morning. The lunchtime deli sells a great range of filled Panini's, fresh homemade soup and hot filled breads and wraps. The chilled offer includes premium salads and dessert pots plus a fantastic range of speciality breads and fillings. A range of speciality coffees, muffins, pastries and cakes are also available all day.

Students are requested to drink only water in lessons.

Lockers:

We have a very limited supply of lockers and priority will be given to students with mobility difficulties and those needing to store moped/bike helmets.

Travel:

We are committed to helping the environment and being green. We encourage students and staff to use environmentally friendly ways of travelling to College and we provide secure bike racks for those who wish to cycle in. For those that choose to cycle, the College provides pocket guides and website with maps of cycle routes of the local areas and use of showers and changing rooms if needed.

First Aid:

The College has a number of trained first aiders. They can be contacted through Reception Staff, LRC Staff, staff in Student Services or through any other member of staff.

IT Open Access Facilities Available from 8am: The College has invested heavily in IT to support learning. All computers are networked to allow for easy access to files from anywhere in college or from home. We have three Apple Mac suites featuring the latest iMac's and software such as ProTools and Adobe Creative Suite 5.5. We have two high specification computer suites with the latest Intel Corei Processors running Windows 7 and Microsoft Office 2010 with access to Adobe Creative Suite 5.5. We have an open ICT suite with 60 computers and 10 Apple Mac's, with access to all the college software. The College also has 7 laptop trollies featuring the latest Intel Corei Processors and running Windows 7 and 3 Netbook trollies running Windows 7. Students also have access to various ICT gadgets, iPad 2's, Nintendo DS XL, SmartVoting Systems and Nikon Digital Cameras.

Students are required to abide by the acceptable use of computers policy which emphasises the use of computers to enhance learning at the College.

ENRICHMENT

College provides an opportunity to achieve qualifications, but students have the chance to get so much more out of student life. Please encourage your son/daughter to take part.

Performing Arts

Our fantastic Performance Space provides plenty of opportunities for all future stars be they actors, costume, lighting or set designers or stage managers to get involved with College productions. Our music team are always keen to spot new talent to perform at our seasonal concerts or to represent the College at local festivals and public events. Our purpose built acoustic rehearsal booths and recording studio are the perfect location for band practice and cutting your first disc.

Sport

We have a range of sporting opportunities waiting for you. Whether you are a serious sports performer with aspirations to play professionally, for enjoyment or whether you just want to stay fit we have the expertise and facilities to make it happen. With free use of Waterlane Leisure Centre, the multi-use games area as well as the excellent 3G pitch at Bernard's Centre Point, you will have the opportunity to play your sport at the level that's right for you.

Clubs & Societies

Why not get involved in the many clubs and societies on offer. They take place mainly in lunch times but also after College. Joining is a good way to make friends with students who share your interests. If the club you want doesn't exist you can start it! For 2011 students have already set up Psychologists Society, Ukulele band, Cake Club, Public speaking and more.

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Try the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. It provides an enjoyable, challenging and rewarding programme of personal development. It's a great way to make new friends and your teamwork and leadership skills will impress future employers and universities.

Volunteering

The College offers a range of opportunities to become a volunteer. Our local community is eager to work with you. We are developing placements in the following areas: with young children, children with special needs, senior citizens, animals & wildlife, conservation & the environment with more to follow.

Student Council

We want student involvement in College life. A new Student Council Executive will be elected every year, voted for by all students. There will be opportunities for all students to be elected as Executive Members in the autumn term. Students can also become Tutor Representatives and Equality Champions, join Committees, set up clubs and run charity events. Students will be asked for their opinions regularly during their time at Lowestoft Sixth Form College, through surveys, focus groups, and voting systems.

STUDENT SUPPORT

Student Services Team

The Student Services team offers a range of support services available to help with problems and to provide support and guidance, along with LRC staff, Additional Learning Support and our Receptionists. Other staff who are readily accessible to provide help are:

Personal Tutors

All students are allocated to a Personal Tutor. Working closely with Tutor Team Leader, Steve Beckingham, Personal Tutors are responsible for monitoring attendance, progress targets, academic discipline, and teaching the College Tutorial Programme. Your son/daughter's Personal Tutor is also the first point of contact for parents/carers.

It is **essential** that students attend tutor sessions– these are the main channels of communication with students. The Tutor is in contact with subject teachers, and will discuss with your son/daughter any matters concerned with courses and progress: attendance, reviews, reports, consultation evenings etc. S/he will also be responsible for providing references - for applications to Higher Education, or for employers.

Your son/daughter's Personal Tutor will help them:

- settle into College and understand what it means to be a College student
- learn how to manage their time and studies, to succeed
- learn how best to make use of the services and facilities we offer
- reflect on progress and experiences and consider opportunities beyond College, e.g. work, further education, community activities, particularly where related to career aspirations.
- 'signpost' other specialist support services within and outside the college if needed

We want students to get the full benefit and enjoyment from the courses they are studying. It might take a while to get used to the ways of a college, but remember that subject staff and tutors are always ready to help. College staff run a variety of support sessions and 'workshops'.

Confidential Counselling Service

Students can discuss in confidence any issue that is worrying them. An appointment to see the counsellor can be made through Student Services.

College Chaplain

Captain Paul McDonough is our College Chaplain and is here on Wednesday afternoons. He helps the development of students' values, beliefs and faiths.

Financial Help

Students are asked to see Tina Wilson in Finance in case of financial hardship. The new college Bursary is a means tested support payment made by the college. Students are required to fill out an application pack if they feel they could qualify for the Bursary scheme. The pack is available on the college website www.l6fc.org and from the Finance Team.

Student Briefing

Your son/daughter's Personal Tutor will also communicate important information at Tutorial. The College has subscribed to Moodle – a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) which will be updated daily with news, events, advice, guidelines, deadlines and careers related information. Key information will also be posted on Facebook.

Email

All students have a College email address and are expected to check their College email daily.

Extra Time in Exams

We can organise exam access arrangements (eg extra time concessions) if appropriate. Students should contact Dave Robson d.robson@lowestoftsfc.ac.uk for more information. If students had access arrangements at a previous school or college we can ensure they can be continued here.

LEARNING SUPPORT

Has your son/daughter ever been assessed with a learning difficulty or disability? Or have you thought they might have one?

- Do they have problems with spelling, reading, numbers, or their memory?
- Do they find it difficult to concentrate, organise their work, manage their learning or meet deadlines?
- Do they have to work much harder than their friends just to keep up in lessons?
- Do they have difficulty completing examination papers within the time allowed?

If you answered “YES” to just a few of these questions, then we can help. Our help can include:

- One to one support tailored to individual needs
- Study Skills
- Exam & revision techniques
- Time management
- Organisational strategies
- Specialist assessment
- Classroom support
- Use of the latest in assistive technology to help students with reading, writing, spelling or grammar
- An appropriate special access arrangement in examinations
- Motivation
- Liaison with subject teachers
- Liaison with ‘feeder’ schools

Find out more from Dave Robson, his email address is d.robson@lowestoftsfc.ac.uk

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The College culture is one of awareness, understanding, tolerance and respect. We value and celebrate the diversity of our community. The College does not tolerate any form of discrimination, bullying and harassment. We are all expected to create a climate of well-being, confidence, security and identity.

We welcome student involvement in advancing equality. Students can join the College Equality and Diversity Committee, become an Equality Champion, organise events, and review the College’s progress in improving equality outcomes.

SAFETY

The safety of our students is of central importance. The college has a full set of safety rules and procedures shared with staff and students. An important aspect of college safety is that all members must carry photo identity at all times.

THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

We want to be a good neighbour and maintain good and friendly relations with the local community. Students can help by being courteous and considerate, and respecting local people and property.

PARKING

As a condition of planning the College is part of a Green Travel Plan and therefore parking is very limited indeed. We have a few visitor spaces for parents and carers with mobility difficulties. We have no student car park. We request that student drivers **must** be alert to pedestrians and young families; drive at a safe and sensible speed; park considerately and not obstruct pavements and driveways; keep the volume of radios down; not drop litter and be polite to residents at all times.

CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

If there is something in College that your son or daughter is not happy with, we are very willing to listen and to try and put things right. If they have a problem, please let us know by talking to Personal Tutors, Directors of Faculty, the Student Services Team or any member of staff.

We hope that by these discussions concerns can be resolved easily and informally. Most issues can be resolved in this way but if you remain unsatisfied the College operates a formal Complaints Procedure. The College intends that formal complaints will be dealt with fully, fairly and objectively, with a speedy response from an appropriate member of senior staff.

Our Mission: 'To enable our students to excel and progress beyond expectation in an outstanding learning environment in the heart of Lowestoft.'