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## **An introduction to Cockermonth School Sixth Form**

Cockermonth School maintains a strong tradition of offering high quality Post-16 education. We welcome many students from Year 11 at Cockermonth School as well as students from other schools. Our aim is to ensure that every student who comes to us is well catered for in terms of the courses we offer, is well supported throughout his or her time with us and leaves well equipped to pursue further courses of study or training or to enter employment.

The decision to come into the Sixth Form should not be taken lightly. We encourage every prospective student to research all available options carefully before committing to a course of study with us. Obviously we are delighted when students choose to continue their education with us, but we are also well aware that, for some students, an alternative course of study or an alternative institution is the right way forward. We encourage all prospective students to take full advantage of the advice and guidance available to them in school and from Connexions. Every prospective student will be expected to attend an Information, Advice and Guidance session with senior staff at Cockermonth School to discuss their options. We have a national reputation for the quality of our advice and guidance.

### **Expectations**

Students need to be aware that our Sixth Form has high expectations of all those who choose to join us. We expect students to work hard and make the most of opportunities afforded to them. Students should choose a course of study for which they are really motivated and need to be prepared to strive for success. With the support of our staff, students need to develop independent study and thinking skills to be successful at A' Level.

We expect Sixth Form students to act as role models and to contribute actively to the life of the school. They are encouraged to take on positions of leadership and responsibility, working closely with younger students in supportive and mentoring roles.

We demand high levels of attendance and punctuality; students who fail to comply, for anything other than medical or specially approved exceptional reasons, can expect to be placed on a programme of close academic monitoring and support and may be asked to leave if the situation does not improve.

### **Dress Code**

Although there is no uniform in the Sixth Form, students are expected to adhere to our dress code, setting a good example to students in the lower school, and Students must be prepared to be guided by staff to understand what is acceptable in terms of dress code in the Sixth Form. As a general guide, we request the following:

- No tatty or ripped jeans
- No shorts
- No leggings without an additional garment of reasonable length over the top
- No football shirts
- No tracksuit bottoms

- No T-shirts with unsuitable slogans
- No hair colours outside the normal colour range
- Discreet piercings only, none in lips, nose or face
- Shoulders and cleavage must be covered
- ID Badges must be worn by all Sixth Form students when on the school site

### **Post 16 Curriculum at Cockermonth School**

Our aim is to provide a range of courses that will meet the needs of those wishing to remain at Cockermonth School to continue their education beyond the age of 16.

The courses we will look to provide will hopefully meet the needs of those:

- wishing to go on to higher education
- looking for employment, having remained in education until the age of 18

### **Entry to our Sixth Form**

Students from Year 11 can enter the Sixth Form if they achieve:

- Five or more A\*-C grades at GCSE level including English Language and/or Maths. Students must also meet the minimum entry criteria for each course they choose.

If a student has 5 A\*-C grades and does not pass English Language or Maths, they cannot enter the Sixth Form.

### **Number of courses it is recommended that students study based on attainment at GCSE:**

- 5 or more A\*-C grades, including Maths or English Language - 3 AS subjects plus 1 re-sit
- 5 or more A\*-C grades, including Maths and English Language - 3 AS subjects
- Mainly B and a few A grades - 4 AS subjects
- Mainly A\* and A grades - 4 AS subjects or 4 AS + EPQ

## **Our Enrichment Programme**

Our enrichment programme is an intrinsic part of our Sixth Form curriculum and full attendance at sessions is a requirement. Traditionally, programme has consisted of four main elements – PHSE, Lifedays, Enrichment and Wednesday afternoon enrichment. Its aims are to prepare Sixth Form students for choices post-17 or 18, to encourage them to become active, engaged citizens and to enable them to develop the skills and confidence necessary to make the most of life at and beyond school.

We encourage students to broaden their academic experience (for example, through General Studies or Work Experience) and the Extended Project, where appropriate, and through reading beyond the defined curriculum. We take two daily broadsheet newspapers, several weekly and monthly publications and provide a wide variety of extra reading materials through subject departments. We encourage students to become active, critical thinkers and to develop listening and debating skills.

Our enrichment programme requires students to gain experience in the voluntary sector, either within the school community or in local, national or global projects. All students are expected to undertake some work experience, which is particularly important for those intending to apply for professions such as teaching, veterinary science/nursing or the healthcare professions. We also encourage students to focus on personal development through sport, the arts and programmes such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award, Young Enterprise and World Challenge.

## **PD**

Each Sixth Form student is a member of a tutor group and works closely with his/her tutor during the 2/3 years in the Sixth Form. Students are encouraged to work co-operatively with others in their form, taking part in various team events and competitions. Form tutors support and guide students through the transition from Key Stage 4 to 5 through our Personal Development programme which is delivered during one lesson a week and during form time each morning. This course helps students to develop the study skills necessary to be successful in the Sixth Form and to prepare them for higher level study beyond school; it provides a programme of Health Education in conjunction with local healthcare practitioners; it provides careers advice and guidance and support for university, apprenticeship and job applications in conjunction with the Connexions service; it provides a framework for close academic monitoring and support for students.

## **Enrichment Period**

This takes place one lesson a week. We welcome into school a wide variety of outside speakers who run a series of whole year group and small interest group sessions on many topics, such as personal safety, driving standards and road safety, local, national and international politics, blood and organ donation, various careers and professions, working in the voluntary sector, applying to university and for apprenticeships.

## **Wednesday Afternoon**

We encourage students who do not have a timetabled lesson at this time to organise some work experience (not paid employment), voluntary work, a specified sporting activity or another purposeful enrichment activity in or out of school. They must provide evidence of their activity which will be logged with their tutor.

Students can change activity during the year but are encouraged to persevere with whatever they choose to gain at least 30 hours' experience in each chosen activity. Students studying four A' Levels or more may use this time as private study time, though in practice, many of these students do undertake enrichment activities during their free afternoon for some of the year.

### **Lifedays**

There are three Lifedays in Year 12 - team building in Borrowdale Valley, a public speaking competition and preparation for choices Post-18. There is also a university visit and a visit to the Sands Centre Higher Education fair in Carlisle. For those students who wish to explore options other than university, there are visits to GenII and other local employers as opportunities become available. There are two Lifedays in Year 13 - applications for university/apprenticeships/employment and Public Speaking. Attendance on Lifedays is compulsory.

### **Paid Employment**

We recognise that many students wish to have a part-time job to provide them with an extra source of income and we acknowledge that many students gain valuable skills and experience in their place of work. However, students should not allow part-time work to be excessive and encroach on study time and other valuable enrichment experiences. We recommend that students limit their part-time work to, at most, one day at the weekend and one evening a week.

### **Sixth Form Facilities**

#### **Study Room**

During their non-contact time, all Sixth Form students are encouraged to undertake independent study. Students in Y12 who are only studying three A' Level courses are timetabled in the supervised study room for four lessons a week. Many Year 13 students also opt to use this facility. The room is equipped with computers and a printer.

#### **Lower Common Room/Reading Room**

This room is for the use of all sixth formers and is also equipped with computers and desks. Daily newspapers and other publications are available and students are encouraged to study individually or in groups in this room.

#### **Upper Common Room and Sixth Form Café**

This room is primarily used for relaxation and social time. Some students also like to study in this more informal environment. It is also used for Enrichment sessions and Sixth Form assemblies. The Sixth Form have use of their own café/deli bar, located adjacent to the common room.

#### **The Library**

The upper floor of the library is reserved for Sixth Form students. This is used for non-supervised silent study. There is a good variety of subject-specific materials/reference books and fiction as well as daily papers and other weekly and monthly publications.

## **Admissions Procedure**

### **Aims**

- To provide sound advice and guidance to enable prospective Sixth Form students to make the best choices possible regarding study Post-16
- To promote opportunity and to maintain high standards

Published Sixth Form admissions number for students from other schools: **30**

### **Admission to the Sixth Form is generally as follows:**

Throughout Years 10 and 11 a programme of information, advice and guidance is delivered to Cockermouth School students through the PHSEE and personal development programmes.

#### **January of Year 11**

Prospective Head of Year 12, together with some Year 13 students, speak at assembly to introduce the possibility of joining Sixth Form to Year 11. Students are encouraged to visit local providers of Post-16 education and training, and the local colleges are invited into school to meet with interested Year 11 pupils. Approaches from students at other schools are logged on our system and prospectuses are sent out as requested, together with a letter of invitation to our open evening.

#### **February of Year 11**

All Year 11 students are invited to our Sixth Form open evening – a chance for prospective pupils and parents to hear a presentation about life in the Sixth Form and to visit subject departments to speak with staff and Sixth Form students.

#### **February/March of Year 11**

Individual Information, Advice and Guidance sessions with pupils and parents take place to discuss options available in the Sixth Form and to advise on the most suitable course of study. These are conducted by senior staff.

Places to students from other schools will be offered in accordance with the County Admissions Policy for Post-16 students.

#### **July**

On Enrolment Day, an induction programme is delivered during one day for all students intending to return to the Sixth Form in September. Students attend sample lessons in the subjects they intend to study. Departments emphasise the course content and skills required for the study of their subject at A' Level. Sixth Form staff are on hand to advise students throughout the day.

#### **August**

GCSE results. Senior staff are again on hand to advise students on how their results might influence decisions and choices for Post-16 study.

#### **Sixth Form registration**

Sixth Form students register and confirm A' Level choices. Any significant changes from initial decisions made at the Information, Advice and Guidance meeting in March will need to be discussed with Sixth Form staff and relevant Heads of Department. Any students who have not yet had an Information, Advice and Guidance session will meet with a senior member of staff to discuss options. Students will be sorted into tutor groups and Heads of Department will be issued with set lists, allowing time for comment and adjustment. Students will begin Sixth Form on a pre-stated day, two or three days after registration.