



The Ferrers
Sixth Form



Student Handbook

2026-2027

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Key Information

Key staff

Sixth Form Centre Manager	Mrs Holland	dholland@theferrers.org
Form Tutor – P1	Mrs Govender	kgovender@theferrers.org
Form Tutor – P2	Mr Adams	dadams@theferrers.org
Form Tutor – P3	Dr Mellor	nmellor@theferrers.org
Form Tutor – P4	Mr Downs	rdowns@theferrers.org
Head of Sixth Form	Mrs Prince	hprince@theferrers.org

Key dates

Activity	Date
GCSE Results Day	20 th August 2026
Year 12 start	3 rd September 2026 – 8.35am
Year 13 start	3 rd September 2026 – 11.00am
Subject lock-in	25 th September 2026
Sixth Form Open Evening	Thursday 12 th November 2026
Year 12 Work Experience Week	TBC

Statement of Intention:

We aim to treat our students as young adults, capable of making the right decisions to benefit you and your education. We will occasionally need to nudge you in the right direction, but we intend to support you by giving you freedoms first, only removing these if you prove incapable of making adult/appropriate decisions. Every concern raised will be made with you first to allow you to adjust your choices. If you do not comply/make the right decision, this is when we involve parents/carers.

Attendance Procedures

Objective: All post-16 students are expected to attend school for 100% of taught lesson, tutorial sessions, mentoring meetings, employability activities, assemblies and dedicated study periods.

Our attendance procedures are underpinned by the [Meridian Trust Post-16 Attendance Policy](#).

Where attendance falls below 100%, it is recognised that a risk is posed to a student's achievement in line with their potential. Attendance below 96% will trigger intervention, as outlined in the Meridian Trust Post-16 Attendance Policy. Parents and students are additionally reminded that frequent periods of unexplained absence can give rise to safeguarding concerns.

Absences will be classified as either authorised or unauthorised. An absence may be authorised where there is an acceptable reason and appropriate notification has been provided. Absences that have not been approved, are unsupported by an acceptable reason, or have not been reported in accordance with school procedures may be recorded as unauthorised.

Where attendance is affected by medical needs, mental health needs, SEND or other significant circumstances, the Sixth Form will work with students and families to identify barriers to attendance and provide appropriate support and reasonable adjustments where possible.

Planned Absences - For planned absences, for example to celebrate a religious festival or to attend a university open day, students are required to complete an Absence Request Form three weeks prior to the event, where possible, or as soon as possible if three weeks' notice cannot be provided.

The following may be considered acceptable reasons for planned absences, subject to reasonable limits:

- Driving tests (practical and theory)
- Urgent medical appointments
- Hospital appointments
- Orthodontist appointments
- Apprenticeship, university or post-18 job interviews
- Representing the school in sport
- University open days
- Religious observance

As far as possible, requests for planned absence should be supported by evidence, which should be attached to the Absence Request Form, e.g. an appointment letter. Requests for planned absence will be considered on an individual basis. Approval is not automatic and requests may be authorised or unauthorised in accordance with the Meridian Trust Post-16 Attendance Policy.

Routine medical and dental appointments and driving lessons must not be scheduled during timetabled contact times, i.e. mentoring sessions, assemblies, lessons, tutor time or Directed Learning Time. Requests may be made to the Head of Sixth Form to take driving lessons during non-contact sessions.

Unplanned Absences - Short-term absences (1–3 days) must be reported by email to dholland@theferrers.org or by phone on 01933 313411 before 8.30am. Students may confirm their own short-term absences via email, but they must cc their parent/carer's email address so that we can confirm parents/carers are aware of the absence. If we have not received notification of an absence, the student and listed contact(s) will be called to seek an explanation. Wherever possible, we will make parental and student contact by phone for safeguarding purposes. However, we may also make contact via email or other means.

Students returning to school following an extended period of sickness or other unplanned absence (3 days or longer) will be required to attend a Return to School meeting with their tutor to discuss the reasons for absence and develop a catch-up plan for missed learning. This meeting must take place within one week of returning to school.

Where absence is linked to an ongoing medical condition, mental health need, SEND or another identified barrier to attendance, the Sixth Form may work with students, parents/carers and external agencies, where appropriate, to provide support and reasonable adjustments to enable continued access to education. Where there is a pattern or frequency of absence which is giving cause for concern, Return to School meetings will be held with the Head of Sixth Form. This will allow for a greater understanding of the reasons for absence and potential barriers to learning so that support can be provided where necessary.

If students are in school and need to leave due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances, they must report to the Sixth Form Centre Manager, who will inform parents/carers. If we are concerned about a student leaving site due to illness, we will keep them on site until a parent/carer is able to collect them. If a student leaves site without signing out with the Sixth Form Centre Manager, the absence will not be authorised.

Sharing Attendance Information - In line with the Meridian Trust Post-16 Attendance Policy, letters will be sent to parents/carers where we have concerns regarding regular non-attendance, whether an explanation has been provided or not.

Where necessary, parents/carers will be invited to attend a meeting to discuss the reasons for absence further. This procedure is intended to promote positive attendance and ensure that reasons for regular absence can be thoroughly understood and support provided where necessary.

Where attendance concerns are identified, our approach will be to work in partnership with students and parents/carers to understand the reasons for absence and provide support wherever possible. Attendance will be monitored regularly, and additional intervention may be implemented where concerns persist.

The partnership between the school, students and parents/carers is important for the benefit of the student's progress and welfare. Therefore, the Sixth Form's approach is that parents and carers will continue to be kept informed of progress, attendance and all other relevant matters, and we will expect that parents/carers will continue to be involved in the partnership throughout their child's time with us at The Ferrers Sixth Form. Where attendance concerns continue despite support and intervention, further action may be taken in accordance with the Meridian Trust Post-16 Attendance Policy.

Accessing and Leaving Site - As part of our school safeguarding policy, Sixth Form students must always wear their lanyards around their neck when on site. Their student cards must be used to 'tap in' to school as they arrive. This will provide us with an accurate fire register when students are on site but not in a timetabled lesson. If a student forgets or loses their lanyard, they must sign in with Mrs Holland in the Sixth Form and collect and wear a temporary lanyard. When leaving site, students must 'tap out'. This includes every time they leave site during break and/or lunch, and at the end of the school day. In the case of lost lanyards/cards, students must replace them as soon as possible at a cost of £3.

All students have two sessions of home study per week. At these times students are not expected to be on site but may use the study centre if they wish to. Students must be on site at all other times unless alternative arrangements have been agreed.

Punctuality - Punctuality to lessons and the start of the school day is just as important as attendance. Persistent lateness will impact learning and outcomes and may be addressed through Supervised Study to make up for lost learning and contact time.

As a reminder, all students should be on site by 8.35am every morning, regardless of whether they have tutor time.

Non-Contacts - Lessons will be timetabled as follows:

- 8 lessons per fortnight, plus 1 Directed Learning Time session per subject
- 4 lessons per fortnight for an additional course

To promote independence and effective study habits, all students will have designated home-study periods from the start of Year 12.

Driving Lessons - We will allow students to book driving lessons during non-contact periods, recognising that this is an important life skill. Lessons must not interfere with any planned school activities, including Directed Learning Time, additional subjects, tutor time, Core Studies, Community Leadership, Sport and Recreation. Driving lessons during non-contact periods require completion of an Absence Request Form and approval from the Head of Sixth Form. Driving tests and theory tests may be taken at any time. Please complete an Absence Request Form for both lessons and tests.

Ethos and Culture

C.L.A.S.S.

Everything that do in the Sixth Form stems from the values of C.L.A.S.S:

- Community
- Leadership
- Agency
- Service
- Support

These are values that we believe will set our students apart and will allow you to become successful, rounded and independent individuals.

Dress Code

When students join The Ferrers Sixth Form they become role models for their peers and for our younger students in the main school. They are leaders and are often asked to take visitors on tours or represent the school in other ways. In light of this, we expect our sixth form students to have a smart appearance and dress in an appropriate way for a school environment.

However, we recognise that the workplace our students are preparing for has changed in recent years, with fewer restrictions and greater opportunity to express individuality. Please remember that we are a diverse community, and we have a responsibility to consider the sensibilities of all members. We feel that it is therefore fitting for students to have an element of personal choice and judgement in what they wear, but with this privilege comes a responsibility to dress in an appropriate way.

We do not feel it is necessary to provide an extensive list of expectations and rules, however we have provided some guidance below to support our students to make informed and appropriate choices as part of our sixth form dress code. This is not an exhaustive list, and **we reserve the right to challenge students about their choices where required.**

- Footwear should be appropriate
- No caps or hats
- No bodycon tube dresses or skirts
- No slogans
- No ripped jeans
- No fishnet tights
- No underwear should be visible
- No cropped, skinny strap or backless tops
- No beachwear (including sliders or flips flops)
- One discrete nose piercing only
- Smart, tailored shorts may be worn in hot weather

As a sixth form team, we make a commitment to be led by the following guiding principles: **clean, comfortable, appropriate.** We ask that students agree to the dress code, as outlined in their initial home-school agreement.

If students arrive to school wearing clothes that do not meet the expectations outlined above, they will be asked to go home and change. Any ongoing issues with the dress code will be addressed by the tutor in the first instance and then in partnership with parents and the sixth form team.

Folder expectations

Students should:

- Ensure that folders are maintained and organised throughout the duration of the course.

- Store all assessments and evidence of feedback in the relevant section.
- Organise revision and lesson notes and resources in the appropriate place.
- Bring folders to lessons.
- Be prepared for folders to be looked at by class teachers, Curriculum Leaders, Tutors and Sixth Form Leaders, as required.

Community leadership

All students are expected to take part in Community Leadership. Students could choose to:

- work within a classroom setting
- support younger students
- work with house teams
- work within curriculum areas
- work with the sixth form centre manager

Students are expected to engage in Community Leadership for a minimum of 1 hour per week. Students will be expected to have their Community Leadership card signed after each hour and hand this card in to Mrs Holland.

Code of Conduct and Conduct Procedures

These procedures are underpinned by the relevant [Meridian Trust policies](#).

Our expectation

We expect that students entering the sixth form will become role models for all younger students, and each other, in The Ferrers Sixth Form. As students mature into independent learners, our expectation is the incidents of poor behaviour and the need for intervention will be minimal. As we are preparing students for adult life, the world of work and/or high education, we expect members of our community to be respectful of their fellow students and staff, and to contribute to creating an effective learning environment.

The following list details behaviours which do not meet our expectations of acceptable conduct. This list is not exhaustive. We reserve the right to challenge students displaying any behaviours we deem unacceptable.

- Defiance/ refusal to follow the instructions of any member of TFS staff.
- Rudeness towards a member of the school community (staff or students).
- Inappropriate language or swearing.
- Racism, sexism, homophobia or any other form of prejudice.
- Disrupting the learning of others – both in lessons and in the sixth form centre.
- Persistent absence or lateness to timetabled lessons and sessions.
- Failure to visibly wear student lanyards/ID badges or temporary replacements.
- Dangerous behaviour/violent conduct towards other.
- Bullying behaviours.
- Bringing age restricted substances into school, including alcohol and caffeine-based energy drinks.
- Plagiarism and inappropriate use of AI/Chat GPT or similar academic misconduct.
- Dropping or deliberately leaving litter, food waste, drink or similar.

- Using personal devices (laptops, tablet, phone etc.) in taught lessons or tutorial groups without the consent of the teacher or supervisor.
- Using phones and headphones around the main school. Use of phones and headphones are restricted to sixth form dedicated spaces.

Responses to unacceptable behaviours

Initial responses

Our initial responses to unacceptable behaviours may include:

- Reminders of expectations.
- Intervention through a supportive discussion.
- Referral to curriculum leaders for discussion.
- Requirement to repeat or improve work to an acceptable standard.
- Attendance at additional sessions organised by departments/curriculum areas.
- Removal from lesson/session for unacceptable learning behaviours.
- Contact home to share concerns and discuss arrangements to address.
- Referral for supervised study – this is conducted on an *ad hoc* basis and can continue for as long as is deemed necessary.

Responses to persistent or serious breaches

Our response to persistent or serious breaches of the Code of Conduct will take a stepped approach, though stages may be taken together where poor conduct is considered by the head of sixth form to be persistent or of a serious nature.

Our response may include:

1. Support plan, including a contract of improvement, which will include associated conditions appropriate to the situation.
2. A verbal warning.
3. A written warning.
4. Suspension.
5. Final warning.
6. In the most extreme cases, permanent exclusion by the principal.

Suspension and permanent exclusion are implemented in line with the appropriate policy which can be found here (add a link to the policy).

Contract of improvement

Recorded through the support plan and subject to regular reviews of no more than three weeks.

Verbal warning

A verbal warning may be given once in each academic year; further instances will be escalated to a subsequent stage. A verbal warning note is placed on the student file and the student interaction logged.

First written warning

A first written warning may be given once during a student's period of enrolment; further instances where a first written warning would be given will be escalated to a subsequent stage. A first written warning will be discussed and explained in a meeting between the student and a member of the sixth form leadership team; the warning will be

formally communicated by letter from the head of sixth form, provided to the student, copied to their parent / carer and retained on file. A student support plan must be considered again. The need to issue a first written warning may be reflected in references provided by the school during the student's period of enrolment.

Suspension

Suspension is implemented in response to a single serious incident or as an escalation in persistent behaviour incidences. Suspension would usually be for a period of up to five days. Instances of more than one suspension during a student's period of enrolment will lead to a second or further suspension of longer duration. An excluded student and their parent/carer will be invited to attend a reintegration meeting at the school. The purpose of the meeting is to ensure that the student understands the reason for the suspension and is committed to preventing the behaviour that led to the suspension from being repeated. In addition, a Support Plan may be implemented as a supplement to the provisions made in the reintegration meeting. The need to issue a suspension may be reflected in references provided by the school.

Final written warning

A final written warning may be given once during a student's period of enrolment. The nature and implications of a final written warning will be explained in a meeting between the student, their parent/carer and a member of the Sixth Form Leadership Team. The warning will be formally communicated by letter from the Head of Sixth Form, provided to the student, copied to their parent/carer and retained on file. A Support Plan must be implemented. The need to issue a final written warning will be reflected in references provided by the school.

Supervised Study

Silent Study is additional monitoring during non-contact periods. These sessions are monitored by the Sixth Form Centre Manager and will be organised on an *ad hoc* basis, depending on need/requirements. Students can be placed into Silent Study for failing to complete home-learning, flipped learning or for non-attendance to lessons or Directed Learning Time without a valid excuse.

Assessment and monitoring

Assessment

There will be three points through the academic year when we will be sharing data about your studies with your parents/carers:

Year 12:

Assessment point	Due Week Commencing:
MTG/ATL	W/C 12 th October 2026
PR1 – Teacher assessment	W/C 15 th March 2027
PR2 – PPE/Mock	W/C 21 st June 2027 (TBC)

Year 13:

Assessment point	Due Week Commencing:
PR1 – PPE and UCAS Predicted Grades	W/C 28 th September 2026
PR2 – PPE	W/C 23 rd November 2027

Following each assessment point, you will complete academic mentoring, including an opportunity for you to self-evaluate. Academic Mentoring will be recorded and shared in the same way as it is in the main school and shared with parents/carers.

UCAS predictions

Your predicted grades for UCAS and apprenticeship applications will be based on the end of Year 12 assessments and evidenced throughout the year in teacher assessed work. A teacher decision for a UCAS grade will not be negotiated. However, there are rare occasions when a slightly altered grade may be required. If this occurs, it will always be through discussion with the Head of Sixth Form, the parents/carers and the teacher, and parents/carers will be expected to sign an agreement that they understand that the predicted grade is not guaranteed.

Work Experience

Why Work Experience matters

Work experience is one of the most valuable opportunities available to you during Sixth Form. It allows you to develop important employability skills, gain insight into a particular career or industry, and begin building a professional network.

Whether you are applying for university, apprenticeships, or employment, meaningful work experience helps you stand out from other candidates. It demonstrates initiative, commitment, and a willingness to invest in your future. Admissions tutors and employers are increasingly looking for evidence that applicants have explored their chosen field and understand the realities of the workplace.

Work experience can also help you make informed decisions about your future. It may confirm that a particular career is right for you, or it may help you identify alternative pathways before making important post-18 choices.

Securing an excellent placement

Finding a high-quality placement requires planning, persistence, and professionalism.

Start early

The best placements are often secured many months in advance. Do not wait until the last minute to begin your search. Organisations may need time to arrange insurance, risk assessments, safeguarding checks, and suitable activities for students.

Be proactive

Sending a single email and waiting for a response is unlikely to be successful. Instead:

- Contact multiple organisations.
- Follow up politely if you do not receive a reply.
- Make phone calls where appropriate.

- Visit organisations in person if this is suitable and safe to do.
- Use any personal, family, or community connections that may be able to help.

Contact the right people

General enquiries inboxes can become very busy. Where possible, identify and contact the most relevant person directly, such as:

- A manager or department lead
- Human Resources (HR)
- Recruitment teams
- Practice managers (for healthcare settings)
- School business managers
- Company directors in smaller organisations

A well-written, personalised message is much more likely to receive a positive response than a generic email. Also consider contacting via LinkedIn.

Demonstrate professionalism

Remember that your communication creates a first impression. Ensure all emails and messages:

- Use appropriate language.
- Include correct spelling and grammar.
- Clearly explain who you are and what you are requesting.
- Thank the recipient for their time.

If you are unable to secure a placement

While we strongly encourage all students to secure an in-person placement, we recognise that this is not always possible.

Students who are unable to obtain a placement will be expected to complete an approved programme of online work experience during Work Experience Week.

Whilst online work experience can provide valuable insights into an industry, it cannot fully replicate the experience of being in a real workplace. It does not offer the same opportunities to:

- Observe professional working practices.
- Interact with colleagues and customers.
- Develop workplace confidence.
- Experience workplace culture.
- Build professional relationships and networks.

For this reason, students should make every effort to secure an in-person placement wherever possible.

Placements with age restrictions

Some industries and professions have strict age-related requirements. For example, certain healthcare, legal, engineering, aviation, or laboratory-based placements may not be available until students reach the age of 18.

Where a placement is genuinely unavailable because of an age restriction, we may permit students to complete their placement later in Year 13 once they are old enough to participate.

However, students in this situation will still be expected to engage in a meaningful and purposeful experience during the scheduled Work Experience Week in July. This could include:

- Online work experience
- Volunteering
- Industry-related projects
- Career-focused enrichment activities
- Other approved experiences that support future progression

Students should discuss these circumstances with the Sixth Form team as early as possible.

Reflecting on your experience

Completing a placement is only part of the process. The most valuable learning often comes from reflecting on what you have experienced.

Following your placement, you should evaluate:

- What you learned about the organisation and industry.
- The skills you developed.
- The challenges you faced.
- What surprised you.
- Whether the experience has influenced your future plans.
- How the experience can be used to strengthen future applications and interviews.

Taking time to reflect will help you identify your strengths, articulate your experiences confidently, and make informed decisions about your next steps.

Recording your placement on Unifrog

Once you have secured your work experience placement, you must complete the relevant Work Experience sections on **Unifrog**.

This is an important part of the process, as it allows the school to:

- Confirm key details about your placement.

- Check that appropriate employer liability insurance is in place.
- Ensure health and safety requirements have been considered.
- Obtain parental/carers consent where required.
- Maintain accurate records of student placements.

It is essential that you complete all requested information accurately and within the deadlines provided. Placements cannot be approved until the necessary details have been submitted and checked.

Do not assume that securing a placement is the final step. Recording the placement on Unifrog and completing any required documentation is your responsibility and forms an important part of the work experience process.

Students will receive guidance throughout the year on how to use Unifrog, complete the necessary forms, and monitor the progress of their placement. Support will be available if you have any questions or encounter any difficulties.

Remember: a placement is only considered fully organised once all Unifrog requirements have been completed and the placement has been approved by the school.

Key Message

The most successful work experience placements are secured by students who start early, show persistence, and take ownership of the process. The effort you invest now can provide valuable experiences, professional connections, and insights that will benefit you long after Sixth Form.

Others

Open days

We actively encourage students to attend Open Days for universities as this helps to support your decision making. We will authorise absence for formal, advertised open days due to their benefit. However, you need to complete an absence request form.

Cars

Once you have passed your driving test, you are permitted to apply to bring a car onto site. Applications forms are available from the Sixth Form Centre Manager. Before you bring your car into school, you need to present the following documentation to the Sixth Form Centre Manager:

- Drivers' licence or pass certificate
- MOT (if relevant)
- Insurance

We will not keep copies of these documents, but the SFCM will need to check these and sign the application to confirm they have seen them.

Bursary

Post-16, students are entitled to apply for educational support funding, if the family income does not exceed £27k per annum. This is funding that you may be entitled to access, so please request a bursary application form from the Sixth Form Centre Manager and complete the form as soon as you can at the start of term.

Part-time jobs

Whilst we understand that as young people, earning your own wages is important to you. Part-time jobs must not impact on your learning or your personal wellbeing. It is for the reason that we strongly recommend that you do not commit to more than 12 hours per week.