



6th form @ Swakeleys

2025 Guide



Dear Students,

It's a busy time in Year 11 and one of the important things that you need to do in amongst preparing for your GCSEs is to choose the right sixth form for you. This is really exciting because you have lots to think about and it may be the first time in your life that you are able to make a decision just for you. Because sixth form is so important for your future success deciding where you will complete sixth form is in many ways a huge decision and in other ways a simple decision.

If you talk to any sixth former they will tell you how challenging level 3 courses are (level 3 courses are A levels and AAQ's you can study at sixth form). In this situation it's really important that you are in an environment where you are known and supported to do your very best. In an environment where the teachers know exactly what you studied at GCSE, how you performed, what your strengths and areas for development are, and how you like to work. [This environment would be 6th Form @ Swakeleys.](#)

One of the reasons that some Swakeleys students give for moving on after Year 11 to a different school/college is that they want a change. My response to that would be firstly you can have a change whilst remaining in an environment where you are known and feel comfortable- when you join 6th Form @ Swakeleys you are able to wear your own clothes, attend lessons in a different part of the school building, use mobile phones, and have a separate area to study and socialise.

Secondly I would question why, if you've done well at Swakeleys, would you take a risk to go somewhere else at such a critical time in your school career. You will have a huge change when you start university, training, or a job after 6th Form so think very carefully about whether you need to make that change at this exact time in your education.

When we think of a change we might always assume that means that it's going to be a change for the better. Many sixth form colleges have large numbers of students and it can be hard to find your place. At Swakeleys we have a small sixth form with 250 students across Year 12 and Year 13. In such an environment you should feel confident you will be known, supported and safe. Every year we have students who try somewhere else and come back to us at Swakeleys because they didn't feel comfortable elsewhere.

I am really proud of 6th Form @ Swakeleys. We have excellent staff - teachers and those who look after you to make sure you're doing well. We have experienced and stable leadership of the 6th Form area. The facilities are modern and support the needs of our 6th form students. 6th Form students are very much part of school life at Swakeleys - helping us organise school events such as Halloween mufti day and staff vs students sporting events, leading our assemblies and helping the school run smoothly in their role as prefects. Students do incredibly well at 6th Form @ Swakeleys and can then confidently head off into the world to follow their passion.

[I recommend 6th Form @ Swakeleys most highly and am sure that you will be happy and successful with us.](#)

Ms Stevenson - Head Teacher



Welcome to 6th Form @ Swakeleys

We are delighted that you are considering joining 6th Form @ Swakeleys. We are an ambitious, hardworking, diverse and supportive community.

The 6th Form has a proven track record of supporting students to reach their academic potential and achieve outstanding grades. These results are the product of our students' commitment to their studies as well as the support given by our dedicated 6th Form teachers, expertly guiding students to do their best.

We also believe that alongside helping students to reach their academic potential that it is also vital that we empower students to develop wider skills that will enable them to thrive in their future workplace as well as a make a positive contribution to their communities. This is why we run a comprehensive character and culture curriculum, offering students a multitude of different opportunities to develop themselves outside of the classroom.

As a community we work together to support one another. We value and celebrate our differences as well as giving time to come together in shared experiences. We believe that for a student to be successful they need to feel safe, known and understood. This is what we seek to achieve each day, through creating an environment of respect and kindness.

I am confident that by choosing 6th Form @ Swakeleys you will have the support, opportunity and challenge that will enable you to achieve your goals.

Mr Hayden

Head of Sixth Form



25% of students achieved an A*-A or Distinction/Distinction*

79% of students achieved an A*-C grade

In 2024

31% of students secured places at Russell Group Universities

57% of students achieved A*-B

22% of Year 12 students achieved an A grade @ AS

99.6% of students achieved a A*-E at A-Level

Character and Culture in 6th Form @ Swakeleys

We share the same values as the wider school, **enjoy, aspire, achieve and succeed**. In the sixth form this is expressed through the wider opportunities we encourage students to engage in as well as the support we offer to students as they consider their future beyond sixth form.

Enjoy - Caring for student's wellbeing

6th Form @ Swakeleys takes student wellbeing very seriously. We want all of our students to feel safe, valued and happy here. We therefore have put in place a range of support for students' wellbeing, including an experienced tutor team, pastoral leader and support staff who are able to help students deal with challenges they may face.

We also have a team of student mental health ambassadors who have been trained to support other students. This team have created a mental health first aid station with take-away resources to support students. The team also run a weekly games club in sixth form, in order to create a supportive space students can come, relax and chat to others.

As part of the sixth form PSHCE programme we also run workshops on mental and physical wellbeing. For students who may need further support we work closely with our in school counselling service Place 2 be, who also run workshops for sixth form students on dealing with exam pressure.



Aspire - Encouraging and support students to realise their aspirations

At 6th Form @ Swakeleys we also encourage students to be aspirational. We know that if a student is goal orientated, this acts as a powerful motivator. We are always so proud and excited to see the variety of pathways students take when they leave us.

The programme of support for post 18 options begins in January in Year 12, where through assemblies and PSHCE workshops we introduce students to the different options available to them and how the application process works. We also give all students' access to Unifrog - the online destination platform. In the summer term Year 12 students have 2 days off timetable to focus on future choices and how to make strong applications. We have a range of external speakers who contribute to these days. Students in Year 12 finish the term with a week of work experience to further support this process. We also give all Year 12 students 1 hour a week to focus on super curricular activities (such as wider reading, listening to podcasts, completing online courses) to help them create a portfolio of evidence which can be used for future applications.

In Year 13 students have one to one meetings with their tutor to review applications and receive further guidance. All students also have the benefit of being able to see our in schools career advisor who also runs sessions during the year on the apprenticeships pathway.

Oxbridge / Medicine pathway

We also run an Oxbridge & Medicine pathway for students who achieved outstanding GCSE results. This programme begins in October for Year 12 students and involves a series of workshops by our partner colleges at Cambridge (Peterhouse) and Oxford (St Anne's). Our Oxbridge and medicine society's run weekly/fortnightly meetings to support students with developing the necessary skills and knowledge to make competitive applications. These students also receive support from an external Oxbridge advisor and for medicine students we work closely with Brighton and Sussex Medical School as well as 'Tutoring Doctors', an organisation set up by a former student of Swakeleys to support future medics.



Achieve – Empowering students to reach their academic potential

We teach students about the key characteristics of a successful 6th form student which includes support for students to understand how to organise themselves effectively, as well as implement the best ways to study and revise.

6th form @ Swakeleys
enjoy achieve aspire succeed

<h3><u>Effort</u></h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend every lesson (and if you do miss a lesson you have caught up the work by the next lesson). • Make good notes in lessons and review/add to these at home. • Complete all homework tasks on time • Complete super-curricular work • Do revision overview mind maps or cue cards at the end of each topic learnt. 	<h3><u>Systems</u></h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be organised – keep notes in order in one folder • Use content pages to keep work in order and fill any gaps in notes • Create a weekly plan of when you will complete homework / reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan time to revise for end of topic assessments
<div style="border: 2px solid black; border-radius: 20px; padding: 10px; margin: 0 auto; width: 80%;"> <h3><u>Vision</u></h3> <p>Do you know what you want to achieve?</p> <p>Set a clear goal, make a plan, and stick to it</p> </div>	
<h3><u>Practice</u></h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice exam questions at home. • Look at the exam papers and the trigger words used in the Q. • Look at the Mark schemes – what are the key assessment objectives? • Ask for feedback from your teachers that allows you to develop your performance 	<h3><u>Attitude</u></h3> <p>If you are struggling to understand areas of the course – ask for help, don't give up or switch off.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rewrite assessment answers using feedback given <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn from mistakes made and persevere • Speak to your form tutor or Year office if you are struggling with anxiety or stress

Students in addition to their subject lessons are allocated 3 hours of supervised study per week on their timetables with the specific focus being for exam skills practice. We believe giving students a silent environment to practice exam questions and/or respond to feedback given by teachers on previously sat assessments gives students the best possible chance of making strong progress.



We also operate a peer mentoring programme during form times to support students' academic progress. As all of our form groups are a combination of Year 12 & Year 13, once a half term Year 13 and Year 12 students pair up and the Year 13 can offer advice and support, based on their experiences the previous year.

After every progress check report, we also identify students in need of extra academic support and they are then formally mentored by their form tutor, 6th Form Academic Lead, or Head of 6th Form. Students identify targets and these are then reviewed with their mentor.

Financial support with academic expenses

All students entering 6th form will be able to loan subject textbooks for the duration of their course. Students may also be required to purchase other supporting materials such as subject specific equipment or contributions towards trips to enrich and support learning. This is why in 6th Form @ Swakeleys we offer a 16 to 19 bursary fund, which is designed to support students who may struggle with the costs of full-time education or training. The school receives a bursary fund from the government, which is then distributed to students in various ways throughout the academic year. Students who successfully apply will be provided financial assistance with course related materials, as well as support with meals, equipment or transport where required.

Students who qualify for Bursary or Pupil Premium funding are also supported in accessing widening participation programmes offered by Universities and employers.

Succeed – Enabling students to develop their wider skills for the work place and wider community

We encourage our students to get involved in a wide variety of extra-curricular activities and clubs. We believe it is very important for students to develop not just academic skills but also wider social skills to help them be successful and positive citizens. We therefore give students access to a range of activities such as leadership training, student

mentoring, and oracy sessions. We also have a bespoke PSHCE programme with a range of sessions and visiting speakers to equip students for life both at and after sixth form.

All sixth form students are expected to take part in extra-curricular activities such as participating in or leading a lunch time club. We also encourage students to participate in programmes that stretch and challenge them. For example:

- Duke of Edinburgh Award
- Mark Evison Foundation project - students can receive up to £500 for a project of their choice
- National Citizens Service

We also run regular social events and trips in the 6th Form organised by students themselves. These have included in the last year - Theatre trips, Halloween dress up day, sports afternoon, Zorbing, and Ice Skating



Student leadership programme

At 6th Form @ Swakeleys we recognise that our students are leaders of tomorrow and we invited students to apply to join our 6th Form Student Leadership Programme, which can lead to a national accreditation in student leadership. Students serve as Head students and prefects and are responsible for representing the needs of students in the sixth form and initiating projects to improve the school and wider community.

Community Champion Award

We also expect all Year 12 students to give at least 10 hours of their time throughout the year to volunteer in school to support others. This could be through helping at school events, mentoring younger students, or assisting in clubs for example.



The Community Champion award scheme recognises and celebrates the voluntary work our students do.

By completing voluntary work students can apply for a Bronze, Silver or Gold community champion award

Choosing what to study

Deciding on what to study can be difficult. It is important for students to make good, considered choices that will support strong academic progress. Our advice would be to:

1. Choose subjects you will enjoy.

A Levels and Level 3 AAQ's can be challenging. To succeed students will need to show high levels of effort and commitment. Students who are interested in and enjoy the subjects they study are often more likely to show the sufficient levels of engagement to make good progress.

2. Choose subjects you will be good at.

For many careers or courses, grades matter more than subjects. In addition, it is difficult to stay motivated if a student is continually failing, no matter how hard they work. It will be important to be guided by the entry requirements for each subject and the grades a student is currently working at.

3. Choose subjects that will help you achieve future goals.

Ensure that the combination of subjects you choose meets the requirements of any careers or courses that you are considering. You can do this and still keep your options open - very few careers or courses specify more than one or two subjects within their overall requirements.

What is essential? What is preferred? What is useful?

Bear in mind that some careers and courses need particular A-levels. For example:

- Engineering and technology require maths and physics.
- Medicine requires chemistry, plus at least one other science - preferably biology.
- Computer sciences needs maths and sometimes further maths.
- Health care professions such as physiotherapy look for biology.
- For many degrees such as English, history, French and maths you will normally need an A level in this subject.
- For others like law, psychology, or economics for example, no prior knowledge is required, though it is useful to study a similar subject to show your aptitude and interest.

The Russell Group - made up of the 24 UK world-class, research-intensive universities have an excellent web site to support on which subjects to choose to help assist with future options. We recommend that this site is used to help with subject choices. www.informedchoices.ac.uk



Different Types of Courses

What are A levels?

These are academic qualifications, the majority of which are assessed through examinations at the end of the second academic year. Some courses have a Non Exam-Assessment (coursework) which makes up a percentage of the grade.

Most students are expected to choose 3 subjects to study. However if a student achieves an average Grade of a 7 or above at GCSE they would be able to apply to study 4 subjects. A decision would then be made at the end of Year 12 in regards to whether it is in their best interests to continue with 4 subjects. All students who choose to study Further Mathematics must choose three other subjects

The Extended Project (EPQ) - This will also be available for Year 12 students studying A Levels. The EPQ is the equivalent to an AS Level (half the value of a full A level). Students will apply to study the EPQ after October half term in Year 12. Access to study the EPQ will be based on a student's academic and attendance record in Year 12 at the time of application.

Students will have timetabled after school lessons starting in February and will be provided a subject mentor to support their progress. Students will submit their final project after the summer holidays.

AAQ (Alternative academic qualifications)

These are courses which provide a specialist work-related qualification that covers the key knowledge and practical skills required in the vocational sector and also offer different emphasis through the choice of specialist units. These qualifications are a combination of modular examinations in Year 12 & 13 and coursework. They are equivalent to an A level.

Please note - At the time of publication of this document there is significant uncertainty regarding what vocational courses will be available to teach in Sept 2025. The Department for Education is currently holding a review of reforms put in place by the previous government. The conclusions of this review will be published in December, at which point we will have a clearer idea (along with all other 6th Forms) what we will be able to offer.

GCSE English and mathematics retakes

If a student has achieved the entry requirements to study A Levels or the vocational pathway but has not achieved a grade 4 in either maths, English or both, students will be expected to retake these GCSE exams. Students will be supported to do this by the maths and English departments with timetabled extra lessons. Students will be given an opportunity in November 2025 to resit these exams. If they do not achieve a passing grade they will need to continue with additional lessons until the summer 2026 examinations

6th Form @ Swakeleys entry requirements

Academic Requirements

To study A Level subjects (or a combination of A Level subjects and AAQ's) we expect a student to achieve a minimum of five GCSE grade 5s or above. This should include a 5 in either English Language or Literature

To study AAQ subjects only (Vocational pathway) we expect a student to have achieved a minimum of four GCSE grade 4s or above.

General Requirements

We require that students have 95% attendance in Year 11 (excluding known medical conditions/ exceptional circumstances) and an excellent behaviour record.

Subject Specific Requirements

Subject	GCSE minimum grade
A LEVEL	
Art and Design	Art 5
Art and Fashion (Textile Design)	Art 5
Biology	Science 7-7 & Maths 6
Business	Maths 5 & Business 5 (if studied)
Chemistry	Science 7-7, Maths 6
Computer Science	Computer Science 6 & Maths 6
Economics	Maths 6
English Literature and Language	English 5-5
English Literature	English 5-5
Film Studies	Media 5 (if studied)
Geography	Geography 5 (if studied)
History	History 5 (if studied)
Mathematics	Mathematics 7 & entrance exam
Mathematics - Further - <i>This can also be chosen as an AS level</i>	Mathematics 8
Media Studies	Media 5 (if studied)
MFL (French or German)	7 in the chosen language
Photography	Art 5 (if studied)
Physics	Science 7-7, maths 7
Politics	Citizenship or History 5 (if studied)
Psychology	Psychology 5 (if studied)
Religious Studies	RE 5
Sociology	Sociology 5 (if studied)
LEVEL 3 AAQ	
Early Childhood Development	4 GCSEs at 9-4
Health & Social Care	4 GCSEs at 9-4

Please note that we give all students a free choice and once we have received all applications we then create a timetable to try and ensure the vast majority of students have their desired combination of subjects.

All offers on courses will be subject to necessary student numbers.

6th Form @ Swakeleys application process

November 2024

Applications for 2024 entry open on **Thursday 14th November**. To apply students need to complete the online application form which can be found on the school website or accessed using the following QR code.



We welcome applications from students studying at other schools.

January 2025

The deadline for applications is **Friday 10th January**. Yr11 students at Swakeleys who have applied will be invited to a taster day in sixth form on **Tuesday 14th January**. This will give a students a day in the life of a sixth form student with, where possible, lessons in their chosen subjects

February 2025

All applications will be reviewed in January. Students at Swakeleys who have applied will be invited for an interview to discuss their application in the first two weeks after February Half term. Interviews will be conducted by one of, Ms Stevenson (Head teacher) Miss Wall (Deputy Head teacher) Mr Hayden (Head of 6th Form) Mrs Tooker (6th Form Academic Lead) or Mrs Cherry (Pastoral Lead in 6th Form). The interviews will take place during the school day and will last no more than 10minutes.

March 2025

After the interview process decisions will made about offers. Students will be informed via a letter given via their form tutor in March. Students will be ask to accept or decline their offer via an online form by the end of April.

External student applications will be reviewed and selected students will be invited to an interview afternoon in March. External students invited for interview will be informed by email if they have been offered a place before the Easter holiday.

June 2025

All students who have accepted their 6th Form @ Swakeleys offer will be expected to attend an induction day on **Monday 23rd June**. Failure to attend these days will result in a student's place being reviewed.

August 2025

On GCSE results day, 21st August, students will be required to enrol to confirm their place and chosen subjects.