



Sixth Form Student Support Information for Parents

The Lifebelt



The transition into the Sixth Form can be a challenging one. Studying three or four subjects at AS, A2 or BTEC Level is a step up in academic challenge, but also comes with increased time for independent study which needs to be used effectively by the students. As a school we are always looking for better ways to identify any students who would benefit from help to fully achieve their potential and then provide them with as much support as we can to achieve the goals they have set themselves.

The Lifebelt is a structure for the support we provide our students. The primary purpose of this process is to give students the rapid support they need as soon as we know there may be a cause for concern and to tailor that support to the individual. We hope that students will embrace the support on offer and begin to adjust elements of their study habits so that they make more progress with less worry!

FAQ's

What is it for?

Teaching staff can record comments about a student on e-portal. Although these comments are often positive in nature, we are also able to keep track of any consistent patterns which could be undermining the progress a student is making. The Lifebelt is simply a structure to allow staff, parents and students to work together and identify a plan to improve the situation.

Who will be involved?

If a student has given a teacher reason to be concerned that they may not achieve their full potential then we expect a member of that subject area to contact you and discuss steps that could be taken to improve the situation. If the concern continues then the student will be entered into the lifebelt process. It is important that students recognise that this is an offer of support rather than a sanction and that their own dedication, determination and behaviour will be the key factor in any improvement.

How does it work?

If we feel a student would benefit from support available through the Lifebelt system, a meeting will be arranged by their tutor, which you and your son/daughter will be invited attend. This meeting will also be attended by the most relevant staff, possibly including the Tutor, The Director of Sixth Form and any specific staff who might contribute. At this meeting, we will work together to agree on ways in which the student can hope to improve the progress they are making. This will obviously be different for each student but might include advice about for example, time management, study methods, revision methods, extension reading, research skills and so on.

Once a plan has been agreed the student will attend a weekly meeting with their tutor to review progress and adjust the plan if necessary. At the end of a six week period staff will be asked for feedback regarding the student's progress and hopefully they would receive a formal acknowledgement of their achievement, (copied to parents) and graduate from the system. If a student is still having problems after six weeks, then a further meeting will be arranged to consider additional support. Students may just need more time to complete the changes they are making to their study habits and so it could be that they remain in the lifebelt for a further six weeks.

What can Parents do to help?

As a school we recognise that you are the best placed people to encourage a useful and lasting change in the study habits of our students. Your support for this process will be valued by staff but more importantly is likely to result in more of our students reaching the very aspirational goals they set for themselves. It will be certainly be useful if you can make us aware of any important developments or changes at home but it will also be very helpful if you can support your child towards identifying clear career goals and effective ways of working. If you have any concerns please do not hesitate to contact your son/daughters Tutor, Mrs Knapton or Miss Booth