

# MONTSAYE ACADEMY

## GOOD STUDY GUIDE



**Montsaye Sixth Form**  
Shaping Minds; Igniting Futures



# WELCOME

We are delighted that you have decided to join our Sixth Form this September. The learning experiences you will have as a Sixth Form student are considerably different to that of a lower school student. Therefore, we have put together this guide to help make the transition to Sixth Form a little bit easier.

If you have any questions or concerns at any stage, please speak to Mrs McNish in the Sixth Form Centre Study Room (SF1). She can also be contacted on [lmcnish@montsaye.org.uk](mailto:lmcnish@montsaye.org.uk)



# WHERE CAN I STUDY?

The Sixth Form Study Centre is a dedicated space that is exclusively for the use of Sixth Form students. The Centre is split into four distinct areas for your use...

## SF1–Main Study Room

This is a large study area upstairs, which can be used for quiet and group study. You will find PCs and laptops available for your use, and a printer and photocopier. There are whiteboards that students can use to teach each other. SF1 is where you will find the sign in and out sheets that you must use everyday. Mrs McNish is also based in SF1, so if you need any help, support or advice, this is where you can find her.



## SF2–Silent Study Room

The Centre has a room dedicated for **silent** study. Tables and booths are arranged individually, so that students are able to complete their work without distraction. The room will be monitored, and anyone who is failing to use this room properly will be asked to work elsewhere.

There are a number of networked computers in the Study Centre, along with laptops available for you to borrow. You are welcome to bring a laptop from home to use (please speak to Mrs McNish or the ICT Helpdesk to get a password for the WiFi).

# WHERE CAN I STUDY?

## SF3–Classroom

SF3 is a classroom used as a teaching space for subjects such as English Literature, History and Sociology. When it is not being used for a lesson, students may use it as an additional study space for group work. This room has an interactive whiteboard which students can use for group teaching.



## The Mezzanine and Kitchen

The mezzanine and kitchen areas are for use before school, and at breaktime and lunchtime. They are not to be used during lesson times. We have two kitchens, each with a fridge, kettle, microwave and sink. Students can bring in their own mugs, milk, tea bags, etc...Washing and drying equipment will be provided by the Academy, but students are responsible for keeping the area tidy during and after use. . You will also find our Sixth Form Snack Bar on the mezzanine, which is open at break and lunchtime. Payment for food and drinks can be made by card or Apple pay.



# MANAGING YOUR STUDY

For the first time in your school life you will not have timetabled lessons all day. You will have, on average, between five and ten hours of private study time per week (depending on the number of subjects you are studying). This equates to between one and two school days where you have time to complete work independently, and it is crucial that you make the most of this time.

We find that our most successful students are those that treat sixth form as a 'full-time job'. Those students arrive at school at 8.40am, and stay until 3.00pm every day. They work continuously through the day (apart from break and lunch!), completing private study and homework in their study sessions. They find that by doing this they keep on top of their work, and do not have as much to complete at home in the evenings and weekends. Of course, there will be work that you will need to complete outside of school hours, but you will find you can get a big chunk of it done during the school day, if you plan and use your time wisely.

You will need to develop the study skills required for success in the Sixth Form as quickly as possible. The first term of PSHE lessons will cover the study skills you need to become a successful sixth form student. The quicker you get into the habit of studying at school, the easier your sixth form studies will be.



# STUDY TIPS

For every hour you spend in a subject lesson, you should be doing **at least** the same amount of work in your study sessions and at home.

For example...

5 hours of lessons per subject = 5 hours of private study per subject  
3 subjects x 5 hours = 15 hours of private study a week.

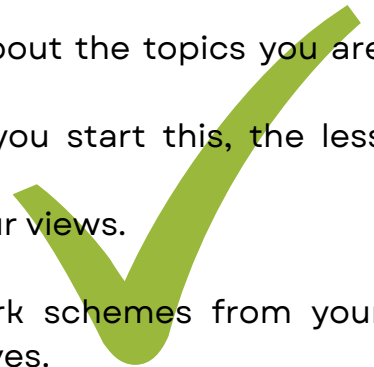


**10 hours of study done at school, means only 5 hours to study in the evenings and at weekends!**

**(Please note: this is the bare minimum you should be doing!)**

## Things you can be doing at school in your study sessions:

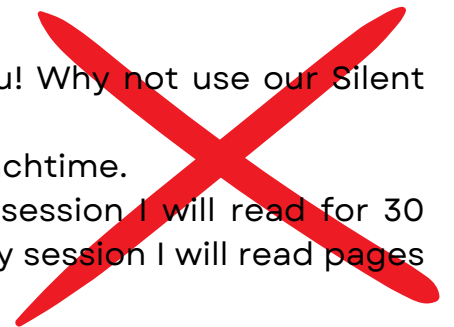
- Re-read notes that you have made in class to check they all make sense. Re-write and develop if necessary. Highlight key points.
- Use the internet or textbook to read additional materials about the topics you are covering in class.
- Make revision cards, summarising key points—the sooner you start this, the less cards you will need to make at the end of Year 13!
- Make mind-maps summarising key points and developing your views.
- Create lists of key words, definitions, formulae, etc...
- Use the internet to print out past exam papers and mark schemes from your subjects. Practice relevant questions and mark them yourselves.
- Complete any homework you have been set.



The benefit of completing work in school is that you can check with your friends that you are on the right track. You can also find your teachers to ask for help if there is anything you are unsure about.

## AVOID...

- Sitting with your friends if you know they will distract you! Why not use our Silent Study Room?
- Looking at your phone! Put it in your bag until break and lunchtime.
- Giving yourself a time-orientated task e.g. 'In this study session I will read for 30 minutes'. Instead, make it task-orientated e.g. 'In this study session I will read pages 25-29 and make a mind map of key points'



# NOTE-TAKING TIPS

## **DON'T WRITE DOWN EVERY WORD**

The whole point of note taking is to be able to summarise information in a different, shorter form to use later. Therefore, if you try to write down every word of a lecture or book then you will soon get behind and lose the thread of what is being presented to you.



## **BE AN ACTIVE LISTENER / READER**

It is easy to drift off and lose the thread of a lesson – concentration is important. Breakdown note-taking tasks from texts into smaller sections.

## **DECIDE WHAT IS IMPORTANT**

Listen/look out for key phrases such as 'the most important factor is...' which is like a large signpost directing you to the fact that a vital piece of information is coming up and instructs you to ready your pen to take a note of it. The author or lecturer you are working with will have their own particular style and phrases that you should look out for, so become familiar with their signposts.

## **USE SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

Develop your own set of symbols and abbreviations. Some obvious ones are + or & for 'and'; = for equals. Other examples seen less often are w/ for 'with' or wch for 'which'.

## **USE COLOURS**

Use different coloured inks when taking notes. You can show different themes and approaches by changing to a different colour.



## **REVISIT YOUR NOTES ASAP!**

The best use of your notes is to read over them a short time after and perhaps re-write them again, more neatly or in a different order.

Perhaps convert them into mind maps, or make flash cards from written notes?

## **IMPROVE YOUR HANDWRITING**

Do not be so immersed in note-taking that you forget to notice that your handwriting has become unreadable! Remember to write or type clearly and legibly throughout, however tired your hand becomes.

## **FORGET SPELLING AND GRAMMAR!**

Achieving perfection in these areas is not important; rather, focus on the gathering and recording of information. And if that means your spelling and grammar has to slip, so be it!

# REVISION TIPS

## OUR TOP 10 TIPS!

- For most subjects, sit and read is not good enough.
- Plan what to revise and when - make a timetable!
- Do not cheat - work when you plan to work.
- Plan your breaks.
- Work without distraction - no interruptions allowed!
- Plan to complete very specific tasks.
- Base revision around 30-40 minutes of concentrated effort before having a break
- Tackle topics you do not like sooner rather than later.
- Do 15 minutes concentrated learning/memorising before going to sleep.
- Make it active.

Rewrite sections of inadequate notes

Reduce notes to side headings and essential details

Reduce notes to revision cards

Use colour to highlight key points

Share notes/essays with a friend

Check marked work for advice

Make mind maps - create the 'big picture'

Make key word definition lists

Ask someone to test you on key words

Make PowerPoints which you can watch later

Arrange with a friend to teach each other a topic

Make a note of anything you are unsure about to check in class

Past paper questions - no notes, then mark

Make summary grids to compare two or more elements

Make post-it timelines or story lines and put them up in your room

Past paper questions - with notes - write in mark scheme detail

Write essay plans outlining structure and key content

Make posters with key facts/formulae and put them up in your room



# ADVICE FOR STUDENTS... ...FROM STUDENTS



What advice would you give to Year 12 students just starting in the Sixth Form?

Attend all lessons and copy up notes if you miss something

Allocate specific time to each subject

Make use of the study rooms during free lessons

Start coursework early - if you leave it until the last minute it won't be very good

Take notes and develop them to help you revise

Always ask if you don't understand

Do your homework as soon as you get it - if you don't it will soon pile up

Prepare for sixth form to be harder than you think!

Free periods are an advantage if you use them properly!

Set school as your main priority

Speak to someone if you are struggling

Don't prioritise subjects you like most at the expense of other - tackle the hard stuff as well!

Try to resist the temptation to keep checking your phone!

Don't be afraid to move yourself away from friends if they are distracting you