



# **SIXTH YEAR**

**at St Ninian's**

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## Introduction from the Head Teacher

Dear Student

Sixth Year provides you with the opportunity to experience an extensive range of academic and vocational options which will further develop your knowledge, skills and attributes that will prepare you well for life, learning, and work beyond Saint Ninian's.

During Sixth Year you will be well supported to take increasing responsibility for your studies and the decisions and choices which will influence your future. The experiences and opportunities offered in S6 and the courses you study will deepen your knowledge and understanding, help you develop a wide range of valuable skills, and prepare you well for the next stage of your learning.

Your studies in Sixth Year are designed to build on your prior levels of achievement and attainment in S5. They are marked by the following characteristics:

- continuing exposure to rich learning experiences which will further develop your personal attributes and capabilities,
- experiences which develop your potential, offering a broad preparation for adult life, including essential skills for life and work, especially literacy and numeracy
- opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills necessary for the next stage of your life, for example in tertiary education, training or in employment
- an emphasis on health and well-being and on your spiritual and moral development and formation

- opportunities for personal development and for reflecting on your progress
- opportunities for acquiring a wide range of personal achievements, both in and out of school, and for formal recognition of those achievements
- opportunities to build up an extensive portfolio of qualifications.

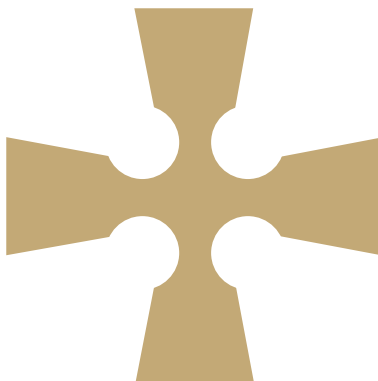
Please take time with your parents(s) to consider what your best options are as you enter your final year at school.

My hope is that you leave Saint Ninian's as a highly conscientious, confident, competent and compassionate young person.

Best wishes for a very fruitful and happy Sixth Year.

Kindest regards

**John Docherty**  
Head Teacher



## Sixth Year in School

Our aim in St Ninian's is to help all our pupils fulfil their potential, their ability and aptitudes to the full in each aspect of their development - academic, spiritual, physical, personal, social and emotional.

Of particular importance is our commitment to helping our young people to grow in faith and to support them to develop as young adults committed to promoting Gospel values throughout their lives. We aim, therefore, to enable those leaving S6 to become confident, successful individuals who will use the talents and gifts given to them by God and supported by the guidance of parents and teachers, to contribute to society.

Staying on for Sixth Year is a choice; it should not be something that you simply drift into. You must have definite goals in what you want to achieve during your Sixth Year. You must be prepared to work as hard as, or even harder than, you have in previous years; Sixth Year is not an easy option and should not be viewed as such.

Sixth year is different from Fifth Year in many ways. Much more is expected of our S6 pupils. Undoubtedly S1 – S5 look to our S6 for indications of how they should dress, talk, behave and interact with others. This is not a responsibility to be taken lightly. There will be opportunities for S6 to work closely with their Pastoral Support teacher and support younger pupils in PSHE as they develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

Pupils in sixth year are expected to set an example to our younger pupils in terms of:

**MOTIVATION**  
**APPEARANCE**  
**ATTITUDE**  
**BEHAVIOUR**

Experience tells us that where S6 students work hard, develop their talents both inside the school and in the wider community and contribute fully to the wider life of the school, they are best prepared for the next stage in their careers, be it the world of work, an apprenticeship, college or university.

Our Sixth Year pupils choose to commit to the school and to their curriculum. In S6 pupils are required to study a minimum of four chosen subjects alongside their core subjects of Religious Education, Physical Education and PSHE.

**5th Year**

5 Certificated



**6th Year**

4 to 5 Certificated

## The Sixth Year Experience

The S6 experience in St Ninian's is about each young person adding to their portfolio of academic qualifications and aspiring to academic excellence. It is about them developing skills for life and utilising their God given gifts. The sense of 'service to others' will feature highly.

The opportunities offered to our S6 are many and varied. For example, those S6 who participate in the CARITAS Award are given the opportunity to take up the invitation of God's friendship by offering their talents in the service of others. The Pope Benedict XVI CARITAS AWARD encourages and promotes the ongoing faith journey of young people. It recognises that some are already active and committed within their homes, schools, parishes and dioceses and it invites others to respond to God's call of love. It supports and celebrates the faith witness which young people give within their communities. We anticipate large numbers of S6 will accept this special opportunity. The award is designed to be inclusive of all young people and is open to pupils of all faiths, denominations and backgrounds.

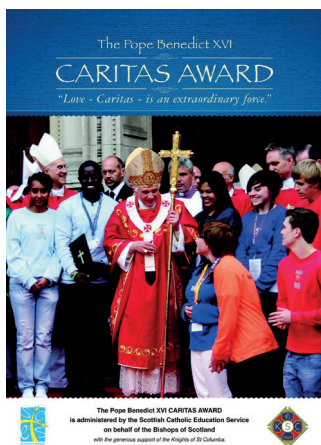


S6 should be a particularly enriching year for our young people. We encourage each and every one of our students to think carefully about the academic and personal choices offered to them and to make decisions that will have a positive impact on them for life.

We also hope many of our S6 will offer their services as Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist and in this way deepen their own faith as well as act as role models for the younger pupils in the school. During Sixth Year all pupils are expected to take up the opportunity to serve others and get involved in the wider life of their school through:

- Community Placements
- Involvement in the S6 Tutor Programme
- Student Mentoring
- Charity fundraising
- Enterprise activities

Further details of these opportunities and many more can be found in the S6 Service Booklet.



## S6 Core Subjects

**All senior pupils must study Religious Education, Physical Education and PSHE as part of their curriculum.**



### **Religious Education (RE):**

The S6 RE Programme continues to support the aim of the Catholic School. It aims to continue the religious, moral and spiritual development of students. To do this, students are given the opportunity to develop their faith and personal relationship with God.

The S6 programme presents religion as a relevant and vital influence in society. Students are encouraged to consider the process of making good and informed decisions about issues of religion.

Students will be encouraged to consider the process of decision-making and to be aware of factors which influence decision-making. The S6 course is delivered over three rotations. For two of these three rotations lessons will be delivered in the classroom with the other being held in the lecture theatre. Presentations on matters of faith will be delivered in the Lecture Theatre by representatives of various religious and faith groups. The teaching of the Church is a constant influence throughout the course.

### **Physical Education (PE):**

It is more important than ever for students to make physical activity a part of their daily lives. Physical activity during the school day not only keeps young people healthier, but also helps them academically and socially.

Physical education is the only subject that focuses children's efforts and learning on their body and its physical development. It further links this to cognitive and social processes thereby making a real connection between how mind and body develop. Evidence indicates that the health and wellbeing of children affect their ability to achieve and their confidence to learn. When young people are fit and healthy, they are more able to concentrate, learn and do well in school.



## Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE):

It is through PSHE that many aspects concerning a young persons Health and Wellbeing are focussed on. A structured course is delivered to our senior pupils through PSHE allowing them to consider and discuss areas that affect their mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing as well as preparing them for choices and changes. In Sixth Year it is through PSHE that crucial information and support regarding applications, particularly UCAS, is delivered.



## S6 Choice

In preparing for S6 you are faced with important choices regarding the subjects that you will be studying. Subjects should be chosen on the basis of your particular strengths, prior attainment, interests and future plans. The subject choices you make for S6 will affect the opportunities you have for employment, further education and higher education. Your aim in 6th Year has to be to build on your previous attainment so as to secure as strong and competitive a platform for upcoming applications.



### You can choose to:

- Pick up subjects that you last studied in S4
- You can choose to crash a National 5 or Higher Course provided you meet the minimum entry requirements and have achieved academic success in S5.
- You can choose to study at an Advanced Higher level for one or more subjects depending on your performance at higher level for these subjects.
- You can choose to develop key skills in other courses on offer to S6 such as Sports Development, and Computer Games Design.

## When choosing:

- Be realistic in your course choice and choose courses that whilst they challenge and stretch your academic capabilities still offer a realistic chance of success.
- Identify where your strengths lie and choose according to those strengths. Taking note of recent prelim scores will act as an indicator as to how strong you are in a subject.
- Note that to study a subject at Advanced Higher it is advisable that you should have achieved an A or B pass for the Higher. Seek the advice of departments.
- Consider subjects relevant for the career path you may wish to pursue.
- Be aware of entry requirements for college or university courses that you are interested in applying for. Students intending to proceed to Further/Higher Education courses should check the actual entry requirements before making any choices.
- Remember that your S6 curriculum has to be realistic, rigorous and challenging in order for it to be competitive and impressive!

The screenshot displays the UCAS website interface. At the top, navigation links include 'Further education', 'Undergraduate', 'Postgraduate', 'Alternatives', 'Careers', a search icon, and a 'Sign in' button. The main header features the 'CHOOSE YOUR FUTURE' title with the subtitle 'Explore your options, apply to university, and more'. Below this is a search bar with the placeholder text 'find courses, information, and more'. The page is divided into several sections: a large image of a young man with the text 'Need help choosing your final five?' and a description of UCAS Futures workshops; a 'unibuddy' chatbot section with the text 'NOT SURE WHICH UNI IS RIGHT FOR YOU? TALK TO CURRENT STUDENTS ONLINE' and a 'chat now >' button; another 'unibuddy' section titled 'CONNECT WITH STUDENTS ONLINE' with bullet points 'ask questions', 'gain insight', and 'find out what to expect', also with a 'chat now >' button; a 'Going to university?' section with a photo of graduates and the text 'Studying at a university, college, or conservatoire?'; and a 'Create your UCAS Hub' section with a photo of two students and the text 'Explore your options, book your interview, and discover your next steps. Get started with'. A small 'Unsure about a course, provider, or student life?' section is also visible, encouraging users to talk to students who are already studying.

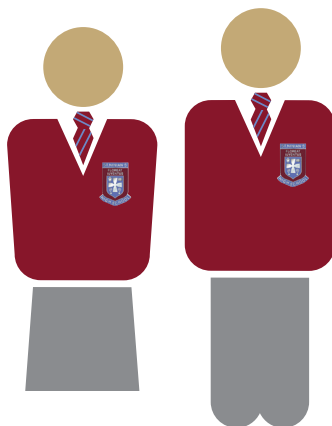


## The Sixth Year Agreement

Once you have negotiated your curriculum for next session you will sign the **Formal Written Agreement** for session 2020-21. As part of the senior school, there are certain commitments you must undertake.

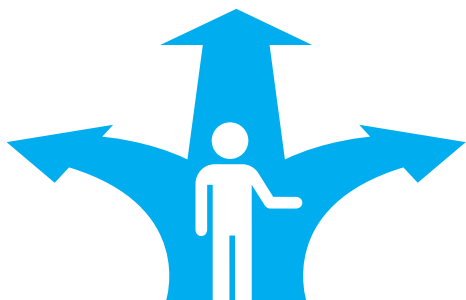
### You will be expected to:

- ✓ Behave responsibly and appropriately
- ✓ Pursue excellent attendance and punctuality
- ✓ Complete all programmes of work to the best of your ability
- ✓ Provide leadership by setting a good example to younger pupils
- ✓ Fully accept and cooperate with the school dress code
  - School Blazer
  - School Tie
  - Grey Trousers/Skirt (app. length)
  - White or Pale Blue Shirt
  - Grey v-necked pullover or cardigan
  - Plain Black Shoes



### In return the school makes commitments to you:

- ✓ Every support possible will be given to help you achieve your goals
- ✓ Departments will provide you with Course Outlines and Course Timelines
- ✓ Work returned either marked or with advice for improvement
- ✓ Careers Advice
- ✓ Support given in making applications



During S6 it is important to consider the next stage of your journey come the end of S6. Are you going to apply for a job or for a course of study at either college or university?

To assist our pupils in deciding this next stage we offer guidance through PSHE by advertising relevant websites and upcoming career events. You can arrange to meet with the school's career advisor through your pastoral support teacher. Additionally a series of career presentations are delivered by professionals from a variety of professions including medicine, engineering, finance, plumbing and surveying which pupils are encouraged to attend.

Furthermore the school delivers a very valuable and successful careers evening which offers pupils the opportunity to discover more about a broad range of careers. Representatives from a number of companies and educational establishments are in attendance and keen to offer advice on appropriate and suitable pathways.

### Applying for Employment

S6 pupils are supported in their pursuit of employment. Employment opportunities are advertised through PSHE as well as being displayed on the careers website and the notice board outside of the Pastoral Base.

### Applying to College

College applications are generally accessed, completed and submitted online. Applications for most college courses beginning in the September become available in January and normally allow applications up to the end of March. It is advisable though to submit applications as early as possible as some courses run a first come first served system.

### Applying to University

Making an application to University is an important step that many of our S6 pupils undertake. Applications are made online through the UCAS website, [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com).

Both parents and pupils are informed about the application process through the school's UCAS information evening as well as the issuing of a UCAS information letter. An additional sign up presentation is also offered to pupils to assist them in beginning their application. Pupils are given further direction through assemblies and PSHE as well as having opportunities to discuss their application with their pastoral support teacher.

Pupils applying for Medicine/Dentistry/Veterinary Medicine or Oxbridge comply with a different timeline to other courses. These applications are therefore known as fast track applications due to the earlier deadline for submission of these applications.

It is also worth noting that aptitude tests are required for certain courses. These aptitude tests are to be arranged and sat independently of the school and UCAS. Courses where an aptitude test can be required are Law (the LNAT) and Medicine (the UKCAT). Prospectuses will detail whether an aptitude test is required.

## Personal Statement

A key element of the application is the personal statement. It is in this statement that the pupil advertises their experience, skills and qualities that make them a suitable candidate for their chosen course of study. Importantly examples must be offered as to how they have achieved or demonstrated these particular traits during their time at school.

## The Reference

A reference from the school is required to support an application. This reference is attached by the school to the application. The reference details the pupil's achievements and accomplishments as well as commenting on their commitment and willingness to work hard in pursuit of their goals.

## University Open Days

Open days can be a valuable opportunity. They offer a chance to visit a university and engage in discussion with faculty staff about courses that you may be considering applying for. For those considering applying to more than one university again it may be worthwhile to attend more than just the one open day.

However attending an open day is an absence from school and we encourage pupils to strongly consider how beneficial attending an open day may be for them weighed against the classes they will miss. It is worth remembering that attending an open day is not necessary in choosing which university course to apply for as well as many universities also running alternative visiting opportunities out with the school day.

If you have already made the decision to apply to a particular university then attending the open day in these circumstances is diminished. The school does not condone visiting universities that you have no intention of applying to or indeed offer courses that you are unable to apply for as this is obviously an unnecessary absence. The school day is just too valuable to miss without good reason. Above all competitive grades are the key to entering university and this is best achieved through attending school. Your pastoral teacher may well discuss with you the relevancy and value of attending an open day if it is not understood to be necessary. This may involve contacting parents.

If you are intent on attending an open day then it is important that you inform the school in advance. The procedure is that a signed note from parents stating the date of the open day and the reason for attending should be submitted before the day. In doing so the absence will be noted as a school visit, in the absence of such a note the absence will be unauthorised and marked as such.

## Work Experience

Work experience can be beneficial in supporting an application. It affords an insight into the day to day reality of a particular working environment and as such can reinforce your determination to pursue a career in this field as well as develop your understanding of what is involved. There are particular university courses for which relevant work experience can prove very valuable when making an application such as medicine and engineering. The ideal time to arrange for work experience would be during the summer between S5 and S6. Arrangements can be made during term time but this is discouraged.

