



Creating tomorrow's
citizens today



Simon Balle

RECEPTION

Simon Balle All-through School
Sixth Form Handbook 2022



Welcome to the Sixth Form

Our ethos and values are at the very core of what we do, from reception to Sixth Form. We have a clear vision of what we want our students to be like so that we can say with certainty that we are 'creating tomorrow's citizens today'.

At Simon Balle we are committed to offering the best possible teaching and learning and the strongest possible guidance in the Sixth Form, within a caring school community. Our students will leave us having had a fantastic educational experience. They will have achieved the highest possible grades that they can and thus be able to go out into our globally competitive world with the skills, attributes and behaviours equipped for 21st century living. They will be self motivated to achieve their very best, be resourceful and resilient, able to accept others for who they are. Our students will be positive people, creative in their thinking, respectful and responsible in their actions. Simon Balle students will have discovered what they find interesting and thus be passionate about their learning. They will therefore possess confidence and have a sense of self worth, empowered to make decisions and able to self improve.

Sixth Form education is a new experience in many ways for a student: they have chosen to stay in education and they have decided which courses to study; they will probably want to work outside of school hours in order to become more financially independent; they may want to learn how to drive; they will undoubtedly want to socialise with friends. Your son/ daughter will need your help to ensure that a sensible balance is maintained and that they do not, for example, find themselves too tired from a job to be able to do justice to their school work. The aim of this handbook is to answer as many questions as possible, setting our expectations to everyone in our Sixth Form community. We all have to share the expectations and the ethos to continue to make the Sixth Form a great place to be.



Expectations of all students in the Sixth Form

By choosing to study at Simon Balle School in the Sixth Form, students have made a decision to be fully committed to their studies. This will require self-discipline and focus. They will be treated as an adult with the responsibility that being an adult brings. Sixth Formers will be looked up to as role models for younger students and will need to set a good example for them. Not only will poor behaviour or attitude affect their overall achievement, but it will also affect the achievement of other students. Just as in any place of work, there needs to be clearly understood rules and expectations to allow everyone to work successfully, safely and enjoyably.



Our ethos and values are at the very core of what we do, from reception to Sixth Form. We have a clear vision of what we want our students to be like so that we can say with certainty that we are 'creating tomorrow's citizens today'.

Simon Balle All-through School student expectations:





Supporting you

Meet the Sixth Form team

**Head of Year 12 -
Mrs Ahmet**

ahmeth@simonballe.herts.sch.uk

**Head of Year 13 -
Miss Young**

youngc@simonballe.herts.sch.uk

**Learning Centre Manger -
Mr R Ford**

fordr@simonballe.herts.sch.uk



Wellbeing



Simon Balle All-through School is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

Parents can feel confident that careful procedures are in place to ensure that all staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children within the school. Consistent and effective safeguarding procedures are in place to support families, children and staff. The school encourages parents and children to talk freely about any concerns or worries which may affect their wellbeing.

It is important to us that parents and students see that Simon Balle All through is as a safe place.

All concerns are referred to the Designated Senior Safeguarding Person. Students may be referred for additional bespoke support from external agencies who work closely with the school. The school will endeavour to work in partnership with parents at all times; however, the Designated Senior Person may when deemed necessary consult with the relevant agencies in order to safeguard the child's welfare.

If you have any concerns relating to any student in our school please contact one of the following designated staff:

Leon Brown - Director of Care and Wellbeing and Designated Safeguarding Lead
James Pooley - Deputy Safeguarding Lead
Lucy Own - Deputy Safeguarding Lead



“ Our **FIRST** priority is that **ALL** students feel safe and happy in our school.



“ We actively encourage our students to become independent learners and to manage their time effectively. Entrants to the Sixth Form will find life extremely busy.



Work Ethic

Such additional academic pursuits not only help with the subjects chosen, but also provide additional information and material upon which a strong UCAS statement or job application can be written.

We actively encourage our students to become independent learners and to manage their time effectively. Entrants to the Sixth Form will find life extremely busy, with most periods occupied by their specialist subjects. This places considerable pressure on time management skills and the need to keep pace with published schedules and deadlines.

However, students should not abandon those extra-curricular interests that can provide such valuable relaxation, performance. Our experience is that participation in these activities – sport, music, drama, volunteering – enhance rather than diminish academic.

They can also provide some of the most vivid memories of life at school.

We also try and provide as much support as possible whilst students are at school. The Sixth Form Learning Centre is open before and after school and provides an ideal location for quiet, productive study. Resources are available in the Sixth Form Learning Centre, library and via the school intranet.

On entering the Sixth Form, students are expected to take greater responsibility for their learning. This not only means work set is completed punctually, but also they begin to develop a greater intellectual curiosity about the subjects they have chosen.

In the Sixth Form, it is expected that students undertake approximately five hours of study, per subject per week. For most students, this is 15-20 hours each week of academically related study outside of lessons.

Some of this time should be devoted to consolidating knowledge, reading around the subject, attending appropriate lectures and undertaking work in independent study. Extra study may include; coursework, homework, extended reading, preparation for learning, revision or past examination papers.

Teachers are always willing to support out of the lessons. However, students cannot be ‘dragged’ through the learning - the initiative has to come from them, a routine for working at home, involvement in extracurricular activities and a good social life should make a happy and successful Sixth Former. It is students who do not achieve this balance who tend to underperform.

The key word here is ‘balance’. Effective use of independent study, a routine for working at home, involvement in extracurricular activities and a good social life should make a happy and successful Sixth Former. It is students who do not achieve this balance who tend to underperform.



“ We ask students to be respectful and responsible - to staff, peers and the environment.

“ During sessions 1 and 2 each day independent study will be silent in all areas of the Sixth Form Learning Centre. These sessions are closely monitored by the Sixth Form team to ensure a positive start.



Independent Study

We believe the best way of finding balance is using your 10 hours of independent study effectively.

- Students are expected to complete all independent study sessions at school in the Learning Centre.
- Independent study should extend and reinforce learning.
- Reading around a subject will not only help pass exams but also help gain a deeper understanding of the topic in preparation for university.

A Levels are difficult and all students are going to need to be determined and work hard throughout their two years in Sixth Form. Learning to work independently and using independent study time effectively is a huge part to ensuring success.

On average a student studying 3 A Levels subjects will spend 15 hours a week in a classroom with a subject teacher. This leaves 10 hours of non-contact, independent study each week. This adds up to roughly 60 hours of independent study each half-term. These 60 hours every six weeks make a huge difference to student progress.

If you are finding it difficult to plan your time or use it effectively, book some time with the Learning Centre Manager for a coaching session. We can then look at revision methods and create a timetable to help.

Life in the Learning Centre

The Sixth Form Learning Centre is the base for all Sixth Form students. Students are expected to remain on site and work in the Learning Centre for all of their independent study sessions. All study sessions are monitored by the Sixth Form Team.

Students have an option of spaces in the Learning Centre:

- Communal work areas
- Isolation pods for silent study

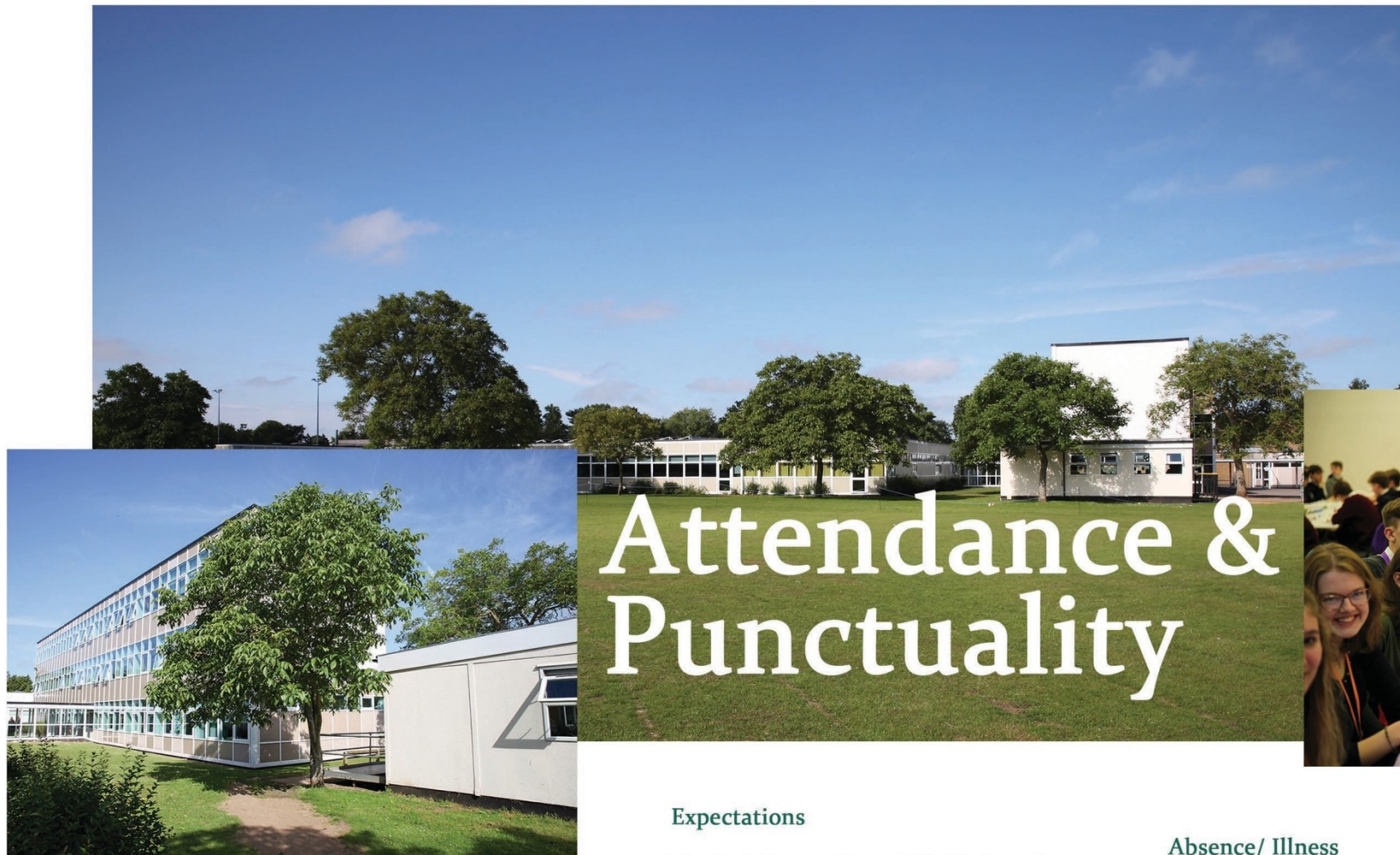
Some students arrive in the Learning Centre before school to work or remain after school to continue their study. The Learning Centre is sometimes used for mentoring sessions, extra-curricular workshops and some informal assemblies.

If students are not using their private study time effectively, distracting others from their work or attempting or completing little to no work, students will be asked to work in an alternative study environment and put in a detention.

In addition to remaining on site:

- Students must sign in, on time for all AM and PM independent study sessions.
- Devices and tablets only during lesson hours (no mobile phones to be used during lesson hours).
- Students are not permitted to eat in study zones during lesson hours. Drinks only.





Attendance & Punctuality

In choosing to join the Sixth Form, students have committed themselves to full-time education for two years.

Our attendance arrangements are straightforward. Sixth Form students are expected to be in school each day from 8.40am until 3.10pm.

In the Sixth Form, students are treated as young adults and should be working in partnership with teachers and parents if they are to reach their full potential.

Students who do not have a lesson will be expected to register with the Learning Centre Manager at the start of AM and PM study periods.

Students are allowed to leave the school site at lunch time only (when they must sign out and back in on their return).

If you arrive after registration closes at 8:40 am you must sign in. You will be marked late in the register and will be asked to explain your lateness.

Expectations

The Sixth Form at Simon Balle All-through School is committed to ensure that every student has the opportunity to develop their full potential. In order to support this, we have clear expectations of students regarding their attendance and punctuality.

- Sixth Form students will aim to have at least 97% attendance.
- Sixth Form students must be on site and registered at 8:40am each day.
- Sixth Form students must attend all timetabled lessons on time and ready to learn.
- Sixth Form students must attend all daily period 5 Learning for Life sessions with their tutor.
- Sixth Form students must remain on site and attend all independent study sessions in the Sixth Form Learning Centre.



Holidays in school time should not be taken as it is impossible to recapture an A level lesson, which is often primarily discussion-based. The copying of notes is no substitute for a missed lesson.

Absence/ Illness

- If you are unable to attend school a parent/carer must call the absence line on 01992 410400 (OPT 1)
- Students who are absent from any lesson are expected to complete the work set and arrive prepared for the next lesson. It is the student's responsibility to contact their subject teacher and request any work they have missed.
- Holidays in school time should not be taken as it is impossible to recapture an A level lesson, which is often primarily discussion-based. The copying of notes is no substitute for a missed lesson.
- Doctor and dentist appointments should also be made outside of school hours for the same reason.
- If a student needs to leave the school site for an unplanned absence the student must first speak with a member of the Sixth Form team before signing out on the iPad located outside the Sixth Form offices. This absence must be authorised by a parent/ carer for confirmation.

Driving tests (theory and practical) should be arranged outside school hours. (Study sessions are allocated for independent study). **Please note once you have passed your test, we do not allow students to drive or park on site.**

Planned - Leave of Absence Request

Pre-arranged absence must be agreed at least a week in advance. A Leave of Absence form must be completed in advance. A timely response to your application will be made.

If a student needs to leave the school site for a planned absence please sign out on the iPad located in the Sixth Form Learning Centre.

Monitoring Attendance

Student weekly attendance and punctuality is monitored by the Sixth Form team.

A staged intervention process, initially with a Sixth Form tutor will be adopted in instances where a student's attendance level drops below 95%. If it drops further below 90% the issue will be addressed by a member of the Sixth Form team.

If a Sixth Form student is late more than twice in one week to either an independent study session or a timetabled lesson without a valid reason, they will be placed in detention.



If you are unable to attend school a parent/carer must call the absence line on 01992 410400 (OPT 1)



Signing in/ out

This is an important safeguarding issue and legal requirement. In the event of a fire, we have to account for the whereabouts of all students and need to be able to detail to the emergency services an accurate list of students that are present and on site. It is imperative that all Sixth Form students comply with these straightforward but vital procedures.

- It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they are registering on time each day.
- This can be done by arriving to their P1 class on time or by signing in for independent study in the Learning Centre by 8:40am. The biometric thumbprint scanner is located at the top of the stairs outside the Sixth Form Learning Centre.
- If a student fails to sign in for private study, on the first occasion the student will be issued with a warning. On the second occasion a pupil does not sign in or he/ she will be placed in a detention.
- If a student arrives after 9:00am the student must sign in using the iPad located outside the Sixth Form offices and detail a reason for their lateness. Parents will be contacted to confirm.
- If a student is late more than twice in a week, the student will be placed in a Sixth Form detention.

Sixth Form Dress Code

Setting an example

Sixth Form students are expected to set an example to the rest of the school through their high standard of business-like dress and the way they present themselves. The intention of the Sixth Form dress code is to maintain the smart appearance of the lower school years.

A Sixth Form student should be able to leave the school site and immediately attend a formal interview without having to change their appearance.



Student ID & Lanyards

All students are required to visibly wear their ID cards and given lanyard at all times whilst on site.

If lost a replacement card must be purchased.



Dress Code

The Sixth Form dress code is smart office wear and the requirements are as follows:

Preferably a suit – (i.e. navy, grey or black) tailored jacket
Shirt with a tie and tailored trousers

OR

V – neck jumper
Shirt with a tie and tailored trousers
Smart dark shoes (not trainers or other casual shoes)

OR

Suit (preferably a dark colour) – i.e. jacket
Matching tailored skirt or full length tailored trousers,
Tailored jacket with tailored skirt, trousers or dress

OR

Cardigan/V – neck jumper with tailored skirt, trousers or dress
Fitted shirt or smart top without logos.
Smart dark shoes (not trainers or other casual shoes)



Exclusions

No hooded tops or sweat tops. Denim, jackets, skirts or jackets. Leather skirts, trousers or jackets. Van, lace up boots (including Doctor Martens Boots), Plimsoll type shoes or trainers.

This is a school, so clothing should not be viewed as offensive, revealing or provocative. Shirts and blouses must cover the midriff. Vest tops or spaghetti strap tops/dresses, low cut tops or tops that reveal shoulders are not suitable. Skirt/dress length must be an appropriate length. No facial piercings other than a nose stud are allowed. For practical lessons student may need to bring in appropriate clothing for that lesson, but should change back immediately following that lesson.

Any students who breaches the school dress code can expect to be sent home to change.



Our dress code is a clear expectation that everyone must maintain in order to be part of our Sixth Form. Take pride in your appearance and in being part of the Simon Balle Sixth Form.



UCAS & Careers Advice



Next Steps

The process of thinking beyond year 13 starts as soon as students join year 12, by way of the chosen subjects.

Later in year 12, students start to think about University and applications, as well as writing a personal statement. During year 12, and particularly in the summer term, there are many events designed to help both students and parents prepare for university or apprenticeship applications. It is important to note that, while there is a schedule of guidance on Higher Education in tutorial sessions and special events, the routine contact with tutors, on a daily basis or in the more formal rolling programme of progress interviews after tracking, is of paramount importance throughout the Sixth Form years. We encourage students to keep tutors abreast of their plans.

Many job opportunities are also passed to students through email, so students need to be proactive and prompt when these opportunities arise.

The two major components of the UCAS application form are the student's personal statement and the school's reference. In order to compile the reference, comments are sought from all of the student's subject teachers; the form tutor collates these and writes the reference which is then checked and sent to UCAS as part of the final application.

The reference also contains predicted grades. Naturally, the student's performance in year 12 examinations will have been part of this procedure. Staff can only predict a particular grade if they have seen the student producing work at that level in a consistent manner over a period of time. Students and parents will already have some idea of what the predicted grades are likely to be. Whilst we would wish to do everything we can to help a student with their university applications, grades – once predicted – are not open to negotiation.

University Visits

We advise students to complete university visits at weekends, where possible. Permission to attend University interviews, open days or taster courses must be sought before a visit. Please complete a Leave of Absence request at least a week prior. No more than 3 visits will be authorised leave.

Work Experience

All year 12 students are encouraged to find a suitable and relevant work experience placement for one week in July. All required documents must be completed and returned to the Sixth Form team by the set deadline.

Careers Education

Careers education, information, advice and guidance are an essential part of our curriculum. Our careers guidance provides the link between what we do in school and a pupil's next steps into the adult world. We aim to develop pupils understanding of the differences between school and work, by enabling students to access a wide range of resources on Post-16 education and training opportunities.

Consequently students at Simon Balle All-through School will be able to go out into the globally competitive world with the skills, attributes and behaviours equipped for the twenty-first century. Therefore all students, and parents, should be made aware of all their options as they progress through school and their post-school options.

Further information can be found on our Careers Hub <http://www.simonballe.herts.sch.uk/careers-hub/>



We hope to inspire our pupils to see the opportunities available to them and achieve their career aspirations.



Our careers guidance provides the link between what we do in school and a pupil's next steps into the adult world.

Simon Balle Sixth Form

Tracking

Go4Schools gives parents access 24/7 to up-to-date information about their son/daughter's learning and progress. The key elements that it provides detail on is:

Current information about achievement and progress in the subjects they are studying

- Attendance information
- Timetable information
- Behaviour information
- Interim and annual reports
- Homework

In order to log onto Go4schools you need to visit www.go4schools.com and click on the 'Parents' icon in the top right hand side.

Communication

We will advise parents via InTouch of all key events and dates. Also please check the Simon Balle All-through School website <http://www.simonballe.herts.sch.uk/> for further updates.

Electronic Devices

All Sixth Form students are expected to arrive to school with a charged device (Ipad, tablet, laptop) ready to use in all lessons and private study sessions. The use of mobile phones is not permitted in class, around the school or in the Sixth Form Learning Centre during study hours.

Learning For Life

A team of expert tutors deliver lessons addressing the PSHEE curriculum alongside a broad range of issues in order to prepare students for adulthood. Lessons and personalised support tutorials are designed to develop the skills students need to ensure the best possible outcomes for them; driving them academically, supporting their wellbeing and preparing them for their next steps.

SSLT

The Student Senior Leadership Team are the body within the Sixth Form that represents the students. They also lead in the school on many aspects, linked to various departments and areas. They are led by the Presidents and Vice Presidents. The team meet regularly and are accountable for their work. They are the leaders within the Sixth Form and should lead by example.

Opportunities

During time in the Sixth Form students will be given many opportunities. They are expected to take up the opportunities as much as possible. Many of these will be linked to the next step beyond Year 13 and here the principle is simple - we cannot help students if they do not want to be helped. It is essential that students seize every opportunity open to them - talks, trips, clubs, societies. It is these vital experiences and that 'can do' attitude that employers and universities want. Every student, by being part of the Simon Balle Sixth Form, should want to join in and seize every opportunity they can.

Giving Something Back

As part of the seizing opportunities ethos, students are expected to give something back to the school, to show what school means to them. This includes helping in KS3 lessons, mentoring younger students, volunteering, being on SSLT. The Sixth Form is an incredibly supportive place, and we do expect that all students give, rather than just taking!

Ambassador Roles

A number of departments will ask for Sixth Form volunteers to become department ambassadors. This could involve supporting a current subject including Music or Spanish. Alternatively, a Sixth Form student can volunteer to support the whole student as an Educational Technology ambassador or a Wellbeing ambassador.

Bursary

If you have been receiving free school meals or you have an identifiable financial need, you may well be entitled to the 16-19 bursary. Bursary payments can be made to students to help fund resources such as textbooks, laptops, practical equipment and also help with travel costs. Please see Mr Klippel for information.

Changing Courses

We hope that you have made the right decision but we are aware that on occasions this does not always work out. If you wish to make a change to your subject options in any way then it is vital you seek advice from Mrs Ahmet or Mr Ford. An orange change of course form will need to be completed and signed by parents and staff. Any course changes must be made by the 23rd September 2022. After this date no further changes can be made.

Food and Drink

Sixth Form students have access to coffee, tea and water facilities in the Sixth Form Learning Centre. Tea and coffee won't be available between 8.40-9.40.

The school operates a cashless catering system using ParentPay.

Students are allowed to leave the school site at lunch time only (when they must sign out and back in on their return).

No food and drink is allowed in study zones during work hours. Following all break and lunch times, students are expected to return the Learning Centre to a working environment ready for the next independent study session.

Sixth Form Detention

Of course, we do not believe that this will be a regular occurrence and the idea behind this is to ensure that students are clear about the simple rules to follow regarding their behaviour. If a Sixth Form student is placed in a detention it will take the form of a Tuesday afternoon for 30 minutes in the first instance. We are sure that this will focus their efforts and will also prove to be a useful time to complete work. However, if it does not prove to be enough of a deterrent, students will be required to stay after school until 5:30pm and meet with a member of senior management to discuss how we can support them in meeting our expectations. We hope that this clarity will be useful for both students and parents.



Further Information

Safeguarding

Simon Balle is an all-through school. Therefore primary, secondary and post-16 students are on site at all times.

Safeguarding is the responsibility of every single person at Simon Balle. All staff are highly accountable for keeping all children safe.

However some staff play a key role:

Leon Brown (Designated Safeguarding Person)
James Pooley (Deputy DSP)
Lucy Owen (Deputy DSP)
Rachel Kirk (Deputy DSP)

First Aid

We have several first aid staff, please alert a member of staff if you feel unwell and they will call for assistance for you. Alternatively, please go to the school office.

Smoking

Simon Balle is a non-smoking site. Smoking on or near the school is strictly prohibited.

Photographs

Before taking any photographs on site permission must be sought from either the School Manager or the Site Manager.

Parking On Site

Simon Balle does not provide any parking for Sixth Form students. Exceptional circumstances will be considered by the Gov. Body.

Walking to school will be the normal expectation and positively promoted from the outset for the whole school community. This approach also supports our specialism in sport which will promote healthy lifestyles and physical fitness for children and their families. Encouraging walking also increases awareness of the local environment, independence and social opportunities.

The school will be actively promoting car free travel.

In some cases there may be a legitimate reason why a family has to drive to school however parking on the school site is limited and parents must use the one-way system. If you need to visit the school during the day you must park in the designated visitor's spaces and not drive up to the main office. Please adhere to all the traffic signs on site.

Thank you for helping to keep Simon Balle All-through School safe



Simon Balle All-through School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We are also committed to the equality of opportunity for all.