

St Paul's Academy, Careers Adviser Mrs Vicki Banbrook

SIXTH FORMS / COLLEGES Some Useful Information

THIS PACK CONTAINS IMPORTANT INFORMATION WHICH MUST BE SHARED WITH YOUR PARENTS/CARERS. YOU WILL BE OFFERED AN INTERVIEW/MEETING WITH A CAREERS ADVISER DURING YEAR 10/11. THIS DOCUMENT WILL HELP YOU TO FOCUS YOUR RESEARCH SO THAT YOU CAN GET THE MOST OUT OF THAT INTERVIEW.

This guide is to help you with your choice of college/6th form and your choice of qualification/subject, it is very important that you start to research this at the end of year 10/beginning of the autumn term of year 11.

You will also see a Careers Adviser and you can then discuss your choices of course, institution and career but this may be after some of the college/6th form open days as they can be as early as the third week of the autumn term - so it is vital that you start the research early.

Which course to take after Year 11

Think about which level of course is right for you to take next year

Level 3 Courses – 2 years

If you are predicted to achieve GCSEs grades 9-5/4 including English language & maths then here are some of the courses you can apply for, (this is a minimum, always check the entry requirements of the school/college you want to apply to):

A Levels (at least 5 GCSEs grades 9-5 but often more, usually to include maths and English language)

You will usually study 3 or sometimes 4 A level subjects. There are a wide variety of subjects. Usually lots of theoretical learning and also lots of exams at the end of the two years.

International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB) (high grade GCSEs required, usually at least grades 9-6)

You will study 6 subjects (an English, a maths, a language, a science, a humanities/social science, and an arts/more practical subject). You will study 3 subjects at a higher level and 3 subjects at standard level. You will also have to study the theory of knowledge, complete an extended essay and get involved in further activities called CAS creativity, activity, service which could be voluntary work/work within the community, involvement in a sport, a performing art etc.

BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma (usually 4/5 GCSEs grades 9-5/4 often including maths and English language)

This course is equal to 3 A levels. It is vocational / work related i.e., sport, childcare, health & social care, hospitality, animal care etc. You normally choose one career subject. You will be assessed throughout the course and there will be some exams. It is for students who have an idea of their future career area, for example, you want to work with children or in sport.

Please note –

The BTEC Level 3 Diploma is equivalent to 2 A levels.

The BTEC Level 3 Foundation Diploma is equivalent to 1.5 A levels.

The BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma is equivalent to 1 A level.

The BTEC Level 3 Extended Certificate is equivalent to 1 A level.

The BTEC Level 3 Certificate is equivalent to 0.5 A levels.

Note - It is sometimes possible to study a mixture of A levels and BTECs. Aim to have an overall equivalent of 3 A levels or more.

T Levels or Technical Levels

These are relatively new Level 3 courses. They are vocational / work related qualifications in career areas such as Management and Admin, Digital Production, Design and Development, Legal, Design, Surveying and Planning, Science, Health and many more. They are equivalent to 3 A levels. The majority of study will be classroom based but will include a work placement of 45 days.

With any of the above level 3 courses you can apply to University. To find out more about university go to www.ucas.com. Or you could seek employment or a higher level or degree apprenticeship, or a place on a school leaver programme.

Always check entry requirements of any degree course you are interested in by using www.ucas.com or looking on the university websites.

Level 2 Courses – 1 year

If you are predicted to get less than 4/5 GCSEs 9-5/4 grades in your GCSEs (let's imagine you achieve mainly grade 3s) then here are some of the courses you can apply for:

BTEC Level 2 Diploma

This course is equal to 4/5 GCSEs, 9-5/4 grades and is marked Pass, Merit or Distinction. Students can progress from this course on to a level 3 course (often a BTEC level 3 course or a T level but see page 3 for the different types of level 3 courses that may be available). This is if you obtain a Merit or Distinction. You will be assessed throughout the course. It is for students who have an idea of their future career area, for example, a student wants to work in business or in engineering, and there are many other areas. Look at college/sixth form prospectuses to get the full range.

GCSE Resits

There are just a few colleges where you can commence a one year GCSE retake year, normally a student can retake 4-5 GCSEs. They usually require you to obtain grade 3s at the end of Year 11.

If you are unsure if you will achieve the necessary 5 GCSEs 9-5/4 grades to progress to a level 3 course, then you should apply for some level 2 courses as a back-up as well as some level 3 courses.

Level 1 courses – 1 year

If you are predicted to get mainly grade 1s and 2s in your GCSEs then here is one of the courses you can apply for:

BTEC Level 1 Diploma

From this course you can go onto the BTEC Level 2 Diploma (as above). It is for students who have an idea of their future career for example working with animals or hairdressing; you will be assessed throughout the course.

Note – Some Colleges also offer Entry Level courses for those students that may need additional support.

Choosing Which Subject/s To Take

A good starting point is to consider which future career interests you. Always think about your interests, skills, personal qualities, abilities and values and try to match these to each career that you research, is it a good match? If you research into any career either at your school careers library or online you may find that there are some preferred or essential courses/subjects needed for that career, for example Chemistry and Biology for Medicine, Maths and Physics for Engineering, a Child Care course for Nursery Work or a Hairdressing course to work as a Hairdresser.

If you are not sure what course/career you want there is a website that has a careers quiz to give job ideas: <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk> use the 'skills assessment' section. Or you can use www.eclips-online.co.uk log in for St Paul's Academy students is SE2 9PX and use the 'careers wizard' quiz.

If you are unsure about a future career and prefer to keep your career options open you could choose a mixture of subjects that you enjoy and are good at, if you have the relevant entry requirements look at A levels and choose 3/4 subjects or study for the IB where you will study 6 subjects and other core elements. Both keep lots of options open.

Just remember it's important to take qualifications linked to the career if you do have any ideas i.e., science qualifications for a science or health or medicine based career. Art/Design careers may require a qualification in art/design or something similar, but may also require a portfolio (a folder with your creative work). To work in the music industry GCSE music could be essential depending on the actual career. Maths and physics are essential for some engineering degrees, drama and dance alongside outside school drama/dance clubs or schools etc. will be useful for acting or dance careers, essay based subjects can be useful for careers in law etc. etc. Ask your Careers Adviser for advice.

Taking your future career into consideration should help you determine whether you want to take:

- a course where you would study several subjects (this could be A levels, or the International Baccalaureate)

OR

- a vocational course e.g., a BTEC or a T Level in a specific career area like child care, health, catering, animal care, hair & beauty etc. - usually meaning that you are interested in that career path

Sometimes the career path you want to follow will list qualifications at degree level for example for a career as a doctor you would need a degree in medicine, in this case look at those degrees using the UCAS website www.ucas.com and research into the entry qualifications which are needed to take the recommended degree. This should result in a narrower list of level 3 qualifications which are required in order to take that degree.

National Qualifications Framework (comparing qualifications)

This educational table has been included to show that certain qualifications are on a similar level to others.

LEVEL	GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS	VOCATIONALLY-RELATED QUALIFICATIONS	OCCUPATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS
	Attainment in a subject	Attainment in a vocational area	Competence in the workplace
Level 4/5/6	Courses in Higher Education such as HND/ Foundation Degree/ Degree - Non Vocational	Courses in Higher Education such as HND/ Foundation Degree/ Degree - vocational	NVQ 4/5/6 Technical, Management and Professional
Level 3	A Level International Baccalaureate	BTEC Level 3 : Some examples = Subsidiary (equiv. 1 A Level), Diploma (equiv. 2 A Levels) Extended (equiv. 3 A levels) OR T Levels	NVQ 3 Advanced Apprentice, Technician and Supervisor
Level 2	4-5 GCSEs 9-5/4 grades	BTEC Level 2	NVQ 2 Intermediate Apprentice/ Crafts(wo)man
Level 1	4-5 GCSEs 3-1 grades	BTEC Level 1	NVQ 1 Foundation Apprentice Basic Skills e.g. packer, typist, checkout operator
Entry level		Preparation for Level 1 Qualifications	

If you want to go on to a level 3 course you will normally need a minimum of 4/5 GCSEs including maths and English language at 9-5/4 grades

If you want to go on to a level 2 course you will usually need GCSEs at mainly grade 3

If you want to go on to a level 1 course you will usually need GCSEs grades 2 – 1 or pass a test and/or interview at the college

Entry Level qualifications are for those that need some extra preparation before entering Level 1 – entry is usually determined by an interview at college

Schools with Sixth Forms/Sixth Form Colleges/Further Education (FE) Colleges - How to narrow your list

It is usually a good idea to make notes about the different schools/colleges you are looking at. You may find the "Research Tips" included in this document helpful. Keep a record of all of the places you look at, it will help you to compare schools/colleges later. It is sometimes difficult to remember what you liked about different places after a few months. Further on in this document there are lists of many possible institutions where you can continue your education after you complete year 11.

Criteria to Consider:

Different types of Post 16 institutions

- School 6th forms- schools which have students from 11-18 years (e.g., Thomas Tallis, Woolwich Poly, Beths, Bexley Grammar)
- Sixth Form College/Post 16 Campus – have students mainly 16-19 years (e.g., Shooters Hill, Christ the King)
- FE Colleges- may have all age students 16-60 years! (e.g., Greenwich Community College, North Kent College)

Ease of Access – Travel / Location

Check where it is (if you are unsure look at Transport for London website and an A-Z Map). Don't forget you will be making this journey regularly in all weathers and will need to be punctual. If you apply to schools/colleges some distance from your home check their selection policy to make sure you do not live too far away. This is more often the case with some schools rather than FE colleges.

School Type

For example, a Church school (where you may be asked to complete a church attendance information form which would need to be signed by your priest) OR a grammar school. If possible, try to apply for a variety of schools.

Qualifications Taught

Does the institution provide the qualifications that you want? There may be restrictions in the combinations of A levels or they may or may not offer the International Baccalaureate or certain Vocational Qualifications.

Past Results

For example - Google A level League tables for Post 16 in Greenwich, see Average Result and then click on Point Score.

You can do the same for Bexley, Bromley etc. You may need to contact the school/college directly for results particular to a subject e.g., Ask Thomas Tallis - What did the students achieve in Maths A level last year?

In Depth Research

When you have made a list of all the institutions you want to research look at their web sites, most places now have online prospectuses, if not email them and you can ask for a paper prospectus to be sent to your home.

Visits

It is your/your parent's responsibility to check the dates of the open evenings/days, each institution will have a different date. Think of any questions you may need to be answered. Start checking the dates at the very beginning of September.

Applications

It is your/your parent's responsibility to check the closing dates for college/sixth form applications and apply in good time, each institution will have its own individual closing date. It is always best to apply for several schools/colleges. Make sure that the institutions and courses you apply to cover the range of possible results that you may achieve as you cannot be certain of the result i.e., you may hope to achieve 9-6 grades so you may have applied to a few schools/courses asking for 9-6 grades, but also you should have applied to some asking just for 5 and 6s and also to some asking for even lower grades as everyone needs a backup.

Just **SOME** of the schools/colleges you could look at when researching (arranged by borough/county, e.g., Greenwich, Bexley etc). These include institutions that students from St Paul's Academy have gone to in the past, but there are many more that you could consider.

It is Your/Your Parent's responsibility to check with each school/college in September for the date of their open day/evening and their closing dates for applications.

Borough websites (under education) often give links to 6th forms and colleges in their area and often have a Post 16 brochure on line.

Care was taken to ensure the following information was correct at the time of printing but please do double check any information that is particularly important to you.

Type	I B	Local Authority Name	Name & Location of Institution	Location Based in:	Other Notes - These institutions offer A Levels Only Or Vocational Courses Only E.G. BTECS/T Levels Or IB Only. If Blank Then A Mixture Of A Levels & Vocational Courses May Be On Offer
Sixth Form		Bexley	Beths Grammar School	Bexley	A Levels Only
Further Education College		Bexley	Bexley College (LSEC)	Main site – Erith Construction site – Belvedere	Vocational Courses Only
Sixth Form	y	Bexley	Bexley Grammar School	Welling	IB Only
Sixth Form		Bexley	Trinity School	Belvedere	
Sixth Form		Bexley	Bexleyheath Academy	Bexleyheath	
Sixth Form		Bexley	Blackfen School for Girls	Sidcup	
Sixth Form		Bexley	Chislehurst & Sidcup Grammar School	Sidcup	A Levels Only
Sixth Form College		Bexley	Christ the King - St Mary's	Sidcup	
Sixth Form		Bexley	Cleeve Park School	Sidcup	
Sixth Form		Bexley	Harris Academy Falconwood	Welling	
Sixth Form		Bexley	Harris Garrard Academy	Thamesmead, Erith	
Sixth Form		Bexley	Leigh Academy Bexley – old King Henry School	Erith	

Sixth Form		Bexley	Townley Grammar School for Girls	Bexleyheath	A Levels Only
Sixth Form		Bexley	Welling School	Welling	
Sixth Form		Bromley	Bishop Justus CofE School	Bromley	
Further Education College		Bromley	Bromley College (LSEC)	Bromley Common	Vocational Courses Only
Sixth Form		Bromley	Bromley High School (Independent)	Bromley	A Levels Only
Sixth Form		Bromley	Bullers Wood School for Girls	Chislehurst	
Sixth Form		Bromley	Chislehurst School for Girls	Chislehurst	Mainly A Levels
Sixth Form		Bromley	Coopers School	Chislehurst	
Sixth Form		Bromley	Darrick Wood School	Orpington	
Sixth Form		Bromley	Eltham College (Independent)	Mottingham	A Levels Only
Sixth Form		Bromley	Harris Academy Orpington	Orpington	
Sixth Form		Bromley	Harris Girls' Academy Bromley	Beckenham	
Sixth Form		Bromley	Hayes School	Hayes, Bromley	
Sixth Form		Bromley	Langley Park Boys (mixed in 6th form)	Beckenham	
Sixth Form		Bromley	Langley Park Girls (mixed in 6th form)	Beckenham	
Sixth Form		Bromley	Newstead Wood Grammar School for Girls	Orpington	A Levels Only
Further Education College		Bromley	Orpington College (LSEC)	Orpington	Vocational Courses Only
Sixth Form		Bromley	St Olave's Grammar School	Orpington	A Levels Only
Sixth Form		Bromley	The Ravensbourne School	Hayes	
Specialist College		Croydon	The BRIT School for Performing & Creative Arts	Croydon	Vocational Courses With An Option To Also Study An A Level Or AS Level
Further Education College		Croydon	Croydon College	East Croydon	Vocational Courses Only

Sixth Form		Greenwich	Blackheath High School (Independent)	Blackheath Village	A Levels Only
Sixth Form		Greenwich	Colfe's School (Independent)	Lee SE12 8AW	Mainly A Levels
Sixth Form		Greenwich	Eltham Hill	Eltham	
Further Education College		Greenwich	Greenwich Community College (LSEC)	Plumstead	Vocational Courses Only
Sixth Form		Greenwich	Harris Academy Greenwich	Eltham	
Sixth Form	Y	Greenwich	Leigh Academy Blackheath	Blackheath	IB Only
Sixth Form		Greenwich	Plumstead Manor	Plumstead	
Sixth Form		Greenwich	Royal Greenwich Trust School	Charlton, Riverside Area	Vocational Courses Only
Sixth Form College		Greenwich	Shooters Hill Campus	Shooters Hill	
Sixth Form		Greenwich	St Mary Magdalene C of E School	Peninsula Site SE10 0NF	A Levels Only
Sixth Form		Greenwich	Stationers' Crown Woods Academy Arden Sixth Form	Eltham	
Sixth Form		Greenwich	The Halley Academy	Blackheath	IBCP / BTECs No A Levels
Sixth Form		Greenwich	The John Roan	Maze Hill Site	
Sixth Form		Greenwich	Thomas Tallis	Kidbrooke	
Sixth Form		Greenwich	Woolwich Polytechnic for Boys (mixed sixth form)	Thamesmead	
Further Education College		Islington & Others	Capital City College Group inc. City & Islington College, Angel & Westminster Kingsway College, Kings Cross etc.	City & Islington College is at the Angel EC1V 7LA & Westminster Kingsway College is at Kings Cross etc & there are other sites in North London	City & Islington College is mainly A levels Westminster Kingsway College is a mixture of A Levels & Vocational Courses
Sixth Form	y	Kent	Dartford Grammar School (Boys) (Mixed sixth form)	Dartford	IB Only

Sixth Form		Kent	Dartford Grammar School for Girls (Mixed sixth form)	Dartford	A Levels Only
Further Education College		Kent & Others	Hadlow College (part of N. Kent College)	Tonbridge Main Site & RBG Equestrian Skills There are other campuses	Vocational Courses Only
Further Education College		Kent	North Kent College	Dartford, Gravesend & Tonbridge Sites	Vocational Courses Only
Sixth Form		Kent	Wilmington Grammar Sixth Form for Boys & Girls – WG6	Wilmington in Dartford	Mainly A levels
Sixth Form College		Lewisham	Christ the King – Aquinas	Brockley	A Levels Only
Sixth Form College		Lewisham	Christ the King – Emmanuel	Lewisham	Vocational Courses Only
Sixth Form		Lewisham & Others	Haberdasher Ask's Federation	Hatcham College in New Cross, Lewisham. Knights Academy in Downham, Bromley. Crayford Academy in Crayford, Bexley.	
Further Education College		Lewisham	Lewisham College	Lewisham	Vocational Courses Only
Sixth Form		Lewisham	Prendergast School	Lewisham SE4 1LE	
Sixth Form		Lewisham	St Dunstan's College (Independent)	Catford	A Levels Only
Sixth Form		Newham	Brampton Manor Academy	East Ham	A Levels Only
Sixth Form College		Newham	London Academy of Excellence	Stratford	A Levels Only
Further Education College		Newham	Newham College	East Ham & Stratford Campuses	Vocational Courses Only
Sixth Form College		Newham	Newham Sixth Form College NewVic	Plaistow	
Further Education College		Southwark	Southwark College	Opposite Southwark Tube Station	Vocational Courses Only
Specialist College		Tower Hamlets	Access Creative College	Whitechapel E1	Vocational Courses Only
Specialist College		Tower Hamlets	ELAM (East London Arts & Music)	Bromley-By-Bow	Vocational Courses Only

Further Education College		Tower Hamlets & Others	New City College	There are many campuses inc. Tower Hamlets (Poplar). Plus, Epping Forest, Redbridge, Havering x 2, Hackney, Ilford, Attlee, Rainham	Tower Hamlets – Vocational Courses Only
Sixth Form College		Wandsworth	St Francis Xavier Sixth Form College	Close to Clapham South	
Further Education College		Westminster	City of Westminster College	Paddington & Maida Vale	
Specialist College		Westminster	The Fashion Retail Academy	London W1T 1QL	Vocational Courses Only
Specialist College		Westminster	The London College of Beauty Therapy	London W1F 7LN	Vocational Courses Only

Some Tips on How to Research Post 16 Schools, Sixth Forms and Colleges

Where should I look? Internet/relevant websites, prospectuses (booklets from institutions or online), and go to Open Days/Evenings

What should I look for? (Print one copy of this page for each Institution you are considering – make notes on the following when researching and attending Open Days/Evenings). You can use it to compare institutions later

Name of the Institution_____

The Course – What will I be studying (course content)? How many years is the course? How will I be assessed?

What grades will I need to get into the subjects/course I wish to study (entry requirements)?

What grades/results did the school/college achieve last year in the subjects/course I am considering choosing (past results)?

How will I get to this institution (location)? (use Transport for London website www.tfl.gov.uk and map).

What is the atmosphere like at this institution?

Other things that are important to me? (E.G., I wish to go to a Grammar School).

Where did students go after this course (destination information)?

Thinking about the above questions - what is my overall impression?

Useful Web Sites, Information and Advice

If you are planning eventually to go to university and you know what you would like to study, look at the UCAS website www.ucas.com and make sure the qualifications you are choosing at A level/IB/BTEC Level 3/T level are the ones required for that degree, for example which subjects are required for Pharmacy?

To find out more about careers you are interested in read any careers books. Also you could use <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk> and go to the Job Profiles section to view a careers database to find out about the career you are interested in and to make sure the qualifications you are planning to take are relevant. You can find similar information by using www.eclips-online.co.uk log in for St Paul's Academy students is SE2 9PX, use the Job Group section.

If you are not sure about your future career look at <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk> the 'skills assessment' section, there is a careers quiz that should give you some job/career ideas. As an alternative use www.eclips-online.co.uk, log in as above and use the 'career wizard' quiz.

Look at Sixth Form/College prospectuses either online or order a paper prospectus to find out more about courses on offer and the institutions themselves.

Make sure you go to open days/evenings for the Sixth Forms/Colleges that you are interested in. **You/your parents are responsible for researching the relevant dates for the open events.**

To research performance of institutions, google A level League tables for Post 16 in Greenwich, see Average Result and then click on Point Score. You can do the same for Bexley, Bromley etc. You may need to contact the school/college directly for results particular to a subject e.g. Ask Thomas Tallis - What did the students achieve in Maths A level last year?

Make sure you apply to at least 5 colleges and sixth forms and always before their closing dates. **You/your parents are responsible for researching the relevant application closing dates for each college/sixth form.** Then later attend any enrolment days to secure you place hopefully at your first choice institution if not, at one of your back up institutions.

Apprenticeships (the other option)

This booklet is focusing on School/College Applications. For those who want an apprenticeship see below, do remember that it is advisable to also apply for a school/college place as a back-up plan as apprenticeships are still quite difficult to find.

If you are interested in applying for an apprenticeship you should register with this website for opportunities and information www.apprenticeships.gov.uk. Also tell your Careers Adviser as she will discuss this option with you in depth and will give you other tips on when and how to apply. In Year 11 January of the Spring Term is a good time to start researching and applying for Apprenticeships.

Mrs Vicki Banbrook – Careers Adviser Aug 2025