

KEEPING THE PLATES SPINNING: REFLECTIONS ON EFFECTIVE SIXTH FORM LEADERSHIP

Herts for Learning 2022 Sixth Form Conference

10th June 2022

Claire Green

Director of Sixth Form, Northampton School for Girls

@CJGreenTeach

thesixthformslant.com

AIMS

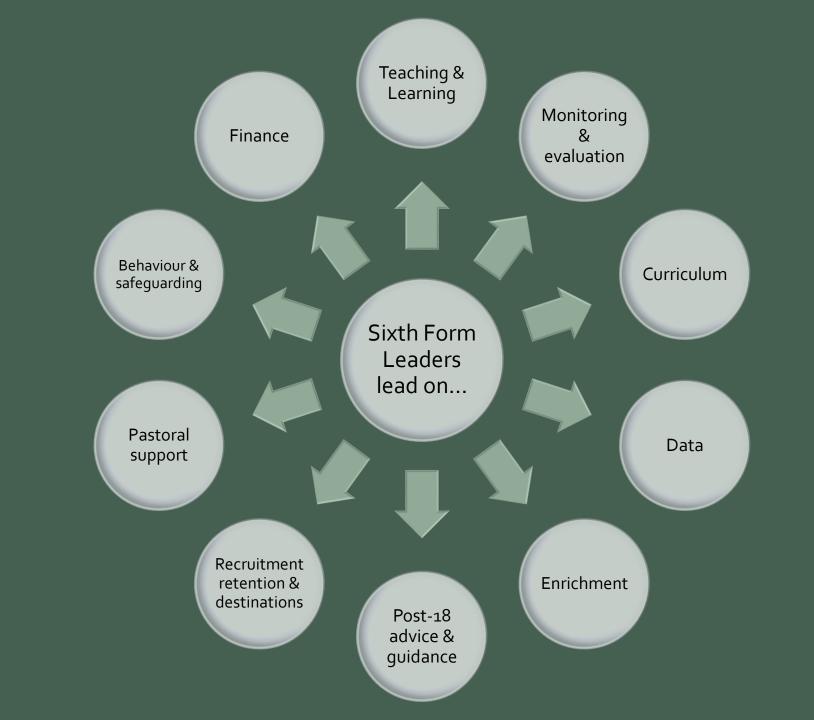
- Explore the multifaceted nature of sixth form leadership
- Reflect on current practice
- Identify ways to implement positive change in your own context



THE MANY PLATES



No other secondary leadership role (below the Headteacher!) is as multifaceted



SIXTH FORM LEADERSHIP LEFT BEHIND?

As leaders we can access:

- ✓A wealth of research and literature about leadership in schools
- ✓A wealth of shared resources on teaching and learning
- ✓A wealth of shared resources on other aspects of sixth form delivery, such as PSHE, post-18 pathways or enrichment

Unfortunately, as yet, we cannot access:

✗A wealth of educational literature focussed specifically on 16-19 education OR sixth form leadership

THE SIXTH FORM Slant

A blog for those interested in sixth form leadership

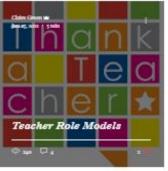






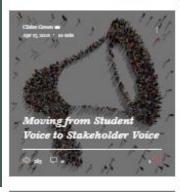
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- Open up the conversation
- Share and improve practice

























A heads-up on how to lead the sixth form

When she first became a director of sixth form, Claire Green was dismayed by the lack of guidance on the requirements of the role. Now, with plenty of experience under her belt, she has put together five tips to support other teachers looking to step into what can be a complex - but rewarding - career move

> not what exactly does. a head of sixth form do? If you're not quite sure, then you are not alone. I wayn't sure either before I stepped into the role. I was certain there would be pleasy of support to help me,

though, in the form of ordine continuing professional development. But Louickly realised that there is very little advice out there that is specific to leading in sixth forms.

That lack of advice is a problem because the director of sixth form role is multifaceted and often challenging. In fact, I would argue that the only other job in a secondary school in which you are required to do more strategic platespinning is that of the headteacher.

So, what does it mean to be a director of sixth form? What should you prepare yourself for if you are taking on this pole in September or if you are considering it as a next step?

1. Know your 'why'

To be successful as a leader in the sixth-form pluse, it is essential that you believe it to be the most exciting phase of students' education to date. You must be able to get across a real sense that you believe in young people and the positive things they can being.

To illustrate this, I have tried to embed a role model culture at our school. We

have a philosophy that our sixth-form students are role models for their vounger peers and deserve to be seen as such by stuff.

This philosophy was clearly articulated to staff, students and governors at the start of the academic year and is reinforced constantly through social media fusing the hashtag #RoleModels), assemblies, communications to staff and parents, and in everyday corridor chats.

2. Recognise the importance of recruitment and retention

Unlike other key-stage leaders, heads of sixth form need to think about strategies to recruit and retain their students.

This can initially be daunting, I recommendthat you start by considering what your ideal number of students would be, then plun recruitment and retention strategies

Do you want to retain the majority of your Year 11 students because you feel your sixth-form curriculum offer serves them well? Do you want to attract students from otherschools because you want to create a more "adult" culture than that of the main school? Is a combination of both possible or practical in your setting?

When joining my current school, I felt that we needed to try to aim for a balance between the two. It therefore seemed sensible to review our admissions process and policy, and change the way we. marketed our sixth form.



To help us present a clear message to prospective students and parents about our provision, we designed a new school logo, revamped our school website and introduced an online admissions system. We also created a short promotional video and embraced social media. As a result, we were able to double our applications.

3. Consider the balance of your curriculum

Some south forms decide to provide anunapologetically academic curriculum while others might provide more of a focus on the vocational. It is possible to be inclusive of both approaches if your curriculum is designed carefully



but this must be planned in light of your particular student population.

When I reviewed the curriculum that Linberited, I decided that we ought to add to our offer - to widen the academic options but also to provide more options. for applied general qualifications.

For example, we felt that there was a gap in our curriculum when it came to business, as business-related courses are among the most popular degree courses in the UK. We therefore decided to offer business at both A level and BTEC, to allow as many students as possible access to these courses.

In addition to the courses you offer, you will also need to factor in personal, social, health and economic (PSHD) education,

and non-qualification activity (NQA) - all of which is planned activity that does not count towards externally certified. qualifications (also known as employability, enrichment and pastoral hours).

Consider what additional provision you will deliver and how, and what steps you'll need to take to ensure students with special educational needs and disability are able to access all of your provision.

Post-18 guidance must be part of this offering. Be thorough and cover potential routes for all students; university, apprenticeships and employment options. should be discussed, and students should be supported to apply for all possible rounes of interest to maximise their chances of success.

4. Make monitoring efficient

There will be plenty of aspects of your provision that you will need to quality assure: ourriculum, teaching and learning, outcomes, destinations, attendance...the list goes on. As there are so many areas of responsibility, monitoring systems need to work efficiently. They need to not be too onerous while still providing enough meaningful data to inform decisions.

Where possible, we have tried to use IT to support smarter tracking of our provision. One example is the use of Google Forms - these can be used to gauge student and staff voice and to track NOA, such as enrichment, work experience or paid employment.

The form responses immediately generate a specad-beet that allows data filtering and helps you to arrive at quick conclusions.

Being clear about whole-school priorities helps here, too, as this will allow you to perform targeted monitoring of particular groups of students.

5. Prioritise pastoral care

Sixth-form students are in a constant state of transition from Year II to adulthood, and often struggle with all the social pressures this brings. Pastoral care is therefore paramount.

Supporting sixth-form students pastorally can range from lending a shoulder to cry on following a friendship fallout over a love. interest, to addressing extreme mental health-related safeguarding concerns.

Look carefully at your pustoral structure. Do you have tutors or mentors and heads of year? Do they have clear roles that they fulfil? Do you bring in caternal support or signmost to it effectively? Do you have subgranding-trained staff within your team? These are all things to consider.

At our school, we have settled on a system of tutors for Year 12 and mentors for Year 13. Year 12 tutors support transition and deliver our PSHE programme while Year 13. mentors hold one-to-one meetings with students to ensure that besenke care and guidance is provided.

Safeguarding-trained heads of year bolster this approach, alongside a senior tutor, who leads on wellbeing and signposts appropriately. In-school counselling from an external provider is also offered.

The above steps only scratch the surface of the multifaceted nature of south-form leadership. It's not easy, but if you can get it right, then there can be no more rewarding job in a secondary school than this absolute gem of a role. Claire Green is director of eith form at Northampton School for Girls

#1: KNOWYOUR WHY – IT ALL STARTS WITH ETHOS

- The 16-19 phase of education is the most exciting stage of secondary education
- We must communicate our belief in young people

Build a culture around this

- ✓ Create a sense of community, belonging and pride
- ✓ Give your sixth form its own unique identity (but tied to the school's values)
- ✓ Improve recruitment and retention
- ✓ Improve relationships with stakeholders



Role model

noun

a person whose behaviour, example, or success is or can be emulated by others, especially by younger people.

OUR APPROACH: #RoleModels



SIXTH FORM STUDENTS ARE ROLE MODELS

They:

- inspire younger students
- inspire staff
- become adults during the sixth form
- make choices that will affect their futures
- are passionate in their beliefs



HOW TO EMBED A #RoleModels CULTURE



Overcommunication – to ALL stakeholders

STAFF

- INSET sessions
- Emails
- Corridor chats
- Displays
- Social media

STUDENTS

- Assemblies
- Emails
- Corridor chats
- Displays
- Social Media
- Lessons
- Opportunities
- One-off gestures
- Rewards

PARENTS/CARERS

- Letters
- Information evenings
- Parents' evenings
- Social Media

GOVERNORS

- Meetings
- Emails
- Social Media

STAKEHOLDER VOICE/SIXTH FORM 'BRANDING'

STUDENT LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES











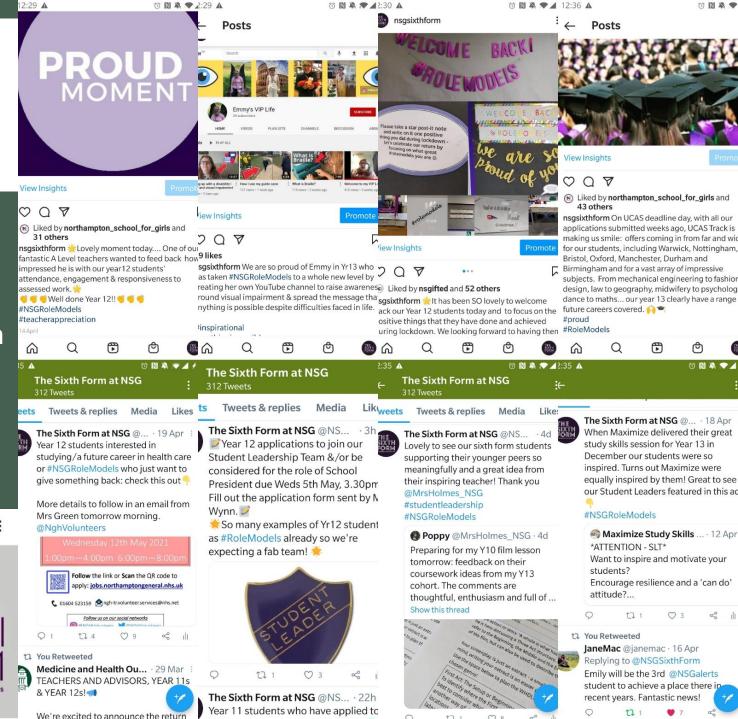




SOCIAL MEDIA

- Reaches all stakeholders
- Gets students talking
- Posts aimed at students best around 9pm
- Establishes culture within and beyond the school
- Marketing tool



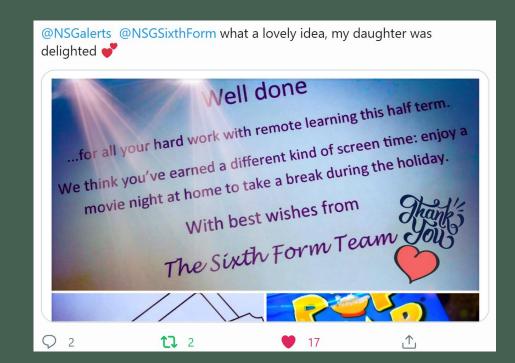


ONE-OFF GESTURES

• Embed the message through gestures to all students







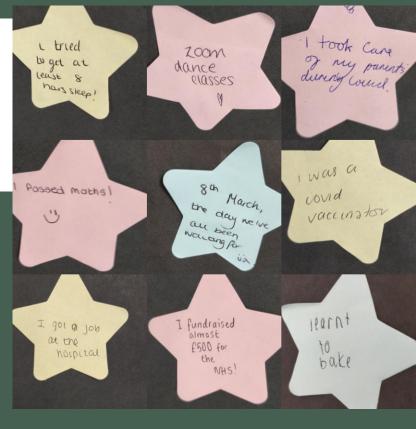


DISPLAYS/SCREENS

- Place strategically at high traffic points
- Encourage students to interact with displays
- Encourage photos of students
- Update regularly







#RoleModels of the Term: Year 12

Well done to all nominated students!

Amber W Hannah D Nana M Beatrice B Hattie B Natalia B Hilary P Beth A Naveen B Bobbi H Kelise B Rosina C Caitlin C Lilly J Rosie P Caitlin M Lily T Rowan N Cindy A Sahira U Lola B Saidah 1 Cosmina A Lucie W Ella K Matteo D Samia K Emily C Mithuna K Sienna S Erin B Morgan G Simone C Sophia D Farzana B Mya E Nailah M Tabby C Grace F Grace J Najma S Zaynab A



Students in bold font were nominated more than once!



EMBEDDING WITH STAFF

My approach



The 16-19 phase of education is the most exciting stage of secondary education

Sixth Form students are role models.

They:

- inspire younger students
- inspire staff
- · become adults during the sixth form
- make choices that will affect their futures
- · are passionate in their beliefs



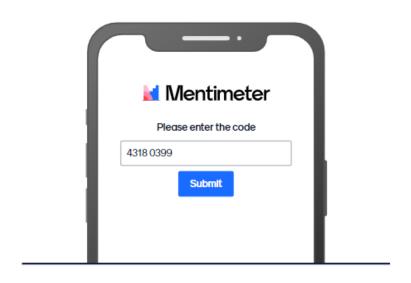


10. Use role models to inspire you through this transition

I was delighted to see this was one of Psychology Today's tips. In my previous blog, I argued why our sixth form students should be seen as role models. Their return to school is a prime opportunity to embed this message, alongside acknowledging role models more widely in society who have been revealed through their actions during the last year. Consider national examples such as Marcus Rashford or Sir Captain Tom Moore for sure, but local examples will be equally, if not more, inspiring. Better still, if they're from our own school communities; all schools will have multiple examples – be sure to celebrate them publicly.

#1: : KNOWYOUR WHY – IT ALL STARTS WITH ETHOS

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Enter the code

4318 0399



#2: RECOGNISE THE IMPORTANCE OF RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

- What is your ideal number of students to have on roll?
- Review (and amend, if necessary) your admissions policy in light of current numbers
- Online admissions process

RETENTION FROM INTERNAL YR11	RECRUITMENT <u>AND</u> RETENTION	RECRUITMENT FROM OTHER SCHOOLS
 Assemblies Year 9 Options – include sixth form info Sixth Form Student Leadership involvement One-to-ones following Yr11 mocks Sixth form building tours Displays/screens around school 	 Social Media Open Evening Prospectus/promo video Website 	 Site tours for students and parents/carers Regular contact throughout the admissions cycle

SIXTH at Northampton School for Girls

COURSES OFFERED



We hope that you find our detailed course guide videos a useful summary of the key aspects of our Sixth Form provision, which is available to our Year 11 students along with Year 11 students (both girls and boys) from other schools.





nsgsixthform We are very proud of our wide c post-16. With 25 A Levels & 5 Applied General there really is something for everyone.

Take a a at our detailed course videos for mo Sixth Form area of our website - link in bio.

#curriculumchoice #post16pathways #alevels : #studentchoice

27w



Thank you to all our lovely visitors this week who have taken part in after school site tours. It was great to meet some potential future #RoleModels

The Sixth Form at NSG @NSGSixthForm · Dec 29, 2021 Become a #RoleModel like these amazing students.

The Sixth Form at NSG @NSGSixthForm · Feb 4

Remember applications are open until 21st February:

nsg.northants.sch.uk/page/?title=AP...

and their families!

Apply to join The Sixth Form at NSG now. See our pinned tweet for details.



The Sixth Form at NSG @NSGSixthForm · Nov 18, 2021 Great to be receiving so many applications for 2022 already; thank you all

#RoleModels #AchievingPersonalBests



#RoleModels

The Sixth Form at NSG @NSGSixthForm · Jan 30

🗂 3 weeks left to apply to join our lovely sixth form in September 2022 🧂 CURRENT NSG STUDENTS:

Search in your emails for Applicaa log-in details to apply as a 'Registered User!

STUDENTS CURRENTLY AT OTHER SCHOOLS:

Click the link below to apply now!

nsg.northants.sch.uk/page/?title=AP...



RATED **OUTSTANDING** BY OFSTED, NOV 2021

"Students' attitudes to learning in the sixth form are exemplary"

11 The Sixth Form at NSG Retweeted Northampton School for Girls @NSGalerts · Jan 25

29 likes

Year 11 students received their PPE results today with follow up

O O A

NOVEMBER 26, 2021

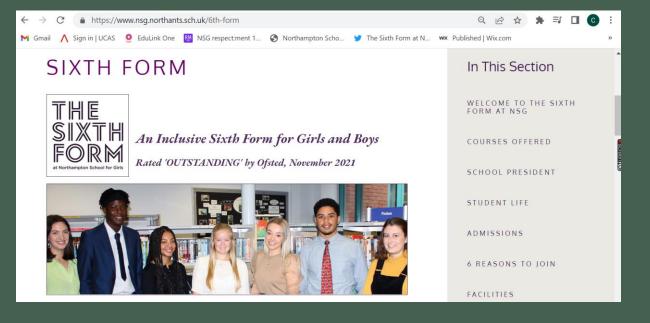
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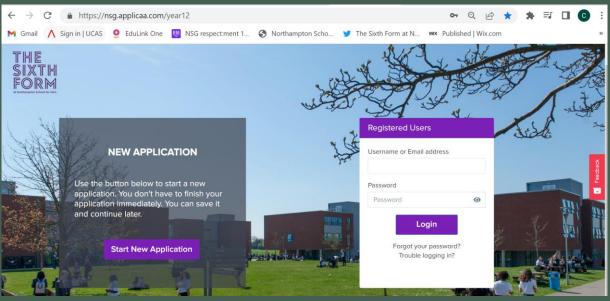
conversations with senior staff. Great students having mature a productive future focused discussions!



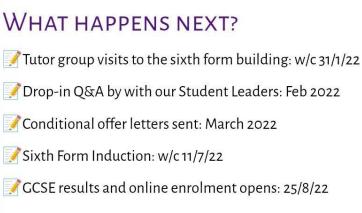
Thank you for your

at Northampton School for Girls









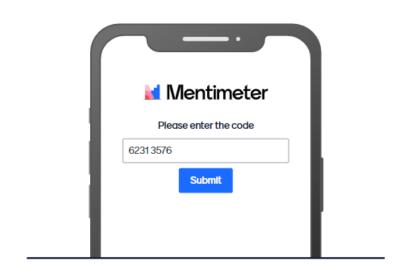
THE SIXTH FORM

FIND OUT MORE

#ROLEMODELS

#2: RECOGNISE THE IMPORTANCE OF RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

www.menti.com



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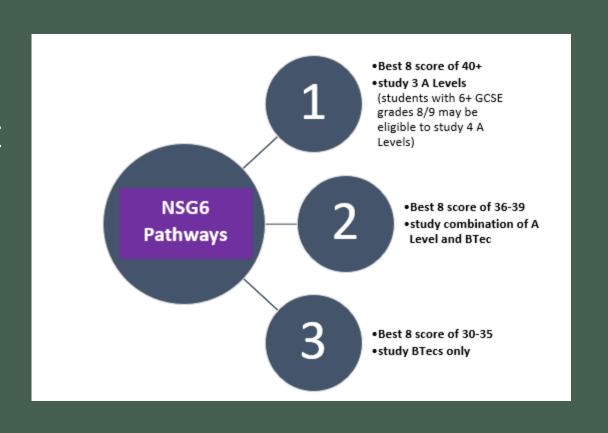
#3: CONSIDER CURRICULUM BALANCE

- Completely academic?
- Mix of academic and vocational?
- Review your admissions policy: does it allow suitable pathways for all?
- Does this work with your staffing/timetable?
- Do you offer a broad range of subjects? What additional subject(s) would enhance your offer? Consider your students' destinations: does your curriculum fit with their aspirations?
- PSHE/RE: do you teach this as a standalone subject or deliver it within tutor time?
- Enrichment: what do you offer and when?



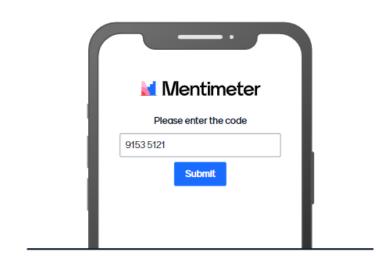
OUR APPROACH

- Created 3 pathways: A Level only, BTEC only and a combination
- Revised entry requirements for all courses
- Introduced Business at both A Level and BTEC (most popular university course)
- PSHE delivered in tutor time + drop down day for key RSE topics
- Enrichment timetable block
- Increase marketing for subjects attracting fewest applicants over 3 years



#3: CONSIDER CURRICULUM BALANCE

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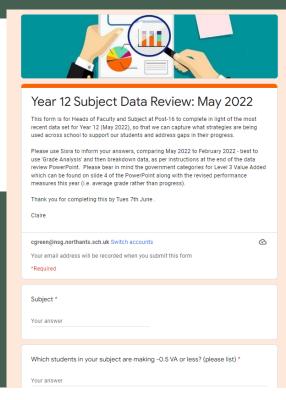


#4: MAKE MONITORING EFFICIENT



OUR APPROACH

- Centralised Monitoring & Evaluation calendar for Quality of Education: sixth form focus for each event – learning walks, student voice, folder checks etc
- Sixth Form Student Services follow up absences via Edulink message to both student and parent/carer
- Unifrog used to log enrichment & work experience
- Google Forms:
 - to follow up with Subject Leaders at data drops
 - to get parental feedback following parents' evenings
 - to gather student voice
 - For #RoleModels of the Term staff nominations



Next Steps



- SLT links to pick up issues raised with Heads of Faculty/P16 Subject Leaders in link meetings:
 - please check your subject VA against slide 4 to see what the categories for VA are nationally at the end of Year 13.
 - please also check your subject's average grade (and individual students' within your subjects) as we are aiming to get to an average grade of a B overall.
- Post-16 subject leaders to complete the **Google Form (shared separately)** regarding actions. Please look closely at your subject data in Sisra to respond to this (see the following slides for how to find/filter the data).

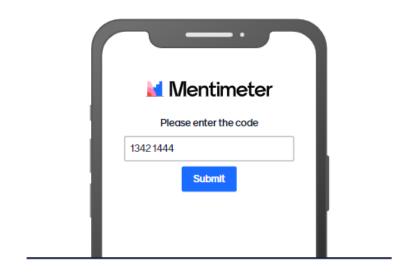
Deadline: Tuesday 7th June

- CGN/KLY will be meeting those losing most VA across all subjects and tutors are working one-to-one with students in tutor time too.
- Year 12 end of year exams begin w/c 14th June (art/design subjects) or 24th June (all other subjects). Data due on SIMS 14th July, 1pm.

#4: MAKE MONITORING EFFICIENT

Go to

www.menti.com



Enter the code

1342 1444



Or use QR code

#5: PRIORITISE PASTORAL CARE

- Awareness of the constant state of transition in this phase
- Consider who delivers pastoral care:
 - What is your structure?
 - Are key staff safeguarding-trained?
- Do you buy in external mental health support and/or signpost effectively to it?
- How do you know what students need?
- How do you monitor impact?



OUR APPROACH

- Form tutor first point of contact for support
- Heads of Year are safeguarding-trained
- Senior Tutor i/c Wellbeing:
 - Mental Health & Wellbeing Google Classroom
 - #WellbeingWednesdays
 - Wellbeing Workshops
 - Student Leader i/c wellbeing
- C.A.L.M. Project focussed on exam anxiety
- Student-led projects

Director of Sixth Form

Head of Year 12

Head of Year 13

Form Tutors

Senior Tutors

(1 wellbeing, 1

enrichment)

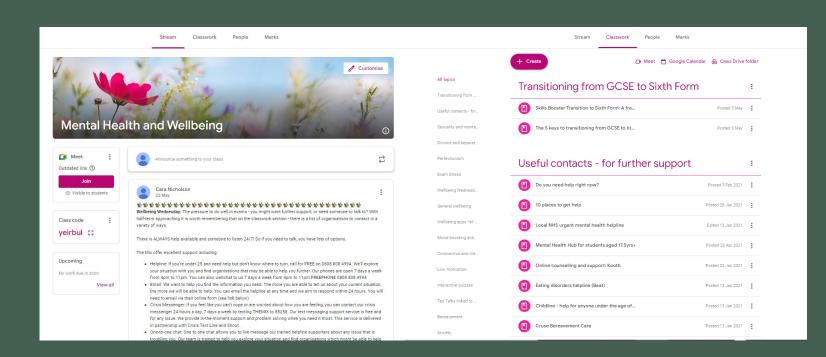
Counsellor

Sixth Form Student Services











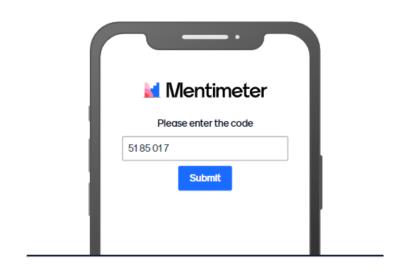


Stay C.A.L.M.



#5: PRIORITISE PASTORAL CARE

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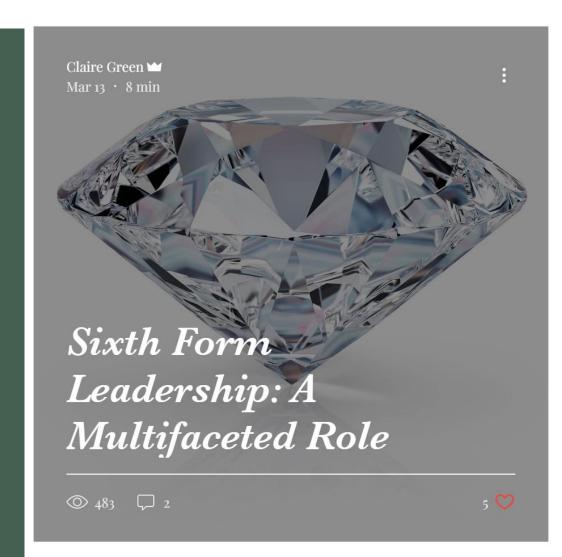
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SIXTH FORM LEADERSHIP: A MULTIFACETED ROLE

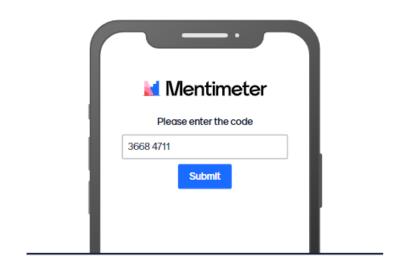
It really is a gem of a role



SIXTH FORM LEADERSHIP: YOUR IDEAS

Go to

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3668 4711



Thank you for listening



