



WESTON
COLLEGE

PARENTS' GUIDE

www.weston.ac.uk/parents



WELCOME

I am delighted to welcome you to Weston College.

We are an Ofsted 'Outstanding' College committed to delivering the very best teaching and learning to our students. We thrive on creating the very best learning opportunities and are delighted that your son/daughter has chosen us as their next place of learning.

Our College vision is 'creating brighter futures' and we aim for all our students to leave us as well-rounded individuals ready for further study or the world of work. To complement the curriculum there are activities and events that take place throughout the year to encourage students to develop in all areas, not just academia.

We encourage all parents and carers to join with us to support our students in their studies and in celebrating all of their successes. The assistance you provide is essential to their progress. This guide provides information that enables you to ensure your son/daughter gets the very best from Weston College and the course they are studying. My colleagues and I look forward to working with you to ensure that your son/daughter achieves their full potential, maximises all opportunities available to them and enjoys their time here at the College.

Weston College's outstanding resources and reputation mean that this is the very best time to join us. We have recently built two new centres of excellence for our learners and have also been named as a Centre of Excellence for mathematics. That - combined with national awards including the Queen's Anniversary Prize for Further and Higher Education, the Association of Colleges' Beacon Award for Mental Health and Wellbeing. We have recently been informed that two of our learners have won places to compete at World Skills 2021 in Shanghai - further demonstrating the we are able to work with our learners to ensure they achieve success and have a very bright future.

We look forward to working with you and your son/daughter during their learning journey with us.



Dr Paul Phillips CBE
Principal and Chief Executive



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OUR MISSION

'Creating Brighter Futures' is the underpinning mission and purpose of the Weston College Group. It is driven to achieve this for all its students and staff through the development of a learning and working culture that is inclusive, aspirational and focused on assuring success and progression.

OUR VALUES

We will put the **L**earner first.

We will be **E**ntrepreneurial in approach and innovative in our thinking.

We will be **A**mbitious and aspirational.

We will value **D**iversity and celebrate success.

We will **E**nable collaboration and work in partnership.

We will be **R**esponsive to the needs of individuals, business and the community.

We will provide a **S**afe and sustainable place to study and work.

We will be **LEADERS** in our field and have a reputation for excellence.

OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH YOU

We know how important the partnership is between the College and you in making your son/daughter's time with us a success.

We believe that communication between home and College is vital to their progression and achievement. Therefore, we will contact you if there are any concerns about attendance, punctuality, effort or behaviour.

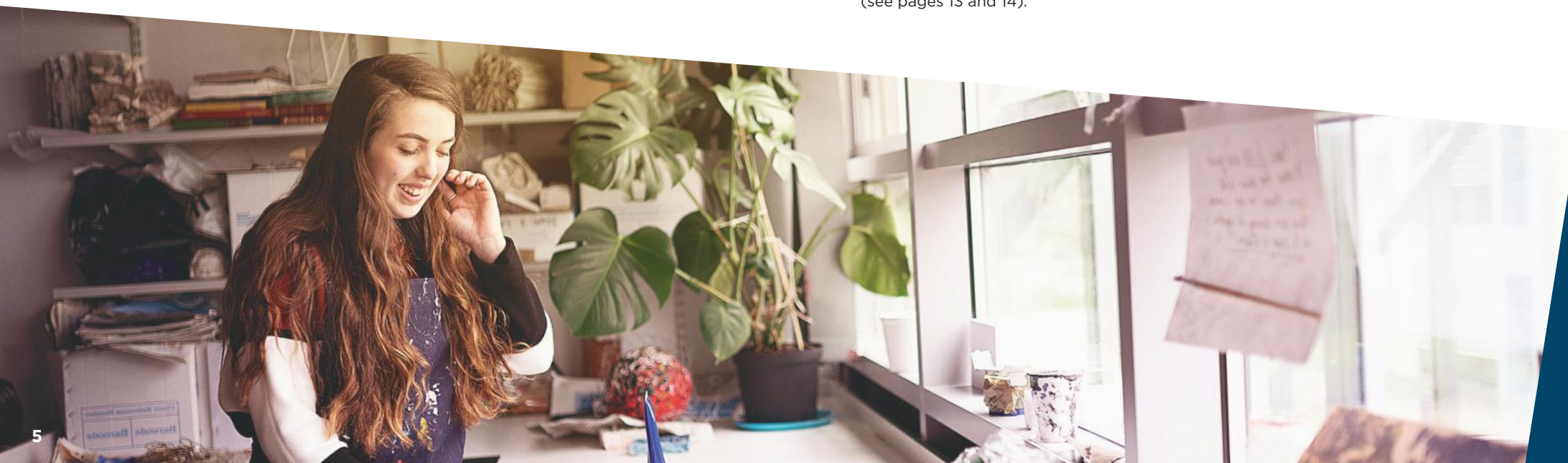
We also welcome contact from you if you have any concerns or queries about your son/daughter's progress.

You can give feedback via your child's personal tutor in the first instance, or by contacting the relevant faculty.

If you'd like more information about the support we can offer, contact one of our student welfare and support contacts (see pages 13 and 14).

Alongside this, we will take every opportunity to celebrate your son/daughter's successes. We have many events where parents/carers and staff can appreciate students' work. Events are also open to members of the public such as the Creative Arts Summer Show.

In line with current child protection, safeguarding and data protection legislation, we will not pass information on to anyone who has not been identified at enrolment as a student's next of kin. If you have any queries about this, please contact us by using the 'useful contacts' page at the back of this guide.



HOW DO WE KEEP YOU INFORMED?

The College will contact you by email or phone if we have any concerns about your son or daughter's academic progress or attitude to learning.

We have high expectations of ourselves and for our students. We expect students to attend all learning sessions linked to their study programme, be prepared for theory and practical sessions and engage with their learning.

Attendance is critical to learning and progress, missing just 5% of lessons across the course of the academic year equates to losing 30 hours of learning time. All unexplained absence will be followed up by the Personal Tutor or a member of our Welfare and Retention Team.

Students are required to contact the faculty absence hotline before 8.30am if they are unable to attend College for any reason (absence hotline number can be found at the back of this guide).

You will be invited to a minimum of two parent/carer meetings per year.

The first takes place in the first half term of the academic year and provides you with an opportunity to meet your child's Personal Tutor, review how they have settled into the College and discuss any areas of concerns you might have. You will be provided with the contact details of your child's Personal Tutor as part of the letter inviting you to this event and a copy of your child's timetable. You can find faculty contact details on the back cover of this guide.

Later in the year you will receive a progress report for your child and an opportunity to attend a meeting to review their progress on their study programme.

This normally takes place between February half term and the Easter break.

If you have any worries or concerns about your child's progress, please contact us at the earliest opportunity. All the key contact numbers can be found at the back of this guide.

READY TO LEARN: STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The College is committed to developing the academic, technical, personal and social skills that are needed to prepare young people for the world of work. We expect students to develop and exhibit behaviours that are representative of a professional working environment.

We promote a culture of Ready to Learn at Weston College where we ask students to commit fully to their programme of study, at the same time ensuring they respect themselves, other people, the environment and others right to learn. Students are required at all times to adhere to the College 'code of conduct'. Students who contravene the code of conduct will be subject to our disciplinary policy and procedure.

Safeguarding and child protection

All schools and Colleges have a legal responsibility to work with outside agencies, for example Social Care, to safeguard a young person's welfare. The College also has a legal duty to prevent students from being drawn into terrorism.

Weston College has clear protocols, systems and approaches to ensure students are safe. A team of Designated Safeguarding Officers and First Response Officers are in place to deal with safeguarding issues. All staff receive annual update training on safeguarding and PREVENT.

Our safeguarding of children and adults at risk policy and procedure can be downloaded from the College website.



HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR SON/DAUGHTER AT COLLEGE?

College encourages students to be more independent and develop the personal organisational skills needed for modern day life. The College recognises that making the transition from school to College is a big step for some students.

Getting to College, getting used to the College environment, meeting new people, understanding expectations will require support from both the College and you as Parents/Carers. Here are just a few ways in which you can help us to support your son/daughter whilst at College:

Time management

The College day typically operates from 9.00am-5.00pm for full time students. A student's timetable will generally require them to be in College to attend up to 20 hours of timetabled classes each week. Students will have gaps in their timetable or 'free periods' which they can use for private study or independent work. The College has outstanding facilities to support independent study and students are encouraged to make use of LibraryPlus facilities for this which are available on all sites.

We will give you access to a copy of your son/daughter's timetable and we would welcome your support in ensuring that they attend all classes and are ready to learn.

Personal organisation

Students will have different equipment and kit requirements dependent on the academic or technical area in which they are studying. These will be made clear to students at both welcome days and through our correspondence to students about their enrolment to College. Students need to ensure they have the right kit and equipment for each class. Their participation in the class and subsequent progress may be hindered without the right kit and equipment.

Students will be required to complete homework, assignments and assessments on a regular basis. Students will be provided with an assessment plan. Students will have access to resources online. Students will be provided with a planner to record work set and key assessment deadlines. Students will quickly find their progress and attainment is impacted if they do not keep up with the work set by their teacher. We would ask Parents/Carers to gain an awareness of the study programme requirements and assessment schedule so they can help their son/daughter keep on top of their college work. Parents/carers should contact the College if they would like more information or clarity on assessment schedules and/or programme requirements.

Attendance, punctuality and attitude to learning

We expect students to attend all sessions on their study programme. Maths and English is a mandatory part of a student's study programme if they have not achieved a grade 4 at GCSE.

Punctuality is critical. It is an important employability skill. Students who are late will miss key learning time and disrupt the learning of others.

The College has a clear policy and procedure regarding attendance and punctuality. Unexplained absence will be followed up with Parents/Carers as will persistent lateness or behaviour that suggest a poor attitude to learning. Students who are unwell or have a genuine reason for absence must contact the faculty absence hotline (see back cover of this guide for details).

Each student will have an Electronic Learning Plan (eLP) which they can access online. Students can access their attendance records, targets, tutorial records, assessment outcomes and timetable. Encourage your son/daughter to share this with you so you can review their progress and performance with them and proactively raise any concerns you might have with the College.

Course and career progression

The Careers Advice team is available to provide advice and guidance. This includes information on College courses, including changing course, future careers and employability advice and university options.

Find out more about the Careers Advice team on page 19.



PERSONAL TUTORS

Every student has a Personal Tutor who is responsible for their academic and pastoral support. They are the first point of contact for students and are responsible for the delivery of the collegiate tutorial programme and associated scheme of work. They will oversee the student's whole learning experience.

Your son/daughter's Personal Tutor will support them in the following ways:

Academic support

- Set and review SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound) and challenging targets, ensuring your son/daughter makes progress and achieves at least their minimum grades for their chosen course of study
- Develop career action plans, stimulate ambition and support your son/daughter's progress
- Monitor and review attendance and attitude to learning, interviewing where appropriate.

Pastoral support

- Check that your son/daughter feels safe and secure in the College environment, giving due regard to the College's Safeguarding Policy
- Discuss with students any issues relating to their progress and achievement, and where appropriate, refer them to the Welfare team for specialist support or Careers Advice team for guidance on careers, university and changing course
- Liaise with parents/carers where appropriate to ensure positive outcomes are recognised and areas of concern are highlighted.

Administrative support

- Ensure all tutorial records are complete and up-to-date, using the eILP
- Liaise, as appropriate, with other members of the teaching team, student support services and management to ensure that all students in their tutor group are enabled and empowered to achieve their potential at Weston College.



STUDENT WELFARE AND PASTORAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Welfare

Welfare offers learners the opportunity to access information, advice and support for a wide range of issues which could impact on learning including - relationships, low thoughts & emotional worries, substance misuse, attendance concerns. The service is available daily on a drop-in or appointment basis.

Knightstone Campus (Kate/Emma)
01934 411 595/648

South West Skills Campus (Heidi/Ellie)
01934 411 750/184

Loxton Campus (Denise)
01934 411 623

Health and Active Living Skills Centre
(Emma/Ellie)
01934 411 648/184

welfare@weston.ac.uk

Healthcare

Healthcare Advisors offer support and guidance to learners with medical healthcare plans, sexual health advice, support to stop smoking and First Aid

Knightstone Campus (Luci)
01934 411 535

South West Skills Campus (Victoria)
01934 411 658

Loxton Campus and Health and Active Living Skills Centre (Charlotte)
01934 411 640

healthcareassistants@weston.ac.uk

Counselling

Counselling offers an opportunity to talk about personal issues in a private and relaxed setting with someone who plays no other role in a learner's life. Counselling is confidential and could help with relationship issues, self-esteem, personal loss, anxiety/stress, decision making and moving on. Service available by appointment only, to book please see the campus Welfare Officer or contact admin.

01934 411 506

Counselling

Providing specialist mental health support to learners who have been diagnosed with a mental health condition, or to those whose mental health is impacting severely upon their lives.

01934 422 769

MHReferrals@weston.ac.uk

Additionally, every learner's weston.ac.uk email address provides them with free 24/7 access to Big White Wall. This is an online mental health support service, which is approved by the NHS and provides support and information.

www.bigwhitewall.com



LEARNING SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS/SEND

Weston College's innovative and unique specialist support model ensures staff have the specific skills and knowledge they need to deliver high quality and personalised support to empower student's independence.

Ofsted says that our support for students is "outstanding", and that our support workers are "highly experienced and very well qualified, with specific areas of expertise." Our staff work closely with the faculty teams to assess our students' special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and to then implement a wide range of support programmes which meet the requirements of our students' education, health and care plans (EHCP).

We offer support in a wide range of specialist areas, which include:

- Assistive technology
- Autism spectrum
- Deaf and hard of hearing
- Behaviour 4 learning (EBD/ADHD/ADD)
- Mental health
- Specific learning difficulties
- Speech and language therapy
- Visual impairment
- Profound and complex learning difficulties.

Accessing learning support

To access learning support, a referral will need to be made to our learning support team and an initial needs assessment will be completed to establish the exact support required.

A referral to discuss potential additional support can be made at any of the following stages:

- Education Health and Care Plan Consultation
- School referral/educational health and care plan
- Pre-entry identification (during interview)
- Applications/enrolment/admission
- Parent or carer referral
- As part of a transition programme
- Screening assessment
- Self-referral
- Tutor referral
- Professional referral.

Support options

Once the initial needs assessment has been completed, our specialist practitioners will work with the student and their tutors to provide an individualised support programme, which could include:

- Specialist teaching and in-class support
- Small group workshops
- Specialist equipment and assistive technology support
- Mentoring
- Diagnostic assessments
- Exam access arrangements
- Note taking
- Communication support
- Differentiation
- Speech and language therapy
- Extensive transition plan
- Weston Bay, our residential training facility for students on the autism spectrum.



WORK EXPERIENCE AND INDUSTRY PLACEMENTS

Your son/daughter will gain work experience as part of their study programme at Weston College.

Work experience, and longer industry placements, bridge the gap between education and employment, and help students:

- Make decisions on potential careers
- Prove themselves to employers
- Develop attitudes and behaviours expected at work
- Apply the personal and social skills they need in the workplace
- Broaden their understanding of a particular industry or job role
- Apply theoretical and technical skills they develop at College
- Find out what career opportunities are available within a particular sector.

We are fully committed to helping students find and secure an appropriate placement. However, students are expected to take some responsibility for researching, identifying and applying for relevant opportunities.

We also understand that parents and carers often have contacts with employers through their own personal and family networks. With that in mind, we encourage you to support your son/daughter and, where possible, help them identify an appropriate employer with whom to gain work experience.

Students are expected to undertake a minimum 'amount' of work experience, depending on the level of their study programme:

- Level 1 - an 'individualised' approach based on learner readiness
- Level 2 - Minimum of five days or 37 hours
- Level 3, year 1 - Minimum of five days or 37 hours
- Level 3, year 2 - Minimum of 315 hours over 45-60 days.

(These expectations apply only where work experience is not a mandatory part of a student's technical qualification.)

At Level 2, work experience does not necessarily need to be related to the student's course - although this is preferable.

At Level 3, the placement must be with a business or organisation that is directly related to student's course.

The longer-term industry placements can be spread out over a number of weeks, or completed in a 'block'. Ideally, it will fit around the student's timetable, but can also take place during evenings, weekends or in holidays.

If a 'block' placement is the only option, we can also make arrangements for a student to make up for any lessons or learning they miss.

Students must also consider the logistics of any work placement, as they are expected to make their own way to the placement and bear the cost however some support may be available to students for this.

For more information please contact the work placement team on

workplacementteam@weston.ac.uk

01934 411 411



CAREERS, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

The College's Careers and Advice team offer advice and guidance on future careers, university options and College courses.

Throughout the year they run events and advice sessions for Weston College students on the following:

- **1:1 careers guidance and tutorials**
available for drop-ins regarding career options, CV structure and much more
- **Choosing a course**
an offer information, advice and guidance for school students making a decision about their College pathway, and for current College students wishing to change direction
- **Career Fest**
an opportunity for students to speak to employers, universities and training providers, as well sit on a number of talks so they can make an informed choice on their next steps
- **UCAS support**
tutorial sessions which focus on how to apply for university through UCAS, university funding, personal statements and 1:1 appointments. We also take students to annual UCAS conventions
- **Higher education and employer visits**
we offer the opportunity to meet and visit education institutions and employers to get a taste of what university and work life is like

More information on the College's careers programme can be found on the website

TRAVELLING TO COLLEGE

By bus

Weston College offers a subsidised bus pass to all full time students. Students are entitled to one subsidised pass per term (three term year). Bus passes are available for purchase from the online college shop and all Weston College receptions.

There are two types of bus pass available depending on where you travel from and which service you use. All information on our routes and which one you'll need can be found at www.weston.ac.uk/bus-routes-and-timetables

First bus pass

Weston College use the **First Bus mTicket**. What students need to do:

- Purchase bus pass voucher code from Weston College
- Download First Bus mTicket app
- Create mTicket account and link voucher code to your account and use the QR code on the app when boarding a First Bus service.

There are currently three types First Bus passes available to full time students:

Five Day Pass

Monday to Friday term time only:
£70 per term

Seven Day Pass

Monday to Sunday including half term (but not Christmas and Easter holidays):
£110 per term

Apprenticeship Bus Pass

Monday to Sunday
(valid for a 17 week period): £70

By train

All 16 and 17 year-olds in education can get a new railcard that offers significant discounts of up to 50% off train travel. We will release details of this as soon as they are confirmed.

Bakers Dolphin bus pass

The College puts on its own coach service via Bakers Dolphin, travelling to each of the College's campuses from the below locations. Exact details of stops again can be found on the College website.

- Portishead
- Clevedon
- Nailsea
- Bridgwater
- Blagdon and surrounding villages

Five Day Pass

Monday to Friday term time only:
£70 per term

LIBRARYPLUS

LibraryPlus is the College's award-winning vibrant learning space, with a welcoming team of specialist support staff to help students access the resources they need.

Our students will find a wide range of technology available to hire and use, including drop-in PCs, tablet devices and digital cameras.

LibraryPlus offers a comprehensive selection of books, DVDs, magazines and course specific resources, all available for loan from any campus. Online resources are also available including eJournals and eBooks with guidance on how to access these provided by the LibraryPlus team.

LibraryPlus

The LibraryPlus team offers a wide variety of study support to students at Weston, including:

- One-to-one study, research and revision guidance
- Assignment support
- Technology help and support
- Basic IT tuition including Microsoft 365 guidance.

For more information:
library@weston.ac.uk

01934 411 493

FUTURES ACADEMY

The Futures Academy programme is an important part of your son/daughter's Level 3 qualification at Weston College.

The programme brings together ways of working digitally on various course and industry-related activities. It also provides students with opportunities to demonstrate their digital expertise – for example, the Microsoft Office Specialist Certification.

As part of the programme, students will get to meet guest speakers working in industry and establish relationships with potential employers.

Learning Mentors will also be on hand to help students improve their study skills and provide one-to-one support with course requirements.

Individual Development (I.D) Programme

All provision types need to design a curriculum which develops the whole learner. Developing the character of a learner will better prepare them for their next steps, society and will impact positively on their academic progress. The College's I.D Programme will focus on developing three core skills for all learners on Level 2 programmes:

- Time management
- Communication
- Personal behaviour management.

In addition to the core skills, curriculum areas will determine a set of skills, behaviours and attitudes required to support learners to progress onto their intended destination within their subject area. These skills are threaded through all aspects of a learner's programme.



STUDYING WITH MICROSOFT TEAMS AND OFFICE 365

Get ready to go digital!

At Weston College, our learners will use Microsoft Teams and Microsoft Office 365 apps to access course resources, communicate with their course tutor, work with other students on their course and much more!

Microsoft Teams and Office applications including Teams, Word, Excel and PowerPoint can all be downloaded for FREE! For the duration of their course, Weston College learners can download Microsoft Office applications on up to five personal devices (including Windows, Android and Apple).

Learners can login at **www.office.com** with their unique Weston College email address and password to find a wide range of tools and features, including:

Microsoft Teams - For accessing course resources, submitting homework, communicating with tutor and other learners on the course

OneNote - For digital notetaking

OneDrive - Online cloud storage

Outlook - Email and calendar

Need help?

Help and advice for using Microsoft Office 365 and Teams is available through the Weston College Learning Technology team

learningtech@weston.ac.uk

Not feeling confident? Students can book a one-to-one IT Basics session with a LibraryPlus Learning Advisor

library@weston.ac.uk

Get certified!

Weston College learners have the opportunity to complete a range of Microsoft Certifications during their time at Weston College. The Microsoft Office Specialist Certification is a way of demonstrating your proficiency in using the Microsoft applications Excel, PowerPoint and Word 2016.

COLLEGE CALENDAR

September

Start of term: Monday 7th September 2020

October

Half term: Monday 26th October 2020

December

End of term: Friday 18th December 2020

January

Start of term: Monday 4th January 2021

February

Half term: Monday 15th February 2021

April

End of term: Friday 1st April 2021

Start of term: Tuesday 20th April 2021

May

Half term: Monday 31st May 2021

July

End of term: Friday 9th July 2021

The College may in some instances finish earlier than the dates listed here.

At the time of publishing, the College has not yet confirmed exact term dates for the 2020-21 academic year. Once done so, these will be posted on our website **www.weston.ac.uk**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can my son/daughter withdraw from College without my consent?

If aged 18 and under, we will inform you if your son/daughter has decided to withdraw from College. In 2015 the Government raised the participation age (RPA) meaning students have to stay in education, training or employment with training until their 18th birthday.

How will I be kept informed of my son/daughter's progress?

You will receive progress reports up to twice a year and have the opportunity to meet your son/daughter's tutor and subject teachers at our parents' events. You can also log onto your son/daughter's eILP to see this information. The portal displays information regarding students attendance and attainment.

Who do I contact if I am concerned about my son/daughter's progress?

Always contact your son/daughter's Personal Tutor first if you have any concerns about progress, unless it is safeguarding related in which case reception can direct your enquiry to an appropriate member of staff.

If your son/daughter's Personal Tutor is unavailable please contact the relevant faculty, contact details can be found on the back of this guide.

Can my son/daughter drop or change a subject/course?

We do not encourage students to drop subjects as it can have a negative impact on their ability to progress. However, if they really do wish to make a change, we will understand and support them. As long as they identify their desire to change course in the first four weeks it should be possible to change.

For advice and guidance on changing course, or if the four week deadline has passed and they feel they need to make a change, students should contact the Careers Advice team (details on the back of this booklet).

Can I take my son/daughter on holiday in term time?

We do not encourage or authorise holidays taken in term time; your son/daughter will be marked absent and will miss out on vital learning time.

Can my son/daughter get careers advice at College?

We have a specialist staff in our Careers Advice team who work with students to ensure they get the best support possible with applications for employment and higher education.

Students receive a suite of tutorials on topics such as UCAS, careers and progression, and have access to highly qualified careers advisers who can help them choose the best progression route for them and their career.

My son/daughter has a learning difficulty. Can they get help and support at College?

We have an experienced team which works with students with learning support needs. Students who need an assessment for a specific learning difficulty, exam concessions, equipment or specialist support can access this through the College's Additional Learning Support team.

Will my son/daughter have access to the resources they need to achieve on their course?

We have excellent, state-of-the-art, facilities for our students to use, to ensure they get the most out of their College course. For example, our industry standard Grove Restaurant, Hair and Beauty salons, our Health and Active Living Skills Centre and our brand new facility out at Puxton Park.

Can I get a copy of my son/daughter's timetable?

They will be issued with their timetable during induction week.

Their timetable can also be accessed electronically on the eILP via their log in. Alternatively, you can contact their faculty to request a copy.

A copy will also be provided by the faculty as part of the letter providing key information, including your opportunity to attend a 'meet the tutor' evening in October.



USEFUL CONTACTS

Reception

01934 411 411
enquiries@weston.ac.uk
www.weston.ac.uk

Student Services

01934 411506

English and Maths

01934 411 545

Knightstone Campus

Professional Studies, Access to HE and
Animal Science

01934 411 567

07910 686 628

PSAA.student.absence@weston.ac.uk

Service Sectors

01934 421250

SS.student.absence@weston.ac.uk

Inclusive Practice

01934 411 697

07773 969 344

IIP.student.absence@weston.ac.uk

Loxton Campus

Creative Arts

01934 411 669

CAD.student.absence@weston.ac.uk

Sixth Form

01934 411 666

TACE.student.absence@weston.ac.uk

South West Skills Campus

Advanced Engineering and Computing

01934 411 194

AEC.student.absence@weston.ac.uk

Building Automotive and Civil Engineering

01934 411 792

BACE.student.absence@weston.ac.uk

Health and Active Living Skills Centre

Health Science

01934 411 520

HSSC.student.absence@weston.ac.uk

Sport

01934 421 251

Sport.student.absence@weston.ac.uk

Apprenticeships

01934 411 751



Weston College Group