



BELOW
Canford in Dorset
has rethought sixth
form life with 6 –
opening from 2025

WINNING 6

A new Sixth Form taking shape at Canford already has a student-designed logo and looks set to score full marks

Canford Sixth Form is a development to give students a smart new place of their own. There are two opening phases, in February 2025 and September 2026, but this is more

than a construction project. The Dorset day and boarding school has used the opportunity to rethink how this critical phase of school life should be structured.

The needs of 17-18-year-olds are very different to those of younger pupils – as is their mindset and outlook. The new College structure will allow stage-specific guidance, enabling them to prepare for the pressures of life beyond school within a supportive environment.

The educational experience will be overseen by a new Assistant Head College, Julia Bird, who will work closely with the pastoral team and the wider pastoral staff across the school. Specialist tutors will

guide and support tutees through the two sixth form years, ensuring continuity of care and connections with key academic and pastoral staff and parents.

Facilities will include areas for the whole Sixth Form, as well as those dedicated to the Upper Sixth only. The Hub and two single-sex residential wings form three sides of a new quad, close to the Library, Layard Theatre, Music School, Sports Centre, Manor House and academic teaching areas.

The College Hub will be an educational and social space for the whole Sixth Form, with seminar rooms, a Future Pathways careers and networking centre, and life skills spaces – teaching kitchen and private dining area included. The design has been carefully thought out to be similar to modern workspaces. That means opportunities for hot desking, conference facilities for webinars and lectures, plus dedicated areas for social and down time.

To prepare for the transition to life in higher education and the working world,

Upper Sixth pupils will move as a year group into their own accommodation, with boarding boys and girls living in separate wings in ensuite bedrooms – Canford's day pupils will have dedicated day workspaces.

Who better to persuade young people of the benefits of the new Sixth Form than students? New branding has been created in a project involving pupils across the Canford year groups. The result is a new '6' logo and teal colourway, which will be incorporated into the interior design of the building.

Chair of Governors Sir Gary Coward says this ambitious rethink has been designed to create: "An inspirational, innovative, integrated Sixth Form experience at the heart of the School".

These smart new buildings will not sit in splendid isolation – the goal is to ensure an aspirational, dynamic setting that pupils will look forward to joining. To build that sense of integration, younger pupils will have access for some aspects of their education – so they, too, can look towards life in 6. **17**