



Presdales School
Sixth Form
Achievement for all

Welcome to the Sixth Form at Presdales School

Presdales is a wonderfully energetic school. The choices on offer make learning a truly inclusive experience.

I do hope that you will be able to join us on our Sixth Form open evening. If for some reason you are unable to attend, please see the school website for details to make an appointment to come and see us at another time. I look forward to welcoming you to Presdales, introducing you to the staff and pupils and to your son or daughter becoming part of our school community.



Matthew Warren
Headteacher



Why study at Presdales?

There are lots of good reasons, both for those of you who are considering staying at Presdales and for those of you who are considering joining the school in the Sixth Form. We are proud to offer:

- an exceptionally wide choice of subjects
- a place in small tutorial groups and individual tutorials on a regular basis with an experienced Sixth Form tutor
- a high quality of learning and teaching
- an extremely thorough careers guidance programme
- supportive pastoral care
- careful academic monitoring
- a pleasant, well-maintained environment
- opportunities to develop leadership and other personal skills through extra-curricular activities
- designated private study areas, dedicated ICT suites and a Common Room
- a valued working relationship with the staff in the smooth running of the school
- excellent help in making the transition to university and higher education

If you already study at Presdales you will find in addition:

- that you have finally achieved that privileged position at the top of the school!
- that the teachers know you as an individual learner and do not need to spend time assessing your strengths, weaknesses and interests
- that you have a different relationship with the staff based on trust and mutual respect
- that you have much more choice, freedom and responsibility than before.

“Presdales Sixth Form offers not only an extremely high standard of education but also a wealth of opportunities that will prepare me for my future endeavours.”





Presdales Sixth Form

The Sixth Form at Presdales enjoys a well-equipped and comfortable environment with a relaxed, informal atmosphere.

Relationships between staff and students are warm and supportive. Students maintain previous friendships and take opportunities to establish new ones through small tutor groups and subject classes.

Students grow in maturity and are encouraged to take responsibility in a wide variety of areas in preparation for adult life, in higher education or in the workplace.

A strong emphasis is put on the importance of community life at Presdales.

The Sixth Form students contribute enormously to the quality of our community by modelling a sense of responsibility, an interest in learning for its own sake, an understanding of the value of service, and team work with the staff in achieving mutual goals.

The majority of students stay on at Presdales after Year 11. Some of the reasons for this are quoted elsewhere in the brochure. Some boys and girls join us from other schools to take advantage of the broad range of A Level subjects on offer here.



“I like Presdales Sixth Form because not only do the teachers enable me to fulfil my full potential, but it is also a highly enjoyable learning environment.”

You will be welcome to join us provided you:

- are committed to working hard and making the most of your studies
- have thought carefully about your subject choices and researched them with the teaching and careers staff
- have the stipulated grade at GCSE in the subjects you have chosen, or in related subjects
- have had an interview with us to ensure that you have made sensible decisions and to give further guidance if necessary
- want to contribute to the life of the community using whatever gifts and skills you have



Choosing your courses

Remember you will be spending a large amount of time studying the subjects of your choice in the Sixth Form, so it is important to make the right decisions.

You should choose subjects you enjoy. It should be easy to tell which these are if you have studied them at GCSE. If not, for example if you are thinking of starting Government and Politics, or Sociology, or Psychology, or if you are considering starting a humanities subject you didn't do at GCSE, make sure you know exactly what you will be studying. Ask your parents and friends if they think you will enjoy it and why. Think about the skills involved as well as the subject content. Do you enjoy reading? Or practical work? Or expressing yourself in discussion? Or constructing language?

You should look for subjects you are good at. Most people like the subjects they are best at. Be careful that you do not choose other subjects because of the image they have, the teacher who is teaching it, the fact that your friends are doing it or because you think it will be easier than another subject. A Levels involve hard work, and you will be able to persevere when the going gets tough only if you are interested in what you are doing.

Try to think ahead to imagine how your choice of subjects will help with your career plans. Draw up a short list of possible career paths and discuss your choice of Sixth Form courses with careers staff.

You should try to make a careful selection of subjects. Base this first of all on the necessary courses for any career aspirations you have, and then balance your first choices with a subject or subjects of a different kind. In some circumstances it may be best to select a subject which will support rather than complement your other subjects (e.g. Maths if you are taking Physics).

In addition to your A Levels, it is possible to study for a GCSE in Mathematics or English. You will also have an opportunity to take a Community Sports Leadership qualification.

Sixth Form study

You will notice a marked difference between study for your GCSEs and study in the Sixth Form. There is no homework timetable as such in the Sixth Form, so you will need to organise your own work programmes in order to meet the varying deadlines set by individual subjects for the production of work.

How we monitor your progress

You will need to be able to monitor your progress throughout by assessing your grades/marks and discussing your progress with subject staff. We shall help you by carrying out a regular formal assessment of your progress through reports sent out to parents.

We expect you to want to help yourself by reading round your chosen subjects (rather than just carrying out set homework tasks), preparing for and actively participating in lessons and undertaking your own revision of topics covered without having to be asked to do so.

In Year 12 you cannot afford to rest on your laurels after success at GCSE and it is vital that you establish good patterns of study in September of Year 12 so that you can achieve the success you are hoping for.

In order to work effectively, you need to make sure that you give yourself enough time in which to carry out your studies.

At least fifteen hours a week should be set aside for homework, which requires a quiet atmosphere conducive to work. In addition, study periods in school will also need to be well used. We supervise some of them in Year 12, but none in Year 13, because we feel that you should, by this time, have acquired sufficient self-discipline to work on your own without being distracted. This is also good preparation for those of you going on to higher education.

It should be clear from what has been said that the Sixth Form enjoy a considerable amount of freedom. Our aim is to make your two years in the Sixth Form as successful, enjoyable and fulfilling as possible, so that you have the qualifications and confidence to proceed to the next stage of your career. We are committed to helping you to achieve the aims you set yourself and we hope that you will want to take advantage of the opportunities we can offer.



Who can help you?

Your subject staff can help you enormously to make the transition from Year 11 to the Sixth Form. Indeed, you will find that in the more informal atmosphere of smaller classes you can have much more of a student/tutor relationship with staff, who will recognise your new status, just as if you were at college.

At all times in the Sixth Form, you have access to help if you need it. In addition to your subject staff, you can talk things over with your form tutor who will be taking an overall interest in your progress in the Sixth Form. The Head of the Sixth Form and Deputy Head of Sixth Form are also available to give support and advice, as is the Sixth Form Careers Adviser, who is always very happy to see you to discuss career opportunities. The aim of all the staff is to ensure you enjoy a successful two years in the Sixth Form and make a smooth transition onto the next stage in your career.

Footnote

If you think you may encounter financial difficulties on entering the Sixth Form, you may be eligible for financial support under a national government scheme. Please ask us for details.





Extra-curricular & social aspects of the Sixth Form

There will be plenty of opportunities for you to enjoy life in the Sixth Form beyond the study of your chosen subjects. The Sixth Form Centre has a spacious common room, a dedicated ICT suite, a study room, and the library is also available for students' use.

In addition to subject-related visits (such as Geography and Biology field trips, language courses and visits to the theatre, art galleries, concerts, etc.), there are many other opportunities available:

Model United Nations

Students spend a weekend each year at the local Model United Nations Conference. This is run entirely by students and introduces Sixth Formers to the work of the UN in an exciting, impressive and formal setting. In the months leading up to the conference, students take on the role of ambassadors from a particular country and undertake research on issues which the UN is currently debating. Recent issues have included: the peaceful use of outer space, child slavery and the disposal of toxic waste. During the conference students develop their negotiating, debating and public speaking skills, as a result of which their confidence is boosted greatly.

Young Enterprise Scheme

We also offer the Young Enterprise Scheme at Presdales. This scheme allows students to experience setting up and running their own business – they make a real product or organise a real service. They are helped by business advisers from the local community and two link teachers.

During the year students are given the opportunity to attend skills workshops on topics such as finance, marketing, sales and how to be a Managing Director. Students attend a trade fair at the Hatfield Galleria in March, when they can sell and market their goods. Companies are encouraged to enter the Young Enterprise Competition where they present their companies and their experiences over the year.

The Young Enterprise Scheme is an ideal way to develop skills which are needed in the workplace and in higher education, and those who take part always find it a worthwhile experience.

Further Opportunities

Students are invited to participate in events such as the Mock Trial Competition. Year 12 students also organise the school charity drive and there are opportunities for running junior clubs, helping with reading in the neighbouring primary special school and taking part in the 'Big Sister' scheme to support younger students.



“No matter what type of person you are, whether you are very creative, a sports woman or a mathematician and so on, Presdales Sixth Form will provide you with opportunities and an education that will guarantee success.”

Careers Guidance

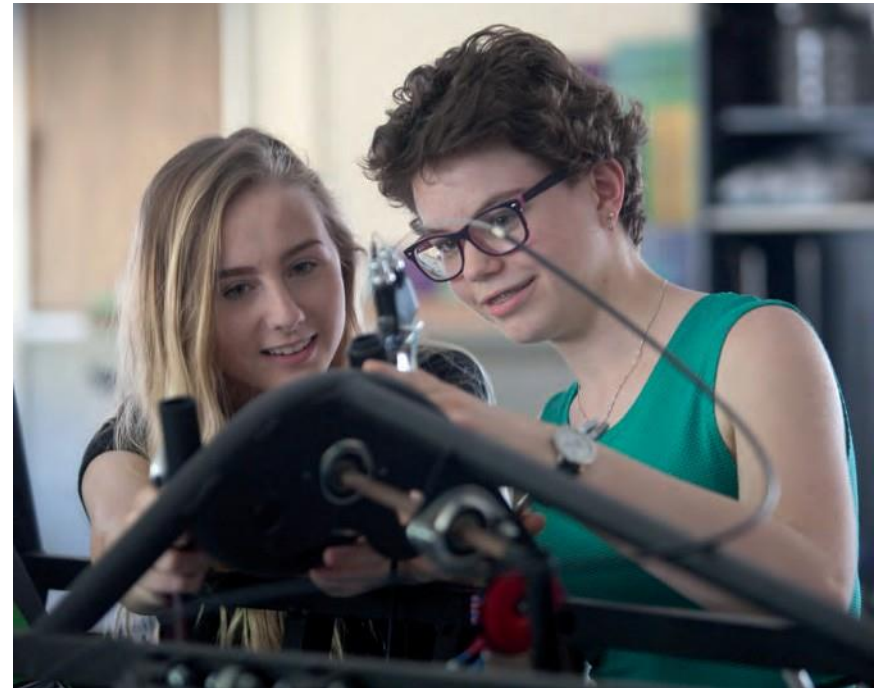
Careers guidance is an integral part of life in the Sixth Form and regular contact between students and their Form Tutor is maintained throughout, so that everyone receives as much help as they need in reaching that all-important decision of what to do after Year 13.

The majority of our students go on to some form of academic, creative or vocational higher education course at a college or university. Extensive guidance on the UCAS university application procedure is given from the very beginning of Year 12 to maximise the likelihood of early offers and success. Detailed help and advice are then given in Year 13 on the completion of the on-line UCAS application form – as well as on the vital personal statement that all applicants must write. For those who are invited to interview, mock interviews are arranged.

Potential candidates for Oxford and Cambridge are identified early in Year 12, and further help is given with the particular application systems for those universities.

Students who wish to go straight to work or embark on a higher apprenticeship after Year 13 are not forgotten. Careers advice is tailored to the needs of each Sixth Form student. YC Herts interviews are arranged in-house to allow students to discuss their options. A post 18 options evening is held for parents to make them aware of the options their son/daughter has post A level. We also run a careers morning where members from the Presdales community and alumni speak about their careers and routes into them.

There is a well-stocked Careers Library which holds a wide-ranging array of careers information, along with copies of at least one prospectus from every university in the UK. The most up-to-date UCAS advice books and lists of useful websites are also available.





“There is so much more to Presdales Sixth Form than just Alevels. You will make friends for life, be offered amazing opportunities and get all the support you need on your journey towards life after school.”



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