



PRESDALES SCHOOL

Achievement for all

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24th September 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

For the past few years we have held information evenings for all year groups. The purpose of the evening was to share key information that was relevant to an individual year group and for parents to meet key pastoral leaders.

As we are unable to hold face to face meetings this year, we have put all of the information that would have been shared into a letter. I appreciate that this is going to be a long letter as there is a great deal of information. We have included links to other important information, so that you can choose to read them at a time that is convenient to you. This letter will also be placed on the school website so you can refer to it at any time.

Each heading/section will have been written by a different member of staff who is identified at the start of their section. If you have any questions or comments then please direct them to the appropriate member of staff for that section.

Matt Warren
Headteacher

Behaviour and Pastoral – Mrs S Miller; Deputy Headteacher

At Presdales School we are committed to ensuring that all of our students achieve their very best. We strive to create a safe and stimulating learning environment where exemplary behaviour is at the heart of productive learning. We seek to embed a culture of praise, encouragement and self-discipline in our students and provide early intervention to prevent issues escalating. We place a heavy emphasis on positive relationships between staff and students, and endeavour to ensure fairness of treatment for all by encouraging consistency of response to both positive and inappropriate behaviour.

We aim to do this in a number of ways –

- Focussing on good behaviour
- Praise and reward positive behaviour by use of the reward point system
- Celebrate success and reward improvement, endeavour and achievement through phonecalls/emails/postcards home and PressTales (our fortnightly newsletter)
- Create an environment where all students can learn effectively without any disruption from others

At times students will make the wrong decision and might find themselves with a consequence point. We do have a clear consequence system in place for the times when a students' behaviour falls short of our expectations. Just like every other secondary school, we provide the students with clear guidelines on how they should conduct themselves. The full behaviour policy can be found by clicking [here](#).

We do understand that they are still learning and they will make mistakes. Our behaviour system isn't in place to catch students out, more to support them in making the correct decision the next time they are faced with a similar scenario.

This is more important now than ever before. Many of our usual school routines are different, and students really do need to be following instructions from all members of staff, for their own, and others, safety.

We understand that the time away from School has been challenging for many students and we are working hard to ensure students well-being is a priority. There continues to be a wide range of support open to all students within school and I would encourage you to speak to your daughter's form tutor if you wish to find out any further information about this, or, if you click here, it will take you to the well-being section of our school website, where you will find links to external organisations that offer a wide range of support.

Online Safety – Ms C Chandler; Assistant Headteacher

We are very much aware over the last few months of both the benefits and dangers of online activity for young people whilst we live through Covid-19.

Government organisations have been providing very useful advice to parents to help them support their children with online activity.

There are a number of helpful short video guides created by ThinkuKnow for parents that you can access by clicking on the link below on the following particular issues:

- Cyber security
- Watching videos online
- Social media
- In-game chat
- Live streaming
- Sharing images

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/Support-tools/presentations-for-parents/>

They have also come up with a list of useful reminders for keeping your child safe online.

- 1. Explore together:** Ask your child to show you their favourite websites and apps and what they do on them. Listen, show interest and encourage them to teach you the basics of the site or app.
- 2. Chat about online safety little and often:** Young people are likely to want to explore new apps and websites this month, whether that's for learning or for fun. Take this opportunity to talk to them about how to stay safe on these new services, and in general.

3. Ask if anything ever worries them while they are online. Make sure they know that if they ever feel worried, they can get help by talking to you or another adult they trust.
4. **Help your child identify trusted adults who can help if they are worried:** This includes you and other adults at home, as well as adults from wider family, school or other support services who they are able to contact at this time. Encourage them to draw a picture or write a list of their trusted adults.
5. **Be non-judgemental:** Explain that you would never blame them for anything that might happen online, and you will always give them calm, loving support.
6. **Talk about how their online actions can affect others:** If your child is engaging with others online, remind them to consider how someone else might feel before they post or share something. If they are considering sharing a photo/video of somebody else, they should always ask permission first.
7. **Parental controls:** Make use of the parental controls available to your home broadband and any internet enabled device in your home. You can find out more about how to use parental controls by visiting your broadband provider's website. **Direct your child to age appropriate information about relationships and sex:** It's natural for young people to start exploring their sexual feelings online and adolescents are more inclined to take risks. It's important to understand this and talk to your child in a positive way. Thinkuknow, Brook, The Mix and Childline all provide age appropriate information about relationships and sex that you can signpost your child to.
8. **Make sure they know about CEOP:** Young people can report a concern about grooming or sexual abuse to CEOP at www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/ and get some support from a specialist Child Protection Advisor.

Curriculum and Careers – Mrs J Stephenson; Deputy Headteacher

Assessment and reporting key dates

Tracking points this year

- TPA week commencing 19th October 2020.
- TPB week commencing 1st February 2021 – *to include Mock Assessment Grade*

Your daughter's tracking reports will include an FFT estimate. We buy into a non-profit organisation called Fisher Family Trust (FFT) which provides estimates for UK schools, to support effective target-setting for GCSEs. This looks at the academic profile of your daughter at the end of primary school and estimates how she will progress on her five-year journey based on similar students in the past. If your daughter's progress is not inline or exceeding our expectations, we will look at putting an appropriate intervention in place. Please support us by ensuring your daughter has a distraction free work station for homework and revision. The GCSE revision guides that we recommend can be found on the school website [here](#).

Parents' Consultation Evenings

- 3rd November 2020 – Virtual
- 9th February 2021

Mock examinations will be 4th to 15th January 2021.

For any further information on assessment and reporting please read the policy which can be found [here](#).

Homework Timetable

- Science homework will be three lots of 30 minutes a week whilst all other homework is 60 minutes.
- Students should also timetable revision into their week

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
BLOCK B SCIENCE	BLOCK A SCIENCE	ENGLISH BLOCK C	MATHS	BLOCK D SCIENCE

Classcode can be found on student timetables e.g 11C/Hi is History in Block C.

- Block A – Business, French, Geography, History, Italian, Russian, Study Support and Textiles.
- Block B – Art, Separate Science, Business, Food and Nutrition, Geography, Graphics, Music and Sociology
- Block C – Separate Science, Business, Geography, Graphics, History, PE, Sociology and Spanish
- Block D – Art, Drama, French, Geography, German, History and Health and Social Care.

Curriculum Maps

Curriculum Maps and term by term overviews for each subject are available on the **Learning** tab of our Website. These will provide you with details on the curriculum that each subject is delivering over the academic year.

Sixth Form Option Programme 2020

- 30th September 2020 - Launch of programme in year assembly
- 5th – 23rd October 2020 - Futures Interview 1
- 12th November 2020 - Options information morning with taster lessons and HRC virtual presentations.
- November - Sixth Form Open Evening information on the website
- 11th December - Closing date for Sixth Form applications
- 8th February to 19th February 2021 - Futures Interview 2
- 29th June 2021 - Sixth Form Induction Week
- 26th August 2021 - GCSE Results Day and course enrolment
- 3rd September 2021 - Start of academic year

In addition to having 2 interviews by senior staff year 11 students will have the opportunity to have a 1-1 meeting with a YC Herts adviser.

GCSE Interventions

After the September assessments have been completed and the data has been collected for the first tracking point we will look at an intervention programme for the Year 11 students. This has included in the past

- Lunchtime and after school revision surgeries which will be made compulsory for some students and optional for others.
- Supervised independent study support instead of Core PE which is optional but may be compulsory for some students.

However, all these interventions are never a substitute for hard work and effective revision. In these uncertain times I would recommend it is never too early to start.

I gave a link earlier to recommended revision guides but there are many websites that are also very useful. Here are two that you can use for almost every subject.

[Seneca](#)

[BBC bitesize](#)

Pupil Premium – Ms S Jennings; Assistant Headteacher

The government provides schools with additional funding which is called the Pupil Premium Grant.

The amount of funding allocated to the school is based on the number of students who are eligible for free school meals, or who have been at some point in the last few years, students who are in care or who have been previously, and students with a parent serving in the armed forces.

The funding is allocated to schools to support eligible students in their education. Approximately 10% of our school population is eligible for Pupil Premium. We are particularly aware that this may increase as current circumstances may have changed for families during the Covid crisis.

If your daughter is eligible for free school meals at any point during her secondary education we would recommend applying, as the benefits follow the student until the end of their secondary education even if the family's financial circumstances change. This means the school receives additional funding to support the eligible students in appropriate ways, such as staffing additional classes/ groups, supporting with resources, revision guides, equipment, tutoring, support with school trips, visits and experiences, clubs, mentoring, careers support and preparation for exams. It is about more than just the headline of a free school meal, although that is vital to ensure students can concentrate well during the school day. If you want to find out if you are eligible at any point, this can be done quickly online [here](#).

If you know your daughter is an eligible student and you need support from the grant in a particular way, please let us know. A brief email or a phone call can suffice. If you have questions about this, please contact Ms Jennings: sjennings2901@presdales.herts.sch.uk

Head of Year Information – Mrs L Bowden *nee Seaman* -Year 11

As the girls go through their final year in secondary school, there will be lots of support available – both pastorally and academically. Please get in touch with your child's form tutor in the first instance for any pastoral concerns and their subject teacher for any academic concerns; all staff email addresses are available on the school website. Over the past few assemblies, I have been discussing with the girls the importance of using the support around them. The pastoral support in year 11 is as follows:

Ms K Chandler – Assistant Headteacher; Pastoral Care KS4

Mrs L Bowden – Head of Year

Mrs C Burnett – 11CB

Miss L Catterall – 11LC

Mrs L Hyslop – 11LH

Mrs S Lanka – 11SL

Ms S Rowe/Mr Mr J Walker - 11SR

The year 11s value this year is **resilience** – something they have shown over the past few months and something I hope they will continue to show. As the year 11s go through this year I will be emphasising the importance of looking after themselves, physically as well as mentally, to help with this resilience. This includes making sure they are eating and sleeping well, making sure they are staying active and incorporating some 'down' time. Finally, making sure they are seeing friends and family.

This year is the unknown, so here are some notes from ex year 11 students to help over the next few months.

- Treat every assessment like it is your last
- Ask teachers for help and guidance to ensure you are getting your best marks possible.
- Coffee only goes so far, get some rest!
- Know your exam board and check the specification.
- Start making revision notes on topics you are covering now.

Students received a specialist revision skills workshop on different ways to revise last year to support them with their revision. Please get them to come and see us if they are still struggling.

I am really looking forward to taking your daughter through their final year of secondary school. During these unprecedented times, our aim is to make their journey as smooth and stress free as possible.

Thank you for taking the time to read this correspondence, I hope you have found it useful.

I expect that this year is going to be different to previous school years and I thank you in advance for your support and understanding.

Yours sincerely

Matt Warren
Headteacher