



PRESDALES SCHOOL

Achievement for all

Headteacher: Mr M Warren

Hoe Lane

Ware, Herts

SG12 9NX

Tel: 01920 462210

Email: admin@presdales.herts.sch.uk

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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 – Mrs E Sykes; 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
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<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.

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.

3. **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.
4. **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.
5. **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.
6. **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.
7. **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 will be sent home week commencing 7th December 2020.
- TPB will be sent home week commencing 13th April 2021
- TPC week commencing 19th July 2021 after school exams

These tracking points will include an FFT estimate showing GCSE grading band 1-3, 4-6 and 7-9

Year 9 Parents Consultation Evening is scheduled for 25th January 2021 with School exams from 7th June to 18th June 2021.

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.

This may help your daughter make decisions about which GCSE options she will take next year. All the information on the Options Programme will be sent out towards the end of the Autumn term and the launch assembly to the students will be 11th December.

If your daughter's progress in the tracking reports is not inline or exceeding our expectations, then 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. She will be starting her GCSE Science course at the beginning of year 9 and here is the link to appropriate revision guides GCSE revision guides

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

Homework Timetable

In Year 9, homework in English, Maths and Science will be 60 minutes in length with all other subjects being 30 minutes. Students can expect to receive homework at the following frequency;

- English, Maths, Science, Geography, History, and Languages – **once per week**
- Art, Drama, Music, PRE, Computing and Technology – **every other week**
- All students will also be expected to complete any additional tasks from Technology e.g. bring ingredients/organise equipment.
- Additional reading of at least one hour a week is recommended for all students.

FORM	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9S	OTHER LANG HISTORY	MATHS RE* DRAMA*	SCIENCE MUSIC* TECH*	ENGLISH FRENCH	GEOGRAPHY ART*
9N	OTHER LANG FRENCH MUSIC*	MATHS RE*	SCIENCE DRAMA* TECH*	ENGLISH HISTORY	GEOGRAPHY ART*
9O	OTHER LANG GEOGRAPHY TECH*	MATHS RE*	SCIENCE DRAMA*	HISTORY ENGLISH	FRENCH ART* MUSIC*
9P	OTHER LANG RE* TECH*	MATHS HISTORY ART*	SCIENCE	ENGLISH DRAMA*	FRENCH GEOGRAPHY MUSIC*
9Q	OTHER LANG DRAMA*	MATHS FRENCH	SCIENCE HISTORY TECH*	ENGLISH GEOGRAPHY RE*	ART* MUSIC*
9R	OTHER LANG DRAMA* ART*	MATHS FRENCH MUSIC*	SCIENCE TECH*	ENGLISH RE*	HISTORY GEOGRAPHY

* Every other week

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.

Careers, Employability and Enterprise Education

There are many different activities planned for your daughter over the coming year including:

- Futures meetings with SLT to discuss GCSE Options – January 2021
- Take Your Daughter to Work Day – 22nd April 2021
- Enterprise House Event – Summer Term

Please click [here](#) for more information on our Careers Programme and the Gatsby Benchmarks.

Presdales is working towards the completion of the Investor in Careers Award. More information can be found on their website <https://investorincareers.org.uk/>

If you feel you can support us in this, please fill out this parent survey by clicking [here](#).

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 Bowman -Year 9

Effective study habits

It is important that your daughter develops effective study habits this year so that she is prepared for the increase in workload and homework in Year 10. She should aim to have a good routine for completing homework, where she allows for extra-curricular activities but doesn't leave work until the last minute, and she should ensure that she is ready for school each day by packing her bag the night before. Things that you can do to help your daughter with this include:

- making sure she has a quiet space to work at home
- and/or encouraging her attend homework club after school
- looking after her phone when she is working to help her avoid distraction
- and really importantly, planning breaks and little rewards for when she has finished tasks

Revision

A crucial part of success at GCSE is revision, and the more your daughter experiments with different revision techniques this year the better, as she will know what does and doesn't work for her. Some examples of different ways to revise include: flashcards, spider diagrams, summary notes, mnemonics, poems, songs, voice notes, picture notes, practice exam questions, revision guides and so on. We all learn in different ways, and what works for one student will not necessarily work for another, which is why it is important that your daughter starts trying things out now. Your daughter should seek advice and support from her subject teachers before an assessment if she is not sure where to begin.

School values - Equality

Each year group has been assigned one of the six school values to focus on, and the value for Year 9 is Equality. This is an exciting opportunity for the year group to shape and develop the value of equality at Presdales. There is already a lot being done to promote equality, including opportunities provided by the Science department to inspire the next generation of women in STEM fields such as the robotics club. As well as this we have recently become a Stonewall school – Stonewall is a charity which campaigns for LGBT rights and there is a weekly 'Presdales Pride' group meeting.

In our year assembly last week, I launched a competition for designing the emblem for the Year 9 value - Equality. The emblem will be displayed on all Year 9 form boards, the Year 9 notice board and will also go on the school website. In addition to this, each Year 9 form is going to nominate one person to be the value representative. The value rep will be responsible for leading the form in coming up with ideas to promote the value of equality. We're also going to create a new page for the school website and there will be a lunchtime club for anyone who wants to get involved. If you or your daughter have any further ideas for how we can promote our value of equality, please let me know!

Reward points

I feel very lucky to have such a wonderful year group, who regularly make me proud to be their Head of Year. One of the best parts of my job is being able to celebrate the girls' successes, and I'm pleased to tell you that at the end of last academic year our girls ended the year on a total of 28,061 reward points!

There are so many hard working, determined and kind students in Year 9 and I'm really hoping that we can end this year on the same high back at the top of the leaderboard!

Year 9 pastoral team

If you have any questions or concerns and would like to get in touch, please do not hesitate to contact us. Please click [here](#) for contact details of the Year 9 pastoral team.

I will be going on maternity leave at the end of this half term. Miss Turner will be taking on the role of Acting Head of Year and can be contacted at turnero@presdales.herts.sch.uk . I would like to take this opportunity to wish our Year 9 students a happy and successful rest of the academic year. I thoroughly enjoy working with them and will definitely miss them whilst I am away!

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