



# PRESDALES SCHOOL

*Achievement for all*

Headteacher: Mr M Warren

Hoe Lane

Ware, Herts

SG12 9NX

Tel: 01920 462210

Email: admin@presdales.herts.sch.uk

Friday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Dear Student/Parent/Carer

## **Covid information at the end of this letter - please read**

The past week or so has been very busy in school with numerous activities taking place for the students. Providing opportunities outside of the normal curriculum is what Presdales excels at, and this has sadly been missed over the past year. Students in Year 7 and 8 in particular, will not have seen the school at its best in this regard.

## **Duke of Edinburgh Award**

Well done to the 24 students who completed the five day Gold expedition two weekends ago. Nine students have now passed their expedition and are close to finishing their full Gold Award, and the other 15 were completing their practice expedition. More information will be in PressTales next week.

This weekend, we have 50 students completing their Silver expedition near Oxford. It is going to be a hot weekend, so we wish them well. Thank you to Miss Haywood for her excellent leadership of our DofE program, which continues to grow year on year.



## **National Champion**

You may remember me mentioning last week that Ellie Bostock was going to the National Schools Athletics Championships to compete in the shot put. I am pleased to say that Ellie won, throwing another PB, so is now the national junior champion. Well done Ellie on this fantastic achievement, it makes all the hard work worth it.

## **String recital**

Last week, our string students performed in a remote recital. It is sad that the students could not have a large live audience, but even so, the performances were excellent. Thank you to Mrs Slade and Mrs Kirkwood for their work this year with our string players.

## **Sports day/Swimming Gala**

It was a pleasure to hear screaming and shouting from the school field on Wednesday, as students competed in our annual sports day. There were many outstanding performances, resulting in new school records. Today, we had our swimming gala, which was fantastic. Further details will be in PressTales. Thank you to Mrs Dann and the sports team for organising these events.

## **STEM day**

On Thursday, Year 8 students participated in a STEM challenge. The task involved building solar powered cars and measuring their speeds on different surfaces. The students showed great teamwork, resilience, and fantastic mathematical skills. The event was supported by Henry Hammond from the Ogdon trust, who awarded the school with a grant to fund the day and David Garlovsky from Solar Active, who is an expert on solar energy. Thank you to Mrs Warburton and Mrs Share for organising the day.

## Year 12 PSHE

On Monday of this week, Year 12 participated in a workshop run by Herts Young Homeless, focusing on independent living. Students completed a range of activities investigating topics such as budgeting, tenant rights and looking at the skills and resources needed to live independently.



### Ex-Student Success

Former student, Ellis Miller, has continued to make great sporting strides despite the pandemic and has made the Great Britain Under 23 Canoe Slalom Team for 2021. She has recently returned from the World Championships for this age group in Tacen, Slovenia and gave a great account of herself, making a World Final and placing 9th. Congratulations to Ellis, this is a tremendous achievement as a 19 year old in this age group.

## School Revenue Generation

Whilst school budgets nationally continue to be an issue, we have had an excellent year in generating income through grants and awards. We have successfully bid for and received more than £140,000 for capital projects, including the refurbishment of two science labs, lighting for the netball courts, new football goals for 5,7,9 and 11 a-side games, fume cupboards, tennis equipment, embroidery machines and sewing machines. We are grateful for all those who have provided these funds and to Mrs Albone, our income revenue coordinator.

## Year 11/13 Students

The school has successfully cleared the third and final stage of the examination quality assurance process. A letter will be sent out to students and parents early next week outlining the appeals process.

## Year 10/12 students

Staff have been asked to set work for students in Year 10 and 12 to complete over the summer break which will keep them 'ticking over'. This will be mostly revision of the past year, in particular areas of the course where a student may not have performed as well as they would have hoped in their end of year exams. The students have been amazing this year, but we are conscious that their learning has inevitably been disrupted and want to give them every chance of success in their public exams in the summer of 2022.

## COVID

Although many national restrictions end on Monday, we are keeping our restrictions in school in place until the end of term. It does not make sense to get this far, then pull them for three and a half days. We closed our Year 9 bubble last weekend due to several positive PCR results, and these numbers have increased significantly. As it stands, we are fortunate that other year groups are largely unaffected. This variant is extremely virulent, as seen in our Year 9 students.

**Therefore, I am requesting that all students and staff continue to wear facemasks in school until the end of term and continue to follow our bubble guidelines.**

The updated government guidance for schools can be found [here](#).

The DfE has requested that schools undertake two lateral flow tests when students return to school in September, as we did in March. The tests we will be using are the Orient Gene tests, which are nasal swabs only. Students are able to self-administer these tests under supervision. I do not intend to start the Autumn term early, or have a staggered start to the year. We will be testing students when they have returned; further details will be sent out before September.

As in March, we need parental consent to test your child on site. We can take the consent given in March for September.

Please [complete the survey](#) if:

1. You gave consent in March, but wish to withdraw it for September
2. You did not give consent in March, but are giving consent for September
3. If you are not sure what you did, then fill in the survey

**The survey will close on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> August.**

### **Testing at home during the summer**

Students are not expected to continue testing at home over the summer. They will be given another supply of LFTs in September, as the DfE has requested that students and staff continue to test from the start of the Autumn term until the end of September, at which point the testing programme in schools will be reviewed.

**Hertfordshire County Council have us to share the following update with you ahead of the end of term.**

*Dear Parents and Carers*

*Firstly, we would like to thank you for the efforts and sacrifices you have made to keep your nursery and school communities safe over the past 16 months. As we head into the summer holidays, we'd like to remind you of some of the ways we can all enjoy a safe summer together.*

*While people will be excited at the prospect of restrictions being lifted on 19 July, others will be fearful or apprehensive. Remember, rules around self-isolation of close contacts for under 18's do not change until 16 August 2021. We all need to be kind to each other as we move into this next phase.*

*Covid-19 won't end when the rules change, in fact cases are rising and we need to keep being sensible. It's important to recognise that everyone's circumstances are different and what feels comfortable to one person might not feel that way to another. Let's keep looking out for one another and recognise that we're all going to be moving forward at our own pace.*

### **What you can do to keep yourself and others safe**

#### **Get vaccinated**

*Vaccinations are now available for everyone aged over 18 who is eligible, you don't need a GP and often don't even need to book an appointment. Visit <https://covid.healthierfuture.org.uk/> for local sites and regular pop ups. If you or children have medical conditions, please speak to your GP about your Covid-19 vaccination.*

#### **Keep testing**

*Regular rapid testing, including for those who are vaccinated, for everyone in year 7 and above (tests are not designed for use on children younger than this) can make a big difference, as most people don't know they're infected until they have infected others. You can order or collect free rapid tests locally, visit [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/rapidtest](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/rapidtest) for more information. If you have symptoms, get a PCR test and self-isolate.*

#### **Look out for one another**

*Give people space, wear face coverings in crowded indoor areas, keep your windows and doors open when you have people round, wash and/or sanitise hands. These measures have kept us safe and will keep us safe still.*

*By looking out for one another we can help us keep infections low. There are many people needing healthcare for non Covid-19 reasons who have been waiting for some time. If Covid-19 cases continue to rise, people will have to wait longer for hospital and health care so let's try to stop that by working together.*

*We are currently seeking views from students, parents and carers about a potential vaccination programme for 12-17 year olds . The survey will remain open until 22 July. We would like to hear and better understand your views effectively should the government decide to go ahead with this programme.*

<https://surveys.hertfordshire.gov.uk/s/PEC871/>

*We hope you all enjoy a safe and happy summer!  
Hertfordshire County Council*

**End of Term Arrangements**

School will close for the summer holidays on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> July at 12.45pm. Buses will be coming early on this day.

Regards  
Matthew Warren  
Headteacher