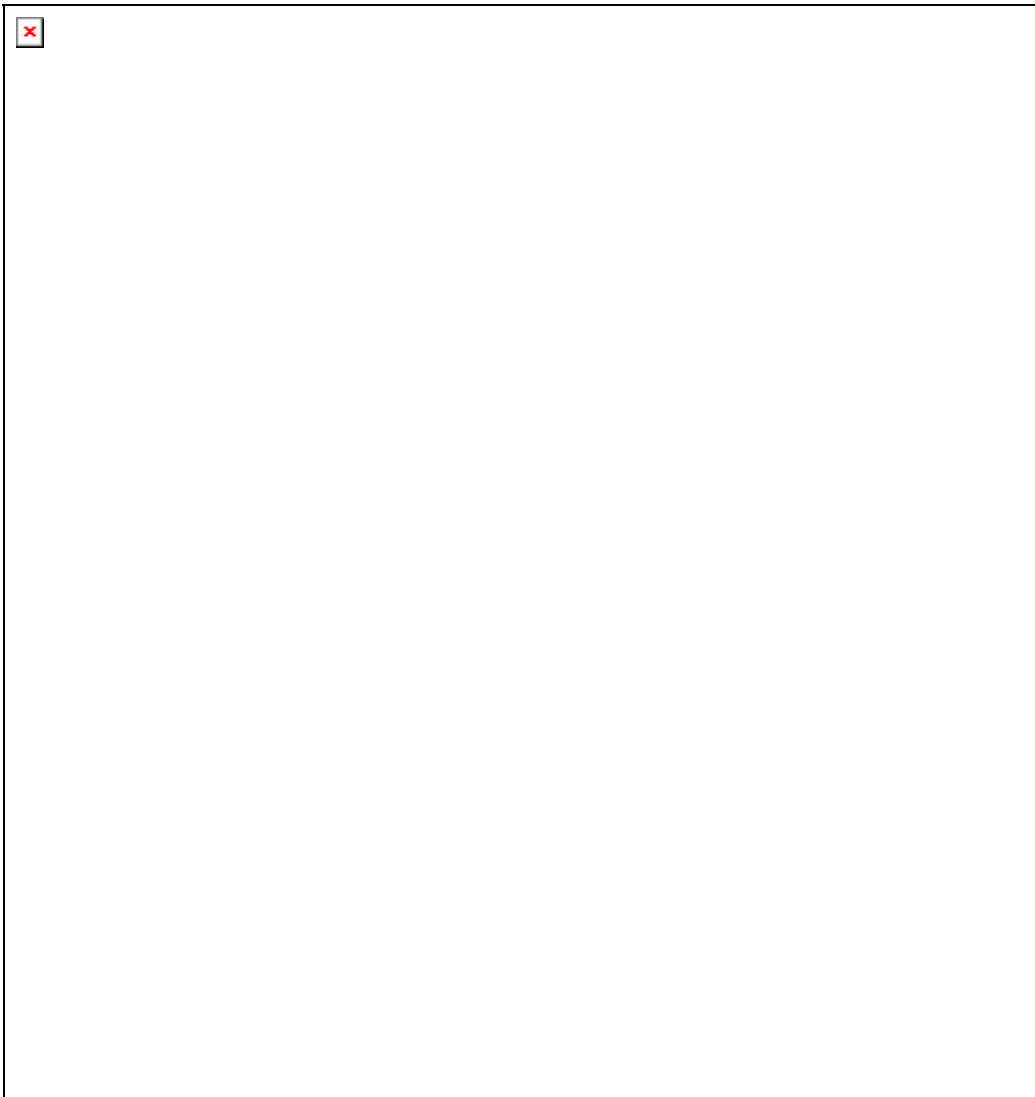


PRESDALES SCHOOL SIXTH FORM



**Sixth Form Handbook
2007 – 2008**

TERMS DATES / CALENDAR

(a full version of the calendar is on the Presdales website)

2007

Autumn term:	Sept	5	Yr 12 Induction Day
		20	ALIS test pd 1
		27	Yr 12 Parents Information Evening
	Oct	17	Yr 12 Study Skills Day
		22-26	Half term week
	Nov	8	Senior Maths Challenge
		15	Sixth Form Forum
		18-24	French Work Experience (Wk 1)
	Dec	30	Yr 12 Preliminary Reports issued
		6	Advent Concert
12-14		Sixth Form Play	
17		Speech Day	
19		Sixth Form Review	
	21	End of term	

2008

Spring term	Jan	7	Start of term
		7-18	Yr 13 Exam Study Leave
	Feb	8	Yr 12 Languages Day for linguists
		11-14	Half term week – Venice trip / Ski trip
		26	Yr 12 Main Report issued
	March	28	Yr 12 Parents Evening
		3-7	AS Geography Field Trip
		13	Spring Concert
		14-16	MUN conference
		16-22	French Work Experience (Wk 2)
20		End of term	
31-4		Geography Trip to Iceland	
Summer term	April	7	Start of term
		10/11	Dance Evening
		22/23	AS History Course Essays
		24-26	School Play
	May	5	Bank Holiday
		16	Yr 12 Report 3 issued
		19-23	Yr 12 AS Exams Study Leave
		26-30	Half term week
	June	2-6	Yr 12 AS Exams Study Leave
		9-13	Yr 12 Reading week / work experience
		24	A2 Geography coursework trip
	July	27	District Sports
		4-7	Duke of Edinburgh Silver/Gold expeditions
		8	Nicky Morris Challenge
		9	Summer Concert
		11	Sports Day
		17	Dramatic Arts Festival
		18	End of term

SIXTH FORM STAFF

Mr Spurgeon	Head of Sixth Form	He is overall in charge of the Sixth Form. His teaching subjects are History & Politics and his office is opposite P4.
Mrs Mermagen	Head of Year 12	She is responsible for all matters relating to students in Year 12. Her teaching subjects are Politics, Philosophy and Critical Thinking. Her office is the Head of Year office next to P1.
Mrs Preshous	Sixth Form Administrator	She is based in the Head of Sixth Form office opposite P4. She is in charge of the administration of EMA & matters relating to attendance, punctuality and Consortium concerns.
Mrs Read	Sixth Form Careers	She is based in her office next to the Dining Room. She is responsible for careers provision including UCAS.

SIXTH FORM TUTORS

12B	Mrs Bennett/Mrs Dillon	P12
12F	Mrs Fraser	P6
12G	Dr Gale	P11
12K	Mr Kendrick	P9
12L	Mrs Lynch	P10
12P	Mrs Spreadbury	P8
12S	Mrs Shoolheifer	P7

Probably the most important person in the sixth form is the Sixth Form Tutor. Every student is part of a tutor group and tutors should be the first line of contact throughout the year. Sixth formers should get to know their tutor as well as possible and exploit the daily contact they will be having.

TUTORIALS & MONITORING

Tutors are responsible for approx.18 students and stay with them throughout both years 12 & 13. As well as seeing their tutees twice every day for registration, they will, as far as possible, have 2 'tutorials' with each student every term. Tutorials occur on Monday and Friday mornings between 9.00am and 9.15am and are organised on a rota basis. (P.S. If there is a matter of some urgency, tutees can always request to see their tutor ahead of their designated slot)

The purpose of tutorials is to give tutors the opportunity to get to know their tutees better and to monitor the progress they are making in the Sixth Form. To that end we avail ourselves of the services of the ALIS ('A' Level Information Service) team at the University of Durham. With the data that we provide them, in the form of (a) GCSE results and (b) the ALIS test, they are able to outline expectations (' projected 'grades') for each student in each of their 'A' level subjects.

In addition to the tutorial rota, there are also 'profiling' days (as there are lower down the school) when academic progress is discussed with tutors. In Yr 12 there are two - in the Spring & Summer Terms - and in Yr 13 a further one - in the Autumn Term.

In these ways, tutors build up an in-depth knowledge of each of their students and this is put to maximum use when references are written (either for UCAS or employment) in Yr 13.

REPORTS

Each student will receive 3 reports in Yr 12 and 2 reports in Yr 13.

- | | | |
|----------------------|---------|---------|
| • Preliminary Report | 30 Nov | |
| • Main Report | 26 Feb | Year 12 |
| • Report 3 | 16 May | |
| | | |
| • Main Report | 28 Nov | Year 13 |
| • Interim Report | 3 March | |

'Preliminary Report'/'Interim Report'/'Report 3' contain brief indications of attainment and progress in each subject, with a summary statement from tutors.

'Main reports' contain a written comment from each subject teacher, in addition to the indicators used in the shorter reports.

P.S. The Head of Yr 12 or the Head of Sixth Form may place students on short term reports to monitor academic progress or attendance & punctuality as the need arises.

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Organisation: Coursework **and** classwork/homework are essential parts of modern 'A' levels. Success in all subjects can only be guaranteed if students keep on top of work and meet deadlines. They need to be able to plan their time and deal with difficulties as they arise. The key to this is setting short term targets and using a diary or a planner to organise work demands.

Academic cause for concern: Subject teachers and tutors will be alert to how students are coping with the demands of sixth form study. Reporting and assessment times require teachers to look at **Attendance, Homework & Organisation** (whether they are each Satisfactory or not), **Effort** (on a scale 1 Excellent – 4 Unsatisfactory) as well as **Attainment** ('A' level grades A – U) related to **Expectation** (above AE, level LE or below BE). Where a student's report gives cause for concern, the Head of Year will ask to see the student and an improvement will be sought. Should the problems persist, a referral will be made to the Head of Sixth Form and parents will be invited to school to discuss the student's future. Ultimately, should the issues not be resolved, the student may be asked to leave.

If a student's work or attitude is a cause for concern at times other than reporting times, the normal procedure is for teachers to take this up with tutors who will then pass on the concern to the Head of Year, if the issue persists. Parents will be involved by the Head of Sixth Form if no improvement is forthcoming.

THE SCHOOL DAY

We follow a one week timetable:

Reg. / tutor time / assembly	8.50am – 9.15am
Period 1	9.15am – 10.00am
Period 2	10.00am – 10.45am
Break	10.45am – 11.05am
Period 3	11.05am – 11.50am
Period 4	11.50am – 12.35pm
Lunch	12.35pm – 1.35pm
Reg	1.35pm – 1.40pm
Period 5	1.40pm – 2.25pm
Period 6	2.25pm – 3.10pm
Period 7	3.10pm – 3.50pm

Students are required to attend from 8.50am – 3.50pm every day. With parents' permission, they are free to go off site for lunch between 12.35pm-1.35pm, as long as they are not late for afternoon registration.

There is no study leave in Yr 12, except for that which is granted for AS exams in May & June. (When students move into Yr 13 they are allowed to take two 'blocks' - typically one morning and one afternoon - of study leave per week, when they may work at home - with parents' permission.)

NB However, if students **know in advance** that **all** their teachers will be away on a particular day, because of trips or courses, and **they have been given all the work they need to do**, they can arrange with their tutor to be at home for that day –obviously with parental support.

THE SIXTH FORM CURRICULUM

We require the vast majority of Yr 12 students to follow 4 AS subjects in the first year of the sixth form.(Where we feel it is appropriate, we will sanction the study of only 3 subjects or, in exceptional circumstances, the study of 5 subjects)

The expectation is that one of these 4 subjects will be dropped at the beginning of Yr 13, leaving just 3 to be taken on to 'A' level proper and against which universities will make their offers of acceptance. The point of studying 4 subjects in Yr 12 is to broaden the sixth form curriculum and allow students to have some experience of each subject before making a final A2 choice.

Changes of subject: The process of choosing subjects for 'A' level has been a long and thorough one and we anticipate that for almost everyone these choices will remain in place throughout their time in the sixth form. For a few though, there may be a case for changing. This is, however, not a light undertaking and students need to give their choices enough time to settle down. If they still feel at sea, they should then inform their teaching staff of the problems, and finally talk the process through with their tutors. At the beginning of Yr 12 there is some flexibility for students to get their choices right, and if changes are deemed appropriate (and departments are in agreement) they will be made. **However, any changes must be agreed in the first half term** and after October will not ordinarily be allowed. **And once subject choices are finalised, students are committed to completing those courses through to the AS exams and the end of the summer term of Yr 12**

Dropping subjects: We leave the dropping of the 4th subject until the beginning of Yr 13, when we can make informed choices based on the AS exam results. This means that students must carry on with all 4 choices to the end of Yr 12.

Core subjects: Along with their 'A' Level choices, students are also required to attend a small number of 'core' lessons. In Yr 12 these include a double lesson of PE, a single lesson of Critical Thinking (which all sixth formers take to AS Level over 2 years), a single lesson of 'ab initio' or 'holiday' language (because we are a Specialist Languages College) and a single lesson of Careers.

INDEPENDENT LEARNING

'A' level study is a transitional stage (which we aim to help students bridge) between the very structured learning that goes on in Key Stage 3 and GCSE, and the totally independent approach that students are expected to master at university and places of higher education.

Students need to understand that success in the Sixth Form is therefore dependent on them being able to learn to work on their own, outside the lessons that are timetabled for them during the week. **In fact exam boards expect that as much private study time should be devoted to 'A' levels, as is spent in the classroom** (for 4 AS level subjects this amounts to 18 hours of private study a week)

The majority of Yr 12 timetables will contain 29 time-tabled lessons with a further 6 periods untaught. These 'free periods' will be a novelty, which students need to learn to use properly. During such periods students are **not allowed off site** but are free to make use of the Common Room or the private study areas as they wish. Given the importance of the independent learning habits they need to cultivate, however, we feel it would be wrong that all these lessons should be used only to socialise. **Therefore we require that students nominate a minimum of half their 'free periods' (normally 3) when they will be studying** and these will be monitored on a weekly basis. *(Ideally we would like them to use **all** of their 'free periods' in this way)*

Study areas: Study areas at Presdales are not plentiful but they do exist. We have a dedicated computer room (the 'PIT'), exclusively for sixth form use, and the 'Reading Room' and the Library for **silent study**. Some departments, like the Art Department, also have facilities for individual sixth form study. Where students need the use of a computer to complete work (and the 'PIT' is full) individual access to computer stations can be usually negotiated with teaching staff in rooms where other classes are being taught.

ATTENDANCE

Regular and punctual attendance throughout Years 12 & 13 is vital for success in the Sixth Form and is required of all students.

Students register twice every day with their tutor and must have arrived at their tutor base by 8.50am in the morning and 1.35pm in the afternoon. Lateness and absence are recorded carefully and **form an important part of our assessment of each student's progress**. In addition, **every request for a reference that we receive, whether for part time jobs, full time careers or entry into higher education asks us to comment on a student's record in this regard**.

Attendance is monitored by tutors and by the Sixth Form Administrator, Mrs Preshous. Each absence must be covered by a letter or telephone call (please ring Mrs Preshous on extension 238) and persistent absence will be followed up. Students will be placed on attendance and/or punctuality reports and if necessary, we will request to see parents. (We are also careful to

monitor students' attendance at, and punctuality to, individual lessons - each teacher keeps a record of these - and absence/lateness 'internally' will be treated just as seriously)

Signing in/out: If students are late to school they **must** sign themselves in, in the Sixth Form book in the reception. Also, if students ever need to leave the site, other than at lunchtime, they **must** sign themselves out. Both of these procedures are vital in the event of a fire or other emergency. Approved reasons for leaving the site include illness, travelling to a consortium lesson, driving *tests* (but not *lessons* – these need to be arranged at the end of the school day or at lunchtime) and *emergency* doctors/dentists appointments (non-urgent consultations must be arranged out of school hours)

Holidays: Time in the Sixth Form is remarkably short, compared to all that has to be done, and time taken out **at any stage in the year** for family and other holidays will have an adverse effect on student progress and final examination performance. Where this is unavoidable, please bear in mind that (i) we need advance notice to help students minimise the disruption to their studies (ii) the period after AS exams in June & July of Yr 12 **is not dead time**. It is particularly important for starting A2 units and determining whether or not students will proceed to Year 13

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Although academic demands at 'A' level are high, it is important that sixth formers get involved in other aspects of school life as well and both universities and employers are interested to know what students do, other than study.

The following are some of the extra-curricular activities that are on offer at Presdales:

Young Enterprise, Model United Nations, Big Sister, Charity Committee, Sixth Form Review, World Challenge, Duke of Edinburgh Award, Paired Reading, helping in departments and running clubs for younger pupils, as well as all the usual sporting, musical and dramatic activities that are available lower down the school.

Clearly students need to be sensible and not over-commit themselves e.g. some activities run at the same time and there can be times in the year when academic demands conflict directly with extra-curricular work e.g. in March/April there is History coursework, the Geography field trip, French work experience, the Model United Nations weekend, the Spring concert, the School Play and the Young Enterprise exam ! However, keeping "many balls in the air" simultaneously is an important skill, and will help students improve their time management.

Paid employment: It is common among students to take on a part time job (evenings or weekends) during their time in the sixth form. While this can bring both welcome financial rewards and a valuable insight into the world of

work, it does come with a warning ! Post-16 courses are demanding and require consistent effort and application. Academic work must remain the priority, and we think that **more than one day** at the weekend and **one evening** during the week, does not represent a healthy balance.

CAREERS / UCAS

The Sixth Form is a relatively short period in a student's schooling and an important stepping stone on to the next phase in their lives. By the end of Yr 12 students need to be considering their options regarding what they do next, and if this involves university, as it does in the majority of cases, making plans about UCAS.

Mrs Read is our Higher Education and Careers specialist in the Sixth Form team. She organises a programme of careers education both in Yr 12 and Yr 13 and sees sixth formers on an individual basis to give advice. Tutors will refer students to her where they feel it appropriate and Mrs Read will ask to see specific students when they come to her attention. It is of course perfectly acceptable for students to refer themselves directly to her when they need help.

Application to university through UCAS is done in the autumn term of Yr 13, with certain applications (e.g. for medicine, veterinary science, law and Oxbridge) needing to meet an early deadline in October. To prepare for this we provide instruction in UCAS procedures and the writing of personal statements in the summer term of Yr 12. All Yr 12 students are also invited to the Higher Education Convention arranged at the University of Hertfordshire in June each year.

Parents can help by talking through university plans with their sons/daughters and visiting potential university destinations with them in the summer term and summer holidays. (To this end, universities organise 'open days' to showcase themselves and their courses. **We would, however, advise against going to more than 3 open days in term time** to avoid affecting progress at school)

DRESS CODE

We operate the following dress code at Presdales. Although we do not want to spend all our, and the students', time on the matter, we think it is extremely important that students treat their time at school differently from their leisure time. For this reason we require them to dress differently. It is also a fact of school life that, whether they like it or not, sixth formers are used as role models by the younger pupils and have to act and dress accordingly. There is not a single, compulsory uniform and we put trust wherever possible the sensible judgement of the students. They are expected to dress in a respectable, smart and business-like fashion in keeping with the traditions and values of Presdales.

Guidelines:

Girls	Boys
Formal skirt or trousers of appropriate design and length	A formal collared shirt of a reasonably sober, conventional design and pattern
A smart top or shirt of an appropriate length and style	A jacket of conventional design or a smart jumper
Discreet make-up	Trousers of a formal style
Any reasonable design and colour of coat	
Scarves may be worn to and from school but not in lessons or assembly	
Reasonable hairstyle with no extremes of fashion or headwear	
No facial or visible body piercing, minimal jewellery	
Appropriate non-casual footwear	
The following are excluded:	
'T' shirts and casual shorts, strappy tops, leggings, hot pants, combat trousers, 'Doc Marten' and similar boots, sandals, stiletto or platform shoes; trainers, leather or denim clothing of all sorts including trousers made of jean material	

Students' appearance will be monitored by their tutors; they will be reminded of our regulations and expected to conform. Where there is a continuing problem, students will be referred to the Head of Year and parents will be informed by letter. If further action is necessary, the Head of Year will refer the matter to the Head of Sixth Form. Parents/Guardians will then be asked to make an appointment to discuss their son/daughter's future in the sixth form.

GENERAL MATTERS

Cars: As students progress through the Sixth Form many will pass their driving tests and be able to drive here. **However, students are not allowed to use the school site to park – there simply is not room.** We would advise they use the Rugby Club in Hoe Lane, which we are kindly allowed to use for free parking, or park at the back of the school in Presdales Drive. Local residents often become irritated by students who park inconsiderately and sixth formers need to respect their wishes. In addition we ask all students who drive to give their registration number to their tutor so that we can get in touch if anything untoward happens during the course of the day.

Lockers: With over 200 students using the mansion, it is easy for files, books and other possessions to go missing, and for the Common Room to be filled with piles of unclaimed items. To keep the centre tidy and to avoid loss of property each student is issued with a locker, as close to their tutor base as possible. For this we charge £25.00 (payable to Mrs Preshous). £20.00 of this sum is reclaimable when students leave in Yr 13, as long as they have returned all textbooks and other materials with which they have been issued by the different departments.

Exam entries: Exam entries are paid by the school for all subjects taken as part of a students' timetable (This does not include retakes) However, where students' level of commitment or standard of work is below that expected by the school, they can be asked to pay for their own entry.

Incidentally:

- Obviously sixth formers are not allowed to bring alcohol onto the site and smoking is not permitted anywhere in the school grounds.
- Playing cards, dice and gambling are not permitted at any time.
- Chewing gum is not allowed inside the school buildings
- Mobile phones can be used outside the school buildings but must be turned off during lessons.

As you can see, we expect a high standard from all our students, and this will hopefully guarantee them success.

We want students to make new friends; to get involved; to seize the opportunities the sixth form offers them; but also to give their work their very best time and effort. We are sure that if they do, **Presdales Sixth Form** will be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for them!