PARENT HANDBOOK

All the information you need for your child's start at Priestley College

PRIESTLEY COLLEGE
WARRINGTON

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

May I take this opportunity to congratulate your child on joining Priestley College and welcome you to the 2023-2024 handbook for parents and carers.

The transition from high school to Priestley College is an exciting time, but I know that it can present some challenges for both you and your child. I would like to reassure you that one of my priorities is for your children, our students, to be as happy as they are successful during their time at college.

Our staff specialise in teaching 16 to 18 year olds and along with other members of the wider support network here at Priestley are equipped to help students settle in and make the most of their time at Priestley.

You have an important role to play in this phase of your child's educational journey and I hope you find this guide helpful as you support your son/daughter.

The handbook aims to answer many of the questions you might have, but if there is still something that you are uncertain about please do not hesitate to contact us.

It is through a strong partnership that we will ensure each student's success. We are very proud of all of them and of our college and I look forward to working together in the months ahead.

James Gresty
Principal

ABOUT PRIESTLEY

Priestley College is an inclusive sixth form college where every learner matters. There is constant investment to ensure we offer a modern campus with vibrant places to learn and socialise.

Students are able to choose from a variety of courses including A-Levels, T-Levels and Vocational options and each year they progress onto university, apprenticeships and employment.

Our vision

To be the region's leading provider of high quality educational opportunities, responding to the needs of the community we serve.

Our mission

To provide an excellent post-16 educational experience that transforms life chances and oppurtunities as well as responding to the needs of the community we serve.

Our values

- Learning and the enjoyment of learning
- Each individual and their needs and aspirations
- Achievements and success which are both personal and academic
- Effort and endeavour to maximise a person's full potential
- Partnership based on respect and equality

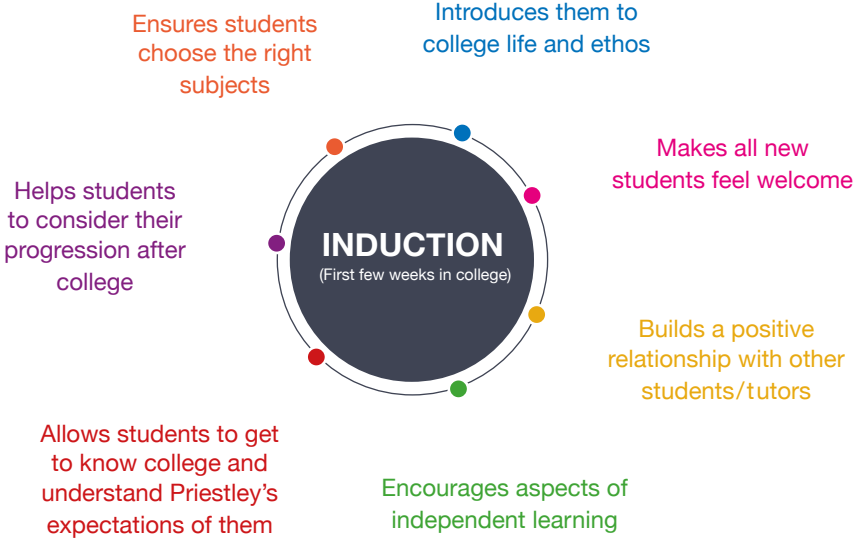
FIRST FEW WEEKS IN COLLEGE

Priestley is a vibrant, busy college attracting students from across Warrington and surrounding areas, meaning lots of opportunities for students to make new friends.

There is a full support network, from Pastoral Heads to Progress Tutors, Student Services and our Wellbeing Team, to ensure every student makes a smooth transition from high school.

They will have more independence – for example there are no bells so students are expected to get themselves to lessons on time – but the college does still have high expectations around academic study and behaviour.

By the end of their first half term we expect all students to have settled into a routine and fully understand what is expected of them by Priestley as a college and in their individual courses.



STUDYING AT PRIESTLEY

Student timetables include study periods and the expectation is they make use of areas in college such as the Learning Resource Centre to complete coursework, additional study, revision etc.

EXOP (Extra Opportunity session) takes place in the LRC from 4pm-6pm Monday to Thursday and provides another chance for students to remain up to date with work.

Weekly Personal Development Programme (PDP) sessions help students develop life skills including study skills. Progress Tutors and the Study Support team can help students struggling with deadlines or adapting to the college way of learning.

We advise students not to take on part-time work of more than 12 hours a week as evidence suggests this can have a negative impact on final grades.

Positive Learning Environment

All Priestley students are expected to behave with respect, treating everyone they encounter with consideration. This helps create a positive learning environment on and around the campus.

Mobile phones must be switched off in class unless permission is given otherwise. They are also not permitted into exams. Anyone found with a phone in an exam could be penalised in ALL examinations taken to date. This also applies to earphones and audio devices.

All students sign a charter which lays out our expectations of them and we cover fundamental British Values/Priestley Values through their Personal Development Programme (PDP).

PDP
Scan to find out more

STUDENT CHARTER
Scan to find out more

Student Charter

The Student Charter is a set of expectations Priestley has of every student about their behaviour, attitude to their studies and other members of the college community.

It covers everything from the need to wear lanyards around campus to progress monitoring and the importance of punctuality.

The charter can be viewed by scanning the QR code.

Virtual Learning

Google Classroom is used to host learning support materials. We also use an online Student Noticeboard and we would ask that you check your child has notifications switched on for this.

Support And Disciplinary Procedure

Priestley's Support & Disciplinary Procedure will be explained to students. Any who do meet the agreed standards and targets may jeopardise their college place.

Personal circumstances are taken into account when administering the Support & Disciplinary Procedure.

Safeguarding

We take your son/daughter's safety very seriously. Their tutor will go through a number of sessions on a variety of safeguarding issues eg e-safety, PREVENT, CSE, drug and alcohol awareness, hate crime etc. If at any time you do not feel your son/daughter is safe in or outside of the college campus, please inform us as soon as possible.

SUPPORTING PROGRESSION

Personal Development Programme (PDP)

Students have a compulsory Professional Development Programme session each week led by their Progress Tutor.

These sessions will develop a range of skills as well as provide time for students to reflect on their college performance and discuss their aspirations one-to-one with their tutor.

These sessions will also help students to prepare for university, apprenticeships and employment. They will have an online Unifrog account to help them create a record of achievement. Parents can also log in, more information can be found on the parents' page on our website.

Progress Tutors

Every student has a Progress Tutor who is the first person you should contact with any concerns or for guidance and advice. An open and professional relationship is essential between these tutors, the students and home.

As well as the weekly PDP sessions, Progress Tutors conduct a termly one-to-one with each student to discuss their progress.

Pastoral Heads

Five Pastoral Heads are responsible for the following:

- UCAS Progression
- Safeguarding/Prevent/British Values
- Equality and Diversity
- Enrichment (Priestley Plus Programme)
- PDP & Skills

Our Pastoral Heads also manage cross college attendance and behaviour and are part of the Safeguarding Team.

MARK EDGINGTON
Pastoral Head

CHRIS LEE
Pastoral Head

JENNY GEORGE
Pastoral Head

DAN MARTIN
Pastoral Head

ANNE WHITE
Pastoral Head

STAYING IN CONTACT

How you can get in touch

General enquiries
Your child's Progress Tutor

Subject specific enquiries
The relevant subject tutor
In the unlikely event you don't hear back you can contact the relevant Faculty Lead.

Personal / confidential matters
Your child's Pastoral Head. Initial contact can be made by emailing collegeenquiries@priestley.ac.uk

Email = initial.fullsurname@priestley.ac.uk
Call 01925 633591

College contacting home

Priestley will stay in contact with parents and carers via email college about events and news. Phone calls will be made for more serious concerns.

An automated email / letter will be sent home if a student is marked as absent.

Progress Tutors and/or subject tutors will contact home to discuss patterns of unexplained absence, non-compliance or issues in class.

Senior staff / Pastoral Heads will contact home in the event of more serious or confidential issues arising, or in the event of disciplinary sanctions.

**Please keep us updated on any changes to your contact details.*

REVIEWING PROGRESS

Performance Monitoring Reports

Every half term subject tutors will provide students with performance grades. They will reflect the current level of work and attainment and the grades they are expected to achieve by the end of their course.

Each performance monitoring report will be emailed directly to the student's primary contact.

Parent/Carer Consultation Events

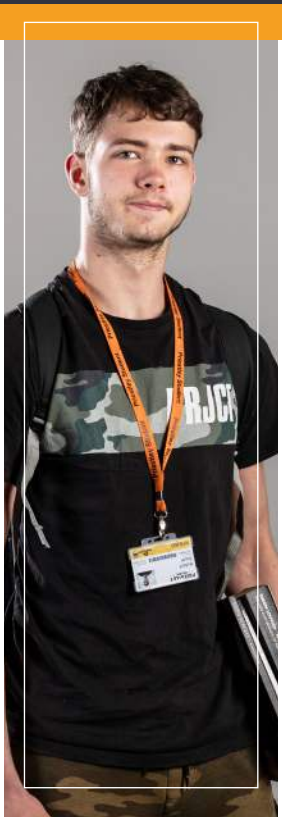
We value your support and these consultation events are an opportunity for us to ensure together that your child is on track. Please check the college calendar for the planned parent/carer consultation dates.

One-to-one reviews

Progress Tutors will hold at least one review with each student every term to discuss academic progress and targets, celebrate strengths and identify issues, discuss extra-curricular experiences as well as setting targets and supportive actions.

Performance reviews

Focused reviews will take place for students who have received a low effort score. Reviews allow tutors to discuss areas for improvement or concerns that may be hindering students' progress.



PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Scan to find out more

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

College Counsellor

Students can make an appointment to meet with the College Counsellor. The service is free and confidential and further sessions can be arranged if required after the initial meeting.

Wellbeing Practitioner

The Wellbeing Practitioner offers an additional layer of pastoral care in the form of safeguarding and mental health / wellbeing support. This will also include directing students to the most appropriate sources of internal and external help and guidance.

Learning Support Team

The Learning Support Team is based in the Learning Resource Centre (LRC) and provides specialist supplementary study support. Following subsequent assessment interviews, specialist teachers at the college will put in place any resources required to meet students' specific learning needs.

SEND / EHCP

If your child is under SEND with high funding or has an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) and you wish to discuss their needs, please contact our Inclusion Manager, Tracie Ryan, on 01925 633591.

Learning Resource Centre (LRC)

The LRC offers space for silent study as well as group work and is also home to the Wellbeing Hub, Study Base and Careers Hub.

CAREERS AT PRIESTLEY

Priestley is committed to providing outstanding careers information and advice to ensure all students understand the opportunities that are available to them after college.

We work tirelessly to meet national benchmarks that allow us to raise the aspirations of our students.

Our careers advisers, Ian Edge and Amy Heald, provide the most up-to-date information on job vacancies and employer developments, as well as initiatives including application process.

A comprehensive careers and Higher Education programme is delivered across the college with the support of subject staff.

Priestley has the Matrix Standard, a national accreditation awarded to bodies that offer effective and impartial information, advice and guidance.

Your child can book an appointment with Ian or Amy by emailing i.edge@priestley.ac.uk or a.heald@priestley.ac.uk

PRIESTLEY PLUS

Priestley Plus is a series of extra-curricular activities that can enrich students' college experience while also giving them something to enhance their CV.

Every student is expected to take one of these activities, which include everything from our History Society, to the College Ambassador Scheme to our Sports Academies.

In addition subjects arrange specialised university open days and lectures, field work, expeditions, theatre and concert trips, visits to exhibitions and training camps and much more.

The more your son/daughter puts into college life the more they will get out! This includes Work Related Learning and work experience opportunities. For more information about this email Pam at p.gardner@priestley.ac.uk

PRIESTLEY PLUS
Scan to find out more

BURSARIES AND TRAVEL

Bursary support is available at Priestley College for those who need it. If you are entitled to a bursary please download the application form from our website or request one to be sent to you by post.

A student is eligible for a core/mainstream bursary or free meal when the household income is below the threshold of £25,000 and for free school meal purposes an eligible benefit.

Free School Meal support is available for students' whose parents receive certain benefits, which are outlined on our website.

The Discretionary Bursary is available if you have personal barriers that prevent you from participating and accessing your education.

Bursary funds can be used to support costs with: travel, meals, equipment and materials, course-related visits, UCAS applications, sport activities, and/or one-off emergencies.

Find out more about the bursary support available at Priestley.

Transport

Bus, walking and cycling routes / timetables are available on our website priestley.ac.uk/travel

Car parking will only be available to students who live two miles from campus, giving priority wherever possible to those students who have the greatest distance to travel. Priority is also given to students who have a justified health need.

BURSARY SUPPORT
Scan to find out more

TRAVEL
Scan to find out more

ABSENCE AND LATENESS PROCEDURES

Full attendance is essential if a student is to achieve their full potential. Priestley monitors attendance daily and will follow up unauthorised absences.

Students should not take holidays during term time. Although no holiday will be authorised, if there is rare and extenuating circumstances, a letter should be written to the Principal, who will consider requests on a case-by-case basis.

If students do not adhere to attendance requirements they will become subject to the Support & Disciplinary Procedure. Bursary payments might be withheld and they may also be asked to pay for exam entry fees.

Progression to Year 2 might be denied if attendance requirements are not met.

Persistent lateness/absence will also result in students being referred to the Support and Disciplinary Procedure.

Reporting an absence

Call 01925 633591 as early as possible ie. 8.30am to inform us your son/daughter will be absent, or you/they can email - studentabsences@priestley.ac.uk

Lateness procedure

If students know they are going to be late they/you must inform the college. If they arrive late they must go straight to their lesson and they are responsible for getting their absence mark changed to a late mark by reminding their tutor at the end of the lesson.

Work placements

If a student is on work placement, but are unable to attend, they must notify the provider as per their absence procedure. They must also inform Priestley's Industry Placement Coordinator Pam Gardner at p.gardner@priestley.ac.uk
For safeguarding purposes, the student's parent/carer must also call to notify us of their absence.

Authorised absences

Certain absences will be classified as authorised and these are listed below. Approval for the absence must be secured before the day in question. An absence form must be completed, they can be collected from the Pastoral Heads' office.

Authorised absences:

1. University open days.
2. University Interviews and other final career choice interviews.
3. Hospital/orthodontist appointments/serious illness supported by a doctor's note.
4. Practical driving test.
5. Bereavement/funeral/compassionate reasons.
6. Religious holidays.

Informed and unauthorised absences:

Where absence is unavoidable, parents/carers should contact the college using the reporting absence contact details. This will ensure any absence is 'informed' and not 'unauthorised'. Sickness absence will be recorded as 'informed'. Routine doctors' and dental appointments will also be recorded as 'informed' as will holidays, driving lessons and theory tests. If we are not notified of an absence, it will be recorded as 'unauthorised'.

INTERNAL PROGRESSION

Automatic progression to Year 2 will be dependent on students achieving certain standards of behaviour and grades in line with expectations.

AS and Vocational

Students must have a satisfactory assessment profile of grades in line with expectations and Year 2 course entry requirements.

Vocational Level 3 programmes

Students must have completed all units by the deadlines set.

Foundation

Those wanting to progress to Level 3 must achieve 'Merit' grades (Pass grade may be considered in exceptional circumstances) and also achieve grade '4' in any GCSE subject that they complete at college.

Exams

Students are entered free of charge for a first attempt at an exam, but will be asked to pay for a resit. If their work, attendance and coursework falls below requirements students may be asked to pay for their own entry. Any student who fails to sit the exams for which they have been entered may be required to pay the entry fee.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Lanyards

Students must have their lanyards with them for security purposes, to access the campus and to sit exams. All staff and visitors must also wear lanyards. Students will be provided with a lanyard and ID badge, but will be charged for replacements. Lanyards are also needed for using the printers, cashless catering, access to the cycle store and safeguarding.

Parent/Carer Tutorial eshot

We will send you eshots throughout the year keeping you updated on your child's education including key activities and college news as well as anything that is upcoming.

Student Rewards

All current students are eligible for the college rewards schemes such as:

- Attendance awards
- Endeavour award
- Priestley Plus awards

Students will receive their awards either at staff briefings or via their tutors.

Cashless catering and online payments

Priestley uses Scopay for online payments so students do not have to carry money around in college. We recommend your child downloads the Scopay app to make things easier. This system should be used to pay for:

- Resources deposit
- Trips
- Lockers (limited availability)
- Tickets
- Books and equipment, including art start-up kits
- and to top up student balance for use in the cafes

After enrolment your child will have received an email with instructions on how to set up their Scopay account.

If they have not received the message, please email finance@priestley.ac.uk stating their full name and ID number and another copy will be sent to their email.

If they are paying for any equipment, they will need to show a copy of the receipt to their tutor or technician to receive these.

More than one person can register to top up a student account. You can do this by clicking on 'Report a problem to Priestley College' on the Scopay website or by calling Student Services on 01925 633591.

Parents/carers with more than one child at Priestley, or even if they are at another school that uses the system, can link accounts on Scopay to make life easier.

Complaints

There may be occasions when you wish to make a complaint about a part of the college's services.

The complaint should be made to the person concerned, but if you feel it is too difficult to do that, you have a number of alternatives:

- The Student Council will voice any general complaints with guaranteed anonymity.
- Progress Tutors will listen to, and act upon, any complaint made.
- Your son/daughter may speak or write to any other member of staff, including the Vice Principal (Curriculum and Standards); it is not normally a good idea to complain directly to the Principal, as the Principal will almost certainly be involved in any appeal against a decision, should any matters reach this stage.
- Every member of staff will treat complaints seriously and do what she/he can to remedy the situation or refer you to someone better equipped to do so.
- If students want to appeal any decision they should go through the students' appeal procedure, which can be found in Student Services.

TCAT

THE CHALLENGE ACADEMY TRUST

PRIESTLEY COLLEGE WARRINGTON

Loushers Lane, Warrington, WA4 6RD
Tel: 01925 633591 priestley.ac.uk