



Expanding opportunities  
Enhancing futures

# Parents' Guide



# Welcome

Dear Parents

I am pleased that your son or daughter is considering Prior as their future destination once they leave school. We appreciate that stepping into post-16 education opens a wide range of windows of opportunity and interesting adult life challenges, and I want to reassure you that Prior has outstanding support and high expectations and will do their utmost to fulfil everyone's needs and aspirations.

Our aim is to make the transition from school to college as seamless as we possibly can and with your help, we can work as partners to assist your son or daughter to make the right choices for themselves and support them in every way we can along the way.

The stimulating and rewarding culture of our college is based on care, respect and hard work and these are the key values at the heart of how we operate as a college community.

We believe that education can transform the lives of individuals and we understand that learning can offer new and exciting life opportunities for us all. Indeed, it is our absolute belief in the positive power of education that motivates our fantastic members of staff in all that they do. We strive to create an environment in our college that is fair, supportive, inclusive and friendly.

Our staff await patiently to welcome students wholeheartedly into our college community and we cannot wait to collaborate with parents here onwards.

Asma Shaffi  
Principal



# Important Dates

<b>Friday 30th June</b>	<b>Preview Day</b> <b>Combined with the opportunity to attend our annual Progression Fair</b>
<b>Thursday 24th August</b>	<b>GCSE Results Day</b>
<b>Friday 25th - Thursday 31st August</b>	<b>Enrolment</b>
<b>Tuesday 5th September</b>	<b>Start of term for Y12 students</b>
<b>Wednesday 20th September</b>	<b>New Parents Evening</b>

## Preview Day & Progression Fair - Friday 30th June 2023

Our last calendared event of the year is our Preview Day and your son or daughter should have already received information about it and hopefully signed up for the event. On this day they get the chance to spend the full day with us to really get the feel of what it means to be a Prior student. This ranges from finding their way to the college on the dedicated college buses to sampling three subjects of their choosing and checking out the delights of the college cafeteria or Guisborough High Street at lunch time. There is still time to sign up if you would like to join us. Please visit the college website for sign-up details.

On the Preview Day we also host our annual Progression Fair which we organise for our current Year 12 students. We thought it would be a brilliant idea to host it at the same time as our Preview Day so that our new students could start planning for life after Prior. So, with this in mind there is a fourth session planned into the timetable which will include spending time at the Progression Fair. Attendees include several Russell Group Universities such as Oxford, Durham, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester and other universities such as Manchester Met, Northumbria, Sheffield Hallam and our local university, The University of Teesside. There are also employers and training providers for those who wish to find out more about employment opportunities after college.

## College Tours – To Suit You!

We had the last of our Open Evenings some time ago but if you feel that you would like to visit the college, it's not too late. We can arrange small group tours or individual tours and if we can, tie them in with speaking to relevant subject teachers. In addition, do not forget that we do have a virtual tour on the college website which does give you some idea of what the college is about and what our campus looks like.

### Term Dates 2023-24

**5th September to 27th October**

**7th November to 19th December**

(Long weekend 30th Nov-1st Dec)

**3rd January 2024 – 9th February**

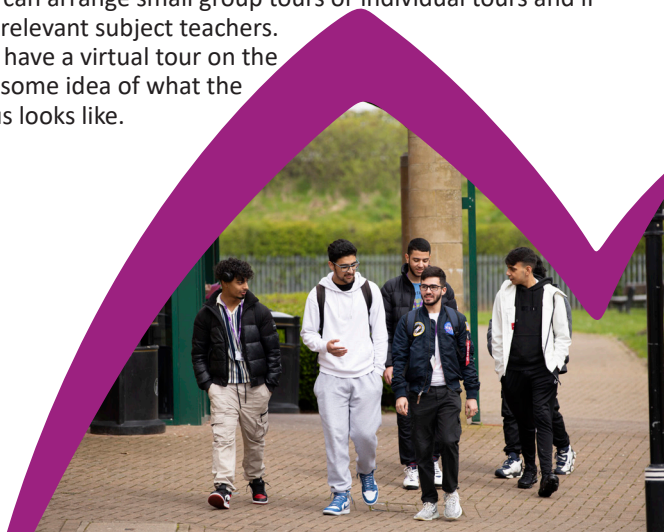
**19th February – 28th March**

**16th April – 24th May**

(Bank Holiday 6th May,

PD Day 7th May)

**3rd June – 15th July**



## **GCSE Results Day - Thursday 24th August**

College staff will be available in college on this day to help with any queries or concerns that you may have. Just call us on 01287 280800 and we will do our very best to help. Please make sure to get in touch if there is anything that you think we can help you with.

## **Enrolment - Friday 25th – Thursday 31st Aug**

Applicants will receive a letter early in August giving them their time slot for their interview. We know from experience that some students come knowing exactly what they want to study, and others need more guidance to help them decide. Either way isn't a problem; we want to make sure the right students are on the right courses. If you prefer a particular date or are unable to make any of them, please let us know and we will arrange an alternative appointment.

## **Start of Term For New Students - Tuesday 5th September**

Our new students will start with us on Tuesday 5th September and that day will be for our new students only so that we can help them settle into their new college and quickly feel at home with us. Our second year students will have already been in the day before so that we can make sure everything is in place for them. On Wednesday 6th September both of the year groups will be in college together.

## **New Parents Evening – Wednesday 20th September**

We look forward to working together to support your son or daughter throughout their time at Prior and you will be invited to come and join us at our New Parents Evening to meet your son's/daughter's Faculty Manager and to find out how we will support them during their time with us.

## **Travel To & From College**

Unless you are lucky enough to live in Guisborough, within walking distance of the college, most of our students travel to college on the dedicated college coaches. A copy of the current bus timetable can be found on the college website. If you would like us to send you a copy, please get in touch. Students pay 50p to the driver for each journey. If you are worried about the cost then we may be able to help eligible students, so please make sure you contact us. The college ID badge which students receive at enrolment tells the driver that they are a Prior student.

## **Financial Support**

If a student is aged 16-18 and the total household income is below £30,000 per annum, they can apply for a Discretionary College Bursary to help towards costs such as transport, food and course related costs. The bursary of £5.00 per day is paid weekly and is subject to 100% attendance. Free meals may also be available to students aged 16-18 on 31st August 2023 if they, or the person financially responsible for them, is in receipt of qualifying benefits. Students aged 19 or over may apply for financial assistance with course related costs. Assistance may also be provided for childcare costs. For a copy of the College Financial Support leaflet please email the enquiries email address at [ppc.enquiries@pursglove.ac.uk](mailto:ppc.enquiries@pursglove.ac.uk) and we will pop one in the post or visit the college website where you will find a copy.



# Student Life, Support & Personal Development

## Prior Plus

Prior Plus is our new, exciting program that brings together the many experiences and opportunities available for your son or daughter at Prior and pulls them all together in an individually tailored program to help them on their way to progression and their chosen career or ambitions. It also enables them to; be involved in activities that maintain their health and well-being, contribute to the local community, develop their employability skills, and broaden their portfolio of skills and interests. Every additional experience that a student has with us will be logged and will go towards an overall certification of a Bronze, Silver or Gold Award.

## Pathways Leaders

At the heart of our Prior Plus Programme are our Pathways Leaders and your son or daughter will have their own dedicated Pathways Leader who is there to support them individually within the framework of Prior Plus. They will be the first person your son or daughter meets to help familiarise them with the way the college works and to introduce them to life at Prior. They will be there to help your son or daughter optimise the opportunities on offer and to guide them in the right direction so that they build an impressive portfolio of experiences, whilst also making sure that their academic studies are on track. Throughout their college life, your son or daughter will follow a personal development programme, delivered through multiple sessions with their Pathway Leader, which will support and develop them as young adults, widen their knowledge base and raise their aspirations. This will work towards their Bronze-standard Prior Plus qualification.

At the beginning of the first term, we host a New Parents' Evening where you will meet your son's or daughter's Faculty Manager and Deputy Faculty Managers and have the opportunity to ask any questions you may have.

## High-Flyers Programme

At Prior Pursglove College we pride ourselves on having the specialist experience and expertise to support all our students, but feel that we really excel at supporting our high-flying students, helping them gain places on the most competitive courses at the most prestigious universities reading Medicine, Veterinary Science, Dentistry, Astrophysics, Biochemistry and Pharmacy, to name but a few.

In preparation for gaining places on the more competitive courses at the most prominent institutions, we support our students by helping them build up an impressive portfolio of experience. This comes in many different shapes and sizes, from the chance to take part in enhanced academic experiences such as the Maths and Science Olympiads, The Nuffield

Research placement, mock law trials plus many others, to substantial internal support with the chance to gain the Extended Project Qualification, membership of our Additional Pathways and work experience opportunities.

We also have an up-to-date knowledge of support schemes at universities for high flying students, and our expertise at helping students with the UCAS process is second to none. We would hope that students aiming to apply for competitive courses and/or universities would be working towards achieving the Prior Plus Gold Award.



## Careers Advice & Guidance

We are fortunate to have a team of dedicated Careers Co-ordinators who are based in the college. Our students can make an appointment to see one of our advisors for specialist advice and guidance and they do this through the student's homepage. As is required by Gatsby benchmarks, all our advisors are fully trained, committed to offering an impartial service and work to a confidentiality statement where information is only shared amongst relevant staff with the student's consent. In addition to

individual advice and guidance the Careers Team organise an extensive programme of visits and speakers which are available to all students who would like to be involved. They are widely publicised throughout the academic year and involvement in these all help towards building credits for the Prior Plus awards.

At Prior we have excellent links with local and national employers and our students benefit from this through the wide range of work experience and volunteering opportunities on offer. Our work experience team will be available to support students in finding their placements and the experience that they have will also add credits for the Prior Plus Award.



## College Enrichment

Enrichment is an important part of our students' college experience. We aim for all our students to take part in an enrichment activity that they enjoy and that benefits them as an individual. We find enrichment helps the student to integrate into college life, to make new friends and to take part in something different. It also addresses the unique needs of students who already have a specific talent that they want to develop further whilst at college.

The Enrichment Programme falls under several key headings: Health and Wellbeing, Community, Employability and Future, and Skills. There are many enrichment opportunities on offer including Student Union, Events Team, Yoga, Orchestra/Choir, Badminton, 5-a-side Football League, Cheese/Pie Club and Dungeons & Dragons to name but a few. It is possible to focus on one option or if preferable to sample different options throughout the year. We will be holding our Freshers Fair on Friday 8th September and your son/daughter will be able to choose for themselves something that they will really enjoy and which will also add to the credits for the Prior Plus award. The Enrichment Programme will also feed into your son's/daughter's Prior Plus qualification and the more they are involved, the more criteria and the higher the level they can achieve.



## Faculty Manager

Your son or daughter will also belong to one of our five faculties – Adventure, Discovery, Endeavour, Fortitude or Resolution. The faculty that they belong to is largely determined by the subjects they study. The Faculty Manager and their deputies tend to deal with issues such as significant welfare or pastoral issues and to help with course changes. We encourage parents to get in touch if they have any questions and the Faculty Manager is probably the best place to start.

## Additional Support

If your son or daughter needs extra support with their studies due to a special educational need or disability (SEND) and you would like to discuss this with us before they start, please contact Anne Donovan, who is our Head of Lifelong Learning.

## Counselling Service

At Prior Pursglove College, we are extremely committed to providing effective support for our students' mental health and well-being to ensure they get the most out of their time here – and beyond! We understand that there are times when a young person may experience problems, feel under pressure, and find it hard to cope. Our therapeutic counsellors can offer support and understanding, and will listen and respond in a non-judgmental way. Ultimately, they will respect students' values, choices and lifestyles as they work with them to help them achieve their therapeutic goals. We offer a range of short and long-term therapies, the service is free and appointments take place in a dedicated, private area within the college. Students can book one-off drop-in appointments or self-refer for weekly therapy sessions. The service is, of course, confidential, although issues connected to college can be raised with college managers with the student's consent. For more information, please see: <https://pursglove.ac.uk/mental-health-and-well-being/college-therapy-service/>



## What Does a College Day Look Like?

When our new students start with us on Tuesday 5th September, the first day will be exclusively for them so that they will have a chance to familiarise themselves with the campus and have a dedicated introduction into college life. Our college day is different from school, but our core hours are 9.00 – 4.00 with a 45-minute lunch break from 12.15 – 1.00 (apart from a Friday when it is 12.45 – 1.30). Each subject has an allocation of four and a half hours contact time, broken up in to one two-hour lesson, a one-and-a-half-hour lesson and a one-hour lesson. Students also have two hours of timetabled compulsory study which is registered and two hours with their Pathways Leader each week. There is also a one-hour slot dedicated to enrichment as we appreciate how important this is for students to broaden their horizons and do something that they enjoy. Below is a copy of our timetable which gives you an idea of what a typical week could look like:

	9.00	10.00	11.00	11.15	12.15	1.00	2.00	3.00
Period								
Mon	D 1hr	D 1hr	Flexi 15 mins	A 1hr	Lunch (45 mins)	F 1½	C 1½	
Tues	E 1hr	E 1hr		Prior Plus 1	Lunch (45 mins)	B 1½	A 1½	
Wed	F 1hr	F 1hr		C 1hr	Lunch (45 mins)	E 1hr	D 1hr	Prior Plus 2
Thurs	B 1hr	B 1hr		Prior Plus 3	Lunch (45 mins)	A 1 hr	A 1hr	F 1hr
Fri	C 1hr	C 1hr		D 1½ hr	Lunch (45 mins - 12.45- 1.30pm)	B 1 hr	E 1½	

## Students' Assessments

Time at college is very short so we get our students quickly into the swing of things. In the first few weeks of their studies teachers will assess how their students have settled into the course. This will include how they have performed on homeworks, in class assessments and other pieces of work. Students are then graded 3, 4 or 5. This allows us to quickly identify any students that may need intervention or support very early on in their studies.

For the remainder of the year, we use Key Assessed Grades (similar to the mocks you are very familiar with in school) to support students in identifying key strengths and areas for improvement in their work so they can sit final exams and/or complete portfolios with confidence. We have planned three KAGs in November, January and June of the students' first year and three in October, January and March of the second year. Subject teachers will give plenty of warning of KAGs and make sure students are well prepared. Pathways Leaders will meet with students after each KAG to review grades and help them plan so that they can maintain and/or improve their grades.

## Student Workload

To encourage students to study outside the classroom, we timetable every student for compulsory study sessions. This helps promote a culture of learning, instil a sense of responsibility, and provide students with a platform to exercise independent learning. Study Supervisors, Pathway Leaders and Faculty Staff work collaboratively to help students make the best use of this time. If you see little sign of College work at home, do ask why. Even if set work has been completed, there is always plenty to do in consolidating lesson work, reading more widely or developing skills; a rough guide would be 15 to 20 hours private work per week. Time management is a very important skill for college students, and they will learn to balance their days between studying, relaxing and socialising or taking part in extra-curricular activities.

## Parents' Evenings

In addition to the New Parents' Evening that is held in September we are planning to hold our Year 12 Parent's Evenings on Thursday 25th April and Wednesday 1st May from 4.30 – 7.30 where you can book appointments to speak to your son's/daughter's Pathways Leader. We will send letters home, through the post, with unique log-in details for you to book your own appointments for convenience, but we can also make these appointments for you should you prefer it.

## Where to find us

**Prior Pursglove College**  
**Church Walk, Guisborough, TS14 6BU**



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