



# Penistone Grammar School

Never Stop Flying

Achieving Excellence through a Values Driven Education



## Welcome

**Penistone Grammar School is thriving. Built on a foundation of strong relationships, with first class teaching, a values driven approach to learning and a supportive school community, PGS provides an excellent educational experience for students from year 7, through to year 13.**

Everything we do is driven by our core values (Aim High; Be Determined; Be Kind; Be Supportive; Be Proud) and is underpinned by honesty, integrity and respect. We believe the potential our students hold in terms of their personal achievement is limitless and our aim is to empower them so that they can go forward, prepared for whatever challenges they may face with absolute confidence, knowing they have the skills and qualities needed to succeed.

We are extremely proud of the academic success of our students and have cemented our position as one of the top secondary schools in the region. We pride ourselves on ensuring all our students are given the support they need to make excellent progress, regardless of their starting point or context. On average our students make almost half a grade progress more than their peers nationally, with 80% of students achieving a grade 4 or higher in English and Mathematics at GCSE, and many obtaining the elite grade 9.

Our Post-16 provision is equally impressive and is one of the top A-Level providers nationally. We have record numbers of students applying to study with us, selecting from a wide range of A-level qualifications. We offer a personalised approach to support which ensures that almost all our students are able to secure their university place (including within the Russell Group and Oxbridge) or apprenticeship of choice.

We are proud of our rich tradition of excellence, striving to achieve the highest standards and to be at the heart of our community. Innovative and supportive, we bravely lead the way in delivering a values driven educational experience that enables our students to be well rounded, confident individuals. We are a happy school and we encourage our students to follow their interests, develop new skills and more importantly, fully enjoy everything that Penistone Grammar School has to offer.

Paul Crook, Principal



# Aim High

*“Everyone can find something that they enjoy. If it’s calculating the hardest math equation, or running your fastest time around the sports hall, you will always be encouraged and supported to achieve your best.”*

## Learning and Achievement

**With a curriculum that transforms the concept of learning, we take our students on a journey from year 7 to year 11, and beyond. Through our curriculum we aim to enrich the lives of our students, developing independent learners who are confident, committed and engaged, equipped and able to fulfil their aspirations.**

In years 7 and 8 our students are given the foundations for effective learning through a broad and balanced curriculum across a range of disciplines including core subjects, humanities, languages, technology, sport and the creative arts. Students are taught in mixed-ability teaching groups for most lessons, with smaller groups in PE, technology and art. Comprehensive subject knowledge is complemented by a focus on developing the key skills which underpin independence and resilience. Through our bespoke "PROUD" presentation model, growth mindset and a clear effort and reward system which develops students' understanding of how to apply themselves, our students leave year 8 well prepared to secure academic success as they move forward into the next stage of their education with us.

In year 9 our students begin to develop the expertise needed for success in formal examinations. We introduce study skills and, while retaining a balanced curriculum similar to that studied in the previous years, we begin to introduce students to teaching groups which are set, ensuring students are stretched, challenged and supported in equal measure. Our students focus on potential future pathways and work collaboratively with local, regional and national organisations through our employer engagement partnership, enabling them to make effective subject choices as they move into key stage 4.

As they progress into the final two years of their secondary education, students' learning becomes personalised, with a solid, core foundation of English, mathematics and science, complemented by studies in subjects chosen by the student from a wide range of options; from business, media, languages, history and geography through to health and social care, technology, music, art, pe and photography.

Our students are supported by a highly skilled and dedicated team of teaching and associate staff. Our staff are committed to developing innovative and engaging practice which nurtures a love of, and enthusiasm for, learning in all our students and delivers academic success. Each member of our team is passionate and driven, empowering our students to aim high, striving to achieve more than they ever thought possible.



# Be Determined

*"At Penistone you are valued as an individual by everyone from your class teacher, to the Principal, who all know you well, want you to succeed and are prepared to go the extra mile to make sure you do. I am confident I would not have done as well at any other school. At PGS the superb support and brilliant teachers are the golden combination required for success."*

# Be Kind

*“My first few weeks at Penistone Grammar School have been the best ever! The teachers give you the confidence to have a go at new things and they help you to understand that, even if you get something wrong, it is helping you to learn. I am encouraged to keep on trying and never give up, and I know that if I do, PGS will help me to achieve my dreams and goals.”*

## Participation and Leadership

**We strive to ensure our students have opportunities to flourish beyond their academic studies, and to give them the confidence they need to succeed in every aspect of life beyond school.**

All students in every year group have the opportunity to participate in student leadership activities. Central to this is our prefect team. Led by our Post-16 Student Leadership Group and Heads of House, they are an impressive group of young people committed to making Penistone Grammar School the best it can be. Working with our student body to ensure our core values are embodied by everyone, they contribute significantly to identifying opportunities for further school development and play an integral part in making our House system an overwhelming success.

We believe it is important that we know what our students think and feel about their school and we place student voice at the heart of our key strategic decision-making processes.

As well as structured opportunities to share their views, there are ongoing informal opportunities for students to tell us how they think we are doing, and for them to shape the direction of their school. Amongst other areas, student voice at Penistone plays a central role in the recruitment of new staff and planning fundraising activities. We are incredibly proud to say that we have raised over £40,000 for our school charity and have been presented with the community engagement award from Sheffield Children’s Hospital in recognition of this.

Our enrichment programme allows students to challenge themselves in a variety of ways. Whether this be participating in a wide range of arts-related clubs, representing the school in many of its successful sports teams, or refining their skills in subject-specific activities, there is always something to engage our students outside the timetabled day.

At PGS we offer our students a range of activities which provide (for many) a once in a lifetime opportunity, challenging them in new and exciting ways. Experiences include the year 7 residential, Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, ski trips, foreign language excursions, and World Challenge expeditions to places such as Iceland and Borneo.

We value the participation of parents in all we do and formalise the partnership between home and school annually through the completion of our Home/School Agreement. We welcome parental contribution and actively invite feedback through our annual parent survey, the results of which inform school improvement planning. Working collaboratively with families ensures that together, we make sure that Penistone Grammar School is truly excellent, and a school which the community is proud to have at its heart.



## The Library

**At Penistone Grammar School we truly believe that reading is the key to learning. Led by a dedicated Literacy Team, we strive to create a culture of reading at every opportunity within the school day and provide an environment where reading is wide, varied and challenging at an age-appropriate level.**

Within our library space, we provide a magical escape from busy school life where students can immerse themselves in a world of books. We are here to both support students on their reading journey, but also stretch and challenge avid readers. Award-winning authors and illustrators are regularly invited into school, in order to provide students with the opportunity to meet and be inspired by champions of reading and writing.

Additionally, we host English reading lessons, book clubs, writing workshops and intervention. We also work closely with the English Department and House Team to help support and incentivise positive reading habits. During their time with us, students will also be encouraged to read at home. We will help you support their reading journey by giving you reading suggestions and questions to ask them.



# Be Supportive

*“My son has had a great start to the school year and is finding his feet! He won't stop talking about everything when he gets home! It really has made a huge difference with the extra support he has received and as a parent, its reassuring to know he has settled in so well.”*



## An Inclusive Approach

**At Penistone Grammar School we are committed to being a fully inclusive school where students are supported to overcome barriers to learning and maximise opportunities for success.**

## The Combined Cadet Force at PGS

**Penistone Grammar School is one of the few state schools to have a Combined Cadet Force; a Ministry of Defence sponsored youth organisation which provides opportunities for young people from Year 8 to develop leadership, responsibility, self-reliance, resourcefulness and endurance. Our values are centred around Respect, Integrity, Service and Excellence.**

Founded in September 2022, the Combined Cadet Force at Penistone Grammar School provides a safe environment where cadets can develop their personal skills as well as their ability to lead and work in a team. Both skills are useful in all walks of life, in the workplace, on the sports field and in other challenges the pupils may encounter in later life.

The core values of our Combined Cadet Force are:

- Courage
- Discipline
- Integrity
- Selfless commitment
- Loyalty
- Respect for others

### **BTEC Vocational Qualification**

Penistone Grammar School CCF offers students the opportunity to enrol on vocational qualifications led by the education charity CVQO. The qualifications are nationally recognised, providing cadets support when applying for university and jobs.

From age 13, students can qualify for the Pearson BTEC Level 1 Certificate in Teamwork, Personal Skills, and Citizenship. At 16, cadets can enrol in the Pearson BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Teamwork and Personal Development in the Community. Students develop a wide variety of skills, including effective communication, career planning and leadership. The Level 2 Award is an ideal qualification for strengthening higher education or future job applications.

Our Inclusion Team brings together a wealth of experience and specialist training to support our students. When a student needs additional support, team members work collaboratively with every member of our school community to ensure all professionals involved in the child's education can provide help that is appropriate to their needs. This extends to external agency involvement where appropriate, and our team have close working relationships and links into professionals outside the school who can provide complementary support for our young people.

The mental health and wellbeing of our students is incredibly important to us. Mental health problems are an endemic issue facing schools across the country and at PGS we focus our approach to mental health support in four key areas: Promoting mental wellbeing by creating an environment where children and young people feel safe and happy; identifying students' specific mental health needs; providing mental health support for students with particular needs; and referring in to and/or delivering specialist therapeutic provision.

Where it has been determined that the barrier to a student's learning is because of a special educational need or disability, our SEND leaders are committed to ensuring that all our students can flourish.

Whether part of our mainstream provision, or as a member of our specialist HeartSpace SEND provision, a team of specialist staff are on hand to provide first-class support for our students. This includes SEND Teachers, Higher-Level Teaching Assistants and Learning Support Assistants, all of whom ensure that highly effective, tailored plans are in place to overcome any obstacles that may act as a barrier to learning and development. Through this approach, all our young people, regardless of need, have every opportunity to achieve their potential and become fully equipped, successful individuals at school, and beyond.

Further information about how we support students with SEND can be accessed through our website: <https://penistone-gs.uk/home/about-us/special-educational-needs/>.

# Encouragement and Recognition

**We believe that the achievements of our students should be recognised, no matter how big or small. We will reward our students for demonstrating effort, drive and determination towards achieving academic and personal excellence, consistently challenging, and supporting them to be the best version of themselves they can be.**

Our experience-based bespoke rewards scheme, which was designed especially for our students, provides a motivational and innovative approach to recognising and rewarding effort.

Each term special reward events, including trips, fairs and summer festivals, take place for those students who have demonstrated a commitment to their studies and our core values, evidenced through the collection of merits. After each reward event the points are reset to encourage those students who didn't qualify for the previous event to apply the resilience needed to succeed moving forward and earn their place at the next celebration.

We are proud of all that our students continue to achieve and we value every opportunity to celebrate the progress our young people make.



# Be Proud

*“One of my main concerns about secondary school was fitting in, but I found out that you don't have to, there may not always be someone like you, but that's okay, we are all different in our own, unique way, so why not be proud of who you are and be proud of what you achieve? Penistone Grammar School has definitely helped me to do that.”*

## How to Apply

To apply for a place at Penistone Grammar School:

### **FOR STANDARD ADMISSIONS AT THE POINT OF SECONDARY TRANSFER**

Details are available in the Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council booklet '**Admission to Secondary School - A Guide for Parents**' and online at [www.barnsley.gov.uk/admissions-secondary-school-places](http://www.barnsley.gov.uk/admissions-secondary-school-places).

If your child is currently in a primary school in the Barnsley area there are two ways to apply:

1. Complete the application form and return it to the Headteacher of your child's primary school
2. Apply online by logging on to the Barnsley Authority website (as per the link above) and following the instructions.

**Please note, the deadline for applications to secondary school is 31 October.**

If you live outside the Barnsley Authority or would like to transfer your child into a year other than Year 7, or at a time other than at the standard secondary transfer point in September, please contact Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council's Admissions Department on 01226 773677 to obtain the appropriate application form.



## Penistone Grammar School

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