



Prior Park College

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“Both boys have thrived in their own individual ways through the encouragement and challenge that the school has provided. We could not have wished for a better start in life for both of them. ”

College Parent

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To steward a thriving family of communities with love for the young people they serve at their heart: communities which cultivate creativity, foster integrity, and transform lives.

OUR VALUES

Curiosity Generosity Courage

CONTENTS

5	WELCOME FROM THE HEADMASTER	18	SPORT
7	OUR COMMUNITY	21	CO-CURRICULAR
9	ACADEMIC	22	BOARDING
13	MUSIC	25	BAINES HOUSE
14	DRAMA	26	SIXTH FORM
16	VISUAL ARTS	29	ADMISSIONS
17	DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY		



A WELCOME FROM THE HEADMASTER, BEN HORAN

Prior Park students have a whole host of opportunities. They are educated in a beautiful environment, in a school which is not afraid to talk about the love we have for them. Prior Park students feel safe and happy, and it is precisely because of this that they are so successful. We are a community that exists to serve. We serve our young people by giving them a high-quality education both inside and outside of the classroom. Teachers here are subject specialists, but they are also committed to helping our young people grow in other arenas. We offer a wide range of activities to give our young people a chance to find out what excites them, and their teachers delight in engaging with them outside of the classroom, building solid, supportive, relationships.

Prior Park looks to challenge each of its students. We ask them to think about the difference they can make to their world, and to look to serve others. We are a school where creativity is valued. Our students can, and do, find a creative spark across the wide range of subjects we offer. We challenge our students to be the best, and truest, versions of themselves, and we provide this challenge in a caring and supportive way. We know that we are a school which transforms the life of every student who comes here. They emerge from a Prior Park education knowing who they want to be and how they can make a difference to our world. They emerge with a character that is well rounded, and an academic profile that allows them to make their next step in life with confidence – whatever that step might be.

At Prior Park every child is known, valued, and cared for. Prior Park is a diverse community where each child finds their way towards a fulfilled and successful life. I know it to be an open, friendly, and caring place where your family will feel at ease and your children will thrive. Do come and visit us. Come and meet the young people at Prior. Ask them what they think of our school. They will show you, more clearly than any website, league table, or Headmaster's introduction, that this is a place they are proud to be a part of. It is a place which lives our Mission, and our Values of Curiosity, Generosity, and Courage, every single day. It is, put simply, an extraordinary school.



Ben Horan
Headmaster, Prior Park College



OUR COMMUNITY

Prior Park College is a Catholic day and boarding school with 600 students made up from approximately 455 day and 145 boarding. Set in 57 stunning acres overlooking the World Heritage City of Bath, Prior Park offers an exceptional environment for students to study, play and live.

Dedicated staff and outstanding facilities help to develop as fully as possible the academic and other talents of each boy and girl. We encourage students to embrace all the opportunities on offer at Prior – acting and singing in first class productions, competing for their team, producing impressive works of art and design, leading our charities work and taking a full role in House activities.

All pupils are members of a House and the House System generates a wonderful sense of community as well as providing easy and appropriate channels of communication for pupils and instilling positive values. They are also fun, with a huge variety of House led activities happening throughout the academic year. Our Junior Houses (years 7 and 8) are co-educational whilst Senior are single sex. Each House is run by a Housemaster or Housemistress with a team of tutors, and all offer encouragement and support to each student within their care.

The College prides itself on its pastoral care and we aim to provide a safe, stimulating and positive environment. We provide a range of information and support for pupils and we address relevant current issues that may be a cause of anxiety. Understanding others, learning to express oneself, tolerance and developing friendships with a wide range of people are vital. We are very much a community that looks out for each other and after each other.

The College has an on-site Health and Wellbeing Centre which provides proactive and holistic care for pupils' physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. An experienced independent Counsellor works alongside our medical team and House staff and is able to provide one-to-one support to students. Our Lay Chaplain is also a source of support and care.

The beautiful Chapel, Our Lady of the Snows, is the focus of our spiritual life. It is the venue for weekly all-school assemblies, musical performances, religious prayer, and it is a peaceful place where one can sit and contemplate in the middle of a busy campus. We welcome pupils from all faith backgrounds and those with no faith into our inclusive community.

“ Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all. ”
Aristotle



“ This is teaching at its best: inspiring young people and cultivating their thirst for learning. ”

Parent

ACADEMIC

Every school’s key purpose is to educate and, like all great schools, Prior Park certainly delivers an exceptional education in the traditional sense. Crucially though, a Prior education goes much further; we educate students for much more than just their future earning potential, productivity level and position in the labour force.

We believe education is about inspiring children, teaching them ‘the best that has ever been thought or said in the world’. First and foremost, we teach our students to think critically so that they can shape their own future and communicate their ideas in an engaging and coherent way; to inform and educate others. Being a Catholic school does not release us from the quest for academic excellence. Instead, it is reinforced as we ensure every child uses their God-given gifts to the very best of their potential.

Our curriculum is unashamedly broad so we can help every child find and pursue their unique gifts, talents and passions, from Physics to Photography, Maths to Mandarin. It is also expertly balanced to make sure our students get what they need to access the next level of their education pathway. This, together with our expert teachers and exceptionally caring tutors, means that young people at Prior are happy in their studies.

On average, students at the College take ten GCSEs. During those GCSE courses, we help students to set targets and measure their success against their own potential, encouraging them to persevere and make the very best of themselves each day. This approach helps our young people excel in their GCSE exams, and is reflected even more in our outstanding ‘value-added’ scores which show how, year after year, we draw out the very best from our students.

Our unique Prior4Life programme in Form 4 and the Sixth Form furthers that broad outlook by exposing students to international politics, finance, ethics, world religions, charity, enterprise, careers, philosophy and much more. This also keeps creative opportunities open for those who otherwise would have had to narrow their subject choices and ensures that our students have the life skills and ‘hinterland’ to excel in whatever comes next.





At Sixth Form the majority of our students take three A Level subjects with the most able choosing a fourth and the intellectually curious choosing to study for the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). Our EPQ results are outstanding with well over two thirds of our students gaining an A or A*.

The vast majority of Prior Park students go on to university at their first-choice institution, including many to Oxford, Cambridge, Russell Group Universities and medical schools. We also encourage students to consider newer tertiary education options – a number of our recent Sixth Formers have been fortunate to gain places on highly competitive degree-apprenticeship schemes offered by Jaguar Land Rover, the MOD, BAE Systems, and other professional services firms.

At Prior, we make sure our students are set up for the future. Enterprise education is both explicitly and implicitly taught so that students are used to thinking creatively and working collaboratively in all subjects, and we invest heavily in digital; all students use a school-provided Personal Learning Device in lessons throughout the day and at home. These high-spec laptops let students use industry-standard collaboration technology, like Teams, OneNote and 365 to manage lessons, access notes, complete work and get help from their teachers. Lesson materials and homework sync effortlessly between students and teachers and let our young people focus on questioning, not copying.

Of course paper and pen remain crucial for many things, and we are careful to maintain those important traditional writing and reading skills; our classrooms are adaptive and we exploit technology in ways that will enable our students to make the best use of it throughout their learning journey.

Prior Park students can enjoy a programme of educational trips. Many subjects, Geography and Biology for example, offer regular field trips so that students can complete work for their classes in the richest possible environments. We run an annual language trip rotating through France, Spain and China, and many other trips are also on offer such as our Physics tour to Geneva, taking in the CERN particle accelerator facility, our thought-provoking History trip to Krakow and our regular Cross Curricular trip to New York - which is, for many of the U6th, the standout memory of their school career.

At Prior Park, simply put, our exceptional teaching, our staff who know every student personally, and our broad academic provision allow every learner to find their individual gifts, talents and passions, and make the very best of them.





MUSIC

Pupils, parents, staff, even visitors quickly see that music is central to the culture of Prior Park College. In this beautiful place music reaches a different level. Orchestras, bands, choirs, shows, chamber music, jazz, African drums, the music department covers every musical genre.

From the hundreds of weekly individual lessons, right up to big school musicals and concerts, musicians of every kind find opportunities to develop in our wonderful performing spaces.

Throughout the academic year, there are scores of opportunities for performance, be it at Mass, the annual Band Night, House Music competition, School Musical or the weekly Informal Lunchtime Recitals. In all areas of music at Prior Park, from the splendour of our Chapel to the spotlight of the theatre, students find an audience. Under the guidance of an experienced and versatile team of teachers, our musicians find themselves and flourish.

On top of this, Prior students benefit from master classes and workshops with leading soloists and groups visiting the College: The King's Singers, the OAE, King's College London, James Gilchrist, Laurence Cummings, Paul Edmund Davies, Jason Rebello, Luke Price and composition workshops with St George's Academy.

Prior students have gone on to study music at Oxbridge as well as in leading UK and US conservatoires, leading to careers with major orchestras, opera companies, film and TV composition, and in the West End.

Prior Park has its own music studio with the most up-to-date production software allowing music technology students to develop their skills up to A Level and beyond, making careers in and producing music. Studying GCSE, A Level and other music courses and exams, students explore, experiment and create, extending their musical scope through arrangement and composition in new styles.

Each academic year ends with our Grand Leavers' Concert. This is always a proud and emotional occasion as our Upper 6 performers hand the baton on to the new, different, younger talent who have been waiting their turn.





DRAMA

Drama is offered to all students at Prior Park in the first three years here and is also taught at both GCSE and A Level. It is a subject that allows students to express themselves, think on their feet and function in a group. Not only that, but Drama is an all-inclusive subject with strong cross-curricular ties and a focus on getting the very best out of every student.

The Drama department is extremely proud of its reputation for putting on diverse and impressive productions each year, including works by Beckett, Ibsen, Miller, Shakespeare and Stoppard. We are very lucky to have such professional facilities and resources at Prior with our own professionally equipped 160-seat Julian Slade Theatre and the Mackintosh Dance Studio.

A number of productions take place every year, from whole school pieces to junior drama shows, LAMDA showcases, and small studio pieces, as well as exam and pre-exam performances and open rehearsals. Students can take control and ownership of some, both as performers and as directors, technicians and backstage crew. Guest speakers are regularly invited to the College to discuss their varied roles within the industry or to give professional acting advice, including former pupils who have gone on to successful careers within the performing arts, of which there are many.

We are proud of our successes in placing students at nationally and internationally recognised drama schools such as The Actors Studio in New York, The London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art and more locally, Bristol Old Vic Theatre School.

The array of talent we have at the College never ceases to amaze. The boundless energy and endless enthusiasm shown by the students of this school is both an inspiration and a source of great pride.





VISUAL ARTS

Our Visual Arts faculty comprises of three fascinating subjects; Fine Art, Photography and Textile Design. Its location in St Peter's provides students with a stimulating, light and airy space for them to tap into their creativity.

These fantastic facilities, combined with the skill set of our talented teaching staff, allow students the opportunity to become complete artists and designers. From textile designers through to the range of artists who work within a plethora of different mediums, from painting and printmaking to sculpture, installation, and digital media, our students are able to explore, wherever their creative journey takes them.

Our programme of annual exhibitions celebrates the hard work and talent of our students. The achievements of A Level, GCSE and Key Stage Three students are showcased in the gallery spaces, studios and throughout the College.



DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

Our award-winning Design & Technology department is highly respected and has facilities on a par with neighbouring universities and many industrial workplaces.

The school has invested heavily in the latest 3D printing and laser cutting technologies, helping the department to be recognised as a Centre of Excellence. With its expert teaching staff, students can access the very latest of what the creative world has to offer - from product, interior, landscape and graphic design, through to professional metal fabrication and glass blowing.

Design & Technology is delivered across all Key Stage 3 years and is a popular subject at GCSE and A Level, with Sixth Form students enjoying their own bespoke Product Design studio. The department currently follows the Edexcel Pearson Design and Technology course at both GCSE and A Level. Exam results are consistently strong.

For many years, Prior Park students have been awarded a prestigious Arkwright Engineering Scholarship. Alongside strong A Level results, this has helped them to gain entry to top engineering universities across the country.

As well as timetabled lessons, the department also has a vibrant co-curricular offering, ranging from metal and woodwork clubs through to an extensive Computer Aided Design program.





SPORT

Our outstanding onsite facilities include a state-of-the-art Sports Centre complete with an impressive fitness suite, indoor swimming pool, all-weather pitch, rugby and cricket pitches, indoor and outdoor tennis and netball courts.

Our specialised coaches, encourage our pupils to achieve the highest standards regardless of ability. We put together several teams so that everyone has an opportunity to compete, however we recognise that team sport is 'not for everyone' and ensure that other options are available for those students.

The school has a strong fixture list and we compete with the best sporting schools, Prior was ranked in the top 100 sporting schools of 2020, (School Sport magazine). The College is represented at various national and inter-schools tournaments throughout the year, including indoor and outdoor hockey, netball, tennis, and Rosslyn Park Rugby Sevens. We have pupils that compete at County, Regional and International level.

For our elite sportsmen and women, our close proximity to Bath University is a tremendous bonus, with students regularly using training facilities and coaching there. Prior Park supports these students in pursuit of their goals and works with them individually to accommodate their sporting schedules, whilst making sure the demands of school life are also met.

A wide range of additional sports, such as basketball, football, badminton, golf, and sailing, are also on offer at the College through extra-curricular activities and Saturday Active.





CO-CURRICULAR

The objectives of our co-curricular programme is that it is inclusive, provides opportunity, develops talents, is enriching, provides a global education, offers access to outdoor education, encourages personal and physical development, leadership, and most importantly, is fun!

Our Activities and Clubs programmes feature activities ranging from African Drumming to Chess, Creative Writing to Metalwork. Students are required to choose one activity per week and the choice can vary each term. If a student has an external activity that they wish to continue with, this can also be included within the programme, once approved by the relevant Housemaster/ Housemistress.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme is a popular and flourishing option for many students from Form 4 upwards. The College offers participation at Bronze and Gold levels, with each level consisting of four sections: skill, service, physical recreation and expeditions.

Our CCF covers both Army and Navy sections and allows boys and girls to develop leadership skills. Cadets learn a broad variety of skills that include training in First Aid, Skill at Arms and Weapon Handling. There are also opportunities to fly drones, sail, or pilot the flight simulator. Some students opt for both CCF and DofE!

Saturday Active is a programme of courses that take place every Saturday morning during term time. There are a variety of courses to choose from during the year, including archery, craft club, golf, and yoga. We expect our Boarders to take part but for Day pupils the courses are optional. Most courses are free however some can incur a small cost.

With such a wide variety of activities on offer, we are confident of providing something for everyone to enjoy and develop.





BOARDING

Boarding is at the heart of the College. Up to 145 full, weekly and flexi boarders live in the family atmosphere within the two boarding houses, St Paul's and St Mary's, each with their own dedicated space and facilities.

St Paul's is home to approximately 80 boys, whilst St Mary's is home to approximately 65 girls. Each boarding house has a dedicated live-in House Parent and a team of residential tutors to ensure the pastoral care and organisation essential to the community and to every individual.

Our boarders are made up of British and international students from a broad range of countries. For our British boarders, and indeed our day students, the benefits of making friends amongst our international community are extraordinary. It broadens horizons and cultural knowledge which, in a global marketplace, can be very advantageous.

During the school day, all boarders are assigned a Day House. They leave their boarding home after breakfast and return at the end of the school day. This 'hotel' style boarding ensures our boarders are fully integrated with our day students throughout each school day.

Boarding life at Prior Park is happy, vibrant and dynamic. A full weekend activity programme includes Saturday Active, cinema and theatre outings, sports fixtures, theme park outings, ten-pin bowling, shopping trips, amongst other fun pursuits. Boarders also benefit from being able to access the on-site facilities after hours, including our state-of-the-art Sports Centre and Fitness Suite.

Bath as a location offers a diverse range of sightseeing and leisure attractions and has a year round programme of festivals and sporting events. The city is easily accessible via mainline rail and major road networks, with Bristol International Airport just 20 miles away.

Boarding at Prior is a life enhancing experience, where students benefit from being able to develop strong friendships and independence in a home-from-home environment. Boarders joining the College will be supported, encouraged, challenged, and very much welcomed.





BAINES HOUSE

Baines House has been set up to smooth the transition from junior to senior school. It is the school time 'home' for our Year 7 students.

Baines has its own Housemaster, Mr Healy, and a team of tutors who each take responsibility for a group of around fifteen students. These tutors provide daily support to their tutees, help them understand much of all that is new, and seek to remove any anxiety a student may have. It is the staff and the care the students receive that is the essence of Baines House.

A modern purpose-built house provides the tangible meeting place for our Year 7 students. It is located close to the centre of the main teaching block, so the pupils are well placed, and it is surrounded by gardens and an outdoor play area. The building offers a large common room stocked with books and games for break times, a piano, homework area, kitchen area, changing and locker rooms. This space is exclusive to Baines students, much to their delight.

Baines is a happy place where students have the time to absorb all the new facets of College life and are encouraged to make the most of the opportunities available to them. The House runs a number of activities and events throughout the year, including fundraising for the school charities, a residential trip, music and drama performances, movie night, and the ever popular Baines House Music competition. Baines students are also encouraged to take part in at least one co-curricular activity per week, ranging from metal club to orchestra.

Baines House is one where all its students feel at home. It is a fun and kind environment, a place where friendships are made and nurtured, and where Prior's younger students are able to grow spiritually, emotionally and academically, within a safe and inclusive environment.





SIXTH FORM

The Sixth Form is a lively, socially enjoyable and intellectually stimulating time in a pupil's school career.

Sixth Form students have their own designated space within the Mansion, providing a perfect place for students to work and relax. The Sixth Form Centre includes a large, bright room for study, a kitchen and café area that sells snacks at break times, and a sofa area for socialising.

The majority of our Sixth Form Leavers go on to their first choice university. Our Sixth Form team prides itself on the support given to each student through the university admissions process. All students have access to the Unifrog software which helps to highlight options for them. They also have individual meetings to discuss their choices and to get advice on finance, accommodation, and student life in general. Those interested in applying to Oxbridge meet weekly to discuss the specific requirements, take part in practice interviews, and prepare for admissions tests. Students who wish to apply for an apprenticeship or take a gap year can meet with our Careers Advisor and are welcomed at our annual Gap Fair.

Prior offers a wide Enrichment Programme, which encourages increased awareness and responsibility. The programme includes; community projects, the Combined Cadet Force (CCF), The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme (DofE), the General Studies lecture programme, a wealth of performance and arts opportunities, as well as sporting excellence and sport for all.

Sixth Form students are expected to be involved in leading the school in many areas. Prior Concern allows students to work in any number of local charitable projects including the homeless, nursery children, and elderly. Eco-Prior acts to prevent climate change, works actively to conserve energy around the school and beyond, and, of course, promotes the protection of the natural environment. Charities Committee aims to make as much money as possible for the worthy causes voted for by the entire school. Charities Week is a chance for each tutor group to compete to raise the most money; teachers getting sponged and cake sales are favourites!

Prior 4 Life is the part of the curriculum that encourages students to learn practical and enriching skills that helps prepare them for life, including DIY, interview skills, first aid, basic cookery, managing finances.

Socialising, feeling part of our community and being happy is conducive to academic success. With this in mind, there are many events throughout the year, including BBQs, restaurant outings, fancy dress parties and concerts. The Upper Sixth finish off their time at Prior in style with a Grand Leavers' Dinner and Leavers' Ball.

Our core aim is to enable our Leavers to be confident, capable, compassionate and independent-minded, and our Sixth Form team wholeheartedly supports our students to this end.



“ One thing I love about Prior Park is that it seems very much a community and I believe that if I do come here, it hopefully won't take long to make friends. ”

Prospective Sixth Form student



ADMISSIONS

We welcome your interest in Prior Park College.

As Registrar it is my pleasure to work with parents in ensuring the Admissions process is as smooth and transparent as possible. Initial enquiries are by phone or email, at which time we will discuss your child's interests, current schooling and year of entry to the College.

Prospective families are encouraged to attend any of our Open Events or, if these dates are not convenient, arrange a private visit to the College on a normal working day. Applicants should complete the Registration Form and return it to the Admissions department with a non-refundable registration fee.

Entrance and scholarship examinations are obligatory and we will contact your child's current school for a report. All candidates are interviewed by the Headmaster before a final decision is reached and an offer of a place is communicated. Parents should return the Acceptance Form and deposit before the deadline date to ensure their child a place.

Our aim is to admit pupils with academic or other qualities, who will gain the most benefit from the opportunities on offer at Prior Park, whilst maintaining a balance across the school - boys to girls, day to boarding.

Prior Park offers a range of scholarships and exhibitions to talented pupils at 11+, 13+ and 16+. Applicant's parents are encouraged to consult the Head of their primary, preparatory

or senior school about the suitability of their son or daughter for such an award. Additional supporting reports from teachers or coaches are most helpful.

So that we can broaden access to our schools, the College is able to offer financial support to eligible families through Bursary Awards. Means-tested bursaries may be granted in addition to scholarships.

Further information regarding our Admissions Policy, Key Dates and Application Process is available on our website priorparkcollege.com/admissions or you can contact our department by phone: +44 (0)1225 831000 and email: admissions@priorparkschools.com

We look forward to hearing from you.



Mrs Vicki Quinn
Registrar



“Our daughter has flourished and developed whilst being at Prior into a kind and considerate young lady, with a sense of pride and achievement, with a true knowledge of what is right and wrong, just and fair.

Prior is like her family, she never pleads to come home early, never moans about Saturday matches and is always up and ready for the bus at 6:30 every morning, five days a week. She has made lifelong friends with her peers. ”

College Parent



Prior Park College

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*11-18 Day and Boarding, HMC Established, Co-educational, Catholic Senior School.
Senior School to The Paragon School, Bath.*