

PCHS Guide to Opportunities Beyond the Curriculum



Excellence in all we do.

At PCHS, we recognise that for students to aspire and be successful academically and in the wider areas of their lives, they need to be given rich and sustained opportunities to develop their cultural capital. **Cultural capital** is the accumulation of knowledge, behaviours, and skills that a student can draw upon and which demonstrates their cultural awareness, knowledge and competence; it is one of the key ingredients a student will draw upon to be successful in society, their career and the world of work. Cultural capital promotes social mobility and success in our stratified society.

Cultural capital gives students power. It helps them achieve goals, become successful, and rise up the social ladder without necessarily having wealth or financial capital. Cultural capital is having assets that give students the desire to aspire and achieve social mobility whatever their starting point.

FutureMe

We are fortunate to be involved in the FutureMe project, supported by Outreach North East which aims to help students to:

- plan for their future and gain an understanding of what can support them in reaching their goals.
- have access to high quality information and support to help them consider what is the right option for them
- Have an increased awareness and understanding of opportunities and progression pathways in the region.

FutureMe have been in school multiple times this academic year and students have also attended workshops outside of school. Year 11 students have taken part in revision and resilience workshops with external speakers to support with exam skills and strategies. Students in Year 10 have participated in a public speaking workshop. Year 9 students have taken part in a resilience workshop and students will be taking part in a workshop to provide additional guidance in making the correct choice for their GCSE options. Each workshop is carefully tailored to support and guide students.



PCHS Students attending a Future Me session at St James' park



Sport

For a relatively small highschool we pack a big punch in terms of the sporting opportunities available to students. As a consequence many PCHS students excel at their chosen sports. Years 9-11 have girls and boys football teams who compete in the Northumberland league, English Schools and various cup competitions. Our Under 19 boys football team are entered into a North East league. Year 9 and 10 boys and Year 10 & 11 girls play in a North East rugby League-, attending both competitive fixtures and tournaments aiming at increasing participation in the sport. Athletics is also popular, taking part in the English school athletics league and various North East Athletics competitions including a national cup. Our netball teams and cricket teams are in the Northumberland Netball league and the North East league. In addition to this students enter competitions in swimming, cross country, badminton, trampolining, volleyball and bowling. While there are lots of opportunities to compete many students take part in sporting clubs, or use the gym simply for fitness and enjoyment. The 6th form take an active role in sport clubs at PCHS and our Sports leaders program helps them develop their skills further.



Trips

There are a number of opportunities to take part in trips across the school year giving many students some unique experiences. Our Adventure and Languages trip to Spain is always popular. The PE dept organise a Ski trip while the geography department has an amazing trip to Iceland. Closer to home we have trips to Wimbledon, watersports and beach trips during activities week and a hiking trip to Scotland. A number of students are working towards their Duke of Edinburgh Awards and will take part in the expedition. In addition there are trips during the school day to local business, NUFC, Universities, theatre trips, Durham Cathedral and others to support the curriculum.

Performing Arts

The Performing Arts Department has a wide range of extracurricular opportunities for students. There are a wide variety of ensembles and performances, such as winter and summer concerts, where students can perform as part of the school choir or band or as a soloist. We have a weekly drama group, where students can build on the ideas and skills developed during lessons to hone their acting skills. We are an inclusive department, where we encourage students to get involved in weekly rehearsals, no matter what their instrument or current ability level. We also have the annual school show, and building on the success of the production of *Grease* in 2024, we will be staging *Les Miserables* in 2025, with students taking part in both performance and backstage roles. We also arrange trips to see performances of different styles and genres, allowing students to expand their own experiences and repertoire.



Students performing in last year's production of Grease

Community & Charity

We encourage students to take an active role in our school community, the local community and as global citizens. This also helps students develop their learning behaviours- especially curiosity, interaction and respect. The student body nominates a School Charity for each academic year and events are held to raise money. Last year the 6th form helped raise over £1000 for the charity MIND and they are busy planning their next charity day in aid of the WWF. At Christmas students help at the Parish Christmas Lunch and make visits to the local care homes where they entertain the residents with Christmas carols and a sneak preview of songs from the upcoming school production. PCHS 6th form students all sign up to complete at least one 'School Service' which can include participating in Y9 reader support, completing a mental health mentors qualification to support some of our lower school students, running a sports club or helping out in lower school classes as academic mentors.



6th form students entertaining residents at the local care home



One of our 6th formers receiving an Award for his charity work for Dystonia UK

Clubs

In addition to Sports and Performing Arts there are a range of other clubs on offer for students. These include Art Club, Manga Club, Engineering Club, Coding Club and Dungeons and Dragons. Students are encouraged and supported to set up their own clubs- so if there is something they want to see then let your Head of Year know!

