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Ysgol Gyfun
PORTHCAWL
Comprehensive School

Headteacher/Pennaeth: M. J. Stephens NPQH, P Dip Ed, BA (Hons)

Deputy Headteacher/Dirprwy Bennaeth: D.W.A Beard BA (Hons)

Deputy Headteacher/Dirprwy Bennaeth: C-A. Painter BA (Hons)

4th November 2024

Dear Parents / Carers,

Welcome back, I hope you had a good half term break. Please treat this letter as an Autumn Half Term (2) Headteacher update. The first half term was an excellent half term filled with success, achievement and recognition, and as I reflect upon what we achieved and as I look forward to the half term ahead I do so with immense pride. I am proud of our school community for the way we work together. As we start this half term, it is important that I recognise the efforts of our students and our staff. I extend my sincere thanks to all staff, both teaching and support staff for providing all that they do for the students in our school. I also thank you, our families for your continued support.

Year 7 Admissions September 2025

It was lovely to welcome so many families to our Year 6 Open Evening on Wednesday 23rd October 2024. The BCBC secondary school admissions window for September 2025 places is now open. This can be accessed via: [Apply for admission to school - Bridgend CBC](#)

GCSE Examinations (November Series)

Good luck to our Year 11 students who start their GCSE examinations this week. Over the next few weeks identified groups of students will complete GCSE English Language and/or GCSE Mathematics. Last half term, it was very clear that all students were working very hard in lessons, and many were attending and benefitting from extra revision sessions at lunch time, after school and the during half term. I would like to praise all students for their effort and maturity and thank staff for running these extra sessions for our students.

The dates for the forthcoming GCSE English Language Examinations are as follows:

- GCSE English Language Paper 1 – Monday 4th November 2024
- GCSE English Language Paper 2 – Wednesday 6th November 2024

The dates for the forthcoming GCSE Mathematics Examinations are as follows:

- GCSE Mathematics Paper 1 – Monday 11th November 2024
- GCSE Mathematics Paper 2 – Wednesday 13th November 2024

Ready to Learn

Thank you for your on-going support in helping us to maintain our high standards at Porthcawl Comprehensive School. As part of our continued commitment to creating a purposeful and respectful atmosphere we regularly talk to all students about what it means to be “Ready to Learn”. This overarching focus forms part of our lesson structure, pastoral time and shapes our recognition and rewards. “Ready to Learn” refers to our daily habits, routines and expectations. It forms an important part of our school culture. It is what we expect from every student, every lesson, every day when at Porthcawl Comprehensive School. We welcome and encourage your support as parents/carers by tracking and discussing behaviour points with your child through the ClassCharts Parent App. Please contact your child’s Head of Year via info@porthcawlschool.co.uk if you do not yet have this working. As I have shared before, more information can be accessed here: ['Ready to Learn' - Porthcawl School](#)

Registration / Pastoral Time / Form Tutors

At Porthcawl Comprehensive School we value the important role our form tutors have with their form classes. Our form tutors build positive relationships with each and every member of their form class. They use registration / pastoral time to reinforce our school ethos and to inspire and encourage our students, whilst also encouraging an environment of mutual respect and showing personal attention to every individual as often as possible. Our form tutors are the vital link between student, school and parents/carers. We believe our form tutors foster strong relationships with our students, taking an active role in supporting their progress and well-being, and encouraging regular attendance.

The Registration Period / Pastoral Time is an important start to the school day. Each day, it is used for several different focus areas; it is not just for registering students. It provides for a structured and focussed start. Across the school we follow a comprehensive programme of activity that runs each day from 8:45am-9:00am and since September 2024, all students have been following a revised programme of registration / pastoral time activity. This is as follows:

Day	Focus			
Monday	'Ready to Learn'			
Tuesday	KS3 Assembly	KS4 The Day	Year 12 Assembly	Year 13 The Day
Wednesday	Week A: KS3 ' Wellbeing Wednesday ' Week B: KS4 & KS5 ' Welsh Wednesday '		Week A: KS4 & KS5 ' Welsh Wednesday ' Week B: KS3 ' Wellbeing Wednesday '	
Thursday	KS3 The Day	KS4 Assembly	Year 13 Assembly	Year 12 The Day
Friday	'Class Charts Review'			

There are occasions where certain daily activities are reorganised and may not follow the above set pattern, such as guest speakers in an assembly or an event, but the above shares with you as parents/carers what your child follows each morning during registration / pastoral time. You will note that Key Stage 3 (Yr7-Yr9), Key Stage 4 (Yr10-Yr11) and Key Stage 5 (Sixth Form) follow a different pattern of activities.

To explain these activities in more detail:

- **Ready to Learn** – form tutors start the week discussing and focusing on “Ready to Learn” expectations at PCS.
- **Assembly** – this will be delivered at a set venue by a different member of staff each week. The assembly will be delivered by your child’s Head of Year and/or the senior member of staff linked to your child’s year group. The assembly might also be delivered by a guest speaker or the Headteacher.
- **The Day** – this is an online news programme that we subscribe to. It is called “The Day: Find Your Voice”. It is an online, whole-school news platform designed to connect current affairs to the curriculum. It helps young people develop the real-world knowledge, critical thinking, and speaking & listening skills they need to become successful, engaged citizens of the modern world. We use this new platform in a variety of different ways and each week during registration / pastoral time, form tutors access weekly themes to deliver an assembly and/or class discussion. We have set the themes for the whole of the academic year ahead and (to name a few) these include: Mental Health, Hope, Democracy, Motivation, Anti-racism, Online Safety, Resilience, Human Rights, Managing Money and Disinformation. We link these themed discussions and/or assemblies to the characteristics we focus upon with our students within ‘The Porthcawl Pupil’ and our ‘Curriculum Vision’.
- **Welsh Wednesday** – each fortnight we focus on further Welsh language learning, heritage and culture. To encourage Welsh language learning out of the classroom.
- **Wellbeing Wednesday** – each fortnight we focus on ‘Wellbeing’. This can take a variety of different approaches. These include: a wellbeing walk with friends, reading, music, further exploration of ‘The Day’ resources, birthday celebrations, school council feedback.
- **Class Charts Review** – form tutors focus on the positive and negative aspects of the week. This is very often a celebration of all that is working. If needed, a form tutor will discuss negative behaviour points with identified students on a 1:1 basis.



In addition to the above, sixth form students will complete UCAS related activity during registration / pastoral time. As you can see, we have prepared a thorough, worthwhile and varied programme to start the school day in a positive and structured manner.

School Uniform - Reminder

We understand that trends and fashions can change, and this appears to be happening, in particular with leggings and white socks, extremely short skirts and hoodies. We have noticed that some skirts appear to be very short in length and as such they are not appropriate for a school setting. In relation to school uniform, it is important to note that almost all students wear the correct uniform each day and concerns in relation to uniform apply to a very, very small minority in our school of approximately 1225 students.

For all students it is essential to uphold the requirements and expectations of our school uniform policy. This ensures an environment where all members of our school community adhere to our uniform standards and promotes a sense of pride and identity. Similarly, hoodies (including sports PCS hoodies) are not part of our uniform, and we encourage children to wear a plain coat to school if they are cold. In addition, the correct school footwear is 'flat black shoes', boots are not permitted. We also have a no jewellery policy for Years 7-11, with one pair of studs being allowed for Years 12 & 13.

We kindly request your support in ensuring that your child's school uniform meets our uniform policy and expectations. Your co-operation in helping us to address these matters will ensure effective partnership working and help to maintain a positive atmosphere within the school where staff will not need to challenge students about their appearance and failure to comply with expectations. We will be monitoring uniform standards and if our concerns continue with the very small minority of students, we will make direct contact home to arrange meetings to resolve the situation.

Please also note, we continue to run a 'School Uniform Exchange' to help parents / carers with the cost of uniform and to reduce waste. In forthcoming weeks, there will be an open invitation for parents/carers to attend school to access the uniform exchange. More information about this will follow.

Below are some of the key events coming up next half term:

- Year 13 Progress Evening – Wednesday 20th November 2024
- Year 7 Progress Evening – Wednesday 4th December 2024
- Carol Service – Thursday 12th December 2024 (Evening)
- Carol Service- Friday 13th December 2024 (during school day)

Advanced Notice: Friday 29th November is an INSET day at Porthcawl Comprehensive School.

I look forward to the half term ahead, and I thank you for your continued support.

Cofion cynnes / Kind regards,

M. Stephens

Headteacher/Pennaeth